

Poetry Series

Gert Strydom

- poems -

Publication Date:
2020

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

Gert Strydom(03 April 1964)

Gert Strydom was born in 1964 in Johannesburg, South Africa. He matriculated at Estcourt High School after which he obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration degree (B.B.A.) at Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A.) and apart from being a poet and writer he is an accountant by profession. His predilection for poetry was stimulated by his late father who read Afrikaans poetry aloud at times, as part of his postgraduate studies at the University of South Africa. While living in Pretoria he attended the poetry writing school at the House of Afrikaans Poetry under mentorship of Prof. Ian Raper, where the other poets especially Ian Raper, Rosa Smit, Mandi Engelbrecht, André (Francois) Viljoen, Luchie Möller, Karlien van der Merwe had a great influence on the sharpening of his abilities.

Gert Strydom was called up for compulsory national service in the South African defence force (SADF) for a period of two years during the time of the South African border / bush war and while following his profession was called up for several compulsory camps for several months as a member of the South African Citizen's force and did partake in the National Colours Parade and in exercise Excalibur.

Some of his Afrikaans poetry is displayed on the Woes web page at:

Some of his English poetry is displayed at:

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T PREJUDICE

"where Have All The Soldiers Gone? Gone To Graveyards Every One"

I read the entry line above your poem
and know that true soldiers live on
sometimes as legends of a place and time,

sometimes as testimony of the effect of war,
witnesses to brutality
and seekers of peace.

The honest truth is that men die
in their hearts with every shot
that they take,

become something else
like a well trained machine
primed to destroy

and something else takes capacity
when bullets whistle past
and each moment can be your last.

[Reference: Oologsduet by Mandi Engelbrecht.]

Gert Strydom

1899-1902 (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To A. E. Housman)

From the Orange Free State to the Transvaal
farms and towns burn,
from concentration camps women, children,
do not return,
up in the hillocks European farmers fight;
not taciturn
Emily Hobhouse does expose some ills,
many innocents the British do kill.

Hard driven men who read the word of God
fight very brave,
hear the British sing their God save their Queen;
they cannot save
some twenty thousand women and children,
but they do crave
for freedom and for a place of their own,
are forced to swear loyal to the crown.

After that bitter war they have to sing
'God save the queen, '
return to decimated farms and towns,
their pain unseen,
impoverished they make a living,
for peace are keen;
to today their kinsmen do not forget,
in God's record His punishment is set.

Gert Strydom

20 March 2003

Strongly the wind blows
and outside the house on the paving
two broken dove-eggs lie,
a newborn dead dove
so pink and hair- and featherless
and Sasja, the golden cocker spaniel, has a feast
do bark at the bakbakiris (bush-shrikes)
as if they are going to bring her more presents
that does fall out of the air
or maybe forever
she wants to drive them away from this yard
or maybe the wind will fulfil her wishes
to bring her some more eggs and little birds
while Jeanie, the brown Labrador,
do only at a distance look at this affair.

The SABC's news have got a report
of gigantic hailstones bigger than golf-balls
that had fallen in the East Rand in Benoni,
the roofs of car's and buildings have been damaged
and a man has been admitted to a private hospital
after some of the hail did hit him on the head.

The BBC-News and CNN blaze it out
that the American war with Iraq has begun
and I still do remember the two tower blocks
that did burn like hellish fires
and did collapse,
about the many people
that were killed, hurt and did escape
and that scene is almost hardwired
with the whole world and burnt into memory

and it's clear that America is angry with Saddam Hussein,
when in secret
the HAARP installation in Alaska is switched on
and broadcasts are made into the sky
to target every soldier and other person in Iraq
as a kind of brainwashing and people

do become terribly perplexed and jaded
and it is switched off

while in the darkness from heaven
bombers like gryphons from the portals of hell
do dive down and lay their deadly eggs,
and I have heard how these air strikes were carried out
at more than eight levels

and children, women, old people
and the enemy soldiers are killed,
every bit of resistance is wiped out by this iron-fist
and later the battle-tanks do creep right through the desert
and do destroy as far as they go,
to also have a feast of it

and the countries of the world that are not toady towards America
do watch all of these things from a distance
while the man in the bush (their president) talks like a monster
that everyone that is not with America
are her enemies
as if no one can stay neutral

and where American general H. Norman Zwartkopf do burst out
do say that what he has to say is only his own opinion
but that Saddam Hussein is a liar
about all kinds of things
like religious places being targeted,
that America do touch the hearts of many people in Iraq
who are logical, reasonable and intellectual
but the normal man in the street
is called a mob by him
and their opinion will not change
and where Hussein does say that his country has fought
against the best that the coalition has
Zwartkopf says that the best is yet to come

and from this I do wonder what that man was really saying,
do wonder about how the normal people is seen
by the general in control,
if bombs can fall on any innocent person,
if every innocent child, woman and man

could be be shot dead
and do wonder to where this world is going.

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Gert Strydom

20 May 1983 (Free Verse Sonnet)

Terrorist men in a cream coloured car blew up the world,
blew up the lives of many pedestrians
who were just innocents going on their own way
on twenty May nineteen eighty three.
The huge explosion did smash, scatter and crush
many men, women and children
did disfigure sully and defile,
did tear limbs right off,
where terrorists did act towards any passing person
on instructions from Nelson Mandela from prison,
where the shrapnel and the flying glass
with one great thunder did rain down
and in Pretoria, South Africa, I did witness all of this,
how the world turned to cruel inhumanity.

[Poet's note: Nelson Mandela admitted to ordering the Church Street bomb in his book: "Long walk to freedom."

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Gert Strydom

20th Century

Farms are burned down to the ground
and cattle slaughter just there in the fields,
while a super power forces women and children
into concentration camps to kill them there.

Railway tracks run crisscross over the country
and galloping horses and oxen pulling wagons
are replaced by roaring cars, lorries
and motorbikes
and people follow technology
as if it's the new god.

When the stock exchange folds
people jump from the windows of buildings,
while they are out of their wits,
as if they have got wings.

Germans march past
and thousands in crowds
are giving a sigh heil salute

and in a peculiar way stay ignorant
about millions of Jews that are robbed
and killed,
as if they did not exist.

Bombers let bombs dropp like rain
on Britain and rockets
hit London almost unstoppable

and in the icy Russian winter
the Germans are reminded that they are humans
and from Stalingrad they are driven back

until the Russians claim some of Berlin
and half of Germany
as their domain
and almost every women there gets raped

and America drops the bomb on Hiroshima
and another time on Nagasaki
and their enemies are molten, burned and radiated

and after this war jets cross the skies,
rockets go to the moon
where man stands like a god.

□

l'Envoi

It's the age were young boys
are shot into peaces in Vietnam, in Namibia
and Angola are sent to war,
where people loose respect for God
and try to solve everything with science,
where man becomes godly in his own eyes

and I wonder what the almighty God
thinks about this
while man is turn the earth to ruins
and are filling the cup
of the wrath of God?

Gert Strydom

5th Avenue Remembered

You'll paint
in your studio
or in the living room
while we watch a video

and I will pen words down too
and sometimes hear you sing
the melancholy of lost loves
and your mother dear
and in my thoughts
always we will be near.

The animals
of our own little zoo
will lie on the ground
and on the floor
wag their tails

and one will sit
upon my legs
majestically like a cat does,
while another
face loving
up from next to you.

My country will merge
into a poem
of a old black lady
carrying her baby
piggyback
and being denied
help from anyone

and on your canvas
she will unfold
with a red head band
and the big
astounded eyes
of the hungry child

following me around.

Sometimes your head
will lie on my chest
while you rest
and Dr. House
becomes a part
of our family

but only you and me
will cry and laugh
and love
in our sanctuary
that fortress against
whatever life brings.

Gert Strydom

A Accountant At A Transport Company

Figures on paper glare at me
with the sun hanging bright in a blue sky,
while busses and lorries drive past the whole time.

Outside vehicles are parked in rows and shine
and drivers walk about talking
where we are camped in, behind rusting wire and zinc.

When the managing director looks in he wants
me to make changes, to do an act of fraud.
Figures on paper glare at me

with a bonus waving,
and my name, my integrity is at stake
and drivers walk about talking

and I wonder how to get out of this trap
when I catch the eye of the managing director's charming daughter
while busses and lorries drive past the whole time.

I again check calculations, re-determine and add
and I keep things correct
and my name, my integrity is at stake.

The managing director wants the final figures,
he makes threats and his temper is just under control.
Figures on paper glare at me

while I complete the financial statements
and thousands of things go through my mind
and I keep things correct

and the day rushes past
the managing director's daughter winks at me, walks down the passage
while busses and lorries drive past the whole time,

sirens are ringing in the distance and the wall-clock ticks off the last minutes
and I know that I can lose my job
and thousands of things go through my mind

when the girl walks in with eyes cutting into my soul,
say that her dad is waiting and I feel like caught in web.
Figures on paper glare at me
while busses and lorries drive past the whole time

and I hear excited voices in the managing director's office.
Outside vehicles are parked in rows and shine
and I know that I can loose my job,
where we are camped in, behind rusting wire and zinc.

Gert Strydom

A Bee Buzzes Past In Its Flight

when the first peach blossoms flower
while birds call out of the bright blue sky
A bee buzzes past in its flight
and the year turns back to summer
and on the hunt is the butcherbird and preying mantis.
A bee buzzes past in its flight
when the first peach blossoms flower

Gert Strydom

A Birthday

It's full moon tonight
and yellow like Citrine
some golden rays
decent down to me
and it's forty-five years
since my full moon first broke
in the dark onyx night.

The morning sun is ruby red
till it turns shining diamond bright
in a sapphire blue sky
and too intense to look at
and it's forty-five years
since the first time
that I saw light.

The years flash past
and in this summer of my life
I wish that perennial
could my summer be,
but autumn has already
laid its hands on me
and there are grey specs in my hair.

Gert Strydom

A Birthday: Far Too Long

Far too long I have been wandering
in all seasons even summer and spring
and at times I have lost, at other times
I had experienced the kindness that you bring

and at times in vain
I have tried to conquer destiny with pain,
have just been struggling on
right through sunshine and rain

and suddenly my life has changed
almost as the divine had it rearranged
with the sun shining down warmly
on me once estranged

and at my birthday, my love is here
with tender care, more sweet and sincere.

Gert Strydom

A Blue Jay In The Bush-Veldt

Drawing a dark-blue line against the cobalt-sky
as higher into the sky it does fly,
astonished in the Bush-veldt I look at that bird
but the blue jay flashes screeching by.

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Gert Strydom

A Bottle Of Wolf's Poison

At dusk little Martha walks
pass the back of the old house
that is build of heaped blue Jacob stone

and her older sister who has to watch her
is a distance away in the orchard
where she is catching small gnats
with shouts of joy.

The sun glows orange red
on the horizon and the rays hits
a brown bottle that protrudes
from one of the cracks of the Jacob rocks

and at a distance
it looks to three-year-old Martha
like her mother's kitchen knife
and quickly she walks closer
on her little feet
and she tries to take it, but it is stuck tight.

With a long stick
she digs the bottle out,
bites it open with her small teeth
and there's pink liquid
that flows down her throat.

Still she wonders
what this bottle is doing here
and goes round the corner
into the kitchen
where she finds her mother
and gives the bottle to her.

Her mother turns white from fright
as it is wolf's poison
and deadly strong
and her shout is so loud
that three of Martha's older brothers

run in from the outside.

"Go and milk one of the cows
and bring some more milk, hurry"
is said to Pieter
and she takes a bucket of milk
from the pantry
and pour some in a glass for Martha to drink
while Pieter runs
as fast as he can to the stable.

"Drink sis drink, " Martha is begged
and glass after glass is given to her
until she starts to vomit
and still they beg her to drink
while they pour some more glasses of milk

and the pink poison
comes out with the vomit
and Pieter brings some more
fresh hot milk
and pours the jug out
and Martha shakes and cries

and they beg her to drink
and still more is poured into glasses
and she drinks
until she vomits the entire poison out.

[Reference: Wolf's poison is strychnine.]

Gert Strydom

A Bouquet For You

In colours of yellow, orange, red and even almost blue
a carnation is a beautiful thing that you remember and remember,
it stays stuck
against the retina of what the eye sees

and half mysterious lies the almost clove goading smell,
half vague but the accent of it lingers and lingers constantly
where it's on a lapel, single or in a bouquet in a vase
taking a woman's breath away, cheering up a whole day

and a carnation is a magical flower
with which I want to reveal my love to you
who leave me dumbstruck,
wanting you to rise like a bud in my heart.

Gert Strydom

A Boy Fishing

At the dam I am still waiting alone
when all of the other fishermen are gone
the float moves do go under
my body feels cold like stone
in the distance I see thunder
do jerk the rod see the fish jump silver-wet
to land it is now a sure bet.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

A Boy Fishing (Cavatina Sequence)

Alone he watches the water ripple,
without movement
he waits with the line going in quite deep,
in a moment
the muddy water stirs in little circles,
tense enjoyment
goes through the boy as line sings, starts running,
he jerks the rod, the fish jumps, it's stunning

with its golden silver scales glittering,
it dips under
and the fight is on as it twists and turns,
quick like thunder
again it jumps and twists back to escape,
without blunder
the boy reels in, still better hooking it,
over the river fighting bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

A Brave Boer Boy

At Italeni the bushes come alive
and abound with a horde of Zulu's,
of which the spears glitter
and some are at the peak
of a hillock
and others on the plane.

Blood and fat
are spread over their faces
and they are raging
and in a blood thirsty trance
and scream luring
and tippie with a ritteltit war dance
and clubs and shields,
are thrown into the air
while spears flash into the air.

In the cloudless blue sky
an eagle flies past screaming,
while Boer horsemen
are riding past with guns at the ready.

Father and son gallop next to each other
and the hoofs of the horses hang thundering,
as far as they go.

When the first Zulu's are in striking distance
they fire at them
and the front warriors fall
and the rest turns about
and run into the bushes
and cliffs.

The commando breaks into smaller groups
and the fleeing Zulu impi
are followed
and Dirk rides side to side with his dad,
to help the Malan brothers
where they are trapped in the cliffs.

Suddenly a whole impi of murderously mad Zulu's
are around them
and Piet Uys's gun
is jammed
and he stops to fix it
and out of the air a spear falls
that penetrates him.

He tell his men to ride away
but Dirkie wants to stay
and he rides only a hundred steps away,
when he hears the war cry
of a lot of Zulu's
that storm to his father.

Horse and son becomes one
and horse and son
burst galloping through the Zulu's
and he shoots three down,
but he is murderously
speared from his horse
and one flintlock gun that breaks
cannot stop a horde of spears.

Father and son lies together
while a Zulu impi
dances with joy up and down
and in the bright blue sky
an Eagle screams while it passes
while death
embraces both men.

At times when a storm
rises over that long hillock
people hear horse hoofs
rushing over the earth
and a rifle that thunders,
while shadows
threaten and creep nearer
and the cry of an Eagle
sounds over the cliffs.

[Reference: The heroic story of Dirkie Uys. Impi=> a Zulu army.]

Gert Strydom

A Brave Field Cornet

From a hillock
two Boer commandoes
ride into an English camp
and a few of the British are shot,
a lot are caught
and most flee away.

In the direction of the Tuli river
the enemy are followed in haste
where they join comrades
driving a ox wagon
and the Boers are marksmen
and the English flee again
to find shelter in a farmhouse.

The house is shot to pieces
and for the third time on one day
the British flee again
and the next day,
the Boer commando captures nine wagons
with food and ammunition.

The day following Boer scouts
find an abandoned enemy camp
with burned out fires,
tents, horses and mules
and see a big cloud of dust
coming along in their direction.

There's a Field Cornet
that does not ride away,
while two Boer commandos
escapes to safety.

At dusk Jacobus Potgieter
finds more men with a canon
set on a hillock
and with just more than twenty men,
he prepares

to give resistance to a huge enemy force.

The darker the night gets,
the nearer the cloud of dust comes
and Jacobus Potgieter and his men
are ready to shoot killing shots
and to let no Englishmen past them
and there's a rambling sound,
but no enemy appear
and they are invaded
by a swarm of locusts.

[Reference: The "JJ Potgieter manuscript." Second Anglo-Boer war. Boer
commando= A group of Boer farmers in a citizen force militia under a
Commandant (Lieutenant-Colonel) .]

Gert Strydom

A Brood Of Vipers

While working as a senior accountant
at the head office of a major worldwide religion:

I have seen colleagues
running to tell tales
which were fibs, slandering others
to get their own way,

using the name of God
in prayer and twisting
His arm,
to get their own way
as if their words are His,

(smiling in friendship
while stabbing the knife
in the back) ,

meddling with salaries and pensions
to defraud and decrease
stipulated payments
(trying to stop this on my own) ,

I have seen a married girl
sitting on the lap
of her boss
to get a promotion,

I have heard the president
of a conference
talking about people
behind their backs
after happily receiving
donations for the church
and saw the anger in his eyes
when I admonished him
and those that talked along,

I have been told by a minister

in high office in the church
about my personal circumstances
that God pours His rain
over the unjust as well,

I have seen people
walking over others
in the Christian way
and still they had the audacity
to want to pray with me
and put their arms
around my shoulders
and thought that they were holy
and have the truth.

[Reference: "In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. 'Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! 'You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? " Matthew 23: 28-33]

Gert Strydom

A Brown Rock-Pigeon, Flutters Just Past The Porch

A brown rock-pigeon, flutters just past the porch
picks up some small insects from the mown lawn
from where it continually calls its mate,
at a distance sparrows splash in water.

An auburn colour flames in the sun
stretching right over some gleaming feathers
while he keeps on catching tiny insects,
before his cooing attracts some more doves.

Yellow weavers chatter in the branches,
they fly whistling from one branch to another,
they are charming pied coloured females
that are basking under the hot bright sun,

the sun stretches shadows all over me,
in the distance there's thunder roaring.

Gert Strydom

A Brush With Death

Gliding out of my boot you came
and I stood thunderstruck as if lame
while you slithered out

pitch black with ridged scales
and light rings around your neck
and I waited for you to strike

facing death with white gleaming fangs,
seeing you uncoil and hypnotized
rather by common sense than fear,

seeing your forked tongue
testing the air
and the hair on my bare arms rise.

Any movement would make you strike
or spit or both in quick succession
and I waited there
while you sailed away

and sometimes cursing
and blessing that day
as you kept me
from stepping on a landmine
which I spotted gleaming
where you brushed some sand away.

Gert Strydom

A Bush Of Roses

So beautiful in the hand of a man in love
matchless in a vase, on the suit of a bridegroom
when a message of love is conveyed
and later they are given in mourning
when the coffin descends into the grave

or are withered, dried out, crumbling
when a bush of rose have no more meaning
and with the fragrance and colour fading
roses go straight to the rubbish bin.

Gert Strydom

A Butterfly Flutters (Free Verse Sonnet)

A butterfly flutters past your face,
for a moment lands on a ruby-red rose
and I wonder about the love between you and me:
is it also so fragile and brittle?
Or is it as ample like the stars at night?
How love really is I cannot say.
Is life only moments of tears and laughter
in days caught in the hot summer sun?
We are but dust particles out of space
on an earth where everything living does teem,
in the big universe we are full of hurt or buoyant
but to live is much more than just feelings.
Maybe a person cannot get answers for the abstractions
and in all of this you are day after day here close to me.

Gert Strydom

A Cape Town Winter Day

The day is icy, grey,
drawn closed, as heavy as lead and wet,
with a southeaster that grabs
that searches for somewhere to hold on to

with bricks, oak trees, razor sharp glass
that is jerked loose in its grip,
with paper bags that are ascending in line
to come down somewhere else in the ocean,

where seagulls continually angrily screech,
are searching for an own escape and continually do curse.

Gert Strydom

A Cape Winter Day (Rubiyat Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

North-northwest the Cape winter wind howls
while out of the rain you dry yourself with a towel,
while the rain does pour down for many days
and shivering, outside we do hear an ominous owl.

The Atlantic Ocean storm-turbid smash against shoreline rocks,
the great oak tree whips up and down and on the roof knocks
where a hot fire burns in the fireplace and you smile happily
and I am soaked through from my head up to my socks

but in all of this you bring love and a kind of tranquillity
and in conversations, in your presence and bed I am cosy
while the winter is really chilly with snow on the high hills
and now in the winter of life you are still lovely to me

even if life outside is dark ominous with rain coming down,
I again want to have you and love you as my very own.

[Poet's note: There is an African belief that an owl does call on death to come or that it's a warning that death is coming.]

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Gert Strydom

A Cat As A Companion For Tea

When tea is made at half past seven
and again at eleven
he comes from the grass where he has been hiding
or from a tree down he comes sliding,
purring with agate eyes in a haze
as if the whole world is caught in his gaze
and suddenly the black and white housecat is there
while he steps purring nearer with great care
and lovingly he brushes against my legs
with those huge green eyes that begs
for some hot tea
and again at half past three
I have my cat's loving company.

Gert Strydom

A Cat's Dream

He stretched out on the ground
lying in the sun
and the heat on the long hair
of the red-golden ginger coat
felt really great
and the golden eyes
of the Persian closed
while it dozed away
and air flowed softly
through its flat pink nose.

Two sharp little white teeth
pointed past its lip
as if ready to clip
and stripes ran everywhere
like those of a tiger.

He'd been a good cat
all his life,
cuddled against
the master and his wife,
caught rats, mice
and even snakes
and brought them
as gifts to the humans
that he loved.

Still on that day
while he slept
he prayed to all the gods
that took cats to heart,
to have a tiger's day
and be able
to live and play
for just one day
like a tiger.

The dream became a nightmare
and two vicious Rottweilers

chased him up a tree
growling, barking
and leaping up in the air,
but while he slept
his prayer was granted
and a ferocious tiger
rushed down
clawing at the hounds
even before it landed
on the ground.

Torn, bleeding and wailing
the two dogs
ran whining away
and in terror
let every other dog know
a tiger was afoot.

When he rushed down the street
all the people that he met
were totally fretted out
and ran away in sheer terror
and he found nobody
to play with
as even the other cats
were terrified
and kept to themselves.

As the day went on
he got really hungry
and drank water
from a wishing well
where tourists stopped
at a distance
to gaze at him
from their cars
while a squadron of police
drew near in great fear.

To be a Persian cat again,
seemed much, much better
in this place at this time

and he wished
and by chance
he bumped a coin
from the ledge
down into the waters.

Gert Strydom

A Cellular Phone

A mobile phone is a hell of a kind of thing
that catches me at all places even in privacy
when it sings a song
and I know that you do not want to hang on
but still it carries words, signs and meaning
of messages and of love
where you do become for me more real
and your tears and longing want to smother me.

Gert Strydom

A Cheetah

By some seen as the kitten of wild cat family,
but it is no joke
when at a speed of
one hundred and ten kilometre per hour
a meter and half long Cheetah
of sixty kilograms comes racing at you

with bared teeth and outstretched piercing claws
and the yellow-brown coat with black spots
shimmers and you can see
the breast muscles retracting in power
and while on patrol, you are ready to shoot it down

but frozen like the Bushman tracker
its final direction averted me from shooting
with the powerful light machinegun
and in parts of a second
the cheetah flashed past

going at speed for the impala
that I did not notice before
of which the eyes were open wide with terror

and in a moment the cheetah tripped it,
with jaws locked around its throat
in a cloud of red-brown dust
pulled it down and laid there motionless
until the antelope stopped struggling.

Gert Strydom

A Child

God gives a child
for a while as a gift to you
to keep in your arms.

It may be for eighty years
or maybe time is measured out
much shorter,

but a time will come that he or she
will go back to the dust
from where new life comes.

The life of the child
will put sparkle in every day
and to see love in the eyes of that child,

will make your life unforgettable
and you will feel as if you are touching immortality
if you raise that child in His ways.

Gert Strydom

A Child Is A Strange Thing

A child is a strange thing
that does take your most expensive books,
to stain them with his own drawings
and here and there words are twisted

and when that boy did find some of my first poems
he did write love poems for his girlfriend
and it was my own words with which he was wooing
that he did write down word upon word

and that file of mine was just gone
until I did find it beneath his bed
and to his mother those poems were inane, foolish and bad
but not for that child

and I wonder what he now does think of my verses,
if at times he still does place my words in his own ink?

Gert Strydom

A Child Is A Strange Thing [1]

A child is a strange thing
that does take your most expensive books,
to stain them with his own drawings
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Gert Strydom

A Childrens Game?

I see a boy making roads
in the red-brown sand,
where his blue plastic Ranchero pickup
drives up and down
past a mud pond.

There's a green plastic
roofless Mercedes,
that's parked in the shade
next to a homestead
of tomato planks.

Small branches stand like popular trees
pressed in a row
in a rectangle,
where a red plastic Massi Furgeson tractor
draws furrows in a line of dust.

When I pass that place years later
a farmer drives around his fields
with his white Toyota pickup,
where popular trees
are rowed in next to the road
and green John Deere tractors
are ploughing
and I see a beautiful blonde woman
with a silver Mercedes SLK
cutting past their big dam
and the road turns away
and I wonder how the house looks
where they live
of which the roof
just edges pass the hillock.

Gert Strydom

A Christmas Carol

On a early summer day
while shepherds fed their flocks hay
all the earth was rejoicing
about the coming king.

Angels sang, appeared in great glory
and told scared men the blessed story,
early in the morn, of the child being born,

the Prince of peace, the creator God, Jesus the Christ
for whom a manger sufficed.

A star guided wise men right through the night
they followed its bright light
and over a stable it halted its flight

where they found the child they sought
and bowed before the king
seeing the mild maiden mother glowing
with admiration, worshipping Him,
they gave the treasures that they brought

and the world was at peace
while God walked among men
and now like then:
giving out His love that never ceases.

Gert Strydom

A Christmas Poem (Sonnet)

Just before Christmas day
my darling wife came to me
with a huge smile and her eyes all glittery
while we did set up a small decorated tree,
did heartfelt prayers to God pray

while life did still happen as it may
and that special day had a lot of tranquility
while we thought about a child that did set the world free,
that told the people of the world how love should really be
and every person may believe as he or she may

but we thought about His birth, life and suffering
and soon He will be returning as the everlasting king.

Gert Strydom

A Christmas Prayer

Our great redeemer that on this day
was born in Bethlehem and triumphed over sin
take all our hardships, our troubles away
while we come to You and let Your love flow in

to our hearts, our lives and like the shepherds let we see
Your glory and find tranquillity,
have peace in our lives and country
and before You forever be free

and grant that we live as brothers
loving all others
totally unselfishly
as if coming from the same fathers and mothers

and when this joyous day begin
grant us Your blessing.

Gert Strydom

A Christmas Story

(In answer to D. J. Opperman)

At the agriculture co-operation's shop the farmers did believe the angel
where on the high-veldt they were farming near to each other,
they did see the star and took gifts to each one's ability.

One did load his best stud bull on the back of his pickup truck
the other his prize winning sheep ewe and towed a trailer full of wool,
the other a pickup load of his maize harvest, fruit and some lettuce,

they did also take along coffee, rusks, biltong and crullers full of syrup,
holders filled with chops, steak and sausages and bags of flour for maize
porridge,
then the three of them took to the back road.

Together they followed the star on a summer-night
where it took direction to the capital city of Pretoria
and at daylight they reached a shack, at a time a stable, in squatter-camp

where they did find an old rundown Datsun pickup truck and a worn out trailer,
where they rolled up their sleeves and made the Datsun and trailer useful for
years,
after washing their hands each one of them did kneel down and smile at the
child,

thanked God and prayed long prayers over the salvation that He does bring,
where the Child gazed at them open mouthed as if He did understand everything
and together they sang songs of praises from their own childhood days,

again did thank God, shook hands with the parents and embraced the small wife,

prayed to the Child, unloaded all the presents and quickly did make a cattle pen
as they were on holy ground and did swallow away the knobs in their throats

while a very old family dog was friendly watching them,
did go and lie outside to protect the bull and the ewe
and they did trust in God and did behold Him themselves.

[Reference:"Kersliefjies" (Christmas-song)by D. J. Opperman.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

A Christmas Story (Sonnet)

Bright in the veldt under a starry canopy
suddenly dazzling lights did shine
at the birth of the Savior, the Lord Jesus divine
who came to set all men free

from a world smitten with the darkest iniquity
and the child as a man did the power of love define
brought mercy to all types of sinners and to the concubine
how life is supposed to be he tried to make all men see

and to some His life seemed a great loss
where daily to help others he went
while He did pray and bless
but was nailed to a cross
while of all evil things he was totally innocent
and dying he cried for forgiveness.

Gert Strydom

A Circle Of Good Men

(after Tony Harrison)

Around a table
the president, his cabinet
and some generals sit in a council of war
and these men
are traders of the bodies of boys
who have just left school

and they deal in corpses
when they send them into war
and as a return
get caskets with the dead,
battered, hardened, shattered
bomb happy citizens

and some receive dog tags
and have to write letters
to parents and wives

but do not experience the lost,
do not carry the cost of lost of income,
do not hear the crying
or see the aching
which death brings
to fathers, mothers,
brothers, sisters, wives, children
and friends

neither do they experience
gunshots, bursting grenades, falling bombs
piercing rockets
or having to crawl through sodden marches,
having to live on ration packs,
or local vegetation
as citizen force soldiers do
who have been called up
against their will

or see the humiliation, the poverty
or the effect of war
on the local population

but sit in their castles and palaces
living up the glory
of their positions,
living in luxury
as if they are gods
with the power
over life and death.

[Reference: "The Bonebard Ballads: The Ballad of Geldshark" by
Tony Harrison.]

Gert Strydom

A Clear Sweet Voice

When I first heard your voice,
in it there was something incredulous pure
a kind of serene beauty that one expects
at the heavenly court
and nowhere else to hear

as if the war had for a time stopped
between armies of angels
and legions of demons
while they all listened in awe
and even nature was stunned at the sound of it.

Gert Strydom

A Cloud Burst In The Afternoon

Birds pelt to their nests,
bees to their hives,
butterflies scatter and flutter
to find some shelter somewhere
the dogs run to their boxes,
the ginger Persian cat
stretches himself out,
looks with almost a kind of grin
at the clouds and sneaks
to the nearest tree
that has bird nests
when the rain starts to fall
from a dark sky full of flashing thunder
with first only a few big drops
and then pouring down

the neighbour's wife who were pruning flower-bushes
snipping the dead ones off
is gone,

the girls across the street
on the sidewalk
stop their hopping
and scatter to their different homes
the boys drop their bicycles on the sidewalk
dart into the large mansion
while like a river water stream down the road
washing the hop-sotch lines,
the dust and pollution away

a lightning bolt slams down
right next to the window
with a blue-white dazzling bright light
before it thunders and I can smell it.

Gert Strydom

A Conductor (In Answer To T.T. Cloete)

Slowly he swings his stick up and again down
in rapture as if it's a magic wand.
When he makes the music notes to come alive:
great classical masters rise from the grave.

Gert Strydom

A Constant Shadow Hangs Ominous

Something has gone wrong
and things are not
how they used to be

and firestorms
hang in the
polluted black sky

while lightning bolts
lash out
like lights searching
for a answer

and bitter acid rain falls
among the rubble
left by man

and as far
as the eye can see
desolation goes

and man has lost the plan
for the survival
of every thing that lives
and death is everywhere

and the constant shadow
hangs ominous
where the sun used to shine

and an unstoppable fire
burns the land
and winds of radiation
blows endlessly
where birds used to fly.

Gert Strydom

A Conversation With God

Everything that I possess does not belong to me
but is a sign of Your love and great mercy
and even all my great and good deeds
do not make me free of Your crucifixion or of blame
and even though I do possess fame and respect,
that which I can become
is only the blessing that You do pour down upon me
and all of my existence,
even the most brilliant thoughts in my mind,
that which do carry meaning for me
You my Lord, do provide before I can ask for it
and does only come as a gift from Your hand.
Your great care is wherever I am
and You do regard everyone that I meet as Your own child.

Gert Strydom

A Conversation With Minette

My dear, destiny has separated us
and my life goes on without meaning
and you are at another place, far away from me.

I am seasons and a lifetime gone from you,
but still forever bonded to you
and although I am another person, you are still stay part of me

and in the evenings you are near
when I lift my eyes to the stars.
My dear, destiny has separated us

and only in my dreams my life seems real
when you are like a flower with me,
and I am not blinded by the day's bright rays,

while I find new meaning,
I feel you material as a human being, when you stand next to me
and you are at another place, far away from me

at a place of which I do not know the extent
caught in the clutches of death
when you are like a flower with me

and sometimes I wish that you would stay with me
that you do not disappear with the morning light.
My dear, destiny has separated us

as if human life always hangs in the balance,
as if man is forever extradited to a Godly decision
caught in the clutches of death,

we life on, immoral or sincere
until death devours us
and although I am another person, you are still stay part of me

I am not able to loose your spirit, your humanity
but still feel your love reaching out too me.
As if man is forever extradited to a Godly decision

life passes much too quickly
even when you bring your hands together in prayer.
My dear, destiny has separated us
and you are at another place, far away from me,

but it's still as if your bright blue eyes look at me.
Now I am seasons and a lifetime gone from you,
but still feel your love reaching out to me
and although I am another person, you still stay part of me.

Gert Strydom

A Country

How can we determine what a country is?
If everyone of us wants to bind
a different meaning to it? Finding our own salvation
our own destruction in it?

That it is a region wherein we exist,
have to make a living, a region that is differentiated for us,
obtained through a struggle in which a flag and anthem
have to bind together but at times rather divide

a place wherein we are born
or of which with time we have become children
which we recognize as our own
and from which we are inseparable,

is no new knowledge, but that life sprouts
from the piece of ground that is own to each one,
that we experience the wonders
in our lives, times that we share with one another

and that we are together in this place and time
where everyone wants to be treated worthy as a human,
with the ability
to make a living on merit

wanting to protect that which we possess
and want to preserve it, trying to save our possessions,
lives and time
to keep to the length of days

where everyone can talk his own language, can write
uniquely perpetrate an own culture
and being able to save the majesty
of nature for our children and their children

are some of the things that I claim legitimately
and by laws and oppression
the government
is showing me the door

so as if my own country
is not innate to me and only belongs to some?

Gert Strydom

A Cup Of Tears

(for Daleen)

Long before first light
in the darkness of the late night
your slumber took you to the coming morning
where in sleep you spoke out without a warning

uttered words that barely had substance

while my yesterdays, life right here and my tomorrows
like a open wound were coming in words of utter sorrows
while the paper ship of sleep did soothe you on the waves
to all the places that the subconscious do crave

where a shower of words come to the remembrance

of the lovely yesterday's that we did live through
about the heartaches and joys and the splendour
of all the bright new mornings that on us down did pour
in all the great and small things that was between me and you

and some were simple treasures or times where we dared and did chance

but now only the silences for me do remain
and meaningless is all the flowers I had planted,
although still with you I do remain enchanted
and with the parting there is a sea full of tears and pain

which have come by words and acts and circumstance

and I wonder if you do really know my heart,
do know the gist of all of my feelings and devotion
while you move away on your own motion
and by your children's wishes and your own we do part

where the last goodbye was without even a last glance.

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A Day Of Rest

(after W.H. Auden)

They had fled from him,
some for their lives from his sight,
had fled from his might
and now it felt only like an interim

as with his bloody big machines
he had turned against himself, trying to destroy his kind
and suddenly there was light that shines
naturally and no sign of him they could find

and it was a day of rest as there had never been
with beauty and tranquillity that went on and on
and they thought that man would never again be seen
that he and his implements were forever gone

but the fun had only just begun when a shot rang out
and a man appeared with a gun, using it clear and loud.

[Reference: "The Sabbath" by W.H. Auden.]

Gert Strydom

A Day On The Beach

The cobalt, emerald and sapphire of the Southern sea
could turn moments in a day into eternity
as if no other day like this could ever be
when I loved you and you loved me
and on that beach we found tranquillity
while both the dogs were barking and running free.

The busy city laid shining in the distance far away
and we loved each other without a single word to say
while the breakers crashed on rocks and rolled out in the bay
and together on that sunny beach we did laugh, kiss and play
on a February God blessed radian day
and it felt if we would love each other come what may.

The wind swept in from the sea, died down and swept in again
and on that open day suddenly it started to rain
while glittering in the distance was the blue-green main
and in our hearts was joy and we did know no pain
as we looked in wonder at the hues that did the Pacific stain

and on that day the time did fly
when almost in a single moment the day passed us by
but at eight in the evening the sun was still high
burning with intensity in that Cape Town sky
and you were in love and so was I.

It was the best of days where we picnicked on the shore
and a day like this had not come before
when it felt as if that day could last forever more,
while I loved you true and you did me adore
and together the beach and each other we did explore.

Gert Strydom

A Day With A New Morn (Luc-Bat)

The wind whispers in rage
while with time I do age each day
when mere fate havoc play,
and I was on my way; was wet
the day that we had met,
my life was already set by grace
with a smile on your face,
we went to a new place for fun,
the day did just begun,
was hot with the bright sun, was fair
with colour in your hair,
a thing was in the air and gone,
like a sweet kind of tone
that had just moved on a page.

Gert Strydom

A Decree Is Made

A decree is made
to paralyse a nation
and to push nations into one tribe.

Heroic deeds are made void
and history is twisted
totally out of proportion
and the new culture
becomes the in thing
and being an Afrikaner is out.

Names are changed to strange
unknown things
while jobs are isolated
for the oppressed
and a fight
for survival rages on
and the future
for white persons fade away.

The syllabus changes at school
and the curriculum with it,
where fights break out
and children are stabbed with knives
and bladed with swords
and the bush is loose
and in some
cannot be tamed.

Slowly but surely
every thing goes backwards
and inflation and the petrol price
goes as if
they are on steroids
but the government declares
that every thing is going well and better,
while very few believe that nonsense.

A Dentist

At the local municipal clinic
the dentist rather pulls the teeth than fill them
and even if you have got a lot of pain
there is no compassion to be seen.

Gert Strydom

A Dirge For Minette

I

Silently, silently the new morning awakes
and your hands are crossed over your breast
while you go to the eternal rest,
and deeply, deeply my heart aches.

II

Colourful new flowers are flowering,
with insects buzzing, birds with songs to sing
while I miss you
during this early spring.

III

Blue as your eyes the sky
is stretching, open and clear
while in it multitudes of birds fly
and I wish that you were here.

IV

Far too fleetingly you were with me
and this remains the earthly thing,
where no one is free
from death and the way that it stings.

V

In the early morning breeze at you grave
my words are fluttering here and there, fluttering
while in sorrow they rave
and even the willows are crying.

Gert Strydom

A Distressful Day Finds Me

a Distressful day finds me
and at work
the air conditioner is on
and I am catching flue
from a colleague.

At a robot a oversized trailer
hits me against the leg,
while the truck thug
turns with purpose wider than his lane
and drives away into intractability.

At the front gate
the motorbike's gear leaver
comes loose
and I can find no gear.

Kyla belches and I hear
that my darling is away with her
to make a end
to her life.

When the car stops at the back door.
I know that God
answers prayers
and see that our big old black dog
is still alive,
as no vet
could find a vain on her
and her tail swings to and thro
when she sees me
and in a day or two
she's well again.

Gert Strydom

A Dragon Fly

that lingers at the mirror image of the window
is swept away
when every insect catches the eye of a butcher bird

and I am caught in the scene
where it pierces the insect on the barbed wire,
is swept away

where the insect loses its life
and the bird is preparing for its next victim
where it pierces the insect on the barbed wire

and I see the bird spreading its black wing
as it twitters on the barbed wire and slaps its wings
and the bird is preparing for its next victim

while each insect it catches so smartly
where it is set on each movement,
as it twitters on the barbed wire and slaps its wings

and the bird becomes a deadly thing
that lingers at the mirror image of the window
where it is set on each movement,
when every insect catches the eye of a butcher bird.

Gert Strydom

A Dream

Like a blue white lightning bolt
hitting one of us
from a clear blue sky,

or a meteorite falling flaming
out of a tranquil black night
right on our house
without a chance in a million

I dreamt of you
even years before us meeting
and that dream came true
right out of the blue.

I believe that our lives are fixed
by more than stars,
by more than mere chance,

by powers far greater
than just destiny
and that God holds His mighty hand
over you and me,
that the Lord straightens the way
and lays it out.

Gert Strydom

A Ducktail Called Stan

There was a man they called Stan the ducktail,
a well build biker with very long hair,
his real name could have been Sam
or Dick or Dirk
no one really still knows
but he carried chains
and knuckle-dusters
that he used as fighting tools
(and sometimes his bare fists did the thing)
whenever a game of cards, pool, snooker
or even darts did not go straight
he took a swing

and rumour had it that he had even
knocked some cops through shop windows,
had send them straight to hospital
he was a hippie in the time
that free love and marijuana
was in some circles acceptable

and this bloke had many friends,
a gang full of them
that used to party with him
with chicks near Brakpan dam
drinking champagne, beer and cane,
or whatever liquor
they could lay their hands on

and to all the schoolboys Stan
was the man, the archetype
of what they wanted to become
what they used to call:
"a mean fighting machine, "

and some parents did not want them
to associate with what they called
ducktail scum, even went as far
as warning the kids in the Sunday school
against Stan, hippies and ducktails in general

and to live a honest respectable life
and held a prayer meeting
where they begged God to intervene
in the life of Stan
and to this day they believe that He did

and one day just to have some fun
Stan was breaking shop windows
in the main street, waiting on the police
to come and meet him
with drawn batons and fists
and the big well build expected six
were hanging back
and a young lean cop walked right up to him,
tried to make an arrest
and the rest is history.

Stan smiled at the young man
lifted his huge right fist,
but it went right over the cop's head
and he got one hell of a punch
on his own jaw instead,
was knocked right from his feet,
landed unconscious in the street,
waked up cuffed in a police cell
and it was totally beyond him
that a small lean policeman
had given him a beating

and it was the last trouble
that the town, the police and people
in the local hotels and bars
ever had with Stan
and what had become of him
no one knows.

Gert Strydom

A Dying Soldier

When he closes his eyes
a helicopter hangs chattering
in the sky
and I feel his pulse beat fading
while I try to press close
the shooting wound
from which the red is oozing

and his face
is deadly silent and pale
his eyes flicker open
perplexed, with pain
and something unknown to me in them,
they become taught
and the lines of his mouth are set in stone
while his breathing goes silent

There is sand swarming up
while the flying machine is landing
and through that wind
I smell his blood.

Gert Strydom

A Elegy For Monica

(after Theodore Roethke)

I remember the way you walked, at times did smile to me,
a shy kind of smile, your quick lingering glance,
but when I got you to talk the words rushed out,
as if those syllables was for me especially meant

like a redbreast twittering while fluttering on the breeze.
then frolicking happily from branch to branch,
shaking it with a trembling and the big old tree,
its branches and even the shade was part of the song,
where every other bird chirped along,
even the hot summer sun smiled at you.

but far too silently, far too swiftly, far too suddenly
you were lost from life and from living,
like a broken mannequin, like a shop-doll,
you lay stretched out in a pool of blood,
were smashed by a careless driver,
with your hair meddled, your head askew.

My little robin, never again will I hear you chirping,
never again will the breeze blow you a kiss,
never again will I see that smile,
hear words especially meant for me

and how I wished that I could mend you,
pick you up and again put your body together,
how I wish that I could awake you from that awful sleep
and utter words that would bring you back

but at you grave I am not a relative,
not your boyfriend, husband or your lover
where I have no right or claim to you:
we worked together and to me you had been kind.

[Poet's note: "Elegy for Jane" by Theodore Roethke.]

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A Far Greater Chill

It was my forty sixth year to heaven
and autumn was in the trees
and a slight breeze frizzled my hair
touching me with the first icy fingers

but the sky was clear and blue
and some wild doves cooed in the trees
and I would have been happier with summer,

but the flowers were still blooming
from shower after shower of rain
and I was alone again
with the winter
of our relationship setting in
which was a far greater chill.

Gert Strydom

A Farewell Lay For Minette

I

Minette, the wind now whispers, are sometimes raging
as if its calling your name while I am aging
and forever you will be sweet and young,
sometimes it feels as if around me a war is waging

while I am trying to find my way
in a world where destiny sometimes havoc play
are looking for answers to the questions of life and living
while my life passes without you day after day.

II

Far too happy was the day that we met
as if by some fiddling of destiny it was set
and while I stopped to give you help
with tears your cheeks was wet,

but the smile that came upon your face
said thank you with a kind of amazing grace
while I changed your car's tire
from sudden nervousness my hands felt out of place.

It was as if the morning sun
had suddenly risen before the day had begun
and although we did not say a single word
your company was loads of fun.

In my car's four sharp head lamps your golden hair
was pretty and you were more beautiful than just fair
while on the wind I caught a whiff of your scent
it felt as if your presence was predetermined to be there.

III

That summer was a really lovely one
even the breeze had a joyous tone
while we laughed fell in love almost at a whim

and far too quickly our time together was gone.

You were so part of me you were in my heart and head,
in quick understanding few words were ever said
but our loving, our companionship and understanding was intense
and together we could only see great things lying ahead.

IV

Standing at your grave I saw the wind
turning the red sand into clouds of dust,
coming strong from behind
and at your death broken
there was no answer that I could find.

Maybe we had too much sheer happiness
found a lifetime's joy in our moments of bliss
as we thought that the rest of our lives
would simply be like this.

V

At times I have tried to forget you
have tried to paint my life a different hue,
forget the way it was between us
but some memories always stay true

and memories at times brings everything back
when you return with an uncanny knack
and in lonely evenings
when the sky is black

I dream of you joining me
and like always you look happy and free
while from each other we are separated
and there's an inadequacy

a dividing thing between the living and the dead
and sometimes our meetings come with a kind of dread
while you stay part of me
and it's a strange, strange life to lead.

VI

Minette, the wind howls, there's rain
coming down while lightning bolts flash again and again
and it's almost as if I can touch you, catch your essence
but my heart is full of pain

and maybe its time to say goodbye,
in this rainy, stormy weather
to really again live in a place where the sun shines
when the sky glows within its ether.

Gert Strydom

A Farewell To Petersfield

(after Leonard Nolens)

In an own paradise we were together
where white stinkwood trees throw cool shadows over the green lawn
where weavers, doves and sparrows do constantly frolic on the branches,
where the sun shines with its bright rays
and in that pretty garden there was no snake,
only hadedah ibises that land with a heavy wing-beat and do sometimes screech
where pink roses did creep over a cupola
and here and there were pots with fuchsias
that red, pink and white, pink and blue and even orange
hang in big bushes with their bells
and we did pull out all of the weeds
while turtle-doves and laughing-doves did coo and flutter down
to peck up the crumbs in the back-yard,
the dogs did open the small gate to follow me
and back in the pond there were golden-fishes that swam around,
there were all kinds of lilies that did constantly flower,
roses that like trees did grow covered with flowers
where I could only write poems every now and then
in Petersfield extension one
where the heaven did hang blue over me.

[Reference: "Afscheid van Missenburg" (Farewell to Missenburg) by Leonard Nolens.]

Gert Strydom

A Farm With A Cemetery And Homestead (Free Verse Sonnet)

At the banquet-bakery I see a cemetery on display
with a small liquorice-gate turned skew
and graves row upon row between flowers in a dale,
the garden is so carefully made and so pretty
and all of it out of icing-sugar and marzipan,
pressed out in cake forms with big brown fields,
with a meandering river over the whole big aria
and his love for the rural district is bold,
with a homestead where there is a paddock with horses
and next to the house a windmill and a round dam,
as if he wants to go back to a place of his childhood days,
with a farmer with a pipe on a fallen brown trunk,
fat Frisian black and white cows that graze in the green veldt,
and as if I can smell the veldt everything looks so familiar to me.

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Gert Strydom

A Few Anku's

The old dentist waits;
quickly
children scuttle off.

*

Prey of butcherbird
flutters
on washing line.

*

Restaurant gossip
playing
with silent feet.

*

yellow sickle moon catch
howling
of an old dog.

Gert Strydom

A Financial Manager In The New South Africa

The sun has risen like a large red ripe orange
and I can almost smell its ripeness
on the early morning air
and I am driving my brand new red BMW
with its leather seats,
dark windows, flaring South African flags
and large L-sign,
slowly through the old dilapidated pickups,
the old Jetta's and ten year old cars
of the white folks
who are going to work
like a herd of cows.

BEE is a really great thing
and gave me the opportunity
to be promoted from filing clerk
to financial manger
and now my cousin
who was formerly a tea lady
is the personnel manager
and although the job seems tough
it doesn't really matter
how I do it,
as long as I get to work on time
and drive the white minority to perform
and to stand in for me.

Sometimes facts and figures
goes right pass me, but my white deputy
certainly knows his stuff
and at times talks on my behalf,
especially at board meetings
and if he doesn't buckle up
and toe the line
his job will be mine
to give to another
who bows down
and says yes boss to me.

Just now I will scratch my head,
put my feet on my desk
and ask aloud:
"right where am I now? "

And when the figures
on the papers in front of me
doesn't add up
shaking my head
I will remark:
"going nowhere slowly."

The afternoon tea will indicate
that the working day is almost done
and it's time to go home
where three wives will welcome me
and like a god I will walk
past the white employees
and stare at one of them
to scare the living daylight out of him
and ask if the assignment he is doing
is completed?

And I will take some files from him
and draw green lines at places
even if I do not comprehend
any of the calculations

and tonight I will shed my suit, shirt and tie
put on my traditional skins
sit in the shade of the old oak tree
at the back of my yard
around a pot of foaming beer
and will hear the voices
of my children and play with them,
have an orgy with all three my wife's
and now I drink my tea
without spilling any from the cup
and the clock on the wall
tell me that its time to go home.

[References: BEE stands for: Black Economic Empowerment. A riot policeman by

Christopher van Wyk.]

Gert Strydom

A First Visit To A Certain Madame (Terzanelle)

With every nerve alert
as at the abyss
you unpredictably flirt

with a seeming innocent kiss
breaking through jeopardy
as at the abyss

and making my heart race in me
longing for your caress
breaking through jeopardy

before revealing your innermost recess
trusting implicitly.
Longing for your caress,

showing a understanding without glee,
being a friend, companion and affectionate
trusting implicitly

acting on instinct you do not contemplate.
With every nerve alert
being a friend, companion and affectionate
you unpredictably flirt.

Gert Strydom

A Flower For The Night

I dreamed about a magical garden
where an assortment of flowers grows
with the most beautiful colours and hues,
delicate leaves and shapes
and as a full moon arced into the sky
throwing its golden rays
buds opened one after another
and the air was filled
with the most lovely scent
and that I found you
next to a pool with drifting lotuses
opening their cups
and when I opened my eyes
you lay beside me
and the scent was still in the air
and it was almost if we were still there.

Gert Strydom

A Flower For The Night [2]

In the garden we sat watching the stars,
talking softly, intimately while she smoked
and the cigarette glowed red
with her perfume and its flavour
mixing on the evening air
and around us there were flowers
opening everywhere
and some had large cups, others hanged
with petals in strings
in different hues from white, pink,
red to crimson, violet and blue.

There is a flower (whose name I know)
who showed me the most beautiful petals
and bloomed one night
in a bed besides me
in sheer nudity
with perfection in ever aspect of her body

while the full moon rose almost silver white
on a cloudless night
she was soft, firm and tender
and her lips sweet and hot
and I could not resist her,
the intimacy, the tenderness
and the love that she brought.

Gert Strydom

A Forget Me Not

I see a young girl
with auburn hair
and ink blue eyes
picking petals from a yellow flower
as if she's counting them
one by one
and her lips form
the words
you love me,
you love me not.

Her face is lovely
and sweet
and she's tanned
by the summer
and slender like a reed
and there are no shoes
on her feet.

She smiles at me
and puts red rose blossoms
in a big heavy book
and closes it tenderly
and press down on it
and I wonder to whom
she is going to send
a forget me not
as if any young lad
would be able to forget her.

Gert Strydom

A Frightening Dream

I

With his body halfway in he stumbles
against a slope beneath the earth
like a pig in sewerage, in manure,
accumulated, that is pouring out,
he gasps at the wound where it pours,
draws his mouth shut.

In sorrow a pair stares at him
under a car's roof -

he passes courteously,
seeing a guard on his rounds.

II

Dams whirl and its daytime,
beyond ditches and borders an imagined thing waits,
he has got to go back, is becoming blinded,
drags himself along, wanting to know
why some people are screaming,
bends down, big and afraid
under an artificial rainbow.

III

With first sight of him hobos mumble where they pass up wind
to where taxi's are catching people impudently
one can barely breath, is searching for his beloved home,
they are arguing, later almost missing: The night mumbles
a dark cupboard, passing an icy mass
that drifts on a river with the darkness waving,
where Amanda bends in a Viva over another woman
and the wind tears open a pool of water following the fainting sun,
that dies like a dead candle.

A Full Red Moon Hangs In The Night Sky

A full red moon
hangs in the night sky
and birds fly past in silhouette

and the leopard
in my soul jumps out
to take the tract
and roars resounding in the dark night
and sneaks, sneaks past
till where you wait for me.

Gert Strydom

A Gigantic Bee Of A Thing

About two centimetres in size,
it drones near,
something that you can probably call a bee
with black wings spread in balancing,

it suddenly wants to attack me
and I want smack it, damning it away.
About two centimetres in size
it drones near,

wants to intervene in my life like a mad despot
with a attacking dive quite openly,
making that I want to call out a string of curses
eager to its attack, like a religious devout,
about two centimetres in size.

Gert Strydom

A Girl Called Lisa

Lisa let's you come to her place near the airport
and you watch warplanes
disappearing into the blue sky
while you wait for her to open.

She treats you like her boyfriend,
soul mate and brother
and you know that she's a little mad
and she smiles with tears in her eyes,
shares whiskey, plays pool, dance
and tells about the things
that makes her happy and she trust you
and you leave a gift of money

and before you know it, her lips burn on yours
and you make to love her, as if it's destined to be.

Gert Strydom

A Girl From The Boland (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

The High-veldt is beautiful the sky is open and blue,
I wonder if you from the Cape will be able to settle here,
where thunderstorms do come in the late afternoon
as I have entrusted our love to God
and where daily I see the hot summer
I do constantly think of you
and although my days do quickly run past
love is not something that does fade away
and A. G. Visser had been right about A girl from the Boland
where as a human being and woman you are far past just pretty
and it's not only the walking away, the coming in and coming along
that makes you exceptional,
your humanity does constantly beat in my heart
and I do want to have you in times of joy and happiness.

[Reference:"Waar ou Heidelberg hang aan die Suikerbosrand" (Where old Heidelberg hangs on the Sugar-bush hillocks)by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

A Glance At Ingrid Jonker

If you give yourself over
to the arms of the swishing sea,
go into the embrace of water that flows
and steams do drag you along

then you will maybe walk in,
in the way that a person does go to a lover
where you have got vistas,
do wish upon new dreams
and do stand at the end of things

as if that which does lie in front of you
are without end or any border
where free from self-conceit
you do wish your current life away
and do set you eye on unseen things,

do let the water flow over you
while you feel something in its chilly grip.

Gert Strydom

A Glance Over Bruges

"'n Klok werp zilver uit een toren" - Paul van Ostaijen
"(A bell throws silver from a tower) " - Paul van Ostaijen

In the moats of Bruges the bells ring
when lighted up church-towers do shine in the distance through the fog,

while a multitude of children skip, hop, jump and run
and around us the squares, the plaza and canals are open,

the ancient beauty brings rapture,
where with troubadours you sing love songs,

above us in the darkness stars do shine blue-white
where they are speckled in the heaven above us,

the black water gleam with all kinds of lights,
when from of the boat we go ashore.

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Gert Strydom

A Glimpse Of God

It's twilight and there is such serenity, Lord
where I sit at a pond and the water
doesn't even ripple out,

the eastern sky is still more yellow than orange,
has a soft warm embrace
and I hardly move scared that my presence here

will disturb or destroy the silence
will be blasphemy to your presence
that is still lingering

and the reflection of the rising sun
is a large orange ball on the glittering pool
and the sheer beauty with the wild aloes,

protea flowering trees remind me
of how Eden must have been
and in the slight wind that is now blowing

leaves barely tremble
and this place, this world you are drawing me into
has no threat, no pain or terror

just the grace and splendour of your everlasting love
and the cobalt sky has purity to it, freshness
that is overwhelming.

[Reference: Glimpse of God by Tatamkhulu Afrika.]

Gert Strydom

A Good Old Braai

Maybe it's a cultural thing,
but I have not seen people
having a braai like South Africans do.

I have seen Americans
holding a barbeque
and in a sacrilegious way frying
burger patties on a fire
while sniffing up the smoke
and with flames
while they do think
that it is really something.

At a real braai every man is the king
of his braai, where he chooses
the wood or charcoal,
sets it up and alight
and decides
what comes on the roasting grill
and at what heat
the coals are right
and when to fry
what he wants to.

Some people fry marinated steaks,
while others butter them
before turning them to roast

Beer, cider or cool drink
is the social thing
and while the steak, chops
and sausages sizzle
men talk in a group,
do enjoy the experience
and the great smell
of really good and tasty food.

Gert Strydom

A Grain Of Sand (Crystalline)

In the omnipotent Lord's hand
this big earth is just a grain of sand

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

A Grave Situation

When I walked away from the Marders Hotel
the world seemed to be stumbling towards me
and I couldn't tell the time,
the air was fresh and cold
and as if my feet were totally free from my body,

the traffic lights
and cars were drifting out of the night
and I gripped on a lamppost to get hold of myself,
waved a taxi down that came along
and the driver was short like a dwarf or an elf

and I paid him for a trip to get home,
but he took me to hell and gone,
it felt as if we were going to Rome
and somewhere along the way

we stopped and he went for a wee
and he told me to wait,
disappeared through a iron gate
and after a time I got out to see,

but though that probably he was far away
and though that I heard a distant scream
struggling right through a cemetery
thinking that everything is just a strange dream

but I did not take closer scrutiny
at what was in front of me
and slipped and fell into a open hole
with a loud thud with my face in the mud

and immediately I was sober,
seeing someone moving towards me,
slipping and falling on some wet clods
I said: "damned, Lord God,
who the hell is this? "

The strange little man gave a short hiss,

trying to gauge the situation
with eyes huge as saucers
in a fearful tone said:

"Satan, leave my body alone"
and without any goodbyes
with a big leap he was gone
and in that grave, I was the only one.

Gert Strydom

A Great Master Poet Wrote

A great master poet told
how nature interceded
and interrupted a architect's design
and made it's own adjustments in time

but that the master designing artist's eye,
his mind, comprehended
the difference and from it found
a brilliant answer to where
the problems were

and yet a man of the book
took it upon himself
to declare the designers work
as a copy of strokes
made by the hand of God
which lead to the ruination
of that master architect.

Now if we follow this argument
every poem, even every thought,
every painting
about nature's splendour
or even the beauty of the human being
or whatever,
you could connect to God or His creation,
even when we sing words, paint pictures
and create art
it does not belong to the author
but to the Lord God and his church.

l'Envoi
If you take the artist away
from designs, verses, paintings, music
(from whatever art)
it will not be there
and it will not exist,

which leaves me to conclude

that some men of the holy book
do claim in the name of the divine
that which does not belong to them
or their church.

Gert Strydom

A Group Of Honourable Men (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Their prayers were like an ominous spell
before those pastors send my career to hell,
that I could not work under any authority
to other employers they did constantly tell,

even that I have got a problem with women,
as if to employ me would be a huge omen,
that I could not keep my hands off them
and they were a group of honourable men

where at work I did not have a relationship
and with me so utter holy they did worship
while they were deceitful in many ways,
affirmative action was rife for white citizenship,

still as the brother of the devil they see me
and now they are in great fear of my poetry.

Gert Strydom

A Hadedda -Ibis Did Cause Amok Outside

A Hadedda-ibis
did cause amok outside in the garden,
did suddenly flap its bronze brown wings
and touched
by the noise you did turn around,
without a word
did draw me deep into your slender arms
and did suddenly cover my face with kisses.

Gert Strydom

A Heart A Heart Full Of Love

(for Annelize, in answer to C. M. van den Heever)

A heart full of love does beat within me
and my feelings to you I must confess:
that I find an anchoring place in your body, spirit and soul

you do bring to me constantly happiness and a smile
and all my pain and sorrow is taken away,
sometimes eternally or just for a short while

where decades do pass
and you and I do remain after destiny's impact
where I cannot really understand your wonderful love.

[Reference: "Gewonde hart" (Wounded heart) by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

A Heartland Verse For My Darling (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Theunis Engelbrecht)

Out of love I will build you a house of blue-rock
in the grassy plains of the valleys of my heart,
seal it with faith and blood against sorrow
that like a lizard you can slide in and out.
I will set you free as a klipspringer from the snare of a native
and give shelter against the golden sun,
always like a shadow with you
and each tear and heartache I will understand.
I will find for you a lying place in the soft grass,
make a swing from a car's tyre under the huge oak-tree,
find every flower and sweet that leaves you speechless,
walk with you to the places where you have been,
to all of the places of which you do still dream about
as it is with loving that I come into your life.

[Reference:"heimat-vers vir my lovely" (A verse of my place of origin for my lovely)by Theunis Engelbrecht.]

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Gert Strydom

A Hippo At Dawn

The cracking branches as it rushed in
had a shocking kind of thunder to them
and where it entered the swollen river
I heard the rushing water splashing

and at that breaking of day
the scene was something primitive
as if from the very beginning of mankind
while that huge animal lingered with gaping jaws,

jaws that could open wide enough
to snap the small rowing boat in two
in which I was crossing the stream

while like in a kind of dream
everything was happening very slowly
before suddenly the water boiled
as in great might it turned away,

and the water swallowed it.

Gert Strydom

A Hippopotamus At Sunrise

Big like a three tonne amphibian truck
unstoppable as if demon bred she shakes her head
while her seven month pregnancy is near to its end.
With the sun rising she rises from the river to shake off the muck,
follows her old track past a crocodile that is rotting and dead.
Small bushes and trees, which give her, cover and do away from her bend
and to notice her with her weighty black-grey sheen glistening we are in luck
while she stops, do wave her tail and with it do her dung spread,
where we are from her somewhat up wind and out of sight a little ahead.
A kudu almost do notice us stops grazing along with a few reedbuck
where for a moment magnificent she stands still as if her power is spend,
before onward that great hippopotamus cow do tread
but she is deadly and vicious as a killer and we are stuck.
That there is no danger to her being near we can pretend
while we are between her and crocodile invested waters with bullets of lead
and at the river and around us life goes on as we notice a passing wild-duck
but to stay standing right were we are the tracker do recommend
and while waiting in anticipation of anything very little is said.

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Gert Strydom

A Horseman At Night

In the darkness without any clear moon
I suddenly hear the gallop, the thunder
of horse hooves and there far below
I see a black horseman passing by,

With some red sparks coming from the quartz rocks
as if it comes straight from revelation
or an ancient war, I am astounded,
struggle with some fear to go on my way,

maybe it is a wanderer from death
but with him I have nothing in common,
I see the rider hang over to me
and my need suddenly becomes great

but when the moon appears unexpected
there is nothing at the troubled old brook.

Gert Strydom

A Host Of People Came South

According to tradition
at the beginning
of the seventeenth century
the tribes of Zulu, Xhosa,
Swazi and Pondo people
who have a related language
and similar culture
and now live in Southern Africa,

migrated from the north
from a legendary place
they call eMbo
somewhere at the great lakes
in central Africa.

As part of a large group
under command of chief Dlamini
the vanguard under chief Nguni
went ahead and discovered
the rivers and hills of Zululand
splitting away from the host
where they killed the local Bushmen hunters
and a metal working offshoot
of the Karimba tribe
and to them these other people
is nothing more than phantoms
spooking in the cliffs,
the caves and in the reeds
near to the river.

Then the followers of Nguni
divided up into different clans
search for the best valley to settle.

One of these people
was a man named Malandela
and they settled near to a river
that they called the forceful one,
building beehive huts

and on Mandela's death
his two sons divided
the followers and possessions
between the two of them.

The younger son was named Zulu
which means heaven
and he went with his mother
and followers
to find a place of his own
near a basin in hills
at the Mkhumbane river
and his people planted
a euphorbia tree over his grave
and from then on referred to it
as the place of the great chief
and all the earlier chiefs
except Shaka are buried
in that valley.

Believing that their spirits
and that of Shaka haunts this place
the Zulu army before battle
went to this valley
to pray at ancestral graves
and thundering out the salute:
"Because of us, war."

Gert Strydom

A Humble Prayer To God (Sonnet)

(in answer to Charl-Pierre Naudé)

You do certainly sometimes use pain
to guide and teach man at times
and it's something that a human being cannot escape
but Your heart is full of love, mercy and it's sincere.
On this rebel earth You did experience pain Yourself,
but it did not come with Your perfect creation
and before Your great work at times I am astonished and blind,
do know that pain will come more and more with old age,
also that it's a thing from sin that brings heartache,
that the sirocco of faith through You always brings deliverance,
that like any other father You do jump into the fire
where You are constantly look out for the welfare of Your children
and on this earth as the great doctor You did stop pain and suffering
where I am kneeling here humbly and only yearn for Your silent closeness.

[Reference: "Charl-Pierre bid tot God" (Charl-Pierre prays to God) by
Charl-Pierre Naudé.]

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Gert Strydom

A Hunting Expedition

Far off in the bush veldt near to Marken,
where the red sand lies like sea sand,
a young hunter on a day
takes a old.303 rifle with open sights

and walks following a tracker,
that they call a guide,
past green thorn trees
with long white camel-thorns

to where a impala
is standing against a hillock
and he aims for a headshot
and I say to him: "shoot for the shoulder-blade"

but he doesn't listen
and when the shot resounds
the antelope lowers its head
and the bullet whistles away from a rock plate

with the antelope
running away in a red brown stripe
disappearing into the bushes
and the bush veldt sun
burns without mercy down on us.

Gert Strydom

A Husband's Love Song

My darling is happy to be with me
while she waits for a cup of tea
and in moments of silence we do enjoy
our togetherness as if it is made to be
while in honesty we chat without a ploy

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

There is a chilly nip in the air
and the back door's light falls on your blonde hair
when to the Renault Scenic together we walk
and you do smile as without a care
while of the things at your work we do talk

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

In the east the December summer sun is setting
the dogs yelp their goodbyes through the wire netting
and here and there is a cloud in the sky
while all of the day's troubles we are forgetting,
the canvas colours of the heaven is magic to the eye

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

You look lovely in your white evening dress,
smile more beautiful when I do my love to you profess
and looking at your burnished body brings me joy
as you are lovely and like a goddess totally matchless,
in your presence tonight I feel like a teenage boy

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

We do drive to the restaurant in Benoni in the early evening haze
while the backlights of the other cars do blaze
and just being with you is great fun
although the back-roads is to me like a maze,
we do suddenly arrive and people are jolly as if a party has begun

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

Above us hangs the bright blue-white evening star
while I give you a kiss in the intimate space of the car
and the car park is full of BMW's, Audi's' and four-by-fours,
while the restaurant looks inviting from afar
with some people laughing at the entrance doors

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

A friendly waiter does welcome us in,
and we talk of our friendship's origin
while I am scared of the ominous dancing that lies ahead
and a adventure with you on this night do begin
but that I do not know how to dance has never being said

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

The night runs perfectly like a fantasy dream
where the silences tell more than they seem
while like it always does love does find a way
and with a kind of happiness you do beam
where we do visit till early into the next day

and I know that my darling is happy to be with me.

[Poet's note: It is high summer in December in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth.]

Gert Strydom

A Kind Of Freedom

Here I want to thank the black government
for their type of freedom that circles out wider,
from a job I have been affirmed and are free from it
and it is not very long
that I am again aware about this freedom thing,
when black robbers drive around in both my cars.

Before I can wipe out my eyes the police visit me
while they wander around in my house
without a invitation, or even a warrant
where they set me free of my pellet guns,
my stainless steel Colt.45 signature model pistol
and ELG shotgun without laying a charge.

I have to deal with freedom again
when black people cheer in the street
about the soccer world cup,
jumping up and down everywhere around me
while they sing, they assure me of freedom,
but my cellular phone disappears
and the felon that has it is also very happy.

At home a stranger rushes upon me
while he points a firearm at my head
to rob me from my possessions,
to set me free from my property
and probably spits AIDS into my face,
says he was promised a land of milk and honey

and if you think that here I am only joking
you do not get the real meaning of this poem,
as these things did really happen
and still I am facing this kind of freedom.

Gert Strydom

A Kind Of Meeting

In my depths your dark eyes are searching
and you soft perfume goes to my head,
the moment lingers while some women chat,
your hand is in mine somewhat loving
and my other hand holds a crumpled handkerchief,
you smile suddenly somewhat caring
and we are like two characters in a movie scene.

Gert Strydom

A Kiss (English Sonnet)

(after George Wither)

Closed are you sunny radiant lovely eyes
where next to me you lie and I look in awe,
where to your passionate hot lips access lies
while slowly your sweet breath you do draw

and I wonder if a single kiss I could steal
where it would bring an own kind of bliss
and that nothing would that theft reveal
where it's not something you would miss

and suddenly open by themselves your eyes glow
a soft hand reaches to my cheek and touches me
you look at me as of my intentions you do know
where in their depths I do happiness and love see

and before I know it your lips are burning on mine
they taste of the summer sun, happiness and wine.

[Reference: "A stolen kiss" by George Wither.]

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Gert Strydom

A Lament For Jeanie

Yesterday afternoon she still barked at the children
running up and down next to the hedge

where outside in the street they passed
with their noisy go-cart, pushing bike and three bicycles,
but this morning she is silent for the postman
and now she lies rigid.

What do you say about the most faithful dog
that waits on you to die of tick fever and where do you grope

to find words when your prayers do not go higher than the ceiling,
when you feel that people and God have forsaken you,
but to say: lie soft my dear friend,
you are much better off than in this world's bleak and cold existence.

There are theological people that believe that dogs do not have a hereafter
but in my eyes you deserve your dog fun in a much better world.

Gert Strydom

A Lamia In The Limpopo (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after John Keats)

I

Long ago in far aeons when some fairy broods
came to dwell in the unspoilt green woods,
in the time of King Arthur's golden diadem,
when Excalibur glittered with its sole gem,
while farmers and merchants traded goods
unexpectedly Hermes he did again in love fell
with a nymph as if under a kind of spell,
again Hermes was in one of his foul moods,
came to dwell in the unspoilt green woods,

II

but like before to him she remained unseen,
for some reason to help her he was keen,
while again he heard a sorrowful wailing,
where something did in great sadness sing,
it felt to him as if she had never on the earth been,
again he found an enchanted spirit being
crying with human eyes in a snake head blue-green,
with silver moon shapes and peacock in-between,
for some reason to help her he was keen.

III

Sibilant the Lamia promised the nymph to find,
if Hermes gave her the ability to be a woman again,
was utterly lonely as the very last of her kind,
on his caduceus Hermes swore but a snake she did remain
but she gave sight and did put the hiding place in his mind,
and only if kissed on the mouth she would a lovely lady be,
the men she tried to enchant were many but a snake they did see
and in the Limpopo River softhearted she did unwind,
was utterly lonely as the very last of her kind.

IV

In the modern age she was afraid of being a sightseeing thing
as through time the words of men did painfully sting,
she came to a far off waterhole where she avoided every human

as in her mind she had become something hideous and inhuman,
was afraid of philosophers and scientists and their measuring
and yet of the heartache of another person she could tell
where a farmer and hunter did himself from humans expel
and lonely and very solitary he was living,
as through time the words of men did painfully sting.

V

At a time with his 30-08-calibre rifle he shot a crocodile
that sneaked up on him where he was thought stuck for a while
and as her only serious enemy this act did set her from all worry free.
Daily at the waterhole to his deceased wife he spoke and she knew his story,
even followed him unseen home for more than a mile,
realised that as a man he was decent and very nice
and really tempted she became and wanted him to entice
but one evening he saw a massive snake that wanted him to beguile,
that sneaked up on him where he was thought stuck for a while.

VI

It looked at him with human understanding soulful eyes,
it seemed as if in those eyes gentleness and a great sorrow lies.
"I must be either drunk or totally out of my mind."
Sibilant but clear she said:"no you are confused and very kind."
"You must be a demonic thing, surely today one of us dies? "
"I am not a demon nor a child eating blood sucking thing,
I am an enchanted spirit and if you kiss me a living human being."
He frowned:"the native water-snake that with great thunder flies."
It seemed as if in those eyes gentleness and a great sorrow lies.

VII

"My granddad talked about it and nobody after that thought he was fit
and yet here you are and kiss you I will if only for the thrill of it."
"Are you truly serious, " sibilant she did joyful in amazement hiss.
Another man might have reacted in another way but he did her kiss
and then stood totally motionless without words as if by lightning hit.
Transfigured he saw his wife who was lost in the river as a human
and if it really was her no one knows but he was a very happy man.
His words remained and with a glint in her eye she repeated them bit-by-bit:
"and yet here you are and kiss you I will if only for the thrill of it."

[References:"Lamia" by John Keats."Oor die seek'gat"
(Over the hippopotamus-hole)by C. M. van den Heever. The short story:"A

Lamia in the Cévennes" by A. S. Byatt.]

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Gert Strydom

A Lane In England

In autumn I walked in England
in a lane full of trees
where leaves lay auburn
on a road wet from rain.

Barren, stripped oak trees
were between other green ones
and it was as if I was going
right through a tunnel
with here and there trees
of which the leaves were more yellow.

In the distance the road bended to the right
where a bush fence
cut neatly square
and telephone poles
ran along the edge of the road

and the green moss banks
were covered with auburn leaves
at places
and on the other side
of the road
a shrub stretched out green and long
like a sausage
that was lying next to the road

and I would love
to have a lane like that
next to my driveway.

Gert Strydom

A Large Golden Moon

(in answer to Riana maiden name Marais (Strydom) Kruger)

A large golden moon hangs
above the row of jacarandas in the avenue
and when I see it, it is so near
that it feels as if I can get pieces of it

and now your promises comes back to me
that you will stay at my side
even though weeks, months and years go by
but without you the moon keeps turning in its orbit
and promises of love that last eternally
I can now forever forget

just as the heat of your heart and body
as for me nothing is written in the planets
and I can find no promises in the stars
when the branches of the trees move around in the wind
and it seems as if the stars are jumping
but still I do wonder what the new day is gong to bring

and even if I could discover the most heartfelt secrets of the moon
it would not bring you closer to me.

Reference:

"Full moon by Riana maiden name Marais (Strydom) Kruger" (My own translation)

"A Golden and silver moon
.hangs on a karee branch in my avenue.
When I look through the window
I can almost reach to it.
I can almost touch it,
almost, almost catch it."

"Long ago you did promise

that you would bring me
the sun and moon and stars.
What is written in the planets tonight...
longing for the heat of your body? "

"Chorus"

"If I could attach the moon
to a chain around my neck
then forever I would be able to discover its secrets,
would be able to hold it against my heart
and I would be able to fold my empty arms around it."

"Like lost promises
the silver rays fall into a water puddle.
The man in the moon is only a dream
that sometimes fills my days and nights of grief."

"Just a dream, just a dream."

Gert Strydom

A Last Day Perarca Speaking (Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

When we came with each other face to face
you were past all other expectations to me,
as no other lovely woman had your sincerity,
I was speechless with your beauty and grace

but then destiny tried our lives to erase
in a way that we did not want life to be
but through this our love still stayed free,
no tears could your love disguise or deface.

Before all of this I saw you in my own Avignon,
like Petrarca thought your presence into my life
and I can write poems like him but do remain true,
I pray you into my days while you are gone,
where your eyes roam in my mind, my wife,
and to others unusual, in my heart it's only you.

[Reference:"N.a.v: " Latter-day Petrarca" aan die woord"
(After a "latter-day Petrarca" talking" by Joan Hambridge.)]

Gert Strydom

A Letter Arrives By Registered Mail

A letter arrives by registered mail
and the getting of it costs nothing,
but the contents
leaves the mark of Cain.

From sixteen all boys are computerized
and when you leave school you are not spared
and get a call up instruction by telegram
and your way is marked off, determined and ready.

Like handcuffs locking for a time
the government has already decided for you
to get training and go to war
and from it no one escapes.

You are indoctrinated
and even chaplains tries to convert you to war
and tell you that you are the rod of God
rather than teaching you about the Lord.

The country is threatened by a total onslaught
with destruction from waiting communists
and you are taught to shoot and kill
and are chased around day and night.

Till you stand at the moment of truth
and enemies are people just like you
at the edge of death
and their lives are forever past

and everybody dies
and are ripped to pieces
young and old and people of another colour
and nobody escapes the destruction

and blood stays red and wet
en splashed into your soul
and the mark of Cain never comes off
and nothing can remove it.

Gert Strydom

A Level Headed Gaze

I come from another place and time
and did walk as a child bared feet in the marsh
I am from a place that is different from this city
where here people and things are trampled upon
and respect, integrity and duty has disappeared
where tarred roads reach to the horizon,
where cyber lights shines like small suns at night
where dust, sooth and ash cover all things.
Here people, animals and almost every thing
has a price that is set for them
while they are involved in a tinned existence
while crowds continually jostle people out of the way
and nothing remains sacred, not bodies or even beliefs
while lives are wasted and nothing brings salvation.

Gert Strydom

A Lighter Shade Of Pale

She don't like sunshine
burning on her skin
and wear sunglasses
to hide from the glare,
as if she's lost in
her own world.

She don't like red wine
and likes something sweeter
sparkling like champagne
to glide down her lips
and her teeth glitter white
when she smiles.

I met her on a Sunday
and before Friday
I was lost in love with her
and caught a glimpse of her heart
reflecting her soul
in golden eyes sparkling
in a face
a lighter shade of pale.

She loves looking at her garden
where purple blue morning glories
creep towering into the sky
and watch birds fly
from branch to branch
in the big pepper tree.

Like a child finding a rare coin
and clutching it in wonder
to his breast
I was blessed
but suddenly it's gone,
I have lost her
and do not know how
to find her again
while life rages on

and her face is
fainting away like a dream
in a lighter shade of pale.

Gert Strydom

A Litany (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Sir Philip Sidney)

Once huge church bells did ring at our wedding,
but love is gone,
as a plague its infected, by your whims has spread;
another one
finds grace in your eyes, now knows your deep flesh,
while like some stone
what was ours is petrified into dust,
good almighty Lord God, deliver us.

What once was high and holy is now dead,
only pain remain
while you acted very unscrupulous,
could not explain
your own female infatuating fancy
and then to gain
you breached our holy, pure, solemn trust
good almighty Lord God, deliver us.

No dirge, lament or even a prayer
can change your mind,
even if I at times do in pain weep
you stay unkind,
rushes away, with your eyes set and does
your lover find;
from a women that acts to true love thus,
good almighty Lord God, deliver us.

[Reference: "A Litany" by Sir Philip Sidney.]

Gert Strydom

A Lonely Young Boy Herds Some Cattle

In the open veldt
a lonely young six year old boy
herds some cattle
and follows them as they are grazing
following shoots of green grass
that appeared after the early summer rains

and he knows the names of every one
and with a knobbed walking-stick in his hands
he guides them while looking out
for leopards that are sneaking around
in the nearby hillocks
and time and again
his eyes is on the ground
finding tracks.

Out of an open blue sky
suddenly a big shade covers him
and before he realizes
that danger is upon him
a huge bird falls as quickly
as a bolt of lightning from the sky
with claws stretching out.

Gert Strydom

A Long Time Ago Somebody Moved Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

A long time ago somebody moved me like you in these days
and where autumn now suddenly is bringing the winter's iciness
there is more real discontent than satisfaction
but still I hear the birds singing their songs of praise outside.
Still undeniable is the love between you and me,
even when the season is bringing winter early,
there is a kind of pleasure that constantly remains in the heart,
as if new life lies around the corner ready to jump out,
as if again a spring is waiting within months
and the emptiness of the world and of the disposition,
is something that changes again into sunshine and days of laughter
even when rain pours down in the coldest winter,
days will come that you and I will smell the sun in the grass,
even where now turbidly it dives away behind clouds.

[Poet's note: In the Southern Hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

A Love Struck Priest And A Nun (Sonnet)

If I do declare my love to you
every saint would point the finger at us,
a whole church denomination would rise up against us,
would damn us and spare us no words.
If I do declare my love to you
high holy ones would point their fingers upward,
would rage their justified anger at us
would look at us like two people that had gone mad.
If I do declare my love to you
nobody but you and I would understand
that love comes from the heart of God,
nobody would notice how holy and noble everything between us is,
that nothing can remove the meaning, the depth of these feelings:
that love is limitless.

Gert Strydom

A Love-Song For My Wife

(after Ted Hughes)

In love they were the two of them
while it felt as if the past had formed them for each other,
as if the future was meant for them as a single unit called a couple.
Only for her kisses and her loving did he hunger
while she sucked, licked and bit at him.
She wanted to have him everywhere inside of her
as if he filled her to her throat,
as if they would be safe in each other,
as if they were meant to be together forever
and their cries of ecstasy went through the curtains,
went out to the wider world.

Her glance wanted to capture everything,
everything of his physical being,
his emotional makeup,
even his thoughts she wanted to keep safe
while her looks explored every bit of his body,
even his hands, wrists, fingers and nails.
His embraces pushed the air from her
almost as if she was lost from life
but nothing could drag them both away
from their intimate moments
and the only future was with them both in it
constantly together with each other
and it seemed as if no other kind of future could exist.
He wanted her in each and every moment
as if nothing else in life did matter
and even in the silences
when from reality he was gone
in dreams into a sea of nothingness
he still wanted her into that which do come after life
whatever it is.

Her embraces did imprint her on him
and sometimes they did cling together after making love
as if much more than their skins were stuck to each other
and she wanted him to be blood of her blood,

the breath in her lungs.
Her glances contained a world that was hidden,
a place where fairy tales did come true,
it was a place filled with happiness
where everything was perfect,
far away from the reality of sickness, hatred and death.
His smiles were spider webs that caught hold of her
and kept her constantly
to the time when he needed her company.
Her words were ambushes
from where she longed to occupy him,
his laughter were ringing in her ears
like the sweet songs of dozens of redbreasts
that was dancing in the rain.
His looks were filled with admiration
as if there was more of her to discover
and no secrets they kept from each other.
Her whispers constantly told him
all of her inner thoughts
while her kisses were sweeter than honey
and something of which he could not get enough of.
His caresses did cling to her
as if he was clinging on to life.
Their sexual encounters encompassed every way
that a man and woman had experience with each other
since the beginning of time
and their cries were so loud
that it almost lifted the roof,
did pass to the wider world
where the birds stopped twittering
and were enchanted while listening.
His promises he did constantly keep
and true to his word he was
while her promises did drive him wild
and they did bind with each other in bodies,
in experiences as if they had been knotted together
while both did realize that romance and attraction was great,
but greater still was the decision to love and to do so constantly
whatever may come along with destiny
and secrets they had with each other,
hidden almost magic things
that was special only to them

while with ecstasy their screams did penetrate everything.

At times intertwined and sometimes spooned,
at times just next to each other they slept
and at times dreamt of entirely the same things
as if love had made them to be only one.

[Reference: "Lovesong" by Ted Hughes.]

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Gert Strydom

A Loving Dog Is A Strange Thing

A loving dog is a strange thing,
an animal that is willing to protect,
to give its own life if the need arises,
a self-aware living being
that understands in a peculiar way
that has the ability to ask if need be
for what it deems necessary

with the ability to love in spite of self,
to obey even until death,
to play and be merry,
to rejoice at the arrival
of its human companion
and to understand
beyond what one expects from animals.

Today again the angel of death passed me
but her fangs were striking
into my beloved dog,
which she touched deadly
and even the injections of the vet
could not get that lively animal
back to life again.

With eyes moving to and thro
she tried to cling to life
as if she could not let go of me
and that last moments displayed
how deep her love went
and perhaps my pain of loosing her
will never be spent.

Gert Strydom

A Man In The City

In the distance a church bell rings off the midnight hour
and where the night tries to fold her cloak around the city
I am lonely driving a motorcar

and streetlights, neon signs and traffic lights light up the roadway
but there is no darkness and everywhere around me its twilight grey,
a high apartment building is on fire

with fire-engines with flashing red lights that are rush to it
while a crowd of onlookers are watching the scene with interest
and here and there a couple that lives in it stands astonished

when in the distance the chimneys at a petroleum structure flame blue-white,
and I see the bright white fire of melting ovens
when I am tired and far pass fatigued

while I am busy driving back to my home in one of the suburbs
and now do not trust the tilting landscape, lights that rush pass
and nowhere there is a place of rest to be found.

Gert Strydom

A Man Of Integrity

I wish to be
a man of integrity
and no other type of man can I be.

Duty is an old and somewhat cold companion
that changes with society
and what once was high en right
might be a shadow on tomorrow.

Training takes control
and stills the shaking hand in battle
and persevere in what some
see as great bravery.

I wish no guilt to follow in my steps
and I am only honour bound
and yet the cruelty of war
still falls over me.

Gert Strydom

A Man With A Torch

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

In the bright light a startled springhare does freeze
with its glowing big eyes somewhat touching

as if it does expect a rifle to suddenly shoot
and it's only the hare and the man in the universe

but the man moves on and walks past
catches a klipspringer in the bright burning spot of the light

which does freeze vulnerable as if it has been delivered into his might
where it is eating next to a small calf in the darkness

and a guinea fowl and her chick are also caught in the light
where she spreads her wings like a chicken over them and everything is scared

and when the man walks along just in time the light does catch a banded-cobra
that pulls its head back and hissing does tell of death

but the man does avoid the snake
and even he is now a bit startled and scared

as the road is still far where it stretches through the hillocks
and above him the beacons of God does gleam where they do cover the sky.

[Reference: "Man met flits" (Man with torch) by D. J. Opperman.
Poet's note: a klipspringer is a very small kind of antelope.]

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Gert Strydom

A Meerkat In The Lounge

With great speed a thing runs
into the lounge
and braids past a bookcase
with aunt Leen behind it.

"Your cats are too useless
to catch the rats, "
she says without breath

but they are chased out,
having to stay outside
and one sleeps at night
in a room at the garage
and the other I smuggle
into my study, my bedroom
and of this fact till now
she luckily bares no knowledge.

I go and fetch the black and white housecat Felix
from the outside,
who is a great mouse hunter,
but he isn't interested and walks out
and this makes her angrier still
and I find it very amusing
and start to wonder
what kind of beast we are dealing with
that is now hiding behind the bookcase?

I get the striped ginger Persian cat Musso,
who sometimes brings big grasshoppers, mice,
rats, lizards, birds and even snakes
as tokens of love
to get a turn
and he sniffs around at the bookcase
but although he is curious
he doesn't want to fetch the thing
that is hiding there

and I carry him to one side

to stop it or to catch it
when it passes
and stir behind the bookcase with a broom
to drive it out.

A big adult meerkat
runs out with speed
and the cat goes for it
and jumps with arched back
and swishing paws

but like a big acrobat
that meerkat leaps right over the cat
and runs to the back of the organ
and the cat is angry,
but also anxious
as this thing
is dangerous for him
and he doesn't regard it as prey.

When my aunt goes to another room
I get the two dogs, sneaking them in
as I am afraid
that the meerkat has rabies
and maybe it will bite me
and I move some of the furniture
for them to chase it out
or to be able to corner it somewhere,
if it doesn't want to leave.

Jeanie the brown Labrador growls
and regards this as a great game
and Sasja
the smaller golden Cocker Spaniel
tries to get her turn
and they chase it to and fro

and Sasja bites at it and it bites back
and I have to protect the furniture from them
and fortunately the three of them run out
and the dogs want to mangle it
but the meerkat disappears into a hole

and the dogs growls and howls
and comes back later to report with waving tails

and at that moment
my aunt returns to the lounge
with her tongue hitting like a whip
stating that dogs
are not allowed in the house
and asking if I am too incapacitated to catch a rat?

I know that she is half deaf
and wonder
if she is turning blind as well
as her rat, is certainly a meerkat
and nothing else
and now she even calls it a skunk.

[Reference: Meerkat is a small animal similar to a suricate.]

Gert Strydom

A Messenger From Above

The rain came and came again
like only in the Cape,
in deep winter it can be.

The pain came and came again
like only in a dying thing
spreading throughout the body
and drenching all of it.

Yet it was a thing of the heart
and far apart
from illness, or accident
or broken body.

That desolate night
the sky and sea
and earth was blacked out dark
and a chill rose as if from the soul.

The metal of the revolver
gleamed ominous in the dark
and the man took a deep breath
before cocking back the hammer
and pressing the barrel
against his breast.

Somewhere against the clouded
night sky
a lonely gull stretched its wings
against the raging gale
as if a living thing
could out fly
a torment sky and sea
and could be free from it
and all catastrophes.

One lightning bolt reported sharp
and flashed bright
lighting up the night

and it fell and fell
like a messenger from above.

No bird was still in that sky
and as darkness fell
the man wondered why
and his reflections on ending
his own life
was stunted by a dying bird
that wanted to live.

Gert Strydom

A Military Goodbye

Being called up for another military camp
as a citizen force soldier against my will
and this one is in Cape Town,
for eight parades
to say goodbye to president PW Botha,
the man with the hairless head
and while I salute roaring past
in a armoured car
his black hat is against his chest
and I wonder what all the bloodshed has bought
and see numerous Fapla and Cuban enemies lying dead
and thundering through the clouds above me
mirage and cheetah fighter jets fly past
and it's clear that the great crocodile's teeth
have been drawn,
that a pack of backbiting lions is surrounding him
and somehow freedom is dwindling away
and the hand that held the arrows of God
is now trembling in a kind of unclear defeat
and drops blur my vision.

Gert Strydom

A Modern Bible Story

While visiting Voortrekker road
to buy a brand new car
a man lying on the sidewalk catches my eye
and he is stripped naked.
I notice that he is from another race,
his glasses lie next to him, his possessions are missing
and he is barely conscious,
severely wounded, is almost knocked-out cold.
The white car shines where it's waiting,
when the pastor drives past waving,
a elder slows down and accelerates
and there is an odd painful moan
that comes over the man's broken lips
when I call for an ambulance and feel speechless.

Gert Strydom

A Modern Bible Story [2]

When I am walking down Voortrekker road to buy a new car
I come upon an old man lying on the sidewalk
and he has been stripped of all of his possessions,

he groans and can barely say a word
and I do notice that he is from another race.
I come upon an old man lying on the sidewalk,

his glasses have been slapped from his face and his possessions are missing.
The new car is shining where it waits
and I do notice that he is from another race,

the pastor from the local church hoots drives past and is waving at me,
the poor man is barely aware of what is going on in the bad state that he is.
The new car is shining where it waits

but he lays wounded badly and is bleeding and knocked cold.
An elder drives slowly past a wounded man but suddenly speeds up,
the poor man is barely aware of what is going on in the bad state that he is

and humanity forces me to take care of the badly wounded man.
When I am walking down Voortrekker road to buy a new car
an elder drives slowly past a wounded man but suddenly speeds up
and he has been stripped of all of his possessions.

Gert Strydom

A Moment (Couplets)

(after Loftus Marais)

Over the bed light patches splash down as you pass
outside a huge bush of red roses is behind the glass,

your body is naked and the moment is profound
while you are steaming hot from the bath and you turn around

that I can fasten your brassiere and you smile,
there is electricity when I touch you and you seem fragile,

your neck is bended a little bit,
the hairs rise on your back as I do fasten it,

when I lift your hair at the back and do you kiss
there is something strange in a moment like this,

silently for a while you stand still
do a lovely picture against the window fill

and when to the bathroom I follow you
you say: "it's the little things that you do, "

a tear does sparkle in a green-brown eye
and when I ask why you do cry

you say that you are very happy
and the loveliest woman I do see.

[Reference:"Oggend en jou lyf (twee oomblikke) " (Morning and your body (two moments)by Loftus Marais.)]

Gert Strydom

A Moment (Rubliw)

You look
in the mirror,
do wipe some stray hair right
and something is caught in the glance
as if the day depends on your own looks
and your glance moves away to me
in a short small moment
that lingers on
and on.

Gert Strydom

A Moment In Eternity

Outside the streets are filled with light,
doors are closed and locked
when the nightly silence is lingering,
while some people look out through dark windows
we walk with your hand fitting into mine,
silver-white stars are all across the night sky
and we talk about places where we have been,
the old oak tree throws a huge dark spot.
Your lips are suddenly hot, sweet and soft
when my heart beats delightful in my throat,
a dove calls to its mate in the dark night
when in that moment time stops suddenly,
your eyes say that you also love me
and I look into their bright depths.

Gert Strydom

A National Leader

(after A.G. Visser)

After his release from prison the whole country did trust him
when he took the future of a rainbow nation in his hands,
did hold the lives and job opportunities of people in his hands
but now I wonder where everything has gone
while the whole country is falling apart.

[Reference: "’n Volksleier" (A national leader) by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

A Nest Of Wasps

Closing the garage door
a wasp was flying past my head
but strangely it didn't come for me
and for the first time
I saw a nest on the door
where there were plenty more,
some more small red stinging wasps.

At first I thought that the nest
was empty and when I reach for it
six more wasps flew past my head
and I drew my hand back instead.

By careful inspection
I saw many more wasps
sitting at the back of the nest
and these pests
were sure to sting somebody
time and time again,
but why they were avoiding me
I still do not know.

I couldn't leave the nest there
and had to get them all dead
and yet somehow I pitied it
and which I could just instead
let them be.

Gert Strydom

A Never Ending Kind Of Intimate Thing

Your white body lies like a continent
with breasts as hillocks, slender thighs
and the valleys somewhere in between
while tiny shadows fall in the afternoon.

I bury myself with great pleasure in you,
feel the warmth of your blazing volcano,
reach up to the centre core of my existence
and each and every glance in your bright eyes

draws me deeper, draws us still closer together
and the lost of self, where nature flees from me
there is a tender kind of peace at twilight
while we love each other past all feelings.

There is peace in the separation that comes later,
the separation of skin, of thighs of genitalia
but still your gaze were burning into my very soul
and I love you; love every part of your body,

with the smell of love like fresh rain around us
rising from the rose of your tender hot pubis,
with nipples still somewhat hardened aroused
on your soft firm breast that are fragile to touch.

Boundless desire flames again and again,
while your beauty bringing sheer joy,
bringing a kind of very deep tranquillity,
as if the thirst, the yearning for each other

is a never ending kind of intimate thing,
that always exists, with a kind of grace,
that has an infinite kind of ache for fulfilment
a kind of indescribable joy that comes with bliss.

Gert Strydom

A New Spring (In Answer To Ernst Van Heerden)

There is something radically new to this spring
something fresh, matchless, pure, even bright
it continually brings the realization of new life
of unfolding growth, hope and true love

if we continually love each other, will I already
see you glow in early pregnancy
when the Seven Sisters, Orion and the Southern Cross
glow romantically, with candles smouldering to their ends?
And now when you lie warm in my arms
with your body enchanting, I feel your heart beating
the moon gleams golden and magical
every moment is full of passion

It is visible that the earth is different
trees are covered in exuberant new buds
the grass is full of life and green
when butterflies are fluttering, bees are working buzzing
while thunder blazes down blue-white
with the rain pouring pattering, bringing life

the fluttering, flapping of chattering birds
over glorious trees, at flowers that are blooming, at crops
is a glad exaltation where the farmer, the gardener
and every lover of nature
see the splendour of new life
knows that God does answer prayers
brings rain, wind and sunshine at His time

and in the fishpond goldfishes stare
in love at each other
while the mirror image
catches nature full of life

Gert Strydom

A New Year

A new year, a new morning after the night
that rises in my life,
with unknown things waiting,
with people showing their friendship and love

with new hope
and in the mirror the same face,
the sky as always blue and open
when night folds for the day

and in the distance cars are hooting,
church bells are ringing in joy,
people are giving wishes and greeting each other
as if the year points to great, happy things

and everybody is jolly and glad
are feeling exuberant and free.

Gert Strydom

A New Year Prayer

Lord, when the last hour of the year leaves me
then I ask love and mercy from You
and sometimes in this life I am astonished and dumbfounded
but at times left behind by friends and loved ones

and when the last minute of the year disappears
then I want to think back to times where I could find moments of happiness
and when life wants to press me down I stand before you like a child,
while I trust in hope on the new tomorrow's sunshine.

Give me a disposition that forgives and do forget,
help me to stay true to You, to my wife and to my country,
to stand free from self-exaltation and any hypocrisy
and to really know about the depth of love.

Help me to live for more than own enrichment,
to pursue the struggle for everything that is right
and bring on my life's way daily new meaning,
teach me to constantly discover your truths,

to live only to Your will in my humanity
and I beg that you lead on the way,
that You do fill each day with new hope
become a part of my reality

and when the dark days comes suddenly
then I ask that You become the light on my way
and when I do deviate I ask that You bring me back to equilibrium
unto the last days of old age.

[Reference: 'n Kersnaggebied' (A Christmas night prayer) by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

Gert Strydom

A News Editor Do Not Pray For Good Things

as misfortune, terrible things are headline news.
An unusual sudden flood, a tornado that destroys,
people dying gruesome somewhere else
draws readers and more and more newspapers are sold.

Gert Strydom

A News Report About A Young Farmer

On the news on Pretoria-FM
I have heard about a young farmer,
living alone in a separate house,
on his father's farm
who had been attacked

by a group of black robbers,
wielding AK-47 machineguns
and knives, they stabbed him
multiple times in the back.

in his face and neck
and after they had taken everything
that they though have got value
he asked them to spare his life.

When they told him to undress
he realised that they
were going to kill him,
jumped right through the window
in the lounge, shattering glass,

cutting himself and they followed him
through the thorn bushes,
but he managed to escape
as it was at night

and he went into the shelter of his father's barn
which set the alarm off,
where his father found him barely alive
and everything that was left in his house,
was broken and smashed to pieces.

[Reference: Pretoria-FM is a Afrikaans radio station broadcasting from Pretoria.]

Gert Strydom

A Nightmare Or What? (Sonnetina Tre)

Sometimes dreams are awful and not nice
and beings that are not human or of man
linger wherever they can
and they bring fear when they do not entice
and fill our dreams with the most awful things
as they are present doing their evil throughout the night
and in the darkness I had struggled up to the daylight
saw a sinister being with black folded wings
while time and again I bid the devil back to hell
as I was frightened in my body's fragile shell

Gert Strydom

A Note From God (Italian Sonnet)

I am a possible friend but you do not know me
at the sight of me you do turn away.

I am the one that do smile at you today
while you do seem extremely happy.

I am the type of leader that you do want to be
but time and again my orders you do not obey.

I am the One to whom you do not pray
where yet you do give to others in great charity.

I am the true council that will try and help you,
maybe the only person in your life that does really care,
the one that will not ever on you leave the blame
and my friendship, my selfless love is always true,
of everything in your life I am constantly aware
and today and yesterday and forever I am the same.

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Gert Strydom

A Note To You About My Winter Garden (Couplets)

There is so much I want to you to say
on this cloudy rainy April autumn-day

where the sun seems very temperate,
while I have not heard from you of late.

Through the clouds dimly the sun still shines
while the last vegetables of summer declines

but my love for you will never be dimmed,
even if I let everything grow untrimmed:

the carrots, turnips and onions are doing well
as if they are under a kind of growing spell,

the seedlings of the peas do lovely grow
while being locked down time passes so slow,

the tomatoes and green peppers still bear fruit,
as the radishes and cauliflower are growing good

and even spinach is growing in the shade.
I know this virus will at a time fade

and in this garden there is tranquillity
but I long with you so much to be.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite
to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

A Paean For My Country

Let freedom and victory get a own song
from the fields of blood and gore
while perished the men that were young
lie in silence forevermore.

At last, at last the darkness has passed
and over us, our country a new day breaks
that is in its glory unsurpassed
while as if coming from death we are awake.

Away our doubts and fears are swept
while for too many years
sacrifices we have made, our widows have wept
tears of pain and their tears

are now of sheer happiness
a feeling without any kind of pain,
as if a kind of holiness
descends upon the land to remain

while every man and women is free
and all hostility is swept away
as men and women live in fraternity,
are kin and neighbours at the brake of day.

I'Envoi

This paean might only still be just a dream
where at times still some blood do spill
and I wish people from hatred to redeem;
that no one wishes another ill.

Awake, arise and wait my fatherland
for true changes to come to every heart and mind,
for God to stretch out His delivering hand
and us to stop to be severally blind.

Gert Strydom

A Painting

The same face is painted
on all the canvases,
and whether she looks up, down
or straight at you
loveliness is mirrored

in her eyes, her face
and slender body
and she could be anyone
as she gives a own meaning
to everyone that watches her

and although similarity
to a real person
is portrayed in every way,
she remains
reflected as the painter
viewed her.

Gert Strydom

A Painting In A Shop

I stopped to look at
a painting in a shop

and in a chair a fat lady sat
and there were several interesting things
to look at,

birds with flapping wings on swings,
anything that people would peddle
and there were several interesting things

and whatever I looked at the woman would meddle
talking about
anything that people would peddle

and I walked right out
without even seeing the painting,

and I had stopped
without even seeing the painting,
a painting in a shop.

Gert Strydom

A Parrot Called Chicken

He sits featherless on his stick
and his head turns
to one side and then the other
while he looks at the bright light
that gives heat
stopping the darkness.

Naked of every feather
from the one or other
incurable disease,
which harmed his body
and left him
like a stripped fledgling,

sometimes he climbs
up and down
swift like a small ape
to pick up rice
and other delicacies

and still he stays caged in
beyond bars
that keeps the world outside
and folding domed over him.

When the dogs bark
he whistles at them
and with time
they ignore him,

but for one
that hops up and down,
turning his head skew
making small crying noises
not able to comprehend
that the bird
is able to talk to him.

He is clever enough

to identify people
by their names
and when you walk past
to greet
until he hears
hello chicken,
or he will say it to himself
or loose his temper
and croak screeching
to get an answer.

Gert Strydom

A Pastor

(after A.G. Visser)

At a time he could preach interesting,
could hold the mind of every person from the pulpit
but now that he is preaching words that have no power
people do wonder about his relationship with God.

[Reference: "’n Predikant" (A pastor) by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

A Perfect Moment

Sometimes you do shake from passion
and your human core is known to me
when I want nothing to violate
a perfect moment.

Gert Strydom

A Perfect Woman (English Sonnet)2

In your green-brown eyes I see a tender light
a glance that lingers just for a single moment,
with your pupils much darker than midnight,
with golden flecks sparkling like an ornament.

Your hair is naturally curly and somewhat fair,
It's as if you are from divine invention drawn
while you act with foresight, respect and care,
do serve, warn, comfort from night till dawn.

Your temperance is placid, unruffled and serene
all of my previous sorrows in you I do loose,
you are more than a biological living machine:
the one whom as a mate in this life I do choose

as we both travel through this world unto death,
you are in my heart, soul and in my last breath.

Gert Strydom

A Person Can Believe (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

A person can believe whatever you want to in a world full of darkness
and miss the Bible's principles of God,
or find that fundamentally it is the utter truth,
you can think that no God or even the devil do exist
and through all of this go on purposeless through life
or even admonish others wherever you come,
where every human in his own being do only know sin,
we can help others to loose the way or lead them to God,
we can live like gods or admit our own humanity,
while violence and murder and robbery devours everything that is beautiful
in the grey-land we can find ourselves between black and white
but only from God we can find salvation
when destiny and Satan do beat down our highest ideals,
daily we can go on a crusade against the darkness.

[Reference:"Bekeringsgeskiedenis" (Conversion history)by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

A Person Can Really Trust On Your Deliverance (Free Verse Sonnet)

In Your word day after day I can read about You,
get a picture of a God that loves selflessly,
about the one that knows everything and do notice all things,
the one who can heal deadly deceases.
You are near to me when I fear my nemesis,
I know love is the essence of Your law,
that at times to my own destruction I do resist You,
You know what the best will be for me.
Other poets do believe that You cannot even understand Yourself,
that You are totally distant and unreachable,
that a person trivially in vain does hold on to faith,
that just destiny controls every single thing
but about Your near presence I bare knowledge,
that a person can really trust on Your deliverance.

Gert Strydom

A Phenomenon

In the moonlight
she appears with a big smile,
in the moonlight
she made my whole body shake,
when suddenly I was afraid of the dark night,
when I heard her terrible and ghastly laughter
in the moonlight.

Gert Strydom

A Phosphorus Projectile Explodes

A Phosphorus projectile explodes
burns soldiers to particles of dust
when an enemy tank fires
hitting a Ratel armoured car in a bright glare,
burns hissing right through the blood of boys,
it becomes a terrible hour
where humanity goes totally dim.

Gert Strydom

A Picture Lingers With Me

A picture lingers with me
of God hanging as a man on the cross,
of Mary standing dumfounded nearby
and mere humans mocking Him about His powerlessness
when the bright day fled into the night,
when God himself paid a sacrifice for the human existence
and this scene remains in my mind
and to me its reality, not just only a very old story.

Gert Strydom

A Place Far Away From This Dark Age

The pink nose of my ginger coloured Persian cat is flat
and he has got whiskers are like antenna
and he watches the weavers
where they splash in their drinking bowl

and softly sneaks nearer
to where the little flock of birds are gathered
before he jumps in with teeth and claws
aimed at every flying thing.

Weavers twitter, sparrows chatter and some doves fly up
while dangerously he rocks up and down on their drinking bowl,
and splashes himself with water
as he has got a weaver in his mouth

while others try to attack him
as they dive down, turn and hang above his head
and the birds make shrill and agitated sounds
as if he is not able to catch them as well

It is then that I am really sorry for the birds
and his natural behaviour troubles me
when that cat brings his gift to me
and I do wonder about a world where everything is free,

where everything has got a own peaceful life
and no birds scream in agony,
where the boy and the lamb wanders with the lion
and it's a place far away from this Dark Age.

[Reference: "Hemel" "Heaven" by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

A Place For You

Maybe in your absence
I will write
another thousand poems,

since it's as if something is chasing me
and there's power
in words
that goes out like a spell.

Sometimes fingers only wait
to let words sprout
before they even form
in thoughts,

still the castles
that I build with words
wants to hold a place for you.

Gert Strydom

A Place In The Sun

There are moments in every day
when the small things
that are happening brings
a sense of belonging
makes my thoughts, my longings stray,
to you and like a child
in faith, in trust
you are my hope, the one
when all other things are gone.

Sometimes it's difficult to find tranquillity
to be the one that you expect me to be
but our love has got wings that overreach
each new tomorrow
and it goes far beyond sorrow and pain
we are no longer just each to each
and something does remain
something that is really great and sublime
as if from the first moment in time
we were created to be together
as if hard wired into our souls
we are to be never alone.

From far beyond the sun, stars,
planets and galaxies beyond the know universe
our time and place in the sun was set;
before we had even met
you were destined to be my wife
and I have know that a time will come
as if our being together was written in stone.

Gert Strydom

A Poem During War (Cavatina) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

Not the loss of men, machines or a country
to destiny,
or the farewell of you to whom I long,
or to be free
from the ravages of a unwanted war,
always holds me
like the beauty of the last summer spent;
the deep feelings for you do not relent

as I long for a new dawn without pain
or any fear
while the future now looks very grim
and guns I hear
sending messages of their deadly flame,
nothing is clear
and although we do constantly just win,
the shattering of my soul did begin.

While bullets, rockets and shells do whistle past
your face, our love,
is out of my mind, as like a machine
I act above
the mere decency of being human,
while I do move
from one sheltering onto the next one,
all other thoughts but survival are gone

but still so intense you remain with me,
that I do dream
of your countenance, I see your face;
in clouds like steam
the wounded do for God, each other or
their mothers scream
with the smell of burnt flesh everywhere,
the pain of dying is constantly here.

[Reference: 'Two Poems from the War' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

A Poem For Zimbabwe

With know-how and trust
seeds sprout from the dust
and with the summer sun and rain
the fields are full of maize again

but with the skilled commercial farmer removed,
even if the land is loved
famine does come
to each and every home.

Gert Strydom

A Poem On Honeymoon

Today I am your darling and your hero
who accompany you everywhere
and maybe I am a man with fame and wealth
that is paying for a holiday at a hotel
and even in your dreams you see my face
when my hand rests upon yours
and you are smitten by the words that I say,
by the wild passion in each kiss
when stormy your blood does flow
in the intimacy between us,
where our lives are growing to the most beautiful dreams
and you are discovering everything and part of me
but how are you going to feel in the days of old age
when maybe poverty or illness comes unexpectedly?

Gert Strydom

A Poem On My Darling's Birthday

(for Daleen)

Birthdays come and birthdays go
and yet there is something of the magic
of what life really is
caught in simple moments just like these
and the true length of life we do not know
or if we will be happy and healthy or be sick,
if important things we will experience or miss

while the rosy blossom of life does glow
upon your soft cheek
and your golden eyes do shine
with a deep perplexing happiness
and yet our lives we do not to destiny throw
but do for deeper meaning seek
for something lasting and divine

and the beauty that only a husband in love can behold
comes in moments of mere bliss
when something special lingers in each kiss
and I wish that every other day be blessed like this
that love will burn as bright when we are old

that even times of turmoil and sadness
will be turned around to gladness,
to the perfection of a eternal spring
and that life will have greatness in everything.

Gert Strydom

A Poem Testifies With Absolute Truth About Reality (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

With many things a poem holds context,
with everything that catches the attention of the poet,
with things of great and little importance,
things that speak to the heart and mind.
Creation and destruction lies in the hand of the poet,
the deep abyss and softness of a woman's cheek,
also the things to which he longs for in his being
but there is also the dangerous other side
where curses, slander and hurting language do appear,
where God is belittled and held in contempt
and plagiarism stays fraud, a lie and robbery.
Words can curse or bless and leave people speechless
or can girdle on the actualisation of evil
or bare witness of the God of the universe.

[Reference: 'n Gedig plagiariseer die werklikheid' (A poem plagiarises reality) by Joan Hambidge.]

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Gert Strydom

A Poet Tried To Shackle My Words

A poet tried to shackle my words,
as if from every poem
the message was stripped,
as if nowhere there was any mastery
of rhythm and sound to be found

as if I had sold my soul
to masses of people reading my verses,
as if I live in disrespect
to the expertise that a great poet
displays in his work

as if every line of mine
was just a wild cacophony
that I had flung together
in a utter hurry
to shower down on crowds of people.

Yet I while I swam against a tempest sea,
sticking to the truth and integrity,
trying to find answers to life's mysteries
and problems
trying to expose injustice and oppression
there was boasting about a elitis clique
that totally excludes me

but they were going along the path
of political correctness and maybe indifference,
being far too scared to ruffle some feathers,
writing verses sixty times over and over
before they were becoming poems somehow,
before their words were catching some magic

believing that a great poem,
is like a jigsaw puzzle,
that you have got to unravel
with a dictionary,
where simple words can fuse together
with a own type of magic,

lacking in the ability
to find poetry in ordinary things,
to create poetry in lines
that by themselves fuses together
to create something great

but my words kept on coming,
falling into lines,
as if designed by a divine presence
and by themselves fused
into much deeper meaning
than I could find with my own abilities.

Gert Strydom

A Police Road Block

We went to the boy's rugby match
it was at a school in Centurion
just south of Pretoria
and he was playing really well
got provincial colours
and went to the Craven week.

We parked up on a knoll
and you wanted to stroll down it,
to where the rugby field was
and I insisted that we follow
the road round,
but you cursed me
right there between the other parents
and was determined to have your way.

You didn't want to hear anything
and your first step
going down that hillock
was the last that you took there,
since you stumbled and broke your leg
while I grabbed you to steady you.

I carried you down that little hill
and you were in great pain
and had your arms
around my neck
and at that moment
I knew that you loved me.

I went to fetch the car
and brought it round the knoll,
put you on the back seat
of your old green Honda ballade
with a lot of care and trouble
to get you in
without hurting you
and took you straight
to Unitas hospital

that was near.

I phoned the medical aid five times
while you were being admitted
to get a confirmation from them
to stop the hospital
from claiming a deposit
and when you were settled
I went home
to fetch some clothing
and toiletries.

I drove back with my own white Polo
and just at the hospital
was stopped by the South African Police
at a roadblock.

They made me get out of the car,
patted me down like a criminal,
wanted to see my drivers license,
was determined to search the car
and went through your
underclothes and things
and asked me what I am doing
with a suitcase of woman's clothes
in the boot?

They were very rude
and I explained that I was taking it
to you in hospital
and was determined
to see their authority
to search my car.

They had the right order there
signed by a judge
for a roadblock and a search
of any car
on that stretch of road

but the police officer to whom
it gave authority

wasn't there
and I demanded to see him
and they wrote my name
and identity number in a book
while I told them
that they were acting illegally
before they let me go.

You were glad to see me
and browsed through the magazines
that I brought
and I visited as long as I could
and asked the sister in the office
to take special care of you,
but when I left
the police and their roadblock
was no longer there.

Gert Strydom

A Prayer (Sonnet)

(After Koos du Plessis)

Let me find a place of rest on this rough earth
that lies near to Your heart, as my best deeds do remain stained
and I do know the things that do draw me further and further from You
while daily I am involved in a fierce battle for survival.
Let me stay true step upon step in your footsteps
while Your wings do cover me continually
as every weak place in my heart I do know
and let Your life and your love become greater in me.
Lord, save me when from my own deeds I am lost once again,
at times perplexed do not know where to go
and when my own conceit and weakness do continually wound me.
Out of the depths of misery and pain You do continually come and fetch me
and all of my success, fame and what I do possess are only borrowed to me
while time does continually speed on with my shadow against the ground.

[Reference: "Gebed" (Prayer) by Koos du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

A Prayer About South Africa (English Sonnet)

My Lord, more commercial farmers have died
than SADF soldiers in the Bush / Border war,
far too many times over this I have cried
and from a solution the government is far.

My God, people act savagely as they do kill,
rob, plunder, torture, dismember and rape
while they do Your Book of Judgement fill
and to this kind of thing there is no escape.

As in Zimbabwe farms they want to dispossess.
without caring about it causing widespread famine.
As the government acts as if problems it do redress
it does not its own senseless ineptness examine.

You do put governments and leaders in place
and now I beg You to act in Your amazing grace.

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Gert Strydom

A Prayer After Noticing The Visiting Birds (Ballade)

(after Ruth Pitter, in answer to Mathews Phosa)

White rule in my country did fall and jobs for white men are no more
while everything has changed from what it was before
unskilled, uneducated and irate black people do function everywhere
as life does ebb in and out like the waves upon the shore.

Chorus:

In my heart my Lord God I keep my faith in You warm
while everything is functioning out of the norm
while into robbery, murder and dilapidation life does go
and over and around us blows an undeserved bitter storm.

Yet still throughout the day the sun comes up with its burning hot flame
and tokens of Your love, compassion and righteousness still do remain the same
even in a country where four thousand commercial farmers have been killed,
wild birds do visit me; do bring tranquillity as sings of wonder and no other name

but Yours in all of this I do see where they sit on the windowsill and on a stone
and I do notice the redbreast, the hoopoe, the different barbets, weavers and
everyone

that does seem to choose me a human above those of their own kind
where I do know that Your presence, Your care and oversight is not gone

even in a world where two cars and my mother's have been robbed from me,
where the insurance and police turned their backs on all of this in inadequacy,
where I am unemployed by Your grace I do still day after day survive
while the birds do twitter, look and do throughout the day keep me company,

Your hand is outside even on the sparrow; the wild doves and You are here
and like these natural wondrous fluttering things that do sing I have no fear
while a politician only do relinquish crumbs as people are too white
as constantly You do remain and Your omnipotent power is near

but like these birds come to me, to You the only living God I do come
as a mere human insignificant in the passages where You do roam,
where the ancestor spirit worshipping rulers are in your sight,
as people are tortured, killed, robbed and raped and it's gruesome

while criminals do whatever they want during the day and night
I do beg You to use Your omnipotent power and even Your righteous might
for You to protect, to save and restore my country and my home
and to You my prayers, those of my people are like these birds in flight.

[Reference:"The Sparrow's Scull. Memento mori. Written at the fall of
France" by Ruth Pitter. "Nou bid ek" (Now I pray)by Mathews
Phosa.]

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Gert Strydom

A Prayer For My Beloved

My Lord, I do still love her,
in my body, soul and spirit she is active
and I ask that you take this love to Your own wonder
as love is a strange kind of thing
and it's as if she cuts through my soul and body,
go to the essence of my being,
as if she is essential for my own existence
that You do make our love holy is probably from the apocrypha,
in my body, soul and spirit she is active.

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Gert Strydom

A Prayer For People On The Farms In South Africa (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to Lina Spies)

I

Let Your name be remembered and hallowed here and everywhere about
and let Your blessing and benevolence on each person pour out
throughout this blood-stained wonderful and difficult land,
that everyone can know that everything come from Your hand,
let us suspend our judgement and Your love in our hearts sprout
and please withhold the government's ideas of land grabbing,
that will only bring to us famine, death and every vile thing,
where commercial farmers provide food with which we cannot life without
and let Your blessing and benevolence on each person pour out.

II

Where at German-Afrikaner people as a mere toddler I had to stay,
from the farmer's house during the day I was driven away,
I had to work where I could and my contribution was limited as small boy,
but as a mere child I did the labour on the farm enjoy,
I was too scared of getting a red dress as he did say
where at times I had to feed the machine cutting maize stalks,
was scared of that farmer in how he did act and talk
but still he was fair in a Christian kind of way,
from the farmer's house during the day I was driven away.

III

With black children as a child I did play,
where undivided as friends we were day by day,
we hunted with catapults and each one did a fair share take,
we threw flat stones that jumped over the lake,
I brought quince-caness with which to throw clay,
later old wonderful Maria did look after me,
where she served in love and was paid fairly
but now every white-man is a oppressor without charity,
where undivided as friends we were day by day.

IV

At family members with a farmer and his son
I noticed how You do bless and support everything that goes on,

we did round up cattle to the corral with horses on a holiday
did castrate, cut the horns burned the brand in the farming way
and just too quickly that great holiday was gone
but white and black together laboured through the day,
where each one received a very fair pay,
and in all of this You my Lord are the witnessing One,
I noticed how You do bless and support everything that goes on.

V

My Lord God, Yours are the cattle on every hill
everything that exists comes from Your divine will
and after ages of bloody labour of commercial farmers on each farm
I am astounded at the robbery, murder and all the harm
I beg like in ages past You do protect my people against each ill
where this country, the people and everything do belong to You,
that You guide us and protect and keep us in everything that we do
and may my people, all South Africans love and honour You still,
everything that exists comes from Your divine will

[Reference:"'n Paternoster vir Suid-Afrika" (A paternoster for South Africa)by Lina 's note:

"Every animal of the forest is mine and the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know every bird in the mountains and the creatures of the field are
mine."Psalm 50: 10-11.]

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Gert Strydom

A Prayer For Renewal (Free Verse Sonnets)

(for Annelize)

I

Right through the darkest night
far past the red-day
I hear the twittering and cooing
of all kinds of birds that do carry me off
as if they are waiting on something special
and with their joy I am astonished in this spring
also that in their multitudes they do constantly come to me
do still carry on singing when days of rain do fall
as if they are singing to You as the Creator of the universe
and as a human I am stupid with Your ways,
only do notice the cloak that the spring is spreading out around me
still more beautiful than any other year as if she is preparing for Your coming
where the blossoms are already becoming small green fruit,
maybe all of these things are from Your loving hand just for me.

II

Maybe all of these things are from Your loving hand just for me
as a sign of change although my years do quickly pass in decades
and I realise that Your year of jubilee do come in every person's life,
are still astonished with the words in my poems
where against the thoroughfare of destiny You are still near
and day after day I do pray my darling into my days
where I am telling her always about my love and I cannot fabricate it,
do already wait a decade on your intervention as all things are in Your hand
as You are still here on my side not there far on the other side,
do ask that You do come with a new beginning for my people and I
do make this the great year of jubilee on which everyone of us is waiting
as over all things You do alone have the upper authority
and Your mercy and goodness brings light and truth
right through the darkest night.

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A Prayer For The Earth (Rondine)

Lord, I ask for a place of peace and love
where nothing sharp or deep divides us,
where again man learn in only you to trust
where nothing could our joy and fun remove,
where every day our world we do improve
where the needs of others becomes obvious, .
Lord, I ask

that always in integrity we will move
from lives that are slowly turning to dust
while slowly, very slowly we do adjust
before nothing of this world is left over,
Lord, I ask...

Gert Strydom

A Prayer In The Summer Of My Life

Lord, I ask that you bless the days
where the summer of my life starts
that You pour out the blue-white thunder and rain
generous into my life.
Give that I in maturity win
against every resistance of my own will
and that I selflessly love my darling,
please cover the sin of my youth,
draw out the summer of my later years
and bring the two of us closer to each other.

Gert Strydom

A Prayer To Be As Adam

(in answer to Lina Spies)

I

My Lord, here I do stand before you
as a man that You did create,
You do know me becoming a cell.
Where I did abundantly eat from the sinful fruit
and I do not need a gate at a garden
or do not have to go to Eden
to talk face to face with You.

II

The hearts of all people that do choose You are Your temples
and to You they are holy
where here now like in my childhood
I come to You
and do want to look with the same glance at myself and at life,
do want to trust You with the hope trust and love of a child

III

and see flowers and bees, insects like the dragonfly,
do notice beetles and a ladybird
and also various birds that do come and go
almost if I am standing in Your intact paradise
and the binding of bee to flower,
of everything that do pair with each other
and even man and woman,
I do not find in that which I do constantly observe
just that Your genuine love do radiate out of all the beauty

IV

and here were I am asking forgiveness for every sin,
I ask that You do steady my way,
do drive my enemies away into all directions
and do pull me closer and more near to Your fatherly heart,
I ask You to change my heart yet again,
do make it serviceable for Your will and for Your works,
do touch my brain, my soul and spirit with Your love
but more than just Your constant friendship and love

V

I ask that You like in the ancient beginning with both Adam and Eve
into me and the woman whom I do love so intensely and deep
that same first inviolate fiery and eternal love place
in our hearts, soul, spirit, brains and bodies,
to renew us in each aspect to in a way be untouched like them
that together we can be happy, intimate, intense
can live as a man and woman
that does truly understand and know each other
and do honour You in all things throughout our lives,

VI

do place even greater love in me my Lord, for the woman that I do love
that in her blood and bones
I will know my hart, soul and spirit untouchable
with happiness, tranquillity, bliss
and also in all pain and tears that life does bring.

[Reference: "Gebed van Eva" (Prayer of Eve) by Lina Spies.]

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Gert Strydom

A Precise Woman

A precise woman, something of a control freak
with hair cropped short, reminds me
of the military
brings order to my life and thoughts
while she arranges everything

putting shining shoes in their place,
panties, pantyhose, brassieres shelved
in neat rows
in a easy accessible way

and even when we make love
her behaviour is predictable
from the removing of her stockings,
where she folds them,
the look in her eyes
and her whimpers and cries
and yet somehow
there is something sweet in the loving,
in the order that she brings.

[Reference: A Precise Woman by Yehuda Amichai.]

Gert Strydom

A Psalm

I wish you each crystal blue morning sky,
the doves cooing in love in the berry trees,
the bees buzzing on the early breeze,
for you're live to freeze
when you are the happiest.

May the one that you love, care for
or just are in love with from a distance
turn your world around, find a way
to surprise you while you talk
and guide you to walk along
to your piece of paradise.

May every dream be a blessing
and those blessings come true
and may the sun
always shine on you
with a better new day.

Gert Strydom

A Psalm In The Twenty First Century (Virelay)

From light years far away in space and time
You are the architect
who takes care of a planet the size of a dime;
a far off small object.

You ordain our days and to us intimately connect
as a kind of loving being
giving sanctuary, even if crudely we do You reject,
with You are disagreeing.

Still You are protecting everything that is living,
constantly giving light
even to those who are in rebellion, unbelieving
who yearn for the night

and of Your kindness we do not have true sight,
we judge You incorrect
as a supreme being that rules by force and might,
giving You no respect.

Gert Strydom

A Ray Of Sunlight

It was in the middle of the day
and the sun was high and bright,
in the deep blue African sky.

The LMG was getting heavy
and hot in my hands
and gnats were turning
round the piece of grass
in my brown bush hat.

Sweat were running
down my face
and like any other day,
a patrol in the hot
African bush was great fun
especially when your water
bottle was near empty
and your throat started to burn
and the going was fast.

The bushman tracker
was hot on the enemy spoor
and where the terrain
got more open,
we halted for a moment.

a Ray of sunlight
reflected bright like a flash light,
somewhere to the left
and pointed out an enemy ambush.

We half circled past
and attacked from their rear
and the LMG stuttered
from my hip
and suddenly the bush was clear
and the firefight was over
and an ominous silence hanged
deep in the African bush.

[Reference: => LMG=> Light machine gun. Spoor=>Track]

Gert Strydom

A Real Life Nightmare

It feels like another life
and had been at another time
and place,
where I knocked and knocked
at the locked bedroom door.

At last I found a key
and still something
was holding it
and I pushed with all my might
and at last it opened.

She was lying on the bed
with outstretched arms
and empty pill bottles
next to her head
and there was no note
to say farewell
and why she did it,
to this day
only she can tell.

She was still breathing
and I felt a weak pulse
and I was without strength
from flu,
but I picked her up
and got her over my shoulder.

The car was too far
and there was nobody
willing to help me
and I stumbled over my weak legs
and got hold of her again
and carried her to the car.

I passed over three red robots
without any car's being there
and she belched over

my shirt and pants
and just before the state hospital
two metro police cars
started to follow me
with flashing blue lights
and screaming sirens.

I stopped at the ambulance
drop-off point
and was cursed by ambulance men
that was standing there,
and the metro police
rushed to me
took a look at her
and went on their way
and nobody wanted to help.

Anger gave me strength
and I carried her
into the hospital
and went straight through admissions
and followed the red line
to casualties
and somebody
brought a wheelchair
and some doctor
saved her life.

The doctor said that the belching
saved her,
but today I am just glad
that she's out of my life
and that I do not have to face
another nightmare.

Gert Strydom

A Redbreast In The Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Thomas Hardy and S. J. Pretorius)

Outside after twilight a bloody-red moon rises,
the autumn-wind sings its own disconsolate song,
it's cloudy when the song of a redbreast does leave me speechless,
it bursts through the world's grey and cold sorrow,
as if something beautiful will appear in the new morning
that small bird does twitter and calls on the rain to begin,
it's as if all other sounds do disappear before the clear purity
when it sings over how the world does exist and our lot and meaning in it,
it calls on God in the darkest night's blackness
and that bird does twitter and sing so ecstatic happy,
as if it does know that the Lord is the light to all things
so that nothing that comes near can avoid that sound
and when the first lightning-bolt suddenly does bash down blue-white
I still hear him so utterly rejoicing.

[References "The darkling thrush" by Thomas Hardy, "Aan 'n
janfrederik" (to a Cape-robin) by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

A Reminiscence

It's a long while back and yet it stays,
how she draws delightful on a cigarette
and drink a glass,
of yellow sparkling st. Anna with me.

Maybe I was on a dark road
at the time and she gave me
a bit of light and protection against loneliness
and the impact of destiny.

She understood me for who and what I am
and much more than passion can find
a way to bind,
I was trapped by her humanity.

Gert Strydom

A Reply To The Nymph

(after Christopher Marlow, in answer to Sir Walter Raleigh)

Throughout the world the greatness of love is proofed
as by it the hearts and minds of men and woman are moved.
Sincerity hope and faith is the essence to put love in place
not just the lovely spell and effect of your gorgeous face.

Although time like an anvil has an impact on all kinds of things,
it in its domain health and glory and pain and downfall brings
even do turn the young and strong to feeble and old,
but love has a capacity to be everlasting I am told.

Where when winter come the flowers fade and are withering
they are once more restored in beauty with the coming of spring
while with toil and prayers and knowledge summer gives abundance
I beg you to take sincere my heartfelt feelings and give our love a chance.

A decision to trust each other is love at its deepest core,
to set love as a principle between us and from that to expect much more.
All of the small tokens although insignificant is just a expression of sincerity
as you do mean much more than all of the world and everything in it to me.

All of nature, its beauty and abundance speak volumes of a love divine
and I can give you nothing greater than the heart and life that is mine.
Pure honesty, sincerity, liberty, friendship, devotion and love that is true
are the only real and worthy gifts that I have left to give to you

where I am just a mortal man living in a world full of mortality
yet inanimate without you and your love my life would be
but still as in everything in this world I leave the choice to you
to with reason and feeling your own sincere will to do.

[References: "The passionate shepherd to his love" by Christopher Marlow. "The nymph's reply to the shepherd" by Sir Walter Raleigh.]

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Gert Strydom

A Resting Place

This world does not deserve you,
nor will it be
the place where,
I to earth let them lay you.

When time get to its finality,
I'll spread the dust that remains
in the air and over land and sea.

No angel was destined
to sleep in the dark cold earth
and for ever
you'll be part
of the endless wind
and breaking sea
and will be free.

Gert Strydom

A Room In The Past

It is a kitchen with a big settee,
and big old coal and wood stove,
a big table where the whole extended family
ate great meals, sat chatting for hours
sounding to outsiders
like a riot
with a fire burning joyously
or only having comforting glowing coals

and at eleven in the morning, or four
in the afternoon
tea in porcelain cups, sometimes Swiss roll
or her own fruitcake
soaked in brandy
and baked to perfection was served.

It was a place where my grandmother
was bigger than life,
a lady born from Scottish ancestry,
but more an Afrikaner than me
with a true belief in the creator God,
where her love was a dazing light

till one sad night, leukaemia finished her years,
stripped her from me
while I was away at university
and the family
had never been the same again
like it was then

and suddenly that kitchen, that house
was stripped bare from furniture,
was painted and sold
and somehow I was the only one
who did not get
any last words from her.

Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In New South Africa (7) : The Inept Police

The madness of a country falling apart
is ominous brought forth when shots are fired,
scenes are displayed in the windows of police-flying-squad-vans
that ineptly are driven to and thro
and never do arrive in time at any crime.

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Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In South Africa (3) : Necklace

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

Desecrated he did defecate in his pants
when the pursuers caught him
did try to jerk loose while they were carrying him

but he was forced into the ground,
a car's tyre was violently flung over his head
and his swollen lips did bleed

while fuel did flow over his head and body,
the crowd did murderous laugh madly
while the women jeered en somebody did light a match

and flaming he screamed vulnerable
for a moment did flutter like a butterfly
and God did witness the murder of an innocent man.

[Reference:"Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.

Poet's note:"Scenes from Another Day" by Robin Camhee

"Stranded in the middle of nowhere
her children by her side
a battered case, some cooking things
an O.K. packet with stuff,
scattered them the possessions
of a lifetime...
she stands admit the flattened walls of her house..."

"another day
as authority
forces a removal."

"Lost amidst commuters
concrete and glass

a used ticket in his hand,
some change, a letter in his pocket,
some tattered clothing in his sack
flung boldly over his shoulder..."

"another ruralite
come to take his chance."

"Sprawled in the dusty road
blood gushing from a head wound
the legs twitching neurotically,
a broken body pours out its life..."

"another day
as the casspirs
make their rounds."

"As the smog settles
it shrouds a mangy dog
dragging a bundle
from a rubbish heap,
its eyes rheumy
its jaws slaverling in anticipation..."

"another sunrise
as a abandoned baby
feeds a township mongrel.

"As he shivers in the heat of the evening
the piss running down his legs
the shit anxious to fly out,
he empties his pockets
while the knives hover close..."

"another week
his children will starve."

"On a corner

the barricades are up,
the fires are lit
and a ring of dancers
chants the last rites
as black smoke
smears the sky..."

"another life is torched."

"So as you make your face
clip on your earrings
for a night on the town
remember,
the heavens
indifferent as always
placidly pass from day to night
just as
the glib words and foul deeds
that crush our lives
pass you by,
you might wake to another day
hung over from the night
and then again,
you might not..."

This poem was published in the book:Scenes from Another Day" new South African writing, Writers Forum, Johannesburg,1989.]

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Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (1)

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

On a lovely Sunday morning you asked me to go with you
to do shopping at Carnival Mall in Brakpan,
our son Janneman and his wife Letitia went along
with their baby girl Raleigh who is only one years old
and their toddler daughter Genevieve who is lovely at three
but on that day God did straighten the way.

As Sundays with families go this one was for a winter day
absolutely lovely where we were together
and you bought some cleaning liquids for the charity
which you do manage, we browsed through the shops,
had a spicy meal as a family at the Mac Donald's

but when we wanted to leave the mall
at the exit with the sliding doors,
a young Nigerian man cut us off with a trolley,
another Nigerian man from behind walked right up to me

did drop a bottle of Johnny Walker Black and White whiskey
right at my feet where it broke and splashed over my shoes
and I noticed that he was carrying that bottle in its box upside down
while he stated that I am responsible for him breaking that bottle.

I calculated that the bottle of whiskey priced at about a thousand Rand,
calmly I stated that I did not even touch him,
that another person did cut us off
while the two of them boxed us in at the exit.

The angry black man was calculating and calm
in his words and actions,
asked Letitia if she was married to me
and she did not hear and answer him
before he got on his mobile phone and talked
in a foreign strange language
(I know the local languages and did not know

what he was saying but he was threatening)
and both Janneman and I knew that trouble was brewing.

You had the lively baby girl Raleigh, in your arms,
where giving sweeties to us and the small children,
Janneman took their groceries from their trolley
and I pushed our trolley with the cleaning materials
all the way to the car,
while the angry black man followed us
and was intent on stopping us.

The children's VW SUV was in for repairs
at the VW agent in Springs where we do live
and we travelled in a black VW Polo Cross
that belongs to Princess motors
which was brand new with only eight thousand
kilometres on the clock.

Janneman told everyone to get in the car immediately
as trouble was coming while the Nigerian
stood in front of the car trying to block it
while he was making some more calls on his mobile phone,
Letitia got in the car,
I helped Janneman to put our shopping bags in the boot,
did put Genevieve in the back of the car,
got into the back as Janneman was going to drive
but with the baby in your arms,
you were again giving sweeties to the small children.

Janneman started the car
and I pulled you with the baby in your arms
over Fiefie (Genevieve) onto the back seat
while we did pull away,
you were over me
and the Nigerian at the last moment jumped out of the way,
your open door did almost slam him
before you closed it.

There was only one exit from the parking area of the Carnival Mall
with a small circle and a traffic light right after that
and I and Janneman reckoned that the Nigerians
were going to block that exit off,

you reckoned that Letitia and us were overreacting,
some of the yellow Honeycomb sweeties
were scattered all over the back seat
and we passed the Mac Donald's
on the outside of the mall.

At the exit of the parking area a golden Jeep was behind us
with some Nigerian men that filled it up
and as we neared the circle a white Quantum minibus taxi
did stop right over the circle to block us in,
its doors opened and eight black men jumped out.

I reckoned that the space on the wrong side of the road
was far too small to pass through with our car,
said to Janneman: "those people are right here."

I started to pray with open eyes,
reminded the Lord God that in the Bible
He promises to straighten the way.
Later on returning to that mall Janneman and I did notice
that a small concrete island run right up to the circle
but on that Sunday there was only a white line
and that black Polo Cross was running on low profile tyres.

Janneman went to the wrong side of the road,
crossed where a concrete line exists
without the car bumping or scraping,
we went right through a far too narrow gap,
the black men hurled stones at us
as we were speeding up to a red traffic light
but not one stone touched the car.

Some cars waited on the right side of the road
but not one car were oncoming as we crossed the red light,
driving on the wrong side of the road
right through a stop sign
into a residential area.

While Janneman acted as a rally-driver
Fiefie (Genevieve) became almost hysterical
but I soothed her that everything was still under control,
that the Lord God was straitening the way,

we passed several white mini bus taxis
and were afraid that the one that blocked us,
was communicating with them
but they did not react in any way to us.

We decided to take the toll road that runs
from Brakpan past Springs to Secunda
and as we stopped to pay
a white Audi stopped at another entrance
right next to us.

The VW Polo Cross is super and turbo charged
and we speeded away onto the freeway
but where we noticed the golden V8 Jeep catching up on us,
did realise that it was following us
and again I did pray while we speeded on.

The white Audi was much quicker
and I assured Janneman
that a white man was driving it,
while he changed lanes
and drove behind another car
for it to be able to pass.

There was at this time three black hatch back cars
from different manufacturers (including ours) on the freeway
and we took an exit at Springs
while the golden Jeep was still away in the distance,
it did mistake us with another car
and at great speed followed it.

Janneman did call Princess motors
to swap that black VW Polo Cross
for another car,
as we were scared
that another hijack attempt would happen
and only supernatural Godly intervention
saved us on that Sunday.

[Reference: "Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.]

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Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (2)

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

On a lovely Sunday morning you asked me to go with you
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on the outside of the mall.

At the exit of the parking area a golden Jeep was behind us
with some Nigerian men that filled it up
and as we neared the circle a white Quantum minibus taxi
did stop right over the circle to block us in,
its doors opened and eight black men jumped out.

I reckoned that the space on the wrong side of the road
was far too small to pass through with our car,
said to Janneman: "those people are right here."

I started to pray with open eyes,
reminded the Lord God that in the Bible
He promises to straighten the way.
Later on returning to that mall Janneman and I did notice
that a small concrete island run right up to the circle
but on that Sunday there was only a white line
and that black Polo Cross was running on low profile tyres.

Janneman went to the wrong side of the road,
crossed where a concrete line exists
without the car bumping or scraping,
we went right through a far too narrow gap,
the black men hurled stones at us
as we were speeding up to a red traffic light
but not one stone touched the car.

Some cars waited on the right side of the road
but not one car were oncoming as we crossed the red light,
driving on the wrong side of the road
right through a stop sign
into a residential area.

While Janneman acted as a rally-driver
Fiefie (Genevieve) became almost hysterical
but I soothed her that everything was still under control,
that the Lord God was straitening the way,

we passed several white mini bus taxis
and were afraid that the one that blocked us,
was communicating with them
but they did not react in any way to us.

We decided to take the toll road that runs
from Brakpan past Springs to Secunda
and as we stopped to pay
a white Audi stopped at another entrance
right next to us.

The VW Polo Cross is super and turbo charged
and we speeded away onto the freeway
but we noticed the golden V8 Jeep catching up on us,
did realise that it was following us
and again I did pray while we speeded on.

The white Audi was much quicker
and I assured Janneman
that a white man was driving it,
while he changed lanes
and drove behind another car
for it to be able to pass.

There was at this time three black hatch back cars
from different manufacturers (including ours) on the freeway
and we took an exit at Springs
while the golden Jeep was still away in the distance,
it did mistake us with another car
and at great speed followed it.

Janneman did call Princess motors
to swap that black VW Polo Cross
for another car,
as we were scared
that another hijack attempt would happen
and only supernatural Godly intervention
saved us on that Sunday.

[Reference: "Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.

Poet's note: I publish this poem again as many people have asked me to quote

the poem by Robin Camhee and I cannot find my own poem on the internet.

"Scenes from Another Day" by Robin Camhee

"Stranded in the middle of nowhere
her children by her side
a battered case, some cooking things
an O.K. packet with stuff,
scattered them the possessions
of a lifetime...
she stands admit the flattened walls of her house..."

"another day
as authority
forces a removal."

"Lost amidst commuters
concrete and glass
a used ticket in his hand,
some change, a letter in his pocket,
some tattered clothing in his sack
flung boldly over his shoulder..."

"another ruralite
come to take his chance."

"Sprawled in the dusty road
blood gushing from a head wound
the legs twitching neurotically,
a broken body pours out its life..."

"another day
as the casspurs
make their rounds."

"As the smog settles
it shrouds a mangy dog
dragging a bundle
from a rubbish heap,

its eyes rheumy
its jaws slaving in anticipation..."

"another sunrise
as a abandoned baby
feeds a township mongrel.

"As he shivers in the heat of the evening
the piss running down his legs
the shit anxious to fly out,
he empties his pockets
while the knives hover close..."

"another week
his children will starve."

"On a corner
the barricades are up,
the fires are lit
and a ring of dancers
chants the last rites
as black smoke
smears the sky..."

"another life is torched."

"So as you make your face
clip on your earrings
for a night on the town
remember,
the heavens
indifferent as always
placidly pass from day to night
just as
the glib words and foul deeds
that crush our lives
pass you by,
you might wake to another day
hung over from the night

and then again,
you might not..."

This poem was published in the book:Scenes from Another Day" new South African writing, Writers Forum, Johannesburg,1989.]

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Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (2) : Hijack (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

With my fiancée I stop at the Ultra City gas station
do pull in at a fuel pump with my new red BMW,
she needs to go to the bathroom and the car needs fuel,
we both get out and I go to the shop while they fill up,
we both carry tins of Coca-Cola and packets of chips,
walk hand in hand back to the car and she gets in,
I pay in cash to settle the bill and get in to drive away
when two old three series BMW's do park us in,
six men jump out of them carrying assault-rifles,
from my military training I note AK-47's.
They want the car's keys; tell me not to immobilize it,
a RPG-7 rocket launcher with rocket is pressed against my head:
"White-man give us a reason to kill you and your wife today, "
a black-man says and beckons us to get out of the car.

[Reference:"Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.

Poet's note:"Scenes from Another Day" by Robin Camhee

"Stranded in the middle of nowhere
her children by her side
a battered case, some cooking things
an O.K. packet with stuff,
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some tattered clothing in his sack
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"another ruralite
come to take his chance."

"Sprawled in the dusty road
blood gushing from a head wound
the legs twitching neurotically,
a broken body pours out its life..."

"another day
as the casspirs
make their rounds."

"As the smog settles
it shrouds a mangy dog
dragging a bundle
from a rubbish heap,
its eyes rheumy
its jaws slavering in anticipation..."

"another sunrise
as a abandoned baby
feeds a township mongrel.

"As he shivers in the heat of the evening
the piss running down his legs
the shit anxious to fly out,
he empties his pockets
while the knives hover close..."

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"On a corner
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and a ring of dancers
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A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (4) : My Retrenchment Is Raw In Me (Ballade)

My retrenchment is raw in me (Ballade)

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

1

I call the children in from where they play outside
with small green plastic soldiers, tanks and jeeps,
the sound of a helicopter clatter against the windows
where we have got to share our world with criminals,

2

Chorus:

my retrenchment is raw in me
when affirmative action comes into place,
I wonder where I am going to find another job,
are astonished at life and at the employer,

3

the police searchlight to below throws a bright spot,
while squad-cars at speed drive up and down
and like this life in the city is sometimes scattered,
a person wonders if you can still dare it outside?

4

I help you with the food and cut onions into pieces,
our attention is drawn from outside to inside,
of the whole world outside we get impressions
with the events portrayed by the evening-news.

5

Later we talk about work, entertainment and fun,
in both our hearts there are real antipathy
while I notice the worry deep in your eyes
and we wonder why it's happening to us?

[Poet's note: I am quoting: "Scenes from Another Day" by Robin Camhee

"Stranded in the middle of nowhere
her children by her side
a battered case, some cooking things
an O.K. packet with stuff,

scattered them the possessions
of a lifetime...
she stands admit the flattened walls of her house..."

"another day
as authority
forces a removal."

"Lost amidst commuters
concrete and glass
a used ticket in his hand,
some change, a letter in his pocket,
some tattered clothing in his sack
flung boldly over his shoulder..."

"another ruralite
come to take his chance."

"Sprawled in the dusty road
blood gushing from a head wound
the legs twitching neurotically,
a broken body pours out its life..."

"another day
as the casspirs
make their rounds."

"As the smog settles
it shrouds a mangy dog
dragging a bundle
from a rubbish heap,
its eyes rheumy
its jaws salivating in anticipation..."

"another sunrise
as a abandoned baby
feeds a township mongrel.

"As he shivers in the heat of the evening
the piss running down his legs
the shit anxious to fly out,
he empties his pockets
while the knives hover close..."

"another week
his children will starve."

"On a corner
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and a ring of dancers
chants the last rites
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"So as you make your face
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A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (5) : At The Traffic Light (English Sonnet)

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

Stranded a white male stands at a traffic light,
unemployed by the black regime's Affirmative Action,
he wonders if he will have food for the children tonight?
Sunburnt he is for vile words and ridicule a attraction

with a board begging for work, for money and for a life
and those white people still employed laugh at him,
where he has lost his job, his car, house and wife
and life at the present and maybe forever looks dim

his two degrees and experience counts for nothing,
the rainbow nation is a lie and everything is just black,
he looks up into the sky, to God his heart still does sing,
where there is now so much that his life does lack.

Slowly with no milk or bread he walks back to a squatter camp,
feel the heels of the black men that do him in the ground stamp.

[Reference:"Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.

Poet's note: I am quoting:

"Scenes from Another Day" by Robin Camhee

"Stranded in the middle of nowhere
her children by her side
a battered case, some cooking things
an O.K. packet with stuff,
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make their rounds."

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it shrouds a mangy dog
dragging a bundle
from a rubbish heap,
its eyes rheumy
its jaws slaverling in anticipation..."

"another sunrise
as a abandoned baby
feeds a township mongrel.

"As he shivers in the heat of the evening
the piss running down his legs
the shit anxious to fly out,
he empties his pockets
while the knives hover close..."

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his children will starve."

"On a corner
the barricades are up,
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and a ring of dancers
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Gert Strydom

A Scene From Another Day In The New South Africa (6) : For Food (Octave)

With a wheelbarrow he is among the commuters,
while he crosses the road two cars hoot at him
and do almost loose one of the three computers,
while jobless as a white male his life looks dim.
At the pawnshop they buy everything that he has got
they take even the wheelbarrow and do happily smile
but pay only a fifth for what they will sell the lot
and with some with food he will walk back mile after mile.

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Gert Strydom

A Scene Of Another Night In South Africa

(in answer to Johannes Prins, in answer to Robin Camhee)

The spotlight outside does suddenly go on,
catches a cat standing with glowing eyes,

every security gate is closed,
when the howling of the dogs for the moon awakens us,

we turn around in bed and together do lie without words,
when not you do come into my arms,

the alarm-system winks its red eye for me
and on the rail a diesel train does pass,

my Colt.45 and ELG 12-bore shotgun
are at the police and cannot stop any killers

and at 03h00 the neighbour's wife does scream
where outside her husband do hold her in his arms,

where the whole neighbourhood knows her car has been robbed
and for help from the police there is no kind of faith

when the neighbourhood-guard drives in rage up and down,
while I wonder if I could dare to go outside

and you and I pray for God to protect us against the danger,
further do sleep right against each other.

[|Reference: "terug bed toe" (back to bed) by Johannes
Prins. "Scenes from another day" by Robin Camhee.]

Gert Strydom

A Schoolboy's Wishes (English Sonnet)

(after Phyllis Leach)

I wish I had the hardened kind of skin
that was far tougher than any shirt,
that with the veldt could melt in,
that did not show any sign of dirt.

I wish I had a jacket as dark as the night
that no kind of thorny fence could every rip,
that could completely take me out of sight
when I do stumble and fall down when I trip

while poaching peaches, I drive the principal mad,
red-handed are caught by him in the very act
and about this He wants to call my mom and dad,
to his office and punishment do take me back.

I wish that I were mature and fully grown
and that I am living on my own.

[Reference: "Timothy's wishes" by Phyllis Leach.]

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Gert Strydom

A Scrapbook

If I put my soul down in a scrapbook
with old photographs of how life used to be,
you will not find me
among the past
that is dead
like it ought to be.

Far too many dreams
were hollow and were followed
by war and loves lost
with a price and cost
and did not lead
to expectations,

but the here and now
is the place where I am.

Gert Strydom

A Season Out Of Time

I watch you turn around
under a electric sun
and your golden body shines
while you are slowly
turning gold

and both breasts
rise up and down
like little hills
at a out of season time
and outside the winter rain chills

and later I rub
more lotion on your back
and you yawn
when I am done
and your auburn hair
lie in strings

and to me
the sun bed looks like
a torturing rack
but your body smells
like summer
and there's a smile
on your lovely face

and every thing is peaceful
as if all our worries are gone
and I watch you
turning brown all over

and it's great to be together
and to at last live as one
and it's as if
in this winter
I have come upon
a season out of time.

A Serious Matter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Charl-Pierre Naudé)

In the mere moment we are caught in happiness,
where the state of the world makes no difference
there is still the going of time that hangs over everything,
where we become involved in the struggle for survival
and in the loving and times in which we do adore each other
the darkness gnashes onwards towards Armageddon
and each one of us have already got roles in it,
where we do belong to the darkness or the light,
where the knowledge that we have can bring light to others,
where no one can view this matter lightly,
when our words and acts come to destruction or healing,
do draw us closer to God and others or do estrange us totally
and when you and I drive away on my old blue Honda CZ900F motorbike,
there are other people that we do meet everywhere.

[Reference: 'n Saak van erns' (A serious matter) by Charl-Pierre Naudé.]

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Gert Strydom

A Sheaf Of Red Roses

Today I saw
a sheaf of red roses,
which a florist displayed.

The petals was still closed
and was fresh,
as if just cut from the trunk.

The roses were spread wildly
and something of their fragrance,
drifted outside in the air.

The flowers caught
various people's eyes and some bees,
were flying around at the door.

I just had to get those flowers,
but remembered
that my darling loves sweet peas more.

Gert Strydom

A Sheer Loveliness Was Hers (Cavatina Sequence)

A sheer loveliness was hers from her birth,
a kind of grace
that has been quite unknown for many years
was on her face,
some men became silent as she did pass,
some hearts did race
at her very sight, while she smiled bright,
was somewhat like a new pure kind of light.

The few words that she did choose had beauty
and her goodbyes
had promises of severe happiness;
pure as the skies,
her radiant smile was mine, I was lost in
her green-brown eyes;
she had changed all of my wanton ways,
with her laughing lingering loving days.

Gert Strydom

A Sheer Loveliness Was Hers (Cavatina Sequence)

A sheer loveliness was hers from her birth,
a kind of grace
that has been quite unknown for many years
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Gert Strydom

A Sheer Loveliness Was Hers (Cavatina Sequence)

[1]

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that has been quite unknown for many years
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her radiant smile was mine, I was lost in
her green-brown eyes;
she had changed all of my wanton ways,
with her laughing lingering loving days.

Gert Strydom

A Shooting Star (Refrain Stanza)

A falling star did draw a long fiery line
where in the night I look at eternity where stars do origin and decline
or in mythology Thor maybe did let his hammer glow
or for Catholics someone did out of purgatory escape and go
or maybe an archangel came to this earth to God's will to define
where rebellion and oppression does rage on
and I am surprised by it's red-white glare before it's gone,
know that the blood of Jesus redeems the sins that are mine
where in the night I look at eternity where stars do origin and decline.

Gert Strydom

A Shot Rang Out Like Lightning Out Of A Gun

Goodbye to the land where the sun always shine,
to the blue sky that always is bright,
goodbye to the light that comes every day
and hello to that midnight which is cold and dark.

A shot rang out like lightning out of a gun
fading the sun while white vapour rose
out of a shot out armoured car,
I couldn't close my eyes or look away.

Goodbye to that enemy tank stopped in its tracks
against a bank of earth
while my armoured car's gun rang out
sending a phosphorus shell with fire from hell.

A rocket flew past with a flaming tail
like a star falling from the sky
before exploding against a tree with a blast

and goodbye to the enemy soldiers who fired it
while we moved past at speed
with a machinegun howling a great cry.

I heard that enemy commander weeping over the radio
while his frequencies were blocked
being in shock
and sounding like the voices of many men

crying in the anguish of death
as if a deadly net had been cast
and I wish that I could understand Spanish
but the noise was ear-splitting

and it was goodbye to tank after tank
and goodbye with blast after blast and going in quick
stopping, firing and running away fast

and every enemy armoured car we found
only got one shot

till the last shell had being fired

and tired we went to fetch some more,
ate in a hurry before being wished good luck
and going back to war.

Gert Strydom

A Small Bird Sang Its Lovely Carefree Song (Novelinee)

A small bird sang its lovely carefree song
at the red breaking of a summer day
and the happy tune just went on and on
with the wind at times sweeping it away
and as that early morning was aglow
the notes did at times soar and again fell
as the wind did lapse or stronger blow
while I was caught in that little bird's spell
that rang lovely, sweeter than any bell.

Gert Strydom

A Small Tear Falls

A small tear falls
when she was very happy,
a small tear falls
when endlessly problems came
and makes a confession
about love she has no knowledge,
and a small tear falls

Gert Strydom

A Smiling Face (Virelay)

Sometimes there is something in a smile
that changes a face
with a kind of sheer light; that in a while
has a kind of grace

bringing great happiness to any old place,
loving to the heart,
setting tender feelings, your pulse at race
playing a tiny part

of living, turning it about into a kind of art,
to those we meet
and when we leave, we have got to depart
we leave a sweet

kind of thing that others constantly repeat,
that does amaze,
making the lives of humans more complete,
leaving them ablaze.

Gert Strydom

A Snowflake (Tritina)

When the wonder of a hexagon binds
I am caught by the very bright beauty
of a tiny white snowflake that glitters,

that forms a unique pattern that glitters
of which the core intimately binds
with a own texture, sparkle and beauty

that sticks around a grain of dust in beauty
as falling snow that in the air glitter
when water vapour as ice crystals binds;

where it binds with beauty, while it glitters.

Gert Strydom

A Snow-White Dove

A snow-white dove
flies into the room's window
and I remember how it had been,
how the crowd listened to the voice of God

at the stream where John was baptising,
how that dove descended,
the disciples stumbling around somewhat confused,
the Son of God who somewhat naked

stretched out His hands above His head to His Father,
the peace that suddenly came to the hearts of everyone,
the onlookers that did cover their eyes to the bright light
and how everybody looked and stared somewhat astonished at Him

and still I do wonder why God himself
came to perish for everyone on this planet?

Gert Strydom

A Song For Minette

(After N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Every night she is with me
and when I do close my eyes
she is present to get kisses
to plead for caresses,
when she does carefully sneak in
and does depart before the day does start.

With eyes sapphire blue
that does cut past the deepest places in me
she comes to embrace,
to tease and giggle
when she does carefully sneak in
and does depart before the day does start.

Give me the night with glittering stars,
the golden enchanting moon, when she does come from afar
to wrap her slender arms around me
when my most beautiful flower
does carefully sneak in
and does depart before the day does start.

In her enchantment and caresses I am cursed
but also blessed by the power of love
that does constantly search me out,
does fall like rain
and every night it is the same
when she does carefully sneak in
and does depart before the day does start.

With her French plait that is tightly bound
and does swish to and thro with every step
or does rustle on her buttocks like the wind
she does carefully sneak in
but does depart before the day does start, back to her exile
when the morning light does devour her.

[Reference: "Kom vannag in my drome" (Come tonight in my

dreams) by N.P. Van Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

A Song For My Sore Beloved

(for Annelize, after A. G. Visser)

Your lips do entice and gleam and glow
severally enchanted I am,
are drawn by green-brown eyes
that does look into my soul,
I do bring budding roses,
want to draw you near,
when falling in love does fill my heart,
I do want to cover you with kisses

Like a lovely princess you glide in,
the organ is thundering,
you fill my heart and every sense,
are radiating in snow-white silk
and you I do want to love forever,
far past stirring you are
when our wedding does begin
and you are breathtaking.

Still years we are asunder,
where this does remain in memories
of how I do experience life,
in my picture of you,
as you remain desirable
where love does not fade,
where I entrust God with everything
beautiful and conceivable.

Where I have got nothing to give to you,
do only bring mere words
as a very sad kind of song
that sings about our love,
about times of joy and sorrow,
I write with affection
where the will of God does always occur
in His great compassion.

[Reference: "Laetitia" by A. G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

A Song Of Joy Sounds Up

A song of joy sounds up when the day begins
in respect as if every swallow, dove and weaver
worships their creator at the brake of day.

A song of joy sounds up

when the sky is open and blue as ink,
when the bright white sun lights its torch
while the morning star still shines blue-white,

while water rushes and shines in the brook
as if a great morning calls everyone to action
soaking hearts and souls with true love
and a song of joy sounds up...

Gert Strydom

A Song Of Sadness

When stars appear at night
the garden still have a kind of beauty
when the evening flower opens pure,
when there is love between us.

There I forget any kind of pain
are surrounded by yellow-white jasmine
even when heartache brings tears to my eyes,
when there is love between us

There is the smell of lavender
that softly is carried by the evening breeze,
when I lift my eyes to God,
when there is love between us

In times of pain and longing
the birds are still singing to each other,
under the big old yellow moon,
when there is love between us.

There I see stars sparkling blue,
I never become bitter,
even when death suddenly comes,
when there is love between us.

Still memories are gliding,
as if it can bring you back again,
although my days continue alone,
when there is love between us.

Gert Strydom

A Song To My Princess Who Are Far Away (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after A. G. Visser)

Were you a bush full of snow-white roses and I the bee,
I would have found the most wonderful nectar from you
where your flowers do hang in the morning breeze
as I do love you and you do adore me.

Were I the letters out of which a poem does consist and you
the words and phrases that do bring joy to the heart and mind
you would have brought me to heights and meaning
as I do love you and you do adore me

but you are a beautiful princess that does live far away
to whom I must drive more than a thousand kilometres
whom I tell about my love, longing and hope
as I do love you and you do adore me

and I aim the arrows of my words far past the stars
as I do love you and you do adore me.

[Reference: "Princesse Lointaine" by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

A South African Reporter Does Not Pray

(in answer to Johannes Prins)

A reporter does not pray and still less a news-editor
and from God they do want to know what is going to happen next,
but God knows every lie that they do sometimes tell,
when they do state the truth along with deceit to set things politically correct,
where they do not regard God at all,
do trumpet sensation that fits into the political scope,
refuse to report the farm-murders and the country that is turning to ruin,
they do avoid any reports about the terror
and from God they do want to know what is going to happen next?

[Reference: "nuusredakteur" (news-editor) by Johannes Prins.]

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Gert Strydom

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Gert Strydom

A Spell, Incantation, Rite And Invocation

1 The need arising for supernatural intervention

After losing every small winning,
I started again and did pursue you,
while a church stifled my new beginning
and they were suspicious in everything I do,
as if I was an agent of all of life's sinning
and each employer took words of churchmen to be true.

2

While at times me they were baiting and berating,
you did not believe fiction and facts mixed as lies,
was satisfied for a much better time to be waiting
and above any other woman in this you were wise,
while I was hated did keep me away from hating,
believed that at a time again I would rise

3

and together we faced many a kind of disaster,
did not each other or God for this blame,
never did make bitterness our master,
while to be happy together we did aim
and although some setbacks came faster,
we kept looking at life just the same,

4

believed that the truth has to be spoken,
although words are twisted and turned by fools,
that promises and a sacred word should not be broken
and tried to build a future without any tools,
saw every small blessing as a Godly token,
knew that in all things love is the thing that rules

5

and through life to each other and God we did hold on,

tried to laugh away every big and small loss,
believed that never from each other we would be gone,
did bravely face each of destiny's whims and every toss
as if situations are finished and done,
did never play over each other the boss

6

and almost wondrous you filled every minute,
while we again found each other when we did argue,
like a glove you did to my life fit,
lived a life full of to others virtue,
where I loved and trusted you more bit by bit
and in all of this with me you did continue.

7 Incantation

At times for our fortune and love
I wanted to write or recite an incantation
that would strengthen with power from below or above,
wanted to smite those responsible for every awful situation,
wanted no one to be able our bond to remove,
wanted to utter an admonishment or a quotation:

8

when a crescent moon rises in a sky that is clear
like; "O mia Luna! Porta mi fortuna" with full courtesy
to be able to hold you much more dear and near,
or hellish in words utter and: 'to-whit, to who' to be of them free,
like a owl calling on death to fill my enemies with utter fear
and some might laugh but to this there is great possibility,

9

to enchant to bind, to hold them in a evil spell
when witchery claims at their own ill will like a god.
to be foredoomed, to be destined to be ill and in hell
in space and time with an utterance and a kind of nod
to be demonically possessed when at them I yell,
to fall from up high to be lower than the sod.

10

I do not need a lion's claws, the teeth from a tiger's jaws,
or a phoenix's blood or a feather from the harpy brood,
to for you stop nature by its distinct reigning set of laws,
while we do live a life that in a way is truthful and good.
I do not need something that above all others awes
or sweat from a demon in a hateful kind of mood

11

or an antique pen, or a heinous crime to halt the ticking of time,
or a Siren's pure tears that turns hope and faith from all fears
to make a spell, a ritual, an incantation or formulary of this rhyme.
Nothing but words I can use to shelter you against the years.
I do not need from deep in a wishing well an enchanted dime,
while the attack of the enemy constantly changes to higher gears.

12

Where loving you feels in essence like sin and losing while we win,
how have we to each other been fitted, whatever errs have we committed
but still in my flesh, my heart, spirit and soul you do dwell within
and in this life where we are, no person has our essence outwitted,
I have the words, do in essence know how an enchantment to begin,
where to this kind of formulary the correct words need to be fitted:

13

Poetry is very similar to being a kind of spell-craft:
a poet utters intentions to find action and effect,
as to words with meanings we do thoughts draft,
where beyond limited language we imagine and do words direct,
as if we do hold an ominous and powerful kind of Moses-staff,
to bring about change and to with mere words connect

14

but in life in the past, present and future I hold
God and you too dear than to do a thing like this,
even where a decisive action will be taken that is bold.
The Judgement-Day not one single one will miss,

as is in the Book of Revelation being foretold,
by Godly love you and I choose our bliss.

15 The need for supernatural intervention during the worldwide crisis

At first over the television flashed scenes
of people frightened by the virus and in great shock
while normal life had been smashed to smithereens
and although governments tried the COVID-19 to block
with controlling measures and tried any means
it came to be everywhere deadly as people do together flock.

16 Invocation

My Lord God I call on You to break the Corona-spell
You do know what makes it on our world bind,
You do know if it's human-made or supernatural from hell
how it does affect the body, soul and mind,
only in Your loving-kindness can humanity excel,
You know where and when a remedy to it to find.

17

I call on You to break the might of this Corona-rite
(Your compassion and grace is new every morning)
to stop this pestilence that does destroy by day and night
You know what in the hearts of people are dawning
(in You there is no darkness, in You there is only light)
and humanity is self-centred do despise every warning.

18

You can control every natural and supernatural thing,
You see the tears that do over dead loved ones flow,
do know what does happiness or great heartache bring,
you know that a deadly spell is about me and I cannot go,
where ultimately in Your control everything exists
I beg you to Your kindness on mankind to bestow.

[Poet's notes:

From the poem "Incantation" by Adelaide Crapsey I am quoting the

mystic ancient words: "O mia Luna! Porta mi fortuna! " There are certain actions going with these words and alone they are powerless to do anything to e can figure out it says: "Oh my moon!Bestow on me fortune! " I myself call on no power / or might but that of the Lord God.

"Nothing but words I can use to shelter you against the years."
Refers to prayers to God.]

Gert Strydom

A Spoilt Rich Woman (Tyburn)

Pretty

witty

petty

slutty

smiling face, pretty, witty disgrace;

petty, slutty to the human race.

Gert Strydom

A Spring Evening

Outside the irises flower yellow and purple
and I haven't seen a red one yet
and there are some pink and white blossoms
on the fruit trees
and the streetlights burn continually
glowing orange-yellow
all day and all night
as if the municipality
does not know how to do things right
and in the fading evening light
the moon is full and white
and the evening star is already shining bright
and a hot breeze sweeps in
through the open windows
and I wonder when the first spring rain
is going to fall
and in the distance I see thunder
crashing down
in blue-white flashes, but the storm
is blown away and again the sky is clear
and the black speckled by stars.

Gert Strydom

A Star Did Fall Out Of The Heaven

A star did fall out of the heaven
and the blue is gone,
it did fall with a burning explosion
and there are fragments laying
wherever I look

and I choke in the vapours of smoke
that does smother the sun
as if it is not hanging in the sky.

Some scientists claim
that it is a meteorite
but still flames are blazing from it
and a crater lies where the Namib had been
and everything there is molten
in one hellish flame sea
that burns without end.

Shock waves run through the country
in gigantic earthquakes
and flooding waves
hit buildings near to the sea
crushing them down

and I wonder if the coming of the Lord is at hand
and if humanity
is on the precipice of its end?

Gert Strydom

A Statesman: Then And Now

He stands on the podium
with his hat
in his hand
pressed against his chest

on the border with Angola
in his country
(as he still rules
over South West Africa)

and his bare head shines
under the bright Africa sun
where he himself was born

and Ratel armoured cars,
tanks, rocket launchers
and artillery drive past in convoys
back from Angola
to get a salute from him.

He stands like a giant
alone against dark Africa
will nuclear devices
waiting ready in bombs

and missiles
for ballistic purposes
are being manufactured.

Later lump after lump
of sand
falls down in his grave
while a lost journalist
runs for photos around it

and he doesn't any more know
what is happening
in his own country
and about thunderbolts

that falls from everywhere
on his people

and rumble ominous
above his grave,
not even about water flowing
above him in a rain stream
and every sunrise
that without equal
unfolds above him

and worms gnawing
patiently on his body
since every thing
fades for him to nothing.

Gert Strydom

A Story Of True Sincere Love (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

A story of true sincere love I have to tell
how a lovely maiden had been my own,
still after many years I am under her spell
but at times away from her I am alone

where many a day to God I do humbly pray
that He will keep and protect her against all ill
where she wanders the earth each sunny day,
will protect her in His omnipotent will

yet love does its own battles raging fight
where even destiny to its great power do fall
and when I do dream my dreams at night
she is a significant part of them all

where daily still nearer to her I do grow
while of the extent of her love I do know.

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Gert Strydom

A Story True At Times (In Answer To Marge Piercy)

Remember the farmer
whose raven turned
into a lovely black haired woman?

Her hair shone with a metallic bluish sheen
and there was warmth in her lovely dark eyes
and her voice had a sweet melody
and she was very intelligent, sociable
and highly adaptable to farm life,

but just after their wedding,
she urged her husband for more and more jewels
loved precious stones, anything gleaming
and with time her manners became
increasingly material, wanting more, raving,
wanting a better house,
as if on the lookout
to be better than the neighbours

she started storing up seeds and nuts,
fruit, the meat of small animals and mammals
in the pantry
and went out to walk, to climb on the high cliffs
peering up at the highest trees

and her voice started to grow more hoarse
and when he got home one day
after labouring under the hot sun
the house was shattered
and everything pulled apart in shreds
and he saw a raven flying away
screeching before disappearing in the blue
and the truth remains
that although courtship turns birds into ladies
marriage, maturity
and age turn them back into old mad crows.

[Reference: A Story Wet as Tears by Marge Piercy.]

Gert Strydom

A Strange Dream (Triolet)

At night I have the strangest dream
where all of my hope is swept away
but everything is not how it does seem.
At night I have the strangest dream
but in love you do vow and deem
to love me past every night and day
but at night I have the strangest dream
where all of my hope is swept away

Gert Strydom

A Stroll At Sea Point

I walk right into
the wind that blows softly,
for a meeting
with the dark blue ocean
that stretches out far
under the bright blue sky
and suddenly I know
that Sea Point had been
a prosperous neighbourhood

but now there are numbers of old folk,
children hanging around like hippies
with liquor, cigarettes and drugs
and car guards catching my eye

while seagulls screeching
with impudence grab
flabby chips from a man's hand
and like screaming helicopters
hang above him
and he angrily
also throws his piece of fish into the air
and saying: "take that too."

The sea stays pretty dark blue
and when I walk along
I smell the salt,
I hear the thundering crunch
of waves without end
breaking and spraying
and it feels if here I am really living.

Gert Strydom

A Struggle For Survival

The day had only begun
when the coach
of governor Van der Stel drives in

and he is searching for copper
or silver to mine
but sends out his dragoons
to disappear behind the hillocks

where every one of them with a blunderbuss
are on the hunt in the thickets.

At Blood river no matchlock gun
or tiny cannon called Griet
could on their own
stop the thousands of attacking Zulus

and right there the pioneers
made a covenant with God
while they did believe in His power,
in His words and commandments

and when the British got the gold fever
the Boer republics
could not avoid going to war

and generals De Wet and De La Rey
taught those foreigners a lesson
while the British send even children and women
to the horrors and death of concentration camps.

Much later I was called up to the military,
to go on patrol,
to protect my country's borders
against attacking terrorists.

The enemy fired with AK-47 rifles
and RPG-7 rockets at me
while the bush, the border and the local population

gave shelter to them

and when the Cubans came with a major force of armour
to destroy us

I saw a shot-out Ratel armoured car
but we did stop the enemy mishmash

and some of the heroes that were honoured there,
entered into a landmine field to bring back
a battle tank and a wounded comrade
while the enemy was firing upon them with battle tanks.

[Reference: Skietgoed (Amminition) by Ernst van Heerden.

"Onder wasgoeddraad se onderhempies deur
klouter klein poenskop Krisjan van De Wet
langs koue waters van die balie,
gooi kole in die erdvarkgat en skiet
pif-paf op kronkels van die rooikopslang.

By geroeste konkas, Wagter met sy blaffies,
skreeu die makkers: "Honoris Crux is joune!
Jy's veilig deur met 'n granaat in die vuur –
nou hol vir die vale in Mulilo se bos,
omseil met jou tekkies die landmyn se brul! ""

My English translation:

("Through washing lines and undershirts
small bold Krisjan van De Wet climbs
next to cold water out of a drum
and he throws coals into the hole of the anteater and fires pif-paf
on the coils of the red headed snake.

At rusting drums the dog Wagter is barking
and his comrades shout: "A Honoris Crux is yours!
You are safely through with a hand grenade in your fist-
now just to run to the bush of the pale Mulilo,
sneak with your running shoes around the roar of the landmine! ")]

Note that a Honoris Crux is a medal of valour.]

Gert Strydom

A Struggle For Survival (Free Verse Sonnet)

Lighting quick runs the springbuck, the impala and the bontebok
but quicker still is death that sneaks closer in the undergrowth
and in its footfall it does avoid every piece of broken stick
as a caracal, cheetah, leopard, lion or hunter
and those antelope do sniff in the air and listen to the ground
where at ease they drink at a stream and do graze
for signs of predators and do prick up their ears for the human and his dog
as existence does depend on avoiding these dangers
and when the jackal howls and the hyena laughs,
the vultures do screeching spread their wings wide and slap them
then there is death that waits in the thickets on a place and time
that comes unnoticed to the plain where the antelope do walk around
where both life and death does hang on mere moments
where even here You do control things like Your will does want them to be.

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Gert Strydom

A Sudden Stare

Her eyes in a deep blue hue caught me,
they were prettier than eyes should be
and for a long moment as I drove by
time stretched out to an eternity.

Still I wonder about what I did see
when dumbfounded by her beauty,
there were thoughts that we did share,
as in almost a moment of ecstasy

but there was more to it than sudden bliss,
a gaze that I could not miss
in a kind of strange togetherness,
a departure from how life usually is

there were thoughts captured in each others stare,
and her beauty, her loveliness was rare
while we comprehended a kind of sudden joy
as if nothing else but we were there.

Gert Strydom

A Swarm Of Swallows

A swarm of swallows turning twittering
tries to reveal with their swishing flight
that a huge thunderstorm is coming
and with electricity the sky is charged pitch black

Gert Strydom

A Tale Of Arthur Pendragon (King Of The Britons)

This tale I was told by Morgan le Fay bit by bit
and a tale I call it
as it talks about a time beyond the present day
which into fairy tales and stories of knights do fit.

On a sunny day a barge came into the bay
and on it mortally wounded was
a great man, a man of faith and integrity
who did believe in prayer and in God,
(maybe the greatest warrior king that ever lived)
who believed in equal opportunities for all
and made his knight's table round as the world

but he was already far-gone
but to man and God he was an important one
and ferried by three black hooded ladies
(Áine, Nimue and Morgan le Fay)
the barge sailed into the bay
right up against the shore of Avalon
and to his wounds they each did care alone.

For years the Roman legions
who invaded the land was driven back
beyond Hadrian's Wall
by Arthur's well trained and equipped knights
who were all honourable men
but with his famous sword Excalibur
he even marched into the continent of Europe
used chariots and horses with great effect
with Sirs Lancelot du Lac, Kay, Gawain,
Percival and Bedivere at his side the battles
against the Romans and legion upon legion raged on
and in every battle Arthur was victorious

but from Camelot (Caerleon-upon-Usk) from Guinevere news came
that Arthur's nephew Mordred was laying the kingdom lame
by raids and had rebelled and was trying to seize it
and did kill anyone that was loyal to Arthur's name.

Guinevere (Gwenhwyfar) did beg Arthur to come home
and very upset Arthur did withdraw all his chariots and knights.
They did sail over the channel back to Britton in many ships
and after landfall did ride by horseback and chariot
chasing Mordred's forces from battle to battle
up to the battle of Camlan where finally Mordred was cornered,
at Lyonesse against the mountains right next to the icy sea
and the great inland lake.
It was havoc on that battlefield with all knights engaged
and desperate Mordred threw a spear that did just miss Arthur
where in great anger Arthur dropped his great sword (Excalibur)
grabbed an own great spear and Mordred also grabbed another.
With great speed the two spears passes each other
and both the king and traitor were pierced.

Knight after knight fell on both sides after this
and the fighting was merciless
but only Sir Bedivere remained unscathed
and carried Arthur who lay motionless to a chapel.

Arthur told Bedivere that Merlin knows
that he will come again to rule
but where he is near to death
be it whatever comes,
but his fellow knights have all fallen
and their time is of the past
as that the world has changed,
God does rule in many ways
and he did entrusted Excalibur to Bedivere
to throw that great sword forged in Avalon into the lake.

Past the ruined shrine where in death knights of old lay
Bedivere went to the lake with a rocky path near to the bay,
could not flung Excalibur with its diamond hilt into the middle of it.
"What happened with my sword?" King Arthur did say.

Bedivere lied and was send back again and again,
yet another time to throw Excalibur away
and he did finally flung that great sword
with all of his force against his will
so that it spun over and over in the air
but before it could splash down

a female arm reached up
and grabbed it at the hilt.

While carrying Arthur past the tombs down the cliff's rock-face
from the sea a dark barge drifted in slowly with grace
with three women in black hoods guiding it
and to meet them at Arthur's instruction Bedivere lengthened his pace.

The ill and wounded not cured by the moonlight at Lough Gur
hear the banshees and know that death is approaching
but Áine, the banshee queen protector,
of those traveling to the underworld
did not want this kingly knight to die.
Nimue and Morgan le Fay from Avalon
the western Isle of the Blessed (the "other-world")
who could give eternal youth to conquering heroes
(both fairy queens with great magical powers)
knew Arthur well and his great deeds of goodwill
and they did their best to bring Arthur back to life.

After aeons these woman did not become decrepit
and just how they did do it
what happened to great king Arthur on Avalon
and thereafter do into volumes of other stories fit.

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Gert Strydom

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and just how they did do it
what happened to great king Arthur on Avalon
and thereafter do into volumes of other stories fit.

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Gert Strydom

A Terzanelle To An Island Girl

On a island beach beguiling
I have met a lady by the water caressed,
slender, tiger eyed and smiling

with a warmth not guessed,
nobility moulded into every speck.
I have met a lady by the water caressed,

duskily from toe to neck,
with eyes burning into my heart,
nobility moulded into every speck,

awaking passion in every part,
as an image of charming glory
with eyes burning into my heart,

talking their own story
at our rendezvous
as an image of charming glory.

Girl, I met you
on a island beach beguiling
at our rendezvous
slender, tiger eyed and smiling.

[References: Les Fleurs du Mal: To a Colonial Lady by Charles Pierre Baudelaire.
To a Colonial Lady by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

A Theologian

(after A.G. Visser)

He has got the highest degree on Christianity at university
but did somehow somewhere loose the godliness of Jesus Christ
and where he now does convince others to his beliefs
I wonder what god now does serve?

[Reference: "’n Teoloog" (A theologian) by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

A Three Double Session On A Sunday In Cape Town (Parody)

(with apologies to Koos A. Kombuis)

I

My heart wants to sleep tonight
with dull tiredness
and my wavy tool
is having trouble.

Everything is squandered, degenerates
from the girl at the red traffic light
till the platonic smiles
of the two dolls in the guest room.
If my winds would just stop turning!
I would with earthquakes stir their salad!
from the Cape Town women on the waterfront
everywhere there are neon lights flashing
messages that I am celibate
and full of expectation.
Al my gates are closed.
I let no maids in.
The party of two has already left,
went to the house of another rich jolly guy
I am full of my own knowledge.
I sneak past the refrigerator
wishing the weekend's hangover away.

In the suburbs I do not have a horn.

II

All my friends have a session.
Everybody is half way mad.
Everybody asks girls to undress.
Everybody is mad with a small town sex hormone.
Only I am more desperate.

I do not get a girl in the street.
All my friends are undressing the whole time
and at times have to leave a girl behind for commitments.
Everybody that does not know and can't even guess.
Although I look endowed in the right way.

I am really endowed.
I am really wired desperate.
I do not get a girl in the street.

When the front bell rings
I am closing inside.
I am a ducktail without vitamins.
For hours long I bake food and cake.
The neighbours compete to be my friends
and come from far.

They say I am celibate.
I do not get a girl in the street.

III

I wish that I had been locked open,
rather in my parents house
between singing girls with condoms,
eatable girls.

I wish I had been at the end of my struggle
right next to the garden gate,
while a love girl jogs past.

I am endowed and have a struggle.
My fascism does not draw applause anymore.
I have served everyone. Nobody is as low as I am feeling.
I am devoted to sex
and cripple with delirium.
– Be silent my friend, while I am getting an urge.

There's a big fire in my loins
while girls are avoiding me.

[Reference: Driedubbele depressie op 'n sondagnag in Kaapstad (three double depression on a Sunday night in Cape Town) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

A Thunderstorm Claps Outside

There's a thunder storm that claps outside
and lightning bolt after lightning bolt flashes past
and the first big drops fall
slamming on the roof
and there are cats and dogs
that finds shelter
and cosiness inside,
but it's far better
to sit right against you
and to get a portion
of your own
spinach and feta quiche

Gert Strydom

A Token

Send me some token to remain
as a sign of the feelings which between us grow
and in years and times of pain
I will of this as a confirmation know.

I do not beg a ring
or even a long letter
or even a small thing,
but want something much better.

Your picture, your voice
is drawing me close
and from my own choice
I need something for you to enclose:

Just a word that you love me as before,
and the notion that you know that I love you much more.

Gert Strydom

A Toll To Pay

I killed them and still
they rose to haunt me
in my sleep
and death's hand
tortured me.

I tried to let it die
with time,
but it lingered
deep within my soul.

They called it peace
but never could
warriors keep,
the personal fatalities
of war away.

In my agony
I tried to forget,
but the demons
imbedded into me
did not want to rest.

Gert Strydom

A Torrent Of Words

In the twilight of the bedroom
you walked up right against me
where I sat on the edge of the bed
and the towel did fall away from you
when you sat down on my lap
and did wrap your arms around my neck

when together we did enter into a new summer
and you did become the fruitful earth
into which the seed did fall.

Your mouth were sweet like yellow hanepoot-grapes
that was baked in the sun
the nipples on your breasts did taste like peaches
that does come with the last part of summer

and moments were an eternity
that now through the years do still linger
in the dark words of the hurting and pain
and in the bright beautiful things
that I do remember with a torrent of words:

Together we did experience the days up to the horizons
in a almost godly summers together in the sun
where those summers were only yours and mine,
while in the garden as if in Eden we tended our flowers
in happiness life was extremely real

and I do know how sincere and dedicated our love still is,
words remain unsaid where such words are unnecessary,
with the playing-off of love between you and me
and this is the song of your days
like I do exist with you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

A Touch (Rubliw)

A touch
of lips speeds up
the quick rhythm of the heart
and a silent single glance causes
a deluge of emotions to follow
when some simple act does love express
to explore uncharted
territory
with you.

Gert Strydom

A Tree (Cavatina)

A tree that welcomes the summer sun,
the wind and rain
stands with its arms reaching into the sky,
it blooms again
during the new spring, in summer has fruit,
knows joy and pain
as it shadow and shelter stays each day
while some children and birds does in it play.

Gert Strydom

A Triad

Maybe I was far too young
For the first,
Who chased her hearts desire
And fell under the spell
Of another.

The second thought
That life was cathing up with her
And somewhere with the passing years
Her feelings died down
And she casted her spell
On a wealthy lover.

The third is still with me
And she stays true
And before we met
I dreamt of her
And destiny
Pointed her out to me.

Gert Strydom

A Troop Of Baboons (Terzanelle)

I saw a troop of baboons gather
with mothers inspecting for ticks
in a group coming together

feeling through heads with finger nails making sharp clicks
and small mouths finding nipples
with mothers inspecting for ticks

and two old cripples
came hobbling along
and small mouths finding nipples

and some female baboons howling as if in song
and babies
came hobbling along

and some were agitated as if having rabies,
and there were large females
and babies

and as guards a group of huge males.
I saw a troop of baboons gather
and there were large females
in a group coming together.

[References: Les Chercheuses de Poux by Jean Arthur Rimbaud and The Sisters
by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

A True Beauty

There were thrushes too,
chorusing in the new morning,
as part of her voice
while her eyelashes move with clouds

where men might dare to fly
as brothers and lovers
in the skies of her eyes
set in the darkest blue hue

and her body, is a slender country
ready and ripe for exploration
with its mountains, plains, valleys

and a woody hill, all a great melody,
a tapestry, of life and living
and she is extremely exciting.

Gert Strydom

A Vase Of Flowers

I saw a vase of purple-pink roses
lying on your dark brown buffet
and simply had to have it.

"Who painted this, " I immediately enquired
loving the picture more with each look
that I took of it
as it's not your thing
to paint still life's with flowers.

"I painted it. It's like painting pillow slips, "
you replied and astonished
I looked at it again
and this was on board
and not in water colours
but done with oil paint.

The folds of the cups were edged
in ridges along their lines
using the techniques
of your abstract paintings
and one smaller unopened bud
laid next to the bowl
almost running into your name.

Little pink flowers was in the background
where the transparent vase with green stems
was against the wall on a tiled floor.

[Reference: Vase with roses by Mandi Engelbrecht. (This painting belongs to me.)]

Gert Strydom

A View Of Spring Turning Into Summer (Hybridanelle)

From the time that the first sunlight hit me
I was surrounded by heat like a cocoon
and I saw the clear blue sky and felt free

while the early morning breeze
kissed my cheek
with an early morning freeze

and there were clouds escaping from my mouth that I could see
evaporating like steam or gas from a balloon.
From the time that the first sun light hit me

some dust tickling my nose made me sneeze
and glorious bright rays
kissed my cheek,

buds opened on every plant and tree,
ants marched to and fro like in a platoon
and I saw the clear blue sky and felt free

and I was experiencing days
of spring leading into summer
and glorious bright rays

and nature's decree
summoning new seasons, made me feel like a tycoon
from the time that the first sunlight hit me

and the wind like a drummer
sweeping through sand, leaves and branches whistling its song
of spring leading into summer

and you my love, had to agree
that an awesome summer would be here soon
and I saw the clear blue sky and felt free

as if this freaky wind was blowing me along,
turned part of me into nature and I saw it
sweeping through sand, leaves and branches whistling its song

and even you were in its spell and we
were both smitten with summer and spring that afternoon.
From the time that the first sunlight hit me
and I saw the clear blue sky and felt free

it was like standing on a high summit
while the early morning breeze,
turned part of me into nature and I saw it
with an early morning freeze.

Gert Strydom

A View On Things (Cavatina Sequence)

We are puzzled, sometimes we are stunned,
in the sheer face
of beauty; loveliness catches the eye,
with a pure grace,
enigmatic we view morning-glories,
things commonplace
like the blue sky on a clear open day
are serene in the view that they portray.

Sometimes the sea plays its optical tricks
in on the mind,
as if changing its feelings with its hue;
daily we find
azure, cobalt blue, green and grey colours
that does remind
of times of happiness, of joy and pain;
too absolute some colours do remain.

If we get too close perspective is lost,
yet we still know
the true shape and colouring of a thing,
or a inner glow,
a white shimmering brings a universe
the eyes do show
that does not exist in our true sight,
sometimes brings to darkness another light.

Gert Strydom

A View Upon The World (Hybridanelle)

At times I look and do not see
and then it is as if I am blind.
What is right there in front of me

at times brings me great joy
while destiny just carries me along
as if fate wants to destroy

and it feels as if its will is going to be,
as if the things that are true and good and kind
at times I look and do not see,

as if evil does a kind of magic employ
and then I do feel forlorn
while destiny just carries me along

as from its fangs I will never be free
but all of this is just thoughts in my mind.
What is right there in front of me

seems if it has not yet happened as if unborn
my troubles do become more and more
and then I do feel forlorn

and it feels as if God's blessings are not many
while I search for signs of love to find.
At times I look and do not see

how beautiful God does my world restore
and in that lengthy hour
my troubles do become more and more

and to somewhere unknown I want to flee
with my steps blown away by the wind.
What is right there in front of me

seems to be without any kind of power
but as if my hope I do languish
and in that lengthy hour

it seems as the people about me has a kind of glee
that everybody is somehow unkind.
At times I look and do not see
what is right there in front of me

and it seems as if the world if full of anguish,
at times brings me great joy
but as if my hope I do languish,
as if fate wants to destroy.

Gert Strydom

A Villanelle For The Love Of My Heart

(In answer to Tom Gouws)

Your breath smells and tastes like a kind of spice
as a person you are delicate and carefree,
you are the most beautiful of all women and nice.

No other will to my heart's yearning suffice,
maybe you are like nutmeg or from the pepper tree.
Your breath smells and tastes like a kind of spice

and when I help when you prepare curry and rice,
our companionship does the loveliest food guarantee.
You are the most beautiful of all women and nice,

like coriander and mustard-seed you do me entice,
in you much more than a lovely woman I do see.
Your breath smells and tastes like a kind of spice,

you are not just a desire and my heart's caprice
as you do set all of the loveliest words of my heart free,
you are the most beautiful of all women and nice.

When you are gone longing pierces right through me,
as you are the dream of how a woman should be.
Your breath smells and tastes like a kind of spice,
you are the most beautiful of all women and nice.

[Reference:"villanelle vir die vertroude geliefde" (villanelle for the love that I trust)by Tom Gouws.]

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Gert Strydom

A Visit At Far Death Hospital

Cold like people that live only for themselves
as if any other person is cut-off
those three doctors acted that night in casualties
of far death hospital
a name given to
a hospital at the border of Springs and Brakpan
by young adult people
who had lost a child in a miscarriage

and although that place
had some of the best facilities and equipment
the primitive and almost barbaric attitude of its staff
was in stark contrast
to the modern, efficient help
experienced previously
at other times at Springs Parkland
and N17 hospitals
which are privately owned

but there we were with a young woman
who was having a miscarriage
and her husband
while she was bleeding
and did come in with a ambulance
and while she was in extreme pain
we were waiting for more
than six hours at casualties
to get any treatment from the staff.

Through the night
we waited for a ward to open
while not one of the nursing staff
or a doctor spoke a word of sympathy

and about twenty other patients
were sleeping on the hard iron benches
at the check in
until five o'clock the next morning
when a ward would be opened

and for the baby that she carried
only death came.

Gert Strydom

A Visit To My Old Home Town

Tombstones of raw granite is still like before,
the once tidy park is now shattered,
with a new shopping mall across the street,
multicoloured children bubble out of the school,
female teachers look at me with interest
and most of the people are now totally unknown
but the town does still make the same picture.

Gert Strydom

A Walk Along The Beach

I see a ship
passing beyond the breakers
white on the top
and red at the bottom

and the sea is calm
and a light wind
is blowing on the beach.

Alone I walk
on the hot soft sand
looking for shells
but here and there
I find one that's not broken

and walk on further
and further
almost as if following a track
that's just out of reach.

Climbing down
a small cliff
I am suddenly on a seclude beach
and in the blinding light
shells are everywhere
and I know
that no one else
has been here.

Some are brittle
like the leaves of flowers
and others hard as rock
with orange and pink embouchures,
a scope of blues,
hazing mother of pearl
shimmering like a rainbow,

brittle green circles
with holes in the middle

and some are more pure white
than snow.

I pick a ransom up at dusk
and lay down on my back
and watch the sun
setting above the sea
and time trail from me.

I must have been stuck
in my own thoughts
and caught by the serenity
when suddenly I noticed
a beautiful naked girl
looking at me
with a kiss in her eyes
that penetrates into my soul.

Her eyes shining
with shivering iridescence
(just like mother of pearl)
and her teeth gleaming
whiter than anything.

The second kiss
is on my lips
and hot and sweet.

Some perfume
almost dazes my head
and her nipples brush
protruding against my cheek.

"You have beautiful shells, "
a husky voice says
and no words can express
my thoughts
while I kiss her back.

Gert Strydom

A Walk Home After Dark

Cars speed past
and their lights search
to find direction
in the rush of the city.

The last red rays of the sun
are dying behind
the ridges
and dusk brings
the darkness of night.

I see the lights appearing high
up in the night sky
and they burn,
as it was
from the beginning of time.

I see a new light hanging bright
where I did not see anything
on a previous night
and it gets brighter
and I wonder
if any Unidentified Flying Objects
are watching us?

Or are some countries
flying secret objects of war,
high up in the night sky?

Is this world like a stage
which creatures from
other worlds
watch for the final ends
to appear?

At times I wonder
what judgement waits
on every one of us?

Or if we are just
another speck
in the big scheme of things
and does destiny
just let the pieces fall
as they may?

Two new lights appear
and I hear the jet engines
of a low flying plane
and it disappears in the distance.

Dark shadows fall
from across the street
and I am wary,
but it's only trees
that moves in the strong wind.

Gert Strydom

A Walk On An Island Beach (Novelinee)

(after Robert Browning, for my wife Daleen)

The dark blue sea and the yellow-white sand
and the golden moon hanging somewhat low
is romantic where we walk hand in hand
while eternally in and out the ocean flow,
we walk and talk, everywhere lights appear,
the sand is soft on the salt-scented beach
and the lingering moments we hold dear,
as the stars feel near, as if in our reach,
where we are falling in love each to each.

[Reference: "Meeting at night" by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

A War Story

There's a story that have being told
(and I do not know if there is truth to it) ,
that after the slaughtering
of the 47th FAPLA / Cuban brigade at the intersection
of the Lomba and Cuzizi Rivers in Angola,

the mauling of several brigades on the way
to Cuito Cuanavale and the destruction
of that military airfield, the loss of many soldiers,
the destruction of nine Mig fighters
and the loss of huge amounts of Soviet equipment

Fidel Castro was very angry and in a terrible rage
brought his Cuban soldiers in Angola
up to fifty thousand, sent four hundred tanks
and his best pilots to Angola,
after the South African forces had withdrawn

which resulted in the Mig-23 attack
on the Calueque dam
in South West Africa (now Namibia) ,
where a Buffel troop carrier was lost
along with some South African soldiers.

According to the story in vengeance
a team of elite South African
Reconnaissance Commandos
was HALO dropped equipped with
the Fim-92 Stinger anti-aircraft systems

that UNITA had supplied to them,
along with some other weapons and equipment
that these special force soldiers do normally carry
to shoot down MIG-23's
and Hind attack helicopters

that was putting UNITA under attack
and it has been told that they were dropped
near to an enemy airbase under the nose

of the large Russian aircraft that was scanning
the air for any approaching enemy activities

where they shot down
several fighter jets and attack helicopters,
but that the section-leader
left one pilot to fly off after seeing him
making a cross, begging God for mercy.

The Reconnaissance Commandos managed to withdraw,
were extracted at the allocated extraction point
without any further incident with either FAPLA
or any Cuban enemy units
but the story gets much more interesting.

It is told that while that Recce section-leader
was holidaying in the United States
he took a taxicab from the airport to his hotel,
where the driver (a former Cuban pilot) recognized him
and that he had left Cuba as a refugee.

Gert Strydom

A White Christmas (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to André Letoit)

I did wonder how a white Christmas
with candles, trees and icy chilliness would be,
in a country where everything is white and pure
without any murder, plundering and fear,
saw the light streaming through the lead glass windows
where angels came to fetch the Sheppard's for the Child,
in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Chartres
did again remember the Godly story,
the towers and images were magnificent
but I was almost ill with longing,
where I were so far from my country where the sun does always shine,
when I did realize that every place has got its own problems
where my people and I are oppressed for the will of blacks
but also that nothing can stop the love of God.

[Reference:"gebed vir my pleegmoeder" (prayer for my foster-mother)by André Letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

A Whole Summer Lies In The Remembering (Free Verse Sonnet)

Your perfume and the fragrance of rain
have penetrated the sheets and curtains,
you said that I am for you the right one,
and on a sunny day you were cheerful.
A whole summer lies in the remembering
of hair curtaining over my face,
of green-brown eyes that look at me,
of bliss and now in the longing pain
but just before sleep a rite
that you do whisper softly against me,
on the chair lie your clothes and your cap,
I hear your breath when I listen,
there are poetry books everywhere on the shelf
and doves coo at night on the roof.

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Gert Strydom

A Woman

I am searching for a woman
who does believe in me,
to whom I can trust everything in my life,
who is radiating like the summer,

in who's heart love does gather
like a cloudburst,
who wants her own will at times,
a girl who is proud to come from Afrikaner stock,

she must be slender like a shadow
but also pretty on the eye,
should be able to keep up with my footsteps
and be able to understand me, for whom I am,

must caress me like the hot sun
does stretch out its rays over the earth,
unexpected like Namaqualand
wake me up with a smile full of flowers

and if I do find her
she will make a horde of offspring for me.

Gert Strydom

A Woman At The Edge Of Death

Once again America and Russia
is at each other's throats
with the possibility of a nuclear war,
the battle of Armageddon on the horizon.

Threats of American embargoes on Russia
are received with discord and unhappiness
by the leaders of Europe
and it's a real possibility that a nuclear attack
can erupt from North Korea aimed at America
and the countries that do support her,
decimating everything throughout the world
with support from communist China
which only seems to be a sleeping giant.

The religious malice
of the believers of Allah is another threat
where terrorists do go to the utter extreme
to make their point,
even if self-inhalation is measured into this

brings us to a decimated nuclear desert with the earth scorched:
the science, culture, technology of eons forever lost
where only the cockroaches do as a enormous pest remain
does to life's puzzle perfectly fit
and it's not just another ridiculous though
of how the future might be.

Global destruction,
the earth's systems cancelled to radiated waste
with at the source of each explosion
even shadows burnt into the rock
becomes a real possibility
while trust in self-righteous
self-serving people has run out
with the sands of time running out to the very moment
that all life on the world is due to be evaporated.

That future to that prophesied time of calamity

is hardwired into destiny
where at the very moment of now
it is like an undiagnosed cancer eating away
at the hope of the future prosperity that does remain
while we live on,
create plans, develop, love, cry and play
while at a time all of history,
all people, animals and plants
are going to be decimated in the third world war

by nuclear, biological and poison weapons
that is matched against each other's
by the opposing super powers
and even third-rate developing nations
are thrown into this melting-pot
which is ready to explode
but even if mankind do not believe
and do not even want to think
that the earth will be gone in a mere moment,
death do come with a much lesser impact

where your pain radiates
as if not ending,
while it is always there
although somewhat suspended
but always somewhere.

Prayers I have said countless times
and still have not found an answer,
as to some things in life
no answer really do exist
and maybe I should be asking for grace,
for you to be taken away
to a more peaceful resting place

where without any knowledge
of the state of the world
and its affairs in death you will rest

but that though brings horror
as I love you too much,
too deeply I adore you

but destiny has the upper hand
while you fade away into the eternal night.

Gert Strydom

A Woman Talks About Her Son

a Woman talks about her son
who was her lover,
in a previous life
and it's as if she
likes the idea.

I wonder if it is fantasy
or reality in her mind
and how she,
get to such a revelation.

To me it sounds too much
like a Oedipus complex
or of somebody that holds
on to her sleeves.

Maybe Freud, Jung and Adler
would have known more
about this type of thing
and would have stated that the man
are emotionally six years old
or maybe the idea
just comes from the mother
who wants to surprise
strangers with it.

Of a previous life
I know nothing
and to me
everything turn round
the here and now
and I rather want to be a man
than a worm or a rat.

Gert Strydom

A Woman That Was Different

I knew a woman
that some people
would have called mad,
who was just different
and taught me well
about bipolar maniac depression.

If she were happy
she held parties
and singed songs
like a operatic star with her soprano voice
and she wanted to dance
until the stars disappeared,
or without a reason
she would hold a wonderful party,
or swim stark naked
in the swimming pool

If she were down
she went to bed,
listened over and over
to messages on her cell phone,
or played
conversations that she did record
over and over again
and tried to sleep for ever.

Darkness folded around her
and any light
that a person switched on in the room,
was too much for her
and like a searchlight in her eyes.

If she were angry,
which she could get easily,
words snagged in her
and she kept repeating the same thing
over and over again,
like a old scratched record

and she couldn't get
to the next words.

If her anger went further
she smashed things,
or grabbed a knife and tried to cut with it,
or tried to throw oil from a red hot frying pan
over a person's face,
or she took shots
with a loaded pistol.

She was destined to loose relationships
and amorous passion with other men
and every now and then
had a new lover,
that she believed would rescue her
and still she wanted
to be married to me.

After various suicide attempts
where I had to save her
time after time,
she went to stay with a lover
and I was totally free
of somebody that is a lot different.

Gert Strydom

A Woman Unconscious

The enemy were almost at the door,
coming with tanks, armoured cars,
rocket launching trucks,
helicopter gunship, fighter jets,
with supporting Cuban troops
under Russian command

and day after day
I prayed for it to end,
for the killing of them, to stop,
where my Ratel armoured car
send tank after tank and many more armoured cars
with phosphorous shells
straight to hell

and by calamity the future changed,
turned into a different world,
changed from the one
scared of them, dropping the annihilating bomb
of millions of people being killed and dead

and at home, the welcoming did not come
at my return
and your were not there,
were killed in a car accident instead,
were for a time unconscious
in a white hospital bed
and the evidence of how cruel
the world can be
still walks with me,
while life goes on.

[Reference: A woman unconscious by Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom

A Women With Her Own Ways And Own Will (Collins Sestets)

There was something strange that did draw my sight
as if she was an angel of the light,
as a apparition from heaven sent
she filled more than a single moment;
a women with her own ways and own will
but made great with some divine perfect skill.

Like me she was but a mortal being
but her glance and her voice made my heart sing,
right there maybe God did not intervene,
her company was sweet, somewhat serene;
a women with her own ways and own will
but made great with some divine perfect skill.

Her lovely bright eyes did mine squarely meet
and she was sculpted perfect to her feet,
her actions was at her will, true and free
and bright like the sun she smiled at me;
a women with her own ways and own will
but made great with some divine perfect skill.

Gert Strydom

A Wounded Leopard (Ballade)

A wounded leopard lies and spy upon the world,
around him there is the cooing of some doves,
guinea fowls and pheasants walk past moaning-moaning
where they are feeding their chicks.

Chorus:

It's twilight and the cold night is coming
and all kinds of animals do now come to him
where they smell his bloody trail
although he lies high, are camouflaged and hidden.

He lies high upon a branch away from the ground
but below there are hyenas and hunting dog upon hunting dog
that does look up and want to jerk him into pieces,
they growl at each other and run up and down.

He drives away blowflies with his tail while he is licking his wounds,
in the tree there is still an impala that he draws nearer with his front paws
and they do not know that healing and a change is coming to his life
when darkness does pull her cloak tight and do cover everything around him.

In the lives of most humans there are a time where destiny does take control,
where nobody does remain out of the merciless way of life,
where without cause wounds are meted out,
even when you do avoid conflict and argumentative conversations.

Where his life does lie in pieces like the dead carcasses
there are people that do insult him in his lot like a chorus of hyenas,
others that like wild hunting dogs do want to devour him in his unemployment,
still others that do not want him to have any chance for survival.

When surrounded from above he does growl and roar,
then for a moment all of them do run
but do return more vicious than before
to see if he has fallen from the branches.

He loves the vistas that the red-day and life does bring,
feels somewhat better and are lured to jump in between his enemies
to drive them away eternally, to let them spatter into all directions,

but he lies and waits on the creator to bring healing bit by bit.

When the dark night does fall still darker over him,
the shots the eradicating hunter are aimed at something else in the distance
and somewhere a lion roars in rage and he smells the spilled blood of the hunter
while everything goes silent in the thickets, on the hillocks and in the dales.

Gert Strydom

A Wreath Of Sonnets For My Darling

I

Outside all the streets are lighted
while you smell red roses in the garden
and it's as if my thoughts linger with you,
at the morning glories trumpeting over the wall,
the windows reflect you in their glare
and you crawl just deeper into my thoughts,
above me stars sparkle, it's as if one is dancing
and I am aware of a secret bond,
I am madly in love with you;
our friendship came suddenly
where two people in the whole universe
are momentarily astounded by each other
and its only moments before you join me,
the doors are closed and locked.

II

The doors are closed and locked
when you come into my life irrevocable
and my world is falling to pieces
but it's as if you give to every day the summer sun,
you change the cool winter rain of months
with a unknown adaptability
and deep in my heart you are the only one;
that makes me happy and sometimes sad,
maybe we knew that difficult days will come,
maybe we had an intuition that moments do decay
but still we are in love with each other,
as two persons finding each other in all of humanity
and it's as if the blessings of God do descend on us,
when the nightly silence lingers.

III

When the nightly silence lingers

I read deep thoughts, your eyes shine
with the brilliance and glittering of rainbows,
they are radiated by a bright pure light,
they lie like two olives totally oval,
when you laugh full of sunshine and you are elated
and still they have got the capacity
to draw all of my thought to you,
when you want to make my whole world wonderful,
as if we are totally exceptional,
and it's as if every bird is calling its mate,
as if the sunrise and the days become more beautiful
and like two children we find meaning;
I cannot get you out of my thoughts.

IV

I cannot get you out of my thoughts,
in this cold winter I miss you,
it's as if I want to include you in everything
and I am constantly looking at your photograph.
Even the wind that blows inconsolable
brings in its songs a bigger sense of longing,
as if all things in life
suggests that I flee but still I am captured
in the power of destiny,
and it's as if escape lies in my power
(I know it sounds somewhat ridiculous
to change everything all at once)
and I am now attached to your soul;
we walk with your hand that fits in mine.

V

We walk with your hand that fits in mine
past the gardens of houses to the church,
the wind jerks on your jacket
and you are the only thing that I do notice.
Your voice makes my heart frolic,
when you tell me about all kinds of things
and your voice sometimes sounds like that of a young girl,

while I pick up beautiful rocks lying here and there
but something precious I want to pick for you
when your presence makes me feel good,
and I want to embrace you
as we stand for long moments
while the day passes rapidly;
silver-white stars are all over the sky.

VI

Silver-white stars are all over the sky
before the cold rain starts to pour down,
when the wind cries at the corners of the house
and I see leaves whirling around,
Thunderbolts fall for moments and disappear,
and there is monotony in the swirl
but it's as if you always cross my life
and even when my days are busy
I realise how fleeting life is,
that life comes down to the here and now
and when the rain keeps splashing down
you come to visit and we share every secret,
talk to deep into the night until the stars fade;
we talk about places where we had been.

VII

We talk about places where we had been
and through the window the moon peeps,
while we kiss and I hold tightly onto your hand,
when our thoughts go back to the past
and the seriousness in your glance
at times makes me scared,
as if a secret shines in your eyes,
when you look mischievous.
Outside many stars glitter blue-white
when the fragrances of jasmine and gardenia hangs in the air,
with lights that glow in the darkness,
the lights of cars that are caught in the moment
and a paper bag is rolling around in the wind,

the old oak tree throws a dark spot.

VIII

The old oak tree throws a dark spot
while doves constantly coo from it,
while the wind jerks on the windows
and the moon watches us shyly.
Gleaming sharp light glitter in the night,
bringing a kind of joy to the dark hour
and in my veins the pure power rushes
of the glowing fire of great passion
of earthly desires, as if from the ground,
burning full of emotion through me
when sparking, flaming your soft mouth
awakens emotion in a showering flood
and sweetly your clear laughter sounds,
your lips are suddenly hot, sweet and soft.

IX

Your lips are suddenly hot, sweet and soft,
tonight there is a potsherd golden moon
and it's as if I am yearning for years for you,
as if the whole wide world suddenly comes to a halt,
as if the moon is breaking into pieces,
it rises as if it's following the stars in its orbit,
and a piece pierces into the heaven
as it brightens, gleams lingering
and it's as if the moon uses magic,
with golden rays and shadows
and for moments I consider conquering you,
to find love without fear
and intensely you watch me for moments,
when my heart beats in rapture in my throat.

X

When my heart beats in rapture in my throat

you smell of flowers that bloom in spring
while passion wants to run away with us both,
when your eyes glow with secrets.
When you kiss me a star jumps in the sky,
you are the sun that carries this summer,
you make me madly in love with you,
you are the answer to which I am yearning.
Your lips caress butterfly soft over my mouth,
for moments lightly touches my cheek
as if you are near to holy ground
and moments linger, are caught;
in the distance a lightning bolt rattles,
a dove calls to its mate in the dark night.

XI

A dove calls to its mate in the dark night
and we both are full of joy and tireless,
when you smile like the sun in the afternoon,
it's as if thousands of fountains flow from your eyes,
radiating flaming from your whole body,
against your blouse sinful blossoms appear,
an attraction that goes to your thighs
making all other needs disappear,
as if eternally you are my flower of flowers
from which all other flowers come;
as if you walk in Eve's steps with sympathy,
can entice any man but it is me that you are astounding,
and I want to marry you and make a home;
when time suddenly stops in that moment.

XII

When time suddenly stops in that moment
when you set me free from all other women,
my blood pulses through my head,
and in this summer you are only looking at me.
When old age appears with the years,
will fire then still arise between us,
when destiny makes us grey, bowed and disguised,

and wants to show us the road to eternity?
Will we then still know love,
when all other things fade away
like fog in the secret places of the mind
and then still be following love,
will we want to find each other in every sentence and word,
when your eyes tell me that you love me?

XIII

When your eyes tell me that you love me
let smoke rise from the glowing sparks,
let us then constantly begin each day anew,
and remain silent about the mistakes of the past.
Let our love become more than just passion,
in the holy temples of the heart,
let us pour out our spirit and soul into each other,
then let you still play your role and I my part;
may we love each other in happiness and sorrow,
even in the wild stormy wind,
may we be stand together on each occasion,
even when life blinds us at times,
may you never fabricate any truth,
when I look into the depths of your soul.

XIV

When I look into the depths of your soul
now that winter goes strips to skeleton,
I know that we can conquer any problem,
while I search joy and meaning from you
and like always I am still blinded
to the errors that your humanity screams out,
and still there is something in me that wants to find you,
while you are caught in this century
and right through the night I am dreaming
about how you fold your slim arms around my neck,
but I do not know what to expect from these things
and it's as if you are still here with me,
even when the last leaves falls with old age,

when we stand before the God of the universe.

XV

Outside all the streets are lighted
the doors are closed and locked
when the nightly silence lingers
(I cannot get you out of my thoughts) :
we walk with your hand that fits in mine,
silver-white stars are all over the sky,
we talk about places where we had been,
the old oak tree throws a dark spot.
Your lips are suddenly hot, sweet and soft,
when my heart beats in rapture in my throat,
a dove calls to its mate in the dark night
when time suddenly stops in that moment
when your eyes tell me that you love me,
when I look into the depths of your soul.

Gert Strydom

A Wreath Of Sonnets To A Sweetheart

I

Tonight for the first time I caught your gaze
where you smelt roses in a garden,
with auburn curly hair hanging down your shoulders,
at morning glories trumpeting in strings over the wall

the window reflected you, caught in bright glass
and from the street I saw how lovely you are
feelings dancing in your sea-green eyes
aware of a unknown secret bond

but in the morning light you did disappear like mist
and when I rose
you were just a thought
you were already gone

like a pretty withered flower;
our friendship came suddenly.

II

Our friendship came suddenly.
like lightning falling from the blue sky
where two people in the great universe
are astounded by each other momentarily,

maybe we knew intrinsically that troubled days were coming,
perhaps had a intuition that moments decay with time
and for the time that was given to us, we were madly in love
like everyone in mankind at times

as if you came into my life unstoppable,
the winter rain of months changed
with a unknown adaptability
and although you are at times far off and distant
you still remain the only one;
like two jewels your eyes are shining.

III

Like two jewels your eyes are shining
pierced by a bright light,
they are oval like olives
with the glittering of rainbows

still they have got the ability
to with a own secret language
draw my thoughts to you
when you bewitch me, full of sunshine laughter and elated

making the world wonderful
as if we are exceptional,
as if clouds are writing enchanting words in the sky,
the sun is rising over days that just get more beautiful
and like two children we find meaning;
by our own free will we are incorporated into each other

IV

By our own free will we are incorporated into each other
in ecstasy, recreation and trouble
of the small loving death
with words that your body writes.

Your slender body
presses tightly against mine
and I can feel your heart beating
without hesitation driven

moments are drawing out long
we are fulfilled in ecstasy,
you drawn me still closer
hitting your nails into me, screaming in pleasure
as if caught in this single moment,
you were twisting from sheer pleasure.

V

You were twisting from sheer pleasure,

but why do your eyes bother me
when you complete me so perfectly,
going deep into my soul leaving an inability?

When this wondrous night passes
you stay incomprehensible to me,
as if something is missing from my comprehension,
that lies between us, something almost untouchable.

Still there is sunshine in every glance that you give
and an intimate certainty with which you love me
as if you trust me with every secret,
as if our feelings will never change

even when destiny foams thundering,
when the cold rain pours down.

VI

When the cold rain pours down
as if there's no stopping to it,
sieving down in a Cape winter in banks of fog,
with the wind howling around the corners of the house

there's a monotonousness in the noise,
days became grey as if stripped from meaning,
your smile comes to me day after day to refresh my life,
it's as if you traverse my life the whole time

and I realise how fleeting life is,
that what we have got is caught in the here and now,
in the glitter and sparkle of the moment,
where I cannot still draw you near;
while you are doing your undressing dance.

VII

While you are doing your undressing dance
my beloved auburn girl, you are standing there winking,
while braless you gambol around me

catching me in a trance

and the sincerity of your glance, the sparkle
at times is terrifying as if it maims,
as if something gruesome shines in your eyes,
spread your web for me without a chance of escape

let smoke rise from sparks
in the temple of my heart
and when the fire alarms are wailing and I yearn for you
you have already caught me and can be silent,
you play your game and I my part to it;
glowing lights are radiating in the night.

VIII

Glowing lights are radiating in the night,
bringing joy to the dark hour
and in my veins power rushes
of passion's glowing fire

of earthly desires, as if from the ground
burning through my blood
when your sparking mouth
let desires awake in a pouring flood

and creeping your hand sail over my chest
in flaming lust,
in the hour of deeper thirst
that only lips, hands and bodies can answer to,

it feels as if in emotions we are overstepping the mark;
tonight there is a potsherd moon.

IX

Tonight there is a potsherd moon
as if the moon is breaking in pieces
there's only a piece of it glowing in the heaven
and very slowly

it rises in the sky, as if it is following the stars in its orbit

where it hangs high as a piece, until the morning comes eventually,
showing early morning still against the blue sky
until its brilliance disappears, suddenly wasted

and still it's as if the moon has enchanted me,
with its rays and shadows
falling secretly over my whole life,
it enchants me with love
that I find without fear;
when you kiss me a star shoots past.

X

When you kiss me a star shoots past,
you are the sunshine of this summer,
you make me mad with passion,
as the answer to what my life is yearning for

and in the dark night
when you come and lie
somewhat afraid next to me, supple and soft
there's passion that I read in your eyes.

Your lips stroke butterfly soft over my mouth,
at times only touches my cheek,
as if near to holy ground
free and never caught

with eyes at times gleaming secretively;
you smell of flowers blooming in spring.

XI

You smell of flowers blooming in spring
fresh, noble and sweet
and it's as if thousands of streams flow through your eyes,
as if a glowing

is radiating out of them
but against your blouse sinful blossoms are showing,
an attraction, a stimulation that goes to your loins
where all promises, all relationships end

as if you are the flower of flowers,
out of which all others come,
going the way of Eve, with great loving
drawing every man, to whom you glance astoundingly

and in this spring you smile at me,
as if you can free me from every other woman.

XII

As if you can free me from every other woman
with lasciviousness in every step,
you are only looking at me
and sometimes your eyes radiate like thunder

and when age come with the years,
will fire then still rise between us
when our youth disappears into the grey, bended in spent disguise,
beginning to show the road to eternity?

Will we then still know the meaning of love,
when all other things begin to fade away
like fog in the brain and memory
and will we still dare

where things now look lovely and heavenly
to look past the surface?

XIII

To look past the surface
how the terribly strong wind
is blowing the winter rain away,
one morning I was gazing with moisture blinding me

while the palm trees were waving around,
it was grabbing broken branches,
with the water in the distance looking grey in the bay
and I was walking unnoticed to your window

and I was wondering if you

would look down from the top window,
maybe would spot me, if I would be able to get in touch with you
and even that gloomy day was lustrous to me

as you love me in times of joy and sorrow;
now that winter is drawing skeleton.

XIV

Now that winter is drawing skeleton
with days bending like branches over me,
with a few birds rising calling into the air,
have I got to miss you, search for you for joy and meaning?

Am I still blinded
against the errors that you scream out,
where like all others you are caught in this age?
Still there's something in me that wants to find you

and I dream right through the night
how your slender arms embrace me,
I see you in other faces during the day,
as if you are close to me
and I wonder what to expect of these things
while the leaves of the acorn are falling and perishing around me?

XV

Tonight for the first time I caught your gaze,
our friendship came suddenly,
like two jewels your eyes are shining,
by our own free will we are incorporated into each other.

You were twisting from sheer pleasure
when the cold rain pours down,
while you are doing your undressing dance,
flowing lights are radiating in the night.

Tonight there is a potsherd moon,
when you kiss me a star shoots past,
you smell of flowers blooming in spring,

as if you can free me from every other woman
to look past the surface
now that winter is drawing skeleton.

Gert Strydom

A Yearning For Nemesis

(after Sipho Sepamla)

Like leaves falling in the autumn
and scratching are swished by the wind
against the window
they do come as individuals,
some do walk in pairs,
others in groups.

Like a sandstorm that suddenly does blind
it is difficult to find people in the crowd
where over platforms they are struggling past,
almost into each other in a mishmash.

I saw tiredness,
sometimes a yearning for nemesis
on the faces from which the masks did disappear
as if the will to live

was somehow destroyed
in the buildings, offices
and factories of the city,

with voices that constantly did chatter,
did make jokes
and some people were to one side
while some were old-fashioned

and in all of this,
even in their conversations
they still did remain individuals,
that did conceal their loneliness,
did almost never make real friendships

and in eyes I did see burn
the deep meaninglessness,
the deeper urge
to mean something to someone,
to be reckoned

while people did scatter
to the cells of their apartments
and others locked themselves away
beyond the bared windows and doors
in the suburbs.

[Reference: "The Loneliness Beyond" by Sipho Sepamla.]

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Gert Strydom

A Yellow And A Red Weaver Peck At Porridge On The Grass

A yellow and a red weaver pecks at porridge on the grass,
some sparrows gather twittering around the water bowl
and I cannot think about a more beautiful picture
when the air is ink blue and dew shines on the flowers
and it feels if right here man can reach to God,
as if nature is as it once was,
when even the sun-birds frolics around
and it feels as if the bees are beckoning me,
when a kind of serenity comes to the garden
and together you and I write a own story
when every rose and iris comes to perfection,
when there is something magical to each flower
and here and there one is snow white,
when doves coo in the chestnut tree,
when I do love you and your garden,
when a kind of youth comes to my days of age,
and morning-glories examine the sun open mouthed
where it hangs high in the bright blue.

Gert Strydom

Abandoned Homestead Ruin

(after Ted Koorser, after Carl-Pierre Naudé)

He was larger than life says the glance
in the old portrait that still hangs on a top-floor wall,
that he was big and tall says the faded jeans
and boots (a number fourteen)
that is dusty in a top-floor cupboard,

a wealthy man says the huge bed and old coins
that is out of circulation carelessly left
in a top room
and like his father and ancestors feared God,
says the huge old family-bible
that is dusty but still good with a list of ancestors in it
on a coffee table right next to the bed
but a farmer at heart says the layout of the fields
which are bare with only grass now growing in them
and the huge barn where old tractors and implements
and many tools
are tidy but all under a thick coat of dust.

He was married and in love says the bedroom
with its ancient silver candlesticks,
the huge pink bathroom
and extra cupboards,
that she cared for them
says the bottles of fruit preserve
and that they had a boy says
the toy soldiers, and toys of tractors and trailers
and the tyre-swing under a big oak tree

but now there is a huge tree in the middle of the house
that is higher than both stories
that does not regard them or even the house
where it's like an Yggdrasil
that connects heaven, earth and hell
and it does crack the floor and walls.

That there was a disaster

says the burned out downstairs remains of the house
where everything is black and lifeless except that huge tree
from where iron stairs lead to the top storey
where everything was left intact
as if people died on the ground level,
as nothing was removed or taken from the top floor
and that tree is lustrous where to the sky it does reach.

[Reference: "Abandoned Farmhouse" by Ted Koorser."Die
murasie" (The ruin)by Carl-Pierre Naudé. Poet's note: The Nordic
"Yggdrasil" is a legendary tree that connects the under-earthly (hell)
, earth and heaven with each other.]

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Gert Strydom

Abandoned Zimbabwean Farmhouse

It was a great commercial farm
at a time,
says the uncultivated fields
where the last crop of maize stands
not harvested at the right time,

says the big house
build from rock with Rhodesian teak floors
and great wooden doors
of which only splinters remain
where they had been axed
for fire wood

says the huge barn,
with a now rusting roof,
now stripped from anything valuable

says the stable now bare
from any living animals
and its obvious that the farmer
and his family left in haste
and that everything is going to waste

says the broken china cups, the broken dinner plates
the child's toys which are scattered, smashed
and I wonder if the family did survive
when the farm was invaded
by a thieving unruly youth
and so-called war veterans.

[Reference: Abandoned Farmhouse by Ted Kooser.]

Gert Strydom

Abelard Cries While He Is Writing

Far too long the time has been
and although I am looking
all of the time in my thoughts at you,
your image over time is fading,
like a very old painting
and in my thoughts there is disintegration.

The pain cuts right through me
and I must confess
that all of the time I am yearning for you,
even if I can only see you for moments,
I yearn to have you with me
and to hold onto you as my lawful wife.

Gert Strydom

Ablaze

Ablaze! An armoured car
is aflame and stuck in
a field of landmines
and enemy tanks are everywhere.

So soldiers say - on yesterday -
just as the dawn was grey
a Ratels wheels
set some landmines of
and it was stuck there
and received seven shells
from enemy tanks
and it's a terrible, terrible thing.

So Generals say - on yesterday -
just as the sun was rising
we lost one Ratel-90 armoured car
stuck in a landmine field,
but she gave a brave fight
and the enemy lost
thirteen tanks that came
to take a shot at her.

So angels say - on yesterday -
just as sun lit the sky,
man played war games again
and used explosives, cannon and flame
and innocent men died
trying to survive
and it's a pity
that man doesn't know
how to live in peace.

Gert Strydom

About A Daisy (Balassi Stanza)

She picked a white daisy,
drew off petals easy,
said he loves me or does not
watched the white flower,
scared to get it over,
wondered what she had got,
her tears gleamed like dew
and the answer she knew,
picked flowers for a pot.

Gert Strydom

About A Fruitful Summer (Cavatina Sequence)

The oak size avocado tree had fruit
during the spring
and into summer, like small pineapples,
with some dropping
to the earth, bursting like hand grenades,
I was picking
from a ladder set on the cobble stones,
dropping down to mother the greater ones.

The two dogs had their fill from those broken,
the roof was struck
while some were falling down like rocks at night,
by some great luck
they just missed the neighbour's nearby car,
more I did pluck
for the neighbours, friends and the family
and they all tasted butter-sweet to me.

At the plum tree the birds were twittering,
the long ladder
swayed under me on the moist soft ground,
I did gather
buckets and boxes full, was startled
by a adder
that was green and hissed in the large tree
and I dropped down to the ground to be free.

The vineyard was full of Catawba grapes,
with their sweet scent,
their essence, filling the summer air,
evanescent
was the summer, but mother was happy,
she did present
to the ladies at church some baskets full,
while I met a girl that is beautiful.

Gert Strydom

About A Girl Called Marike (Cavatina Sequence)

She thought: He truly cares for me, saw eyes
full of worry,
while the affairs of state weighed him down;
like a lorry
his frame was broad; he could take all the strain,
she was sorry
for him, helped him wherever she could,
only acted like a first lady should.

Far too selfless she loved him, in his shade
she spent her life,
walked the streets to win him some voters,
in times of strife
she supported, caressed, was with him,
she was alive
in his presence, was proud of his career,
she wanted always to him to be near

but a dark day came that every headline
told about him
and his lovely, lively, foreign mistress;
her life was dim
while he rode the wave of self-centred fame;
over the brim
her tears, her sorrow, suffering did flow;
but he was not the great man she did know.

Gert Strydom

About Flowers And Trees

I

Why did the chrysanthemum wait long
to open it's quivering twisted rays?
When other flowers are gone it grows strong
in these much more colder wintry days

with cups making blossoms like anemones
some seen as feathery, plumed, or spidery
growing big or smaller in shaded tones,
in the winter portraying nature's imagery

in bronze, brown, purple, red, pink and white
with a single or semi-double blossom
growing to man's and the Creator's delight
when ripe makes growing very unwholesome.

Why was it not sprouting, rising, growing
at the beginning of the lovely spring?

II

At the beginning of the lovely spring
in the veldt among big acacia trees
when the first drops of rain are visiting,
drawing new life, flowers and buzzing bees

I find the bulbous hyacinth flowering,
and its appearance, its fragrance
is almost totally overpowering
when it makes its sudden appearance

with pale-blue petals of strings all opening
smelling like a tiny perfumery,
with bell shaped small cups that are hanging
bright among the green and brown scenery

displaying the joys of living and life,

many times have I counted groups of five.

III

Many times have I counted groups of five,
in things making the way that nature is
and have seen five eggs coming to live,
five leaves on flowers with five small bees.

Even on some trees that number is right
but strangely sometimes it might be wrong
and while in nature I walk along,
I see different flowers in a throng,

hear various birds singing their beautiful song,
there's something in all flowers, in each tree
that tells something about its makers will
who makes all things how they are to be

I have seen even five bundles to a sheaf;
the trees are butting in flower and leaf.

IV

The trees are butting in flower and leaf
as if some kind of magic word was said,
in rejoicing without any small grief,
the growing long green stems upwards do spread

as if new life has come to them again
like from scratch they are programmed to do,
after receiving power from summer rain
but like humans sometimes they do die too

carrying more bountiful each summer day
to the custom of their kind and their breed
till the summer suddenly dwindles away,
again they are stripped as if in need

and I like the fragrant fresh smell the best,
while walking through a huge pine forest.

V

While walking through a huge pine forest
a gentle wind like a friend greeted me
and for lingering long moments I did rest,
feeling from the whole big world somewhat free

and it was filled with the catching smell
of pine trees and soft in its embrace
for many moments long did I there dwell,
by songs of twittering birds amazed

and I then longed forever to be
among the flying birds, the buzzing bees
and the soft shadows, the tranquillity
of the peaked mountain, the large trees,

but sometimes lightning falls in a blue-white spark,
when the stormy wind blows strong in the dark.

VI

When the stormy wind blows strong in the dark
and the dark black evening suddenly glows
and the wind whispers with a howling bark
among the waving, rocking trees and throws

branches breaking, snapping, twisting, tearing;
you can hear that great savage strange beast
walking about, awoke from slumber stirring
during winter in the forest, in the east

suddenly coming to its greatest strength
somewhere in the thick enveloping fog
as the long night draws out darker at length
while its breaking, mauling log upon log,

from this windy monster I want to be free,
let me find some peace and tranquillity.

VII

Let me find some peace and tranquillity
at some places where man have never trod,
experience the greatest kind of beauty
that still is spared from the iron rod

with which man rules cities, huge countries
let me see miracles, see nature's joys,
away from buildings and big industries,
far away from the scorn, the manmade noise.

Let me smell some sweet wild flowers and lie
on wild grass to find nature's peace and rest
under a clear blue unpolluted sky,
away from even them whom I love best

and I wonder before the winter comes along,
why did the chrysanthemum wait long?

Gert Strydom

About Love

I

You were my darling, the relief in the desert,
your smile shone in darkness over my life
and you brought me refreshment
out of the fountain of love in your heart.

II

In your arms at times there were rest,
I was constantly aware of your love
while stormy winds were crying on the outside
and with you I were warm and comfortable.

III

As if it were an interval in a inaccessible world
your body brought new meaning to my life
while you were clinging to me in yearning
we formed a magical bond.

IV

I know that our days here are measured out,
that a time will come where I will no longer know
about how deep and intense your love is
and I pray that in the hereafter I do not forget.

V

When at times your were not with me
I knew how deeply a person could miss someone,
I knew how much your love meant to me,
that it was the greatest blessing in the darkness of this world

VI

I do not know what I did love more
you clinging to me in passion

or you looking with love over a table at me,
comprehending the emotion in your look.

VII

In this world each one of us is only an actor
who does not really know what will happen in the next one
and as destiny determines
the earth opens for some.

VIII

Still it is with love that you are resting,
maybe totally unaware of my current existence,
what had been between us stays great
and with the circumstances I have got to take acquiesce.

IX

Maybe someday in the coming world
I will be astonished by the new form that you exist in
and we will still adore each other,
in a place where everything is perfect.

Gert Strydom

About Love I Had Been Very Naive

About love I had been very naive, believed like Visser,
tried to keep my life for you
as if it comes from the Creator's hand from above,

saved my life for ten years for you
and I was prepared to suffer through it,
tried to keep my life for you

waited in my best years to have you,
time passed as if I was dreaming
and I was prepared to suffer through it,

and I tried to hold to integrity and was devout,
waited on you and you were far off,
time passed as if I was dreaming

while I believed that the same star was leading us
saw signs, things in your smallest gesture,
waited on you and you were far off

and now after twenty years we are standing in front of each other.
About love I had been very naive, believed like Visser
saw signs, things in your smallest gesture,
as if it comes from the Creator's hand from above.

(Reference: from *Euheu fugaces* by A.G. Visser.

"maar eenmaal in die lewe kom
die liefde weergaloos;
en eenmaal in die gaarde blom
volmaak 'n wonderroos."

My English translation:

"but once in life comes
love without equal;
and once in the garden is flowering
perfectly a wondrous rose.")

Gert Strydom

About Mothers

In most things I am free
to make my choice
but still she tries to guide me
with her look, with her voice

and I wonder why mothers
keep on bothering?
And to think of it, it isn't surprising,
but till eternity they do the mothering thing?

Gert Strydom

About Our Love

That love simultaneously let you rise
and fall,
plane your humanity
and grind on you

to something bigger than when you were alone,
like ginger beer yeasted in me
till you left your mark
and it went to full meaning.

Like the sun which can stroke and burn
somewhere between Eden and the desert,
love required that we give and take
and we were bound hand to hand.

¶Envoi

Somewhere between the pleasure and deeper pain
the healing and growth appeared
we were independent and still one,
bounded together by an invisible line.

Gert Strydom

About Some Things Unseen (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

In loving each other we sow our seed,
in passion kiss
while we wish for some greater happiness,
in joy's great bliss
and then suddenly some life comes from us
and we know this
binds us each to each and to a own child,
our joy and pride runs extremely wild.

From our very birth we learn about love;
feelings within
at times comes forward from the very dark,
they are unseen
but alive they jump, breathe, roar, run and thrill;
they are quite keen
to set a mark on each single life
they materialize in love and strive.

Still the depths of some selfless love remain
a mystery
while we create like the divine some new life,
we are set free
to love or hate, to do right or wrong in
integrity
or in the evil, we strive on our own,
or we try to reach beyond the unknown.

[Reference: 'Mystery' by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

About The Name Of God Being Used

As a Christian I have got a problem
with the omnipotent Lord God being blasphemed
or with His name being used in vain
and with the same occurring with the name of the savior
our Lord Jesus Christ
on television, in the movies and in the daily talk
of some Christians, of people
from every nation, language and every creed
so as if God does not exist
or as if God has become our own playmate
as if His great and holy name means nothing.

I have not heard a person say:
"in Satan's name"
nor "thank Metatron it's Friday"
nor "for Buddha's sake, "
nor "with Allah, "
or "thank the Kabala"
or "Krishna knows, "
or "oh my Jane
or "by Amaterasu"
or "in Shiva's, in Vishnu's, or in Devi's name"
or "under Muhammad"
or "may Maitreya damn him"
or "may Tao forbid it" or "Mahatma knows"
or "the Dalai Lama bless his soul"
or "by the help of the ancestors"

yet the great name of the creator God
does ring out continually in the mouths of men.

[Note: With great thanks to Janneman Enslin for the idea for this poem.]

Gert Strydom

About The Power That Love Do Impress

About the power that love do impress,
there is something that is really lovely
a kind of beauty that does confess
that love does come totally free
and in my heart your image does linger on
while all thoughts, needs of others are gone.

Gert Strydom

Above A Enemy Camp

A mirage fighter jet flies past
like a angel going in advance
on the crusade.

There's an enemy camp
going up in flames
and clouds of smoke
hanging ominous
over the place
while our aeroplane
flies to the right height.

With the sun
showing its head
over the horizon,
I fall like a bat
breaking through the airspace

and right around me
the sky is full
of other bats
that decent angry on the target
with fangs exposed downwards.

[Reference: Bats here refers to "parabats" as South African airborne soldiers were known.]

Gert Strydom

Above Me The Stars Do Stretch Light Years Away

(to Minette)

Above me the stars do stretch light years away
it's as if the darkness does separate us
and somewhere in my heart you are still bonded to me
but that which had been has passed in this life.

In the sudden breeze I want to catch fresh air
around me beetles sing, doves coo in the night
and still I am caught in your web
it is as if I am waiting on you to come,

as your heart is attached to mine,
I see a bolt of lightning touching the earth,
do smell the rain that falls suddenly
and does splash down in a stream

but it's only thoughts of you
when on the porch I look into the night,
I see the tar shining, washed clean
and in vain I am clinging to that which had been between us.

I tried to remember you
but you are gone.

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Gert Strydom

Above The Shed On The Winter Porch

Above the shed, the winter porch
a young wild dove
continually calls its mate
and when the door slides open
I see dots on its breast
and at the pond it quenches its thirst
and I see dots
and I see dots
that shines; when it is frightened it becomes sullen.

Above the shed, the winter porch
the oak tree rustles
and then my mother coughs badly from croup
where sometimes she sits and dream
as the sunshine flames up hot
and I watch her caringly
as the sunshine flames up
as the sunshine flames up
as if a field fire runs past.

Above the shed, the winter porch
a swarm of swallows peck,
sometimes doves land in a group,
and at times I hear my mother sneezing
while I am caught with a kind of hope,
but I know that time is running out
while I am caught,
while I am caught
and my life at times feels sold out.

Gert Strydom

Above Us It's A Summer Day

Above us it's a summer day with the sky cobalt blue
when in the garden right against me you stand for moments,
while cars slowly pass our idyllic garden in the road,
where you do kiss me for a moment and we do embrace,

you look deep into my eyes into my soul and I look at you
and there are children that hit a tennis-ball over the road.
Above us it's a summer day with the sky cobalt blue
when in the garden right against me you stand for moments,

it's intimate and soft that you do fold your hand around mine,
when softly your tongue find a way into my mouth
and we do worry about nothing
where this event is saved in memory:
Above us it's a summer day with the sky cobalt blue
when in the garden right against me you stand for moments...

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Gert Strydom

Absalom

When you did hang like a scarecrow
on your hair
on cedar branches
caught in your own guilt
and megalomania

a father's heart was torn,
was cut in two
and although you saw him as a enemy
you never knew the depth
of his love for you.

Gert Strydom

Absence

I keep myself occupied
by searching for a job
on the Internet,
writing stories and poems,
taking care and feeding the animals
and sometimes I carry things
to the garage and back
and measure instinctively
about every step

and wonder why
I still care so much for you,
read stories and poetry books
and try to learn
something from other writers.

There are white arum lilies
that grows wild at the river
and on strange places
I see flowers
as if life makes opportunities
for the outcasts

and there are simple things
that I keep me busy with
to try and forget
how empty and painful
your absence becomes

and when we are together
things sometimes get muddled,
but without you
it's the darkest night.

Gert Strydom

Absolute Truth (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Has society at large come to the place
where it does not anymore want to face
the way that absolute truth tells how life is
and is their in our lives and forums not a place

for Freedom of religion and Freedom of Speech
when to others we do with our words reach?
Is the truth nowadays just relative in how I want to perceive it?
Does prime evil now everything beseech

that on Christmas Day I am totally banned
by Facebook, which on that day may be undermanned
to post poems about Christmas and of the Child, the Man, Christ,
and now the day after those poems go through and I cannot understand

just what those poems did say to annoy anyone
but do perceive that at Facbook mere humanity is gone.

[Poet's note:The warning message did state that I was "misusing
Facebook" and that I might have said something that I may not.]

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Gert Strydom

Absolution (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Hannatjie Schreck)

I do not want to stare myself blind anymore
but do want to confess the real truth here
that I can never leave your order
as I am grounded through and through in you
and like something utterly holy I will protect and keep our love
as your rites are sacral, a holyness to me,
where who you are, are leaving lasting impression on me
as your embodiment makes me larger and healthy,
you burn in the darkness of my soul with the light
with something that goes past comprehension and resistance
my tongue, my body, my heart are converted by you
where in my banned existence you do bring me liberation
and this is no enchantment just how things are,
that I do want to pour out my whole life and body and soul into you.

[Reference:"Absolusie" (Absolution) by Hannatjie Schreck.]

Gert Strydom

Ac Her For? Beraò; Fugelas Singaò, Gylleò Groëghama

Gnashing enemy tanks are coming on
while the Ratel-90 stands still
and many things
goes through my mind.

The shot sounds thundering
and for a moment I am blinded
by smoke, dust and giant flames
that devours things.

The redneck is still shooting
through branches and bushes
with the front machinegun
and it can cost his life

but he shoots on like a machine
and feeds the ammunition belt
and I let the driver pull him in
and he's again aboard

locked behind armoured steel
where he curses and takes out his rage
and shoot from within
and he speaks a foreign tongue:

"Ac her for? beraò;
fugelas singaò,
gylleò groëghama"

We drive away with speed
and stop and shoot and drive again
and let projectiles
find their targets deadly

and so we continue for hours
that drag into days
and around us the enemy is shot out

and what is not burning,

is already junk
or just left behind.

Enemy soldiers of Fapla,
Cuba and a few from Russia
lie shot to pieces,
some half burnt
and whole brigades are wiped out

and in the distance I hear jackals howling
and the air is full of vultures
turning in it

while the stench of death,
phosphorous and gunpowder almost suffocates me
and some more dust or maybe emotions
makes my eyes tear.

[References: Redneck=>Englishman. "Ac her for? beraò; fugelas singaò, gylleò grøeghama" => Gaelic for: "For here starts war; carrion birds sing, and grey wolves howl." From: "The Fight at Finnsburh." Jackal => a African fox.]

Gert Strydom

Acacia Of My Blood

When I let my eyes go over the earth
in the distance there's a pretty green tree,
that stands out.

On the edge of Africa
her branches reach to the sky
and she almost touches the clouds.

I see that God could make no other
so wonderful and exceptional
and that as a sprout,
He protected her against overwhelming darkness.

Later a super power's dread knights had drawn
their strongest weapons against her
and fire touched her bark,
but her thorns made them wrench
and drew painful blood.

She was trodden down and axed to pieces,
but with time her stem sprouted out again
and new shoots shot out
and grew stronger than before.

Out of the North
the enemy tried to put their hand to her again,
but where they stroke
her own gum brought healing
and they were torn apart
by huge branches with thousands of white thorns.

From near there's great white thorns
that almost throngs each other out
and branches that braid against each other,
as if no one can grow together
and each has a live of its own.

Still they stream from all over the continent
to eat her berries and catch shade in her shadow

and her seedlings are sprouting out all over the world.

Acacia of my blood,
I will always be proud of you
and are called by God to be one of your offspring.

Gert Strydom

Accord (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Where with intense analysis you do look at every word
you do at times feel to me like a darling full of cunning
as if you do know better about syntax and the building of verses.
Sometimes you wonder how my poems do come effortless
then I realise that words do belong in your heart of hearts,
that you do cherish them with every image and meaning,
maybe are afraid that you will miss something holy and wondrous
but in friction comes to us t age-old accord,
as in everything you do find a mutual context
where you do hear the real meaning of my words,
do get in depth your own wonderful unique insight
and you do lead me by the hand to trust and cherishing
where in each other we do loose everything and ourselves
when our souls, spirits, minds and bodies do yield for each other.

[Reference:"Akkoord" (Accord)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Accountability Over Time

I have always believed
that people
who propagated
accountability over time
should go to places
like the nuthouse

Yet the time
of a person's life
runs out
and every day
sneaks past
while the next
goes on continually

Yet it remains wise
to live every day
to the limit
and to make
the best of it
as if it is the very last.

Gert Strydom

Accounting

I know a man
who accounts the businesses of others
and then do calculate
to let those businesses become his own
while he drinks a toast
on the demise of those that do compete against him.

I know a man
who did take over his father in law's business
on his father in law's insistence
and that man do make fools of people
who did work all of their lives
to make that business successful
to be able to get rid of them.

I do know people that without any merit
do fill positions
without a clue how to do their own jobs
and who do ride on the backs of other people
to get the work done
and they have been affirmed in the places of others
and do not contribute any great thing to their jobs.

Still destiny does walk on its own path
and do unexpectedly strike
while with time the existence of every human being
does run out.

What kind of calculations will these people make
when the great Accountant does come
and what will their answers be to Him
when their accounts are continually out of balance?

Gert Strydom

Achilles [2]

To some more a god than man
the hero walks in
with greatness depicted
in every move and stride
and thunder reflected
in his determined eyes, but the upper commander
and king of Mycenae insults him,
grabs the maiden Briseis as his own
and the great Achilles
withdraws the Myrmidons
sulking in his tent.

The Trojans encouraged by his absence
advance with a loud clamouring noise
like cranes screaming from up high
before the storming in and bringing death
and destruction to the Greeks
forcing them back in retreat.

Storming into the tent of Achilles
his companion Patroclus
tells Achilles about the Trojans
burning their ships
with flaming arrows
and begs him to use his armour
and to give consent for him
to lead the Myrmidons into battle
to come to the rescue.

Fighting like Achilles
Patroclus and the Myrmidons
are victorious and force
the Trojans back
into their city,
but the Trojan commander
Hector kills Patroclus
in the moment of his glory.

Achilles is filled with grief

and joins the battle
taking the Myrmidons
with determination
and ferocity
edged into every man
move shoulder to shoulder
to the depths of the fight.

Achilles fights in a raging frenzy
pursuing Hector three times
around the walls of Troy
and like a thrashing thunder bolt
kills him
tying Hector with anger
to his war chariot
dragging him around
the walls of Troy
and then to the funeral pyre
of his friend Patroclus
withholding funeral rites from Hector.

The anger of the fierce Achilles abates
and the Trojan king Priam
finds him and begs
Achilles to release his son's corpse
and the great Achilles
has pity on the enemy king.

Gert Strydom

Achilles At Troy

The walls of the enemy city believed by them
to be made by the gods,
rise up in front of us
stripped, empty like hills,
looking impregnable
and higher up I see some archers
with their armour shining in the midday heat
rising bows and shooting arrows into the sky
believing, wishing and praying to hit one of us.

I drive with my chariot far out of their reach,
around and around the city, as if inspecting it
for any frailty, a place to penetrate with force
searching for Hector
while fierce fighting is going on

and anger, great rage roars within my heart
when at the main gate I stop and wait,
before roaring at the top of my voice
for Hector to come out, to face me.

My black steel shield, my black steel armour
my great spear, my bow and sword
are at the ready and I am implacable
watching, willing for the main gate to open

and see a lizard basking in the sun on a nearby rock,
as it probably has done since being born,
my heart is torn by the death
of my familiar one,
Patroclus my companion and friend
and in pain I roar again

calling Hector a coward and a fool
and my small army
of brave Myrmidons gather around me
heading off the enemy, killing scores of them

banging their swords on their shields

every time I call the name out
of the Champion of Troy
and like me they are ready to destroy.

Again I give reigns to the horses
driving at speed with my chariot
around the city inspecting
the fighting men more carefully

and nowhere I can see Hector,
nowhere I find him destroying our own
and on the third time
I spot him taking on three men
and killing them

and at speed jump from the chariot
with spear, sword and shield
and like a thunder falling from the sky
I land solidly right next to him

and he wards off my first, my second blow
even stopping my great spear
thrown with all my might,
but in the frenzy of it all
I see an opening made by his shield
and dropping my shield
with both hands directly
drive my sword in, in a stabbing blow
and catch him in the throat
leaping back picking up my shield and spear
and stab, stab from behind the shield
killing Hector with fierce blows

and I gather my great sword
drawing it from him
and tie him behind my chariot
before fully armed
I jump into it
and drive away
dragging the Champion of Troy
around and around the great
impregnable city while roaring

loud as thunder
with a blood bedecked spear above my head.

Gert Strydom

Acquiescence (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Marlene van Niekerk)

My love, when the twilight and night comes dark-blue
with the evening-star and moon hanging on their places
then I am speechless with the revelation of God's omnipotence,
at such a time a person is somewhat scared for the mortality of man
as if this moment that now does feel eternal
too quickly does pass in life not to come again
and I wonder what God does intend with our love
when our words and acts stand naked before Him?
Where I know that evil does everywhere lie peeking,
others do not comprehend this kind of selfless love
while people that are sincere are sneaky at war with each other,
and this thought does press the air out of me
but then when you are skin against skin against me I do want to forget,
when I do know only about the intensity of your sincere love.

[Reference: "berusting" (acquiescence) by Marlene van Niekerk.]

Gert Strydom

Across The Road The Veldt Stretches Out Wide

Across the road the veldt stretches out wide
where coucals calls to each other and peer around,
there are tree branches scratching against the window
and early in the morning the sun splashes on the floor
when weavers twitter in the branches,
while doves coo in the higher trees,
in the garden there is a red poppy
and I am moved by the scene.

From the kitchen comes the smell of baking rusks
where you stir the dough for bread,
the dog barks so loudly that my ears ring,
around your neck a golden necklace sparkles
with a pendant in the shape of a clover,
you smile as if you can take me along
to memories of a day in the hay
and I am moved by the scene.

Gert Strydom

Adam

He had awakened from his sleep
and first his eyes opened
and above him the sun shone in its glory,

but a soft an arm folded
somewhat tender over him and strangely
he recognized it as if it was his own.

When he saw her for the first time,
still before her bright eyes folded open,
his breath was taken away as if he
was standing at a similar figure and he stared at her.

When she opened her eyes
he read love and utter joy in their depths
and he was more bewitched and in love
than he knew it to be possible
and to him she was absolutely woman.

Gert Strydom

Adam (2)

If only I did comprehend
how destructive and without return
that dead would be
I would have restrained my wife Eve

to eat of the fruit
that has knowledge
and with its sparkle and fragrance and taste
does infect everything around it.

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Gert Strydom

Adam (Sonnet)

Sunburnt Adam walked to and thro over the garden,
constantly he was surrounded by the wing-beat of the birds
where they did follow him with their songs of praises everywhere
horses, antelope, dogs, the lion and the lamb did everywhere tread around him,
did already know their names that he had given to them,
wanted as his companions to with him scout the glorious garden,
did eat from his hand all kinds of things, just what he was feeding them,
and he was happy and strong, did reckon God as the ruler of his heart
but at night when the sun did go down in the west and the moon did shine softly
over him
everything did with their partners silently and secretly disappear
and one day when he opened his eyes he recognized her as his own wife
where she was lying cosily with an arm over him and he was surprised with her
presence
was enraptured, did not want to disturb her while he was staring in wonder at
her
but suddenly her eyes did open and it was with great love that she did look at
him.

Gert Strydom

Adam And Eve

In paradise the world was intact
and me and Eve, the two of us
our hearts were beating fervently.
We were without sin,
bonded to each other
and the bees were everywhere around us.

In paradise the world was intact
and me and Eve, the two of us
looked at a forbidden fruit and it was beautiful and round
and we lay on a bed of fluff
when suddenly we were three, Oh boy!
There were sin and every thing fell to pieces,
but in paradise the world was intact.

Gert Strydom

Adam And Eve (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

When they observed each other naked for the first time,
together became aware that they were totally lost
they did hold wonderful desire for each other:
she saw him as noble and fierce, he how very beautiful she is.
Banned and bound they were to the same destiny,
when he brought her into the protection of his strong arms,
did wonder about their standing and relationship with God,
their hearts did sing fiery about their love for each other,
where together they stood alone against the world,
where their love bound them tighter with each other,
where they were entering a cruel difficult world
with a struggle against injustice in everything beautiful and sincere,
they did not forget God,
only knew about the beauty and wonder of life.

[Reference: "Adam en Eva" (Adam and Eve) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Adam And Eve (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to Ina Rousseau)

I

Perfectly God created man and his wife
and constantly God was involved with them in each one's life
but did give them both a free will,
while they entered the world with skill,
and mighty angels where around them alive,
did warn them about Lucifer being cunning,
they were not in darkness existing:
by herself enticed Eve reached to the deadly fruit and to strive
and constantly God was involved with them in each one's life.

II

When man came to naked truth about life
where astounding and beautiful was his wife,
when thoughtful man did disfigure creation
God was near them through every emotion
but He turned their ways away from strife
and came to find the humans in their darkest hour,
to stand for them before the snake that do devour
when with sin all of creation was rife,
where astounding and beautiful was his wife.

[Reference:"Adam en Eva" (Adam and Eve)by Ina Rousseau.]

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Gert Strydom

Adam En Eve (In Answer To Ina Rousseau)

Mature and glorious they were created
as people in His image
and with His own hands he touched them
and they were constantly aware of His love

when He build in freedom, to constantly trust Him,
to independently live a own life,
man himself decided to gnaw this world
to divorce them from God and His perfect love

long after He instructed them to propagate
they ate a forbidden fruit
in open rebellion
and when they were misbehaving they knew

that this deed brings death,
even can penetrate to their last descendants.

[Reference: Adam en Eva (Adam and Eve) by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

Adamastor

Nearing the Cape of storms
ships sail and sailors pray
to their gods to prevail
when suddenly out of the blue
storm clouds gather
and lightning bolts flash down

while unseen and like a phantom
the giant of the ages
barbaric and savage
the Titan Adamastor
watches ever morose,
resentful and unforgiving

drawing the sea in his fist
and throwing a great
unpredicted crashing wave,
causing sudden storms
and gale force winds,
calling thunder to hit down
like Thor's hammer

and in his workshop brewing storms
and out of the granite rocks at times
where his body lies entombed
his spirit rises angry.

Numerous ships are wrecked
along the shore,
where giant elder god Adamastor
rages ashore
among the sandstone cliffs
and in anger forever more
sends storms, great winds
and throwing thick fog
to draw ships on ridges and sharp rocks.

[References: Rounding the Cape by Roy Campbell and Canto V Vasco da Gama
(Os Lusíadas) by Luis de Camões.]

Gert Strydom

Adt And Neighbourhood-Watch Barge Into A House In Lodeyko In Springs

On 22 May 2019 two black men with rifles in their hands
jumped over the bladed-wire fence and entered the property.
When I confronted them at the front door they were impudent and insolent
and I saw some more men and on a brain wave slammed the door shut,
locked it and hurried to the back door.
They barged into the house and I found them in the kitchen
and my mother of 85 was busy preparing food and totally dumbstruck.
I summarised the situation and she asked: 'What now, my child?'
My drilled-in military training wanted to take over.
There were four men. One man obstructed the backdoor with a rifle,
one a white-man had a baseball-bat and one without a weapon and I was
astonished
as one with a weapon at the ready stopped me in the kitchen.
After a break-in down in the street in violation of the law they entered the house,

and without anyone entering the yard they brought this trouble to me.

[Poet's note: ADT here do refer to armed reaction from ADT security using rifles
and Kevlar.]

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Gert Strydom

Aeneas

When Aeneas did escape from destroyed Troy
while in the distance arrows did hit into people
he knew the weight of duty
while he walked away
with his father on his back,
his child on his hand

but when he got tired
he walked on with determination,
in the distance he saw the blue-white thunder coming down
and when he was stumbling,
did almost fall
he knew that he had to go on

and he got more power from love,
his father did become light
while his child's hand did keep him in balance
until he found his men and his ship
and pointed it to the deep ocean.

Gert Strydom

Aeneas(Persian Quatrain)

(after Elizabeth Eybers)

Still forward he does slowly stroll
with sweat on his face from the heavy toll,
like lead his father is on his back,
lissom he draws his child, do every step control.

[Reference: "Aeneas" by Elizabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Affinity

(after S. Ign. Mocke)

Much further than man's science can see and reach
systems of stars and planets pay honour to You
and much deeper than our conception can ever understand
is the ways that Your omnipotent thoughts constantly dwell
and on Your command star-systems and planets do appear
and the last elements of others are burned out
where in immortality You see everything beyond the bonds of time,
vigilantly keep Your hands over the undetermined space
and let Your laws, constraints, righteousness and love occur everywhere
and to me a mortal man bring salvation as a child of the King.

The thunder that flashes blue-white
when rain falls from your storage rooms
continually tells about your care and omnipotence,
in the smallest things your love and mercy is present
and when flowers bloom everywhere in spring,
when the sun rises in the hot summer
and stars gleam like torches in your heaven,
when the sun rises and disappears beyond the far horizon
I do realize that between everything there is a relationship,
that Your light penetrates through every kind of darkness

and then I do know that your heart beat pulses in all living things,
that in wisdom You do give life and let it stop,
that the names of those that follow you are etched in the marks of Your hands
and that You listen like a father to each one that asks,
that a will to serve You is hard-wired from the age-old beginning
and that a life without You is stripped from all meaning and sense,
that You also hold Your hands protecting over the cells of everyone that does
exist,
that you walk ahead to pave the way for everyone
and when the winds of destiny do blow wild
I do know that our lives still do revolve in Your great plan.

[Reference: "Verwantskap" (relationship) by S. Ign. Mocke.]

Africa

When I look to my own continent
there are only ruins of places
that at a time was glamorous and I struggle to fit in
the beautiful places where waterfalls does roar
and I see people who are ravaged by famine, war,
unrest and a population explosion,
people who die from pestilence,
who live totally immoral,
and wild animals do disappear into hungry stomachs,
while I am blinded by the sand
as if the desert is crawling
deeper and deeper into the continent
and the political majority does devour everything
until nothing is left for anybody.

Gert Strydom

Africa (In Reply To William Shakespeare)

This huge content of living things
where everything roams free
without any real sceptered kings
dividing where realms should be

who do not bow to the gods of Mars
but is nature's own paradise
not locked by hedges, fences or bars
where flowers and animals daily rise

and a throng of strong happy men do their duty
being true to the ancestral calling
working on plains, in the veldt at places of great beauty
in a land where the blue sky has rain falling

where the sun, moon and stars are like visitors
to peoples braver and fiercer than any conquistadors.

Gert Strydom

Africa [2]

When I look to my own continent
there are only ruins of places
that at a time was glamorous and I struggle to fit in
the beautiful places where waterfalls does roar
and I see people who are ravaged by famine, war,
unrest and a population explosion,
people who die from pestilence,
who live totally immoral,
and wild animals do disappear into hungry stomachs,
while I am blinded by the sand
as if the desert is crawling
deeper and deeper into the continent
and the political majority does devour everything
until nothing is left for anybody.

Gert Strydom

Africa Child

You stay in one
of a group of shacks
on the other side
of the cleared borderline
where bleating goats
are eating
leaves from the thorn bushes.

You run inquisitive past
some pecking chickens
and your large brown and white eyes
are watching me,
when I take the LMG with the other hand
and get some hot water
out of a green water bottle.

Your hands are dirty caked with mud
and you wear a dirty white t-shirt
and tattered torn pants,
but there's a smile
that spread past your ears
when I give an energy bar
and a dogbiscuit to you.

You push a car built from wire
along my boot tracts
and talk in your own language
as far as we go
and there's wonder
in your big eyes,
when I take the catapult from you
and shoot the bird
which you are aiming at for some time,
with one shot
out of the sky.

You bring the bird to me
and I indicate
that you must take it

and you are still happier
and just before
I leave with my troops,
you pick up a stick
and point at the bush
before you draw your finger
across your throat.

I still hear your childish laughter
and see you disappear in the distance,
while we walk with another route
circling around those bushes.

Later another military patrol
detonated some landmines there
and there where no child,
to walk with them
and it was only
another forsaken native village.

Gert Strydom

African September

Dawn now wakes me earlier each morning,
bringing light at a time
where a month ago there was only night
with a chilly breeze

and where the darkness
were like a blanket
spread wide over the garden, the houses
of the suburb
I now see the horizon getting grey
with the sun sneaking
slowly over it

and sometimes when I wake up
a little bit later
and pull the thick curtains open
and it's already a bright sunny day
with a sweet freshness breezing in.

Gert Strydom

African Vultures

Around and around they move, turning,
as big specks in the bright blue sky
before they suddenly descend one after another
with wild wings cutting as shining blades,
with heads stripped bare and necks stretched out
when they screech and hobble along to rotting meat.

Gert Strydom

Africans Want A New King

There's sudden strength flowing
through black men's souls
and Africans want a new king
a new Dingaan, Shaka, Mzilikazi,
to drive the white man into the sea.

Like giants they want to rise
and take what they think belongs to them,
they dance around the tribal fires,
drink homebrewed beer,
pray to their gods
calling up the spirits
and in Zimbabwe they find a man
and wage a terrible war there.

He is chosen as prime minister
and rids his country of opposition
unleashing his fifth brigade
on the Ndbele tribe
to exterminate, torture and to rape
fellow black citizens.

Promises are made about agricultural fields
and white farmers are freed
of their ground and possessions by force
with the police backing up
the onslaught.

Food production dries up
and mass famine and poverty results,
the country is run into the ground
controlled by the power
of the security police and military
and the king is in the chair
still ruling with a iron hand,
gathering a fortune
in foreign banking accounts

and in his eyes,

he's president for life.

Gert Strydom

Afrikaner Genetics (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

Maybe wild trees grow
the yards of your ancestors,

their worth have become nothing
like stale salt,

their faces are yellow
and most of them are squint,

they walk without words to nowhere

but I have a God that stands with me
and my ancestors,

with brave men that do not disregard their duty
who do not imagine them above others

who had chosen their wives
out of a people that God himself planted

and your insults of my people and me
make me raving mad, worse than just angry.

[Reference: Afrikanergenetika (Afrikaner genetics) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

After A Weekend (Free Verse Sonnet)

After a weekend you and I are caught
in how moments had been between us,
but still in all of this the longing does remain
as if we are only reaching towards each other,
where we do choose out days with each other
and at night do hold each other tightly
thoughts do paint moments of loss
as if we do not trust reality.
We dream about spring and the coming summer
as if the hotter days will bring us sill closer
and when we are together time and days fly past
while our hearts do sing songs of joy
and all of my prayers do go to God,
where sincerely I do believe in our love.

Gert Strydom

After Her Death I Dreamed Of My Love (Cavatina Sequence)

(After William Shakespeare)

After her death I dreamed of my love,
with eyes sparkling
somewhat divine like the stars that glitter,
somehow existing
in the dark outer space, with her two hands
reaching, touching,
the circumference of this great earth,
with a sash of vast planets in her girth.

White blazing braking thunder was her breath,
her eyes were blue
as the purest kind of cobalt hued sky
her love was true,
even much greater than it was before,
her retinue
were the elements, some power divine
and still she wanted to be only mine.

[Reference: 'Cleopatra's Lament' from 'Antony and Cleopatra, Act V, Scene 2 by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

After The Farm Invasions In Zimbabwe

The violent dispossession of farms
in Zimbabwe
is seen by some people as lawlessness (1)

and that it only is the consequence
of ethnic and racial hatred that is present
where the state does collapse, (2)
where lawful authority does lack
and that nothing else is hidden
beyond those occurrences

but when you look deeper
into all of this
facts do come to light
that is utterly disturbing.

It is a known fact
that the ruler in Zimbabwe
that has been voted out but still does rule
Robert Mugabe
is a Jesuit (3) (4) (5)
in the Roman Catholic Church

and that church
believes in the natural law
as had been set out by Thomas Aquinas
in his Summa Theologiae (6)

and everywhere where the state and church
had been one throughout history
there had been grave danger
as during the dark ages
where people had been executed
for that in which they do believe.

According to this natural law
possessions like farms, houses
cars and even tools
is being seen as only

in the title belonging to the owner

but that the community
has got the right of the use of it
above the owner
and even the violent dispossession
of such property
by the community
is justified.

[Footnotes:

(1) "ná grond-invasions in Zimbabwe" (After ther ground-invasions in Zimbabwe) " by Antjie Krog.

(2) "There is one type of fear more devastating in its impact than any other: the systematic fear that arises when a state begins to collapse. Ethnic hatred is the result of the terror that arises when legitimate authority disintegrates."
Michael Ignatieff: Blood and Belonging – Croatia and Serbia.

(3) "The Society of Jesus (Latin: Societas Iesu, S.J., SJ or SI) is a male religious congregation of the Catholic Church. The members are called Jesuits." O'Malley, John W., ed. (2006) . 'The Formula of the Institute (p. XXXV) '. Jesuits 2 (2nd ed.) . Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

(4) "Robert Gabriel Mugabe was born near the Kutama Jesuit Mission in the Zvimba District northwest of Salisbury, in Southern Rhodesia, to a Malawian father, Gabriel Matibili, and a Shona mother, Bona, both Roman Catholic. He was the third of six children. He had two older brothers, Michael (1919–34) and Raphael. Both his older brothers died when he was young, leaving Robert and his younger brother, Donato (1926–2007) , and two younger sisters – Sabina and Bridgette." Mugabe mourns reclusive brother'. .11 December 2009. Retrieved 4 August2013.

(5) "Mugabe was raised as a Roman Catholic, studying in Marist Brothers and Jesuit schools, including the exclusive Kutama College, headed by an Irish priest, Father Jerome O'Hea, who took him under his wing. Through his youth, Mugabe was never socially popular nor physically active and spent most of his time with the priests or his mother when he was not reading in the school's libraries. He was described as never playing with other children but enjoying his own company. 'Robert Mugabe: The man behind the fist'.The Economist.29 March 2007.

(6) The Papal Encyclical: "Rerum Novarum: " "Goods of some are due to others by the natural law. There is no sin if the poor take the goods of their neighbours.

In cases of need, all things are common property, for the need has made it common. Not only is such taking of another's property not a sin, it is not even crime. It is lawful for a man to succour his own need by means of another's property by taking either openly or secretly, nor is this properly speaking, theft or robbery. It is not theft, properly speaking to take secretly and use another's property in a case of extreme need, because that which he takes for the support of his own life becomes his own property by reason of that need. In a case of a like need a man may also take secretly another's property to succour his neighbour's need." Summa Theologiae ii-ii 7th Article by Thomas Aquinas"

Poet's note: This verse illustrates how easily man can make mistakes, where the church and state is one. Anyone who reads this verse as an assault on the Roman Catholic Church misinterprets it.]

Gert Strydom

After The Rain

After the rain
the air is full of swallows
swishing up and down
hanging in it
to catch flying white ants
and I see them ascending
and descending twittering.

Some sit as if strung together
right next to each other
on the silver lamp post
and hordes are invited
to the feast of the swallows.

Later when I sit in my study
there is a bird
that that lands on my windowsill
that looks like a parrot to me
and seeing itself in the window
pecks constantly against it

or maybe it's something else
that I take as a parrot
and its head is scarlet red
up to its neck,

its eyes wide from each other
and its beak is bended
and below the red
its pitch black
and the rest of its body is light green

and I know that it's too late
for the festival of the other birds
but maybe it would rather have
An apple or two

and every day
I now wait on Polla

or whatever its name is
to come back
to awake me with its knocking
and maybe I will catch him
but it's rather much better
to be without a cage
and never again to be cooped in.

Gert Strydom

After The Robbery Of A Car

I could do something to them,
write my sorrow in a book,
even call upon God
before I took it further.

Gert Strydom

After Three Glases Of Wine With Your Steak

After three glases of wine with your steak
you tell that everybody can hear
how your life is turning to nothing,
that you do continually hope to meet the right man
and with a serviette you wipe off your lips

and you tell why you are divorced,
what it takes to take you to bed
while covertly you look at me,
you tell of your only child
who is away in a dormitory

and I know how disastrous your love,
your whole life is
while I do not even know your,
are not looking at you
and are not even at your table.

Gert Strydom

After Ventersdorp, 4 April 2010

In storm language the wind talks
blind full of thunder
that draws blue lines
over the tar road
and the Jacarandas wriggle,
washing on balconies are jerked
and now angry
the wind howls and cries
and I see lightning bolts
slamming down near the Union Buildings.

Rows of maize fields greet me
where the knobs stand green
and there's no peace
coming from the greeting

and in vain is waited on the murdered farmer
and somewhere there are cattle bellowing
but not for long anymore
as the slaughterers
are sharpening their Panga-blades

and have already violated the farmer
his wife and daughter,
have stolen what they can
and nobody can stop the plunder and pillage
of the country
as a swarm of locust are descending.

Gert Strydom

After Wandering We Are One (Common Measure Octave)

After wandering we are one,
after the days of youth,
I have found my dear love in you
while days linger in truth,
and the early summer is gone
while true as azimuth
our love is in all that we do,
it's without an untruth.

Gert Strydom

After You Did Draw The Curtains Tight

After you did draw the curtains tight,
your clothes dropped
and you were stretched out over the bed,
looking very enticing.

You smiled, when you reached for me,
with you soft mouth that were luring,
when you were right against me,
when you wanted me to settle myself in you;

your breasts were soft, firm and round
and without any fear
you took me to ultimate bliss,
where you healed me,

where you taught me to be lost
in a place far past
the urges of the human spirit,
to find a kind of peace.

Gert Strydom

After You Left (Fay Slimm Form)

The day you left the rain poured down almost endless;
many things have changed.

The jasmine, geraniums and irises started blooming
as if they were destined
with pretty flowers opening in the morning mist,
the air soft with lavender
breezed into the room through the open window
but still your shadow
keeps on wandering into my mind, much
as if you are hiding somewhere.

The sun came just as bright as
when you were here, shining with intensity
and each and every day birds sing joyously,
happy to be free.

Gert Strydom

Afternoon Homecoming

Bright blue is the afternoon
when the farmer goes home
and where he parks at the homestead
everything is different from what he does expect.

The two dogs lie dead in puddles of blood
and confused he does run in, are preoccupied,
in haste he drops some of the things that he does carry,
when his search for his sweetheart wife begins.

Bringing him to vomit she lies streched open,
naked, raped and murdered.
Despair does go through him,
when he does loose his head,

the black robbers are gone; the police are in disarray,
and nothing of him is right, life is bleak and hard as rock.

Gert Strydom

Afternoon Rain

Every day this summer
in the late afternoon
the rain just keep pouring down
as if the milling clouds
and the storm has its clock set.

Thunder flashes here and there
white-blue electric bolts
from a sudden grey sky
and big and small drops fall
rushing down to the earth.

Heat rises in steaming white patches
on the hot black tar road
while the first drops make it wet
and water suddenly streams everywhere
in miniature rivers.

People run to reach their cars
and are stuck in huge traffic jams
where cars crawl meters at a time,
while others go to bars
and enjoy a drink or two
and smoke their cigars.

Two teenage girls
that are soaking wet
with T-shirts clinging translucent
dance on the sidewalk
in the falling rain
and their giggles
catches my ear
and suddenly it's fun to live.

Gert Strydom

Afterwards

After making love your skin glows
and your have energy
as if something is living in you
with fire in your eyes

and the room cools down,
while darkness is sheltering us
and outside the rain falls
as without end

and while you sleep
in the moonlight I trace the lines
of your face
and I feel you breathing against me.

Gert Strydom

Afterwards (2)

After making love your skin glows
and your have energy
as if something is living in you
and with fire in your eyes

we quarrel, being two separate persons
and I frown at your words
that are hurting, but they belong to us
and with a sweet kiss you smooth

my troubles away and we laugh
while you lie naked against me
with your nipples pressing
against my chest

and the room cools down,
while darkness is sheltering us
and outside the rain falls
as without end

and while you sleep
in the moonlight I trace the lines
of your face
amd feel you breathing against me.

Gert Strydom

Again Some Tears Will Fall (Rubliw)

Again
some tears will fall
like great fountains of rain
and words and deeds even though small
will have an impact on the inner heart
and where we do both live apart
we will know the great pain
separation
does bring.

Gert Strydom

Against The British Alone Stands Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout As A Boer Rebel (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. J. Langenhoven)

Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout is trapped in a cave
are challenged to surrender or in resistance to come out where the British rave:
"You are a damn fool, " is roared while they do more words despitful
shout,
with a blunderbuss he faces the British and their shots ring out,
only silence comes from the cave where no one can him save
and an Afrikaner Boer is tired of the British tyrannical rule,
is not scared to openly for justice confront them and be called a fool,
where with convictions a man stands against a world empire, do freedom crave,
are challenged to surrender or in resistance to come out where the British rave.

[Reference:"Die eersteling" (The first ones)by C. J. 's note: In October 1815 the missionary John Philip of the London Missionary Society incited a Khoikhoi named Boy to lay charges against Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout and his brother Jan Bezuidenhout that as farmers they do misuse the Khoikhoi in labour."Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout suspected the Khoikhoi labourer Boy of stealing and did retain his did lay false charges of assault against Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout at the Graaff-Reinet magistrate" and in his absence Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout was sentenced to a month's imprisonment."A force of 12 Khoikhoi British soldiers under a white British officer was sent on 16 October 1815 to arrest Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout" and at his arrest he was shot British also tried to arrest his brother Jan Bezuidenhout and at his arrest he was also killed which led to the Slaughterer's Neck executions of Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout, his brother Jan Bezuidenhout and the executions at Slaughterer's Neck led to the Great Trek of the Voortrekkers twenty years later where the Boer / Afrikaner nation brewed on this for twenty years and were concerned with the continuous Xhosa and Khoikhoi attacks that murdered and plundered and the far too many border wars."Voortrekker is a pioneer and it's a name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces)who migrated north into the interior of South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what became known as the Great Trek."]

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Against The British Jan Bezuidenhout Stands Alone As A Boer Rebel (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. J. Langenhoven)

"Surrender, " is roared once again."Against the British Empire
you stand alone! "
Surrounded Jan Bezuidenhout is against many British soldiers as a man only one.
"Your foolish brother has been shot dead, did loose in rebellion in
resistance
You are challenged by armed nder at this instance! "
Determined in his beliefs Jan Bezuidenhout stands as if petrified into a stone
"Truly my brother is a example for me,
in the future we will be of the British tyranny free.
Look how my wife is loading the blunderbuss." The British shoot on and on,

surrounded Jan Bezuidenhout is against many British soldiers as a man only one.

[Reference:"Die eerstelinge" (The first ones)by C. J. 's note: In
October 1815 the missionary John Philip of the London Missionary Society incited
a Khoikhoi named Boy to lay charges against Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout and
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became known as the Great Trek."]

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Gert Strydom

Against The Dark Blue Of Irises The Sky Has But A Pale Hue (Persian Quatrain)

(After C. Louis Leipoldt)

Against the dark blue of irises the sky has but a pale hue
in times of war blood flows to the earth as it is due
and the pain and suffering that sacrifice brings
is quite dim against that left by words that are untrue.

[Reference: "Teen die blou van jakarandas is die blou van die lug maar bleek" (Against the blue of jacarandas the blue of the sky is bleak) by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

Gert Strydom

Against The Gold Of Your Eyes

(for Daleen a dirge, after C. Louis Leipoldt)

Against the gold of your eyes the sun has a dull-white colour
and I do wonder about you and the divorce that is happening between us,
over the things that do come over your lips and how painfully you do keep
astounding me
where my heart does break a thousand times from sorrow and is continually
torn.

Against the red of your lips blood is somewhat pale
and between you and me a lifetime of secrets are hidden
but when you and your children do despise me and trample on my humanity
then my existence does continually break

and here where I am mourning over you and our relationship that is ending
in the near future I do see no light
and although I would plant a thousand flowers and coral-trees and jacarandas
nothing does keep that what does remain between us in balance

and where your children for five years have come between you and me,
do continually with their words and deeds bring hurt and astonishment,
as if they have got the right and might to decide over our lives
my own life like a whirlpool do now turn around and around

where the bright blue of the new tomorrows
continually do grow faint against the dark thunderclouds
and while slowly-slowly my days do run out
I do wonder what does remain in the silences of the remembering?

[Reference: "Teen die blou van die jakarandas" (Against the blue of the jacarandas) by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

Gert Strydom

Against The Great Power Of Destiny (Cavatina)

Against the great power of destiny
I can only
give my heart, all of myself as comfort
and all of me
with true love set against the angry blast,
no property
I have to give as some great sheltering
against the evil wind that hiss and sting.

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Gert Strydom

Against The Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

With a terrible roar the diesoline-train does pass
as if no trains do run on electricity anymore
and it's in the middle of the night that it is noisy,
do whistle shrilly as if it stands and cannot go any further,
like a wounded animal that is growling somewhere
the lifts do groan with metal upon metal at the mine
while the turbines at Impala Platinum right through the night
at a high tone do almost angrily cry-sing
and bloody red is the high big moon
where factories stand with chimneys smoking
that a person does almost choke on the pollution
and almost purposeless the city hurries on
between the white mine-dumps where stripped trees
against the night reach like skeletons up to the sky.

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Gert Strydom

Against This Spirit Of The Times (Free Verse Sonnet)

Against this time-spirit of political-correctness,
I try to remain with the absolute truth,
in days full of death I want to entrust you to God,
where I turn away from anger, revenge and resentment
and others make my personal business their very own,
where they see me as the greatest sinner,
try to keep me imprisoned by severe gossiping,
do not comprehend that God is my only righteousness
and barefoot I want to bring you my words,
tell you that love between us is something holy,
where you are over the horizon and I still can feel your heartbeat
and these humble words I write with emotion:
that now for almost a month I do terribly miss you,
that I do only intend the most beautiful things in life for you.

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Gert Strydom

Age Had Killed The Child

Age had killed the child,
but I the adult was uncorrupted,
somewhere I had lost something pure,
while the child was killed slowly;
rebellion I could inherit from the child.

Gert Strydom

Age Is Slowly Taking Its Toll

(For mother)

Age is slowly taking its toll
and with it the last touches of summer
is fading away while autumn
is turning into life's winter.

Diamonds sparkles in your eyes,
looking somewhat like the dew
that early in the morning covers the flowers
as they run down your cheeks at times.

Pain is slowly but surely taking control
of your body and there is nothing
that I can do to ease away that burden
and still in this time of oblivion nearing

Mother, you are the one
who keeps on encouraging me,
keep on to trust in the salvation
of God eternal.

Gert Strydom

Ages Flicker In The Hot Fire

Ages flicker in the hot fire
where I sit in the bar
time passes slowly hour-by-hour,

my face reflects in the glass, somewhat confused
the flames jump bright orange, blue and white,
ages flicker in the hot fire

with shades playing on the wall of the fireplace
and deeper something fries like on a spit,
time passes slowly hour-by-hour

someone complains about his wife, wants to hire prostitutes
while a couple sit down at a table with a candle,
ages flicker in the hot fire,

outside the thunder bashes down, my whisky is very expensive,
the candle in front of me burns down to its end,
time passes slowly hour-by-hour

then I see you, pretty and my match
I cannot avoid your eyes,
ages flicker in the hot fire
time passes slowly hour-by-hour.

Gert Strydom

Albino

Her red inflamed eyes looks bloody
against her pink white scabby face
and almost colourless white hair frizz on her head
with a vein beating nervously against her cheek.
The glance in her eyes goes almost everywhere
but still teeth gleam pearl white in her mouth
and on a old leather leading strap
an impudent dog jerks
as if it wants to jump right in front of my car,
as if it wants to escape from her and life
and where she is passing I hear her sing cheerfully
as if her body is not holding her back
and when I look past the surface
I see in her heart the great longing.

Gert Strydom

All Night It Did Rain... (Roundel)

All night it did rain, the morning was bright
while the sun shone with its power again
had an incredible serene kind of light;
all night it did rain,

with dark clouds coming over the mountain
covering it until it was out of sight;
as we did the last red champagne drain

our feelings was warm, passionate and right
and we were of each other very certain,
while through darkness we brought love to delight;
all night it did rain.

Gert Strydom

All Of My Dreams In You Do Become True (Sicilian Sonnet)

You turn my life upside down and around,
I love your smile, your lips and your cheek,
when I am strong you are making me weak,
in you fun, joy and happiness I have found.

Your voice has a perfect pitch and sound,
with you I loose all of my words to speak,
you are like a hungry lion but also meek
and with you I do stumble on solid ground.

I do very intimately know all of you,
you drive me mad from the very begin,
all of my dreams in you do become true,
with you life is perfect almost like sin.
To every day you do bring the perfect hue
and in a beautiful life you do pull me in.

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Gert Strydom

All Of My Senses Have An Awakening (Sonnet)

In spring and summer there are lovely days,
the lively beauty of nature tells me
that in so many different kinds of ways
it is clear that God exists in what I see.

All of my senses have an awakening,
of the Supreme Being that is present,
whose own handiwork exists in everything,
that life itself is something that's heaven sent.

From the time of birth, every day on earth
have challenges, sometimes disasters and pain
but also times of sheer happiness and mirth,
at times the sun shines brightly or it does rain

yet in the times of disaster He is true,
I pray to Him somewhere beyond the blue.

Gert Strydom

All Of My Words And Thoughts

All of my words and thoughts
that I have got to share with You
do today sound so meaningless
as if I cannot find the right words to speak
and all that I can ask
is that You have got to help me.

Gert Strydom

All Of The Day My Heart Sings Psalms To You

(after Carina Stander)

At night your smile jumps into my heart,
all of the day my heart sings psalms to you
and you do become my shameless Song of Songs
when you are in my blood, the beating of my heart late at night.
Prayers and formularies you do whisper softly
when moments become eternal between us,
sometimes you do name a moment intense sin
when love is spiritual, holy and in the flesh.

[Reference =:“Palm-pas” by Carina Stander.]

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Gert Strydom

All Our Knowledge Is But Foolish

(After John of the Cross, after Roy Campbell)

where this God is loving,
is kind and graceful
and the more we get to know Him
the more we do realise that the knowledge,
the science and technology
that we do have is but nothing
against what does exist in and with God,

that the perfect science does bring us
to a straight and narrow path
that sets our characters,
that is walked in a relationship with Him
who is the saviour,
the sacrificing lamb that was slaughtered
for my and for everyone's sins
and do ultimately lead to heaven

but then as mortal humans
we cannot have all sense and knowing
which only comes from the Divine Presence,
even the geniuses among us are but foolish
do only have a part of a far greater puzzle
where daily He does bestow knowledge and grace to us
where we do actually with all our knowledge know nothing
compared to what is in the mind of our loving God

[Reference:"Stanzas concerning the Ecstasy experienced in high contemplation, "by John of the Cross, translated by K. Kavanaugh and O. Rodrigues."Verses written after an Ecstasy of High Exaltation" by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

All Our Morning Glory Days Are Done

All our morning glory days are done
just like the flowers
that you made me rip out
from where they grew
towering under the sun.

The garden is empty
and stripped of the violet flowers
that grew everywhere
and I am no longer there

and wonder if the geraniums,
irises, marigolds, white lilies,
red roses and lavender
are still being watered

or is every thing in your life
just fading away
into death
with the falling leaves
of this autumn?

Gert Strydom

All That Really Matters Is God

All that really matters is God
and although the world is totally rotten
nothing can make His atoning sacrifice in vain
or the love that does protect in every commandment

and His mercy is incomprehensible wonderful
where He did not spare His own life as a ransom,
as a mere human did forsake His omnipotence
and I do follow Him although my life is in disorder,

as all that remains is how genuine His love is
and to the struggle of every day He does bring meaning
to help me find my way through the dark world
and when I do fall next to the road He gives forgiveness.

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Gert Strydom

All That Search Do Not Wish To Find

All that search do not wish to find
the answers that are
obviously present.

Answers do not always
carry the meaning
that one wish that they do.

Some actions and words
do not necessarily translate
that which is deep inside the heart

Everyone that smiles
doesn't necessary do so
from a heart that overflows with joy.

Yet some things speak louder
and have a greater impact
than other things do.

sacrifice, love, integrity
and being true,
makes better people of you and me.

Gert Strydom

All The Beings In The Universe Are Astounded

All the beings in the universe are astounded
that the almighty One
comes to earth as a human
and being God and human
are bonded in Him
and there's a boy crying in clothes.

All the beings in the universe are astounded
that the almighty One
with angels all around
as human alone,
had to pay the price
and a Godly being dies in stead of everybody
and all the beings in the universe are astounded

Gert Strydom

All The Great Young Men

All the great young men
walking on patrol
in the African sun

without choice
forced into war

burnt past brown,
and all of them
far too young to die

and how pale do death
now make them seem.

All the great young men
of those that did survive
wondering why they
are still alive

and what spared some
and made others pay the price.

Gert Strydom

All The Promises (Rondeau)

(for my wife Daleen)

All the sweet promises made by you
whereof I know each word is true
help to keep me going still further on
but locked-down from you I am gone
and thinking of you pulls me through

and about my feeling I cannot you con,
while endless the months do continue,
I miss you and every daughter and son
All the sweet promises

in this time have for me great value.
and I think of you when I am blue,
of how you love sweets called bon-bon.
I remember while life weighs a ton
all the sweet promises.

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Gert Strydom

Almighty God (In Reply To Louis Esterhuizen)

Lord, You that keep the universe in your hands
who are even aware of the sparrow, the finch,
the dew hanging on pieces of grass,
every star that shines in the heavenly dome

say that You have made man
just less than a godly being
and at times I wonder how every terrible thing bothers You,
from the day that man committed sin?

Where You came as the sacrifice for man's fate,
tried to teach us to live together in love,
and hanged silent like a lamb on the cross,
but still people view You as a God that does not forgive:

how do we hurt You with our poems,
where we make misfortune, murder and death your plague control.

Gert Strydom

Almighty God, Creator Of Everything (In Reply To Breyten Breytenbach)

Almighty God, creator of everything,
let me ask in Your holy name
that the unrighteousness that is happening,
now draw Your attention

that the names, the occurrences, the whole lives
of everyone who is oppressed
become written in Your immortal book

give the opportunity for a life to us, that we also
may earn a living, also may have a place
in our country and are not be trampled upon
by people who want to rob, the little that we have
that we have earned with difficulty
and protect us; shelter us

in your laager, with fire
that You draw around us, around our properties
and let we forgive them,
who are sincerely striving for our destruction,
who do not grant us employment,
are trampling upon our human rights

and let the forces of evil flee away from us,
let evil succumb to Your Godly power
since the whole world belongs to You,
every government, country and kingdom
is under Your sway

and may we remember like our fathers,
how faithful Your Godly salvation is,
may our lives be just as sincere
and may the wide world see us
as people of integrity

but more than this, more than the salvation
that You are bringing,

let we testify about Your endless love,
bend our knees to only You.

[Reference: 7.8 Onse milde God van alles wat soet en mooi is (7.8 Our generous God of everything that is sweet and beautiful) by Breyten Breytenbach.]

Gert Strydom

Almighty Lord

Almighty God who sets the ways of people
do You see, do You daily notice
how my people do suffer?

Are You aware of the old man begging in the street,
the man that has lost everything in his old age,
who now is suntanned over his bald head,
who does not know how to resist

against a country that has betrayed him,
a country that despises his experience, his qualifications?

Do You notice friends and family
who are murdered on farms,
even in houses and businesses in towns and cities,
those that live as if they are bewitched,
as people caught in and attached to the past.

For them all there are only darkness, while others prosper
and they still wait on Your salvation, while they are extradited.

Gert Strydom

Almost Picture Perfect

Water-thrilled, sub-aqueous
I see karps lingering
at the edge of the river
gliding with fins slowly moving.

Some water birds are drifting by slowly
with the little ones following the adults
and it's almost picture perfect
but for the motorboat

that suddenly appears around the corner
passing at full speed
with a water skier
throwing up a spray of water

and the scene, its tranquillity is shattered
like a framed picture
that had fallen from the sideboard
where it had been standing

breaking in splintering glass
and the birds, the fish are gone
and even the water that was calm
now have rushing waves.

Gert Strydom

Almost Timeless

Almost timeless a wave breaks white
where we walk bare foot to the bay.
In the early evening the sky is star speckled
and out of one of the beach houses a joyful noise resounds.
From the distance the light of the lighthouse beacons
when small pebbles hurt our feet
and the city, the beach and sea is a beautiful vista
while a wave breaks washing over our feet
and you yell happily when we get wet from a bigger breaker
and to me you are far past pretty
as if your face does not change with time
and in the distance a car drives down the mountain pass
and I wonder if another night like this will come
and with happiness we are both astonished and surprised.

Gert Strydom

Aloes (Novelinee)

Suddenly summer was everywhere,
like blazing fire in the veldt and hillocks
there were patches of flame here and there
with aloes blooming between the rocks,
flaming right through the day till eventide
bringing to nature a patched kind of redness
naturally planted at places side by side
growing lovely in the utter harshness,
bringing great beauty to the wilderness.

Gert Strydom

Alone Climbing To The Crest Of The Drakensberg

(in answer to W.S. Graham)

Alone climbing to the crest of the Drakensberg
the load of my words weighs down on me
sheer against the edge, shimmers almost flaming
in exhaustion through my mind

and the symmetry, the vast beauty of the sheer cliffs
surrounds me welcoming
while the hobnail boots finds steady places
as if going on there own in a huge adventure

scaling the unseen and I can almost touch
the blue cobalt sky, and I smell the rain
in clouds very near to me
while nature spreads its blanket
of rocks, boulders grass
plants and trees with unknown serenity.

[Reference: "Since All My Steps Taken" by W.S. Graham.]

Gert Strydom

Alone I Do Awake

(for Daleen)

Alone I do awake
in the dark morning-hour
while the darkness does change to blue,
the morning star is still hanging bright,
thinly the moon knives up
and the world outside
is still strange to me,

the sun hangs in a red ball
as if from the hand of God
before it appears aflame through the windows
and the day is becoming brighter.

Outside bees buzz, butterflies flutter,
the black-collard barbet, yellow weavers do frolic
and part of the cobalt sky
are blotched out by clouds
that here and there does cloak white
and I do love you
as if this is the very first day of being human,
as if you have just come out of the hand of God.

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Gert Strydom

Alone I Drink A Hot Mega Coffee

Alone I drink a hot Mega coffee
so fast that my throat catches fire
since I have to get to the internet café
in time to get a place

and maybe there's an email from you
but there is nothing
as if you have disappeared
between the floor planks

and nothing can stop the longing,
not even the animals that are happy
when I get back to home.

Gert Strydom

Alone On Holiday Away From You

White, red and yellow lilies
grow rampant and wild
next to the train tracts
between Somerset West
and the Strand
where I am on the train
from Bellville

and there's a
white-hot sun that burns
high from above

and I can smell the sea
while I look
at the magical
dark blue water,

but you will not like
the cold water
and the light breeze
that blows today

and here and there
there are people
sending kites
into the air

and I see them
hanging flapping above
while a few
diving down with speed

and there's sandpaper
in the beach wind
that hits me with sea sand
and the waves
rollick like wild horses

and in the distance

I see the road turning
past Gordonsbay
and I am alone on holiday
away from you.

Gert Strydom

Alone We Come Into The World

Alone we come into the world,
beginning as cells
from somewhere unknown,
fall into life and the experiences of it
and are born from a mother without choice

but if it was possible to choose a mother
no other one would have been as wonderful as you
and my existence is knotted into your life
from the time of my first heart beat

and although you are frail with the years
still firmly you stand against the blows of destiny
and to me mother you are very special throughout the year
while at times life does frighten me mother
and still you take all of my cares to God.

Gert Strydom

Alone We Come Into The World (For My Mom On Mother's Day)

Alone we come into the world,
beginning as cells
from somewhere unknown,
fall into life and the experiences of it
and are born from a mother without choice

but if it was possible to choose a mother
no other one would have been as wonderful as you
and my existence is knotted into your life
from the time of my first heart beat

and although you are frail with the years
still firmly you stand against the blows of destiny
and to me mother you are very special throughout the year
while at times life does frighten me mother
and still you take all of my cares to God.

Gert Strydom

Also Wake Up Thoughts With You

Sometimes when the evening's first twilight
folds over me and the air changes from blue
to grey, I think of you
while the day so suddenly becomes night
as if you can walk in here at any moment

and it's like another night
where we were together
and watched the sunset
on the porch
while we celebrated dinner
and I wonder if that hour
also wakes up thoughts with you
which you remember like I do?

Gert Strydom

Although A Great War Rages On

Although a great war rages on
between the forces of darkness and light
and many of my loved ones are gone
into the unending night
and life at times seems like hell,
even the smallest things do of God's love tell
and of the morning when in glory He will come
to take all of us to an eternal home.

Gert Strydom

Although All Humans Are Ephemeral (Cavatina)

let us this night
in a certain kind of fidelity
find our delight,
act as if we both are truly godly,
as without fright
our dear love could outlast everything
as in it we could be ever living.

Gert Strydom

Although Love Is Unseen (Sicilian Sonnet)

On a lovely evening of a great sunny day
our feelings and principles became parallel,
even before we really knew each other well
while some did each other cheat, kiss and play

and I realized then that it was something to stay,
of your feelings your green-brown eyes did tell
while immediately I was under your lovely spell
and now we are at times from each other far away,

yet the same feelings and principles do remain
while in each other we do beautiful things find,
while days are full of real happiness and pain
and God do our spirits, bodies and souls bind
while over and over I love you again and again
in the inner conjunction of both heart and mind.

Gert Strydom

Although Miles Lie Between You And Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

Look my love; I send to you the red sun,
that looks red-eyed in the morning and late afternoon
and brightly over your skin bake down intimately,
that you do day upon day see wherever you are.
Look my love; my heart also goes along with you,
when I entrust you to God's power,
where you do know constantly about my love,
although miles lie between you and me.
I am still in love and lost in you,
like leaves that blow in a whirling-wind,
where I see you from another perspective,
always find a resting-place in your heart.
You remind me of the summer-sun,
of times where we did everything that we could.

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Gert Strydom

Although Our Feelings Are True (Cavatina)

Although our feelings are true winter comes
too suddenly
and in our quick approaching middle-age
we love gladly
while life rushes by in the good and great times
and part of me
always remains hidden quite deep in you
and some thoughts of you in all that I do.

Gert Strydom

Although Our World (Persian Quatrain)

To my life you do constantly bring meaning,
you smile like sunshine and your voice do in my ears sing,
although our world is rough and hard like metal
your love goes beyond any other thing.

Gert Strydom

Although We Do Live In A Dark Planet (Cavatina) (In Answer To Karl Shapiro)

Although we do live in a dark planet,
a place of sin
while time moves forward constantly
demons cannot win,
God holds the hope and love of tomorrow.
We do go in
the next moment, rather with happiness,
than with all of our sorrow and sadness.

[Reference: "The Minute" by Karl Shapiro.]

Gert Strydom

Although You Do Not Realise That You Are Pretty

(after Herman de Coninck)

In the twenty first century the sun blushes
just like a nun full of innocence on that morning flaming red,
a cold front comes with icy chilliness right through the country
and for years I do love you deep in my heart.
I know you intimately; do know every part of your body,
do also know your disposition and your spirit and soul
I do regard how easily you are well known to me
where parts of you do fit perfectly in my hands,
your beauty makes that I do feel special
although you do not realise that you are pretty
and to you I am attractive and beautiful,
sometimes you look at me as if I am Apollo
but you do remain lovelier than Helen of Troy
and do carry the same name.

When you climb out of the bath and walk wet into my arms
you are soft and hot against me,
while the whole world slips away
as if only you and I do exist in eternity
where your un-definability
do get context in the taste of lips upon lips,
in the heat of body upon body
and I say Helen you are wonderful
but that lovely name sounds awful to you,
the sun witnesses every thing of us
even when as my wife you stand naked before me,
you say that it must be mere sin in intense ecstasy
and it's like a world event for you and me
where through all the seasons of life we do go together.

[Reference: "Frédérique
of: hoe ik geskchiedschrijver werd" by Herman de Coninck

(Frédérique
or how I became a history writer)by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

Although You Think That I Am Different (Cavatina)

Although you think that I am different
you know the things
I do love and hate and do relate to
happy tidings,
in your selfless love, to my greatest dreams,
you give some wings,
you love to walk with me on wet rainy days
and know me in some very special ways.

Gert Strydom

Always I See You Lie

(for Minette, in answer to Herman de Coninck)

In my thoughts I do remember that dark day,
with you in the car like a broken doll,
where I could not change it and could do nothing
while other people and I stopped at that accident.
You always wanted to be silent and at times it left me dumbstruck
and even speechless you could move me nearer to you
but this deadly silence is something, out of which you can never come,
where the inability of someone else jerks everything to a standstill.
The earth does not deserve you so early to become a part of it,
I am with death in brokenness overwhelmed,
mere words to you and everything that I still wanted to do is curtailed
where at that moment I could do nothing to help,
where I did look at you in the last moment's rigid brokenness
but in the beauty of mere moments I do remember you.

[Reference:"Ik zie je nog altijd liggen" (I always see you lie)by
Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

Always Marry A Summer Girl

Summer is forever sunny
like the smile on your face,
wet at times when a storm brews
like the drops on your cheek
in the movies,
lovely pleasant evenings
like I have with you.

Great the feast of summer's splendour,
green the grass
and fruit everywhere.

Sweet the kisses,
that you give me
and sweeter still that you truly love me.

Cool the water of the pool
when the sun is high,
in a blue summer sky.

Still more cool,
is when you're with me
and the pleasure of being with you.

Toss confetti and a bunch
of pure white roses or two,
since I want to marry you.

Do not yet give an answer,
since time will tell the right moment
and I love you and I love summer too.

Gert Strydom

Alzheimer's

To where have all the words gone
and why are memories
fading away,
as if they were never
meant to be?

Calculus and math
have taken a hike
and normal speech,
is away on a motorbike
and has left for good.

Like a clown to people
around me I act,
without knowing what
they found so funny
and why they look at me
as if I am mad.

What has happened to me
and where's my integrity
and what road have my dignity taken
and why can't I just be me?

Gert Strydom

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

"Am I my brother's keeper? "

Cain answered the omnipotent Lord God
as if a brotherly relationship did not go much deeper
and this answer seems odd

as if he did not have his brother's blood on his hands
as if his brother had travelled away to distant lands

and I wonder where our own responsibility do begin
or do we choose to live a life of sin
to be political correct
and just to fit in,

when our country is turned into chaos
and people try to survive at any cost

while daily we do meet a sister or brother
from another father and mother,
see our own people begging on the street
and we have no concern for each other,

drive the newest most expensive luxury cars
gather with others in fortress houses and bars

while the new kind of racism know as affirmative action
destroys lives, do reserve jobs by the colour of skin
and we do build our lives around ourselves as a reaction
while we do believe that we can survive and win

and somewhere the unlucky ones are retrenched, loose their lives
cars, property and wives,

and all kind of hope suddenly to them is gone
while for all others life goes on
as if no corruption, crime and suppression does occur
and people's hearts become rock solid like stone

while the Redistribution and development programs
is catching speed and so does greed,

(and the revenge of the dark people) in lives are like epigrams
while some people are in real need

and kill themselves while they are unwilling to beg for salvation
while others beg at street corners as if it's their real occupation
and others like Abraham trust daily on God to provide,
to be a friend, a shelter and a true guide.

Gert Strydom

Amakeia

Protected by the mountains
and covered by bushes
the ruin of an old farmhouse stands,
where the shadow
of the past
still falls heavy and menacing.

Lulling the old black house maid Amakeia
rocked the baby of a white pioneer
softly to sleep
and she was faithful
to her promise,
to try and raise the child.

When she discovered
that danger was sneaking nearer,
she went to hide
in the mountains
with the baby.

As the dark night came
the assegais rattled
against the shields
of a horde of Maxosas,
that jeered like animals
and gathered around the woman and child.

No pleading could stop the blades
where the woman with her body
tried to protect the child
and the wild savage war gang,
speared the woman and child
again and again.

When the winter wind cries in the Amatola cliffs
no devil can still hide there
and the song
of the old woman
cuts right trough marrow and bone,

while she sings
for the child to be silent
and the murder of woman and child
still hits right through
a nation of savages.

[Reference: Amakeia by A.G. Visser. An incident during 1834 war. Assegai = A
spear.]

Gert Strydom

Amakeia Then And Now

If ever there were treason
against humanity,
the slaughter of the black woman Amakeia
trying to rescue
the life of the small white child
drives it to the point

Spears raining down
on a innocent woman and child
during the 1834 war
are images that stay
in with me
and I still feel my arm hairs rise,
while I see assegais glitter
in the sun
and a farmhouse
burning down to the ground
and know how much unreasonable hatred
the Maxosas had to have in their hearts
to kill a women and baby child
and even the elements
still try and lull the kid.

II

It's in the middle of the day and criminals
stand at the door of a house,
as if no Police
or any security
can stop them.

They are armed with weapons of war
and no life
have any value to them
and to murder and rape
comes to them like second nature,
as if demons
are guiding their deeds.

Spare the child,
spare my life
the faithful nanny asks
with tears
running down her cheeks
and with her hands
are trying to protect the small child
and it's a miracle
if the criminals
note what she says
and if the nanny and child
and are locked in a room
while the most valued things are taken.

[Reference: poem "AMAKEIA" by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Amazon

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Bellicose you view every fierce man
where your hand folds over the stabbing-spear,
where you hold a bow in the other hand
to later draw its string tight deadly
against everyone that rules as a weakling-tyrant
but skin-deep you still remain a woman,
where rooted in you do remember the beautiful memories,
when alone at night somewhere you do relax
in your inside burns the lust and passion,
when you know how easily you do fit into his arms and body,
where you do remember the relaxation, cherishment and touching
as in your cells yearning is hard-wired in
but firmly at night your hunting knife remains in your hand,
with other female companions you do not want to share the thought.

[Reference:"Amasone" (Amazon)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Ambulances

With screaming sirens
and flashing red lights
they cut right through traffic
and the white vehicles,
appear and disappear
at any time of day.

Where life flows away
with the passage of age
and time,
where destiny strikes
and robbers leave their mark,
cars join together in force
or illness impart
its impact on humanity
they rush
to bring a sense
of caring and hope.

White doors open and close
and some are helped
and in time
grow well again
and for others,
grey blankets are drawn
right over them
and in time coffin lids
are hammered shut.

Gert Strydom

Ambulances (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Philip Larkin, Martinus Nijhoff and S. J. Pretorius)

With the great silence with which comes the final rest,
they do stop next to the streets,
when the back doors and stretchers on wheels do fold open,
in the tumult of the city the neighbours stand astonished,
where some on the sidewalk and others in gardens do gather,
when paramedics do come out with a neighbour,
where they notice illness or death for moments,
while children stop playing and the fear of others are unhidden,
people notice severe pain or the paleness of a face,
women with shopping bags stare, speechless, astonished and silent,
are jerked by the insignificance of human existence,
the back doors of the ambulance do slam shut,
people wonder about life and about the will of God,
when again they do talk and do go on with their own lives.

[References: "Ambulances" by Philip Larkin. "Het uur u" (Your hour) by Martinus Nijhoff. "Ambulanse of het uur u" (Ambulances or your hour) by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

Ambush

I deeply treaded into your trap
and when I was in it
I did not want to escape and could not
as your arms were around me
and your lips were upon mine
and it was dangerous territory
were shots at times were fired

and words at times left holes like bullets.
On the borderline somewhere between love and hate,
we found each other as those that are wounded
and we could talk for hours

where in the long grass we did take cover
and at times we stood in the shadows of trees
to rest for moments, to hide in each other,
to look at the bright great white moon

and while enemies, lions
and female tigers were sneaking past
we tried to hide further from the barrage of fire,
from bouncing bullets of the good intentions of others
and we fled through an overflowing river
and almost drowned in it

and now that your arms are around me
I have nowhere to go and I am missing
in your love, your humanity and your body.

Gert Strydom

Amid Chaos

Amid chaos and catastrophe
the Roman Catholic Pope will try
to bring a kind of human peace to the world
but according to the Bible
there will be no peace at all
and pressure to keep the Sunday as a day of rest
will mount throughout the entire world
while the law of human rights will be uplifted
as a means of bringing more humanity to man
and the Lord God, who never does change,
whose ultimate laws of love
stands to all eternity
(given on tables of stone to Moses)
will at a time come on His great Judgement Day
to bring the ultimate righteousness and peace to all of mankind.

[Poet's note: Whoever views this poem as an attack on the Pope or the Roman Catholic faith does interpret this poem wrong. This poem does illustrate how insignificant the efforts of man is against that of the supreme Lord God.]

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Amid Chaos 2

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Gert Strydom

Amidst The Forces Of Destiny

(in answer to Frances Bellerby)

Amidst the tempest,
of my life tossed in the whirlpool of destiny
there is no kind of rest
and yet You are still right here with me,

in the burning to my essence
facing humans and the forces of hell
I am still aware of your presence,
even imperfect I can of your love tell

and I learn extreme humiliation and pain
where of iniquities I am not totally innocent
even where I am attacked again and again
I am never to You impenitent

as You remain to me forever true
and the meaning of my life I do find in You.

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Gert Strydom

Amor Vincit Omnia (Collins Sestets)

(After Divena Collins)

Love is much more than only chemistry
a kind of binding, feeling that comes free
when two people are bonded forever,
their emotions, bodies come together;
when suddenly small things have some meaning
when love become greater than anything

There is something secret in each embrace,
the look, the expression on every face
in the kinds of words that people do say,
that affects the outcome of every day;
when suddenly small things have some meaning
when love become greater than anything

People change, act as if in wonderland
at times walk everywhere hand in hand,
find something really great in every kiss
as slowly life turns to a place of bliss,
when suddenly small things have some meaning
when love become greater than anything

[Reference: "Amor Vincit Omnia (Love Conquers All) " by Divena Collins.]

Gert Strydom

An Abandoned Bundle (In Answer To Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali)

In a chilling world
where man is nothing more
than a mere animal
it may be true
that a heartless, girl without conscience

gives birth to a child
between the oozing puss,
smothers him, leaves him
for the dogs to scavenge
and walks away as if innocent
with purity in every pore
etched in to her heart,

that even the baby Jesus Christ, that destiny,
oppression are sited as the root cause
of this revolting deed,
but even animals
fend for their young
offering their own lives
to care and protect

and I wonder what type of beings
live in White City Jabavu
where humanity is totally lacking
or any tendency of love, of decency?

Gert Strydom

An Abomination Happens At The Crossroad (Refrain Stanza)

(after I. D du Plessis)

An abomination happens at the crossroad where lights do flash as a scary thing,
Beelzebub surrounded by evil angels wants to possess a distorted human being,
Lucifer laughs with great joy and draws a witch's star with a circle around it,
Adramelech wants a burning rite and pours out gravel on the drawn lines bit by bit,

Asmodeus mutters a lustful rite as a spell right from hell that does more evil bring

and for the seduction of a honourable woman the demons to dare

a wealthy businessman drives his red Ferrari with without care,

kneels before them, begs and his own soul is the offering,

Beelzebub surrounded by evil angels wants to possess a distorted human being.

[Reference:"By die kruispad" (At the crossroad)by I. D. du Plessis.]

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Gert Strydom

An Abstract Painting

My eyes fall on an abstract painting
of which my girlfriend,
wants to paint a series
that may hang in board halls
and offices.

There's something hot and alive
in the background
that changes from golden yellow,
to flame orange
and flows into black red
and a green line
runs from the foreground
into the horizon.

With strong straight lines wood,
and sink plate shacks appear
with horizontal and vertical lines
and it looks like a squatter camp,
or the houses of a headman
in the country.

To me it looks like drums and large tin cans
that lies around in the front
and a big old TV set
with sitting places round it
and at the back,
there are two wooden pens
to keep in sheep and goats.

Maybe there's red sand
on the one side
and yellow and green grass
for grazing on the other side,
but honestly I do not want to stay
in such a place.

[Reference: Abstract painting by Mandi. Look at the painting on my mabooki

webpage:

Gert Strydom

An African Experience (In Reply To Agostinho Neto)

That night it looked as if
the whole of the horizon was ablaze,
men were beating the fire throwing huge shadows
waving with arms outstretched
with the acrid smell of burning palms trees
filling the night air
and the fire was still spreading.

A row of Bailundu were carrying their possessions
were already fleeing, running away
as if they could outrun the blaze,
chased on by a strong wind
the kind of thing setting the hearts,
the minds of men alight,
taking possession of everything
and raising fear in non-believers
of party politics of freedom
by force, by the barrel of the gun

and even the coloured girl
reddening her face, using rouge
smiling at the mirror
felt the prickles of fear
going up and down her spine
thinking that maybe she wasn't black enough
but let the thought go
as her lovely body had proofed enough
its value up to now

and the sleepless man, thinking about eating utensils,
the care of his whole family
got out of bed and watched the horizon,
the red sky anxiously, afraid that the fire
was going to consume his house
and he wanted nothing but peace
but the far off shots of blazing guns
drawing closer, of mortar bombs exploding
and rocket shells hitting destroying,
had him in a frenzy of fear

and the silhouettes coming from the horizon
wasn't of people killing fire, or dancing to the music
of marimbas,
it was the signs of a vicious civil war
coming nearer and nearer
with a consuming blaze

and soon the whole country
would be on fire,
burning from shore to shore
in a destructive war
that would leave its people shattered
in poverty and with starvation,
with legs shot off by landmines.

[Reference: African poetry by Agostinho Neto]

Gert Strydom

An Annoyed Plover (Burns Stanza / Standard Habbie)

Fluttering with a broken wing
or diving with a voice that ring,
like a mad little flying thing
a plover bombards me,
before again it is rising
trying to make me flee

and I am astounded by it
drawing me away bit by bit
or in anger catching a fit
as I near the small nest,
falling down as if it is hit;
to be leaving seems best.

Gert Strydom

An Arundel Tomb

Enthroned in their stone effigy
with dogs at their feet
hands clasped together forever
bounded by rock

their Latin names almost indistinct
and yet alone in their solitude
they watch each other
in a kind of sweet peace

as if having rest at last
and still they are dead
a long gone earl and his countess
of a different time and age.

The words almost undecipherable
but still having a own significance
of two people beloved, serene
looking at each other with sincerity

with him clasping his empty gauntlet
in his covered hand,
and his bare hand holding hers and just maybe
the epitaph should be:

love conquers all,
even death and war.

Gert Strydom

An Elegy For South Africa

Weep South Africa
as you are no longer my country
and I live here
as if I am
from another planet

as part of a small minority
in a country where dark Africa
declares murderers as heroes
and act like barbarians
and dance and scream.

At a time the orange, white and blue
streamed proud over you
and people at work,
school to parliament
bended their knees to God

who was their supreme leader
right through hordes
at blood river,
the onslaught of the British Empire

and with God on our side
we would quarter
for nobody and nothing.

Our own culture flowered,
children went through schools
right through university
to distinguish themselves
and you could even leave the doors unlocked,
could make a living somewhere,
the police were a servant and a friend
and we under our own rule.

How many times our ancestors
tried to teach other people of God,
distributed medicine and food

and we even faced
the communists and Cubans in Angola,

till on a day a man
for the wide world a hero,
out of our own ranks betrayed his brothers
and he laid the whole country lame
and didn't sell it out,
but rather gave it away.

Today incompetents are everywhere in control
of state departments
right through into the parliament,
money is squandered,
a whole generation
through their own choosing
did not receive any school education,
whites are affirmed and impoverished by the law
and criminals and foreigners stream in
from all over Africa
to start a new life here.

Today another Afrikaner son is slaughtered
(one of more than three thousand) ,
what happens tomorrow and the next day?

[Reference: Murder on Eugene Terreblance. General condition in the country.]

Gert Strydom

An Elegy To Eugene Terreblance

You are gone without a farewell
and like a great De Wet
or De La Rey
you stood single
for your people
to also have
a place in the sun.

When your men went into Bophuthatswana
there was fear in me
that they wouldn't be able to bring peace there
and would get death for their trouble.

Time after time I have listened
to your electronic Afrikaans poems
about the field, nature
and God to whom
you bended your knee
and the beauty of it
and your humanity
came to lie in my heart.

I was at Church Square
when you on the day of the covenant
read a piece out of the Bible
and prayed for your country, your people
and that God reach out His hand
against the dark might
that takes their humanity away,

but in your sleep
you were hacked to pieces
with a Panga-blade
and a martyr was made of you.

Let dark Africa rejoice
and declare killers as heroes
and reveal themselves to journalists
and the wide world.

Let people interpret you wrongly
as a bellicose person
that wanted to bring conflict.

□

☞Envoi

I see a honourable man
who wanted to serve his Lord,
who set his people first

and your death plucks through me
and cuts where it hurts most,
as in a way
every Afrikaner is portrayed in you.

Gert Strydom

An Epitaph For My Children

(after Arthur Seymore John Tessimond)

Those that grew up from the cradle in my own chaos,
must not blame me for the hillocks full of wild-plums, medlar,
night-adders, puffing-adders and spitting-cobras

for their own frightening horse-racing right-through the ploughed maize fields,
for donkeys that oppose moving but suddenly start off at hell-razing speed,
against barbed wire rub off skin at a gallop or throw their riders down on rocks,

where my children dare each other to jump down silage pits five storeys deep,
where hayforks with iron-teeth lie and wait to piece anything
and then gambol and jell in pleasure while they do downward fall,

who with many friends chase Kittenel the angry pedigree bull into the crush-pen,
dare their lives on its back in a field where maize-stubble stand like spear-points
and do hit him with a little branch of thorns to enraged get him moving,

that crawls into porcupine holes with barking dogs,
following those beasts for their spikes,
that will follow each other into any hellish place as the leader.

[Poet's note: "Epitaph for our children" by Arthur Seymore John Tessimond.]

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Gert Strydom

An Eternal Kind Of Love (Enclosed Triplet)

While time far too quickly passes us by
in the presence of things pure and true
that between some beloved partners does lie,

sometimes the vast protecting sapphire sky
hangs covering over us, in it's deep blue
hangs somewhat sheltering over you and I,

as there's longing for something in each eye
of every great thing that we can pursue,
while continually time gets wings to fly

but somewhere a kind of essence does lie,
like something precious with a perfect hue,
as true love is the thing that does us tie

while in every thing for which we vie
you accompany me in all that we do
and somewhere is lost the me and the my

while own interests we do at times defy,
your graceful face remains my only retinue
until the very day that we do die,

even in all that we treat with some fie
we stick to each other like a kind of glue
while time far too quickly passes us by.

Gert Strydom

An Expression Of Gratitude To God (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

Thank you that You do give words to me to share with others
and I am also grateful for life and every small and big blessing
where I and every other person have got to play an important role for You
and You do bring small and big miracles and every lovely thing around me,
I thank you for each word in which I can sing and also for the correct sentences,
where Your way is far beyond the horizons and Your stars do glitter above me
and I am but insignificant (just a human being)and like this each one comes into
life
but You do give each person in life love and choices and chance upon chance,
I am but one individual in nature's stretched out great choir
that sings to You about Your love and grace praise and thanks and honour
where You do exist far beyond eons and through ages hear this song
and thank you that You do give me the ability to humbly sing to your praise
in that sometimes incomprehensible and overwhelming glorious great song
that everything that is created in one or other way does bring to You.

[Reference:"Danklied"(Song of thans)by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

An Ex-Princess Among Real Men (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Fleur Adcock)

She is constantly in the press flash light,
but tries to find
a kind of inner peace, some real meaning,
and hide behind
dark glasses, magazines, dark windows;
but in her mind
is turmoil, as she is being ignored;
with all her life she is very bored.

Her husband is daily playing the rich prince,
do not have time
to spend with her, is busy with horses
and is begrime,
he visits his married mistress daily,
he acts sublime
with affairs of business or state
and he forces her for attention to wait.

Of all her prince's inconsistencies
she is aware,
as a kind of exile, beyond a mask,
she still does dare
to choose her lovers, from real solid men
with utter care,
among tank commanders, paratroopers
and businessmen; avoiding snoopers.

When she finds a man of confidence
she gets astride,
loosen her fair hair and gets very wild,
shyness aside
she sucks at tongue, member, bite earlobe,
open up wide
to extreme intimacy with flaming eyes
that is bluer than cobalt skies

and if you think that I am only writing

of one woman,
then you have got it extremely wrong;
as long as man
does disregard, does exile his princess,
then if she can
someone else will entice her in joy,
even if it does her whole life destroy.

[Reference: 'The Ex-queen among the Astronomers' by Fleur Adcock.]

Gert Strydom

An Ibis Screeched Outside In The Garden

An ibis screeched outside
in the garden
suddenly slapped its big bronze-brown wings
and touched
by the frenzy you turned around,
without a word
pulled me deep into your arms,
suddenly you covered my face with kisses.

Gert Strydom

An Inciting Concert (Or So Was Thought At The Time)

I drive my yellow Bmw
with six cylinders roaring powerful
beneath a group of students
five pressed into the back
and three of us in the front

to listen to Koos Kombuis,
Johannes Kerkorrel, Bernoldus Niemand
and the Gereformeerde Blues Band
at the voëlvry tour.

The Afrikaans rock and roll concert
is banned at Stellenbosch
by the university
(probably by order of the government) ,

but another venue is found
where thousands of students turn up
at the Drie Gewels hotel
and it goes really jolly

and policemen with cameras
come to look
at who looks like communists
and whom they later
can crack down on.

Songs are sung
about government ministers
so and so
and we were told
who and what they really are

and we know
Johnny isn't dead,
he's just passed out
from all the drugs

and maybe in heaven

but probably
already in hell

and the maid Sara
makes green tea
for the man with the Bmw
that every now and then
embraces her
like a mother

and every thing goes well,
but for the policemen
who act like a group of clowns
trying to play spy

while criminals run loose
at other places
murdering, robbing
and stealing cars
and dealing out drugs to kids.

Gert Strydom

An Oath

Confirm my love with thee
I swear upon all that is high to me,
that only you are in my heart.

Take my hand
and make this covenant,
to belong to me
and let me swear
to be only yours.

Let come what may
and let us stay
entranced with each other
and let us be
forever together.

Gert Strydom

An Old Flame

At the cinema I waited at the counter
to buy cool drinks,
some popcorn and sweets

with the two boys
waiting to carry the load
and then like magic
you appeared from somewhere.

Still the impressive chick
with cute smile, dimples on your cheeks
and now a fire raging in your dark eyes
your big breasts drawing the attention of men

walking straight up to me
and giving me a smack of kiss
burning full on my lips.

That moment will forever be great,
while I saw tenderness and something more,
heard the voices of the two boys
mingling into our conversation

and even when my pretty wife
later in the car
called you my concubine,
my whore
even though we haven't had contact
in many years
as girls go, you are better than great.

Gert Strydom

An Old Legend

One day I pass
a place where cliffs
gnashes into the sky
and an old legend
comes alive with me.

In the distance
I hear a child's cry,
calling in vain to be rescued
and the pain cuts past all reason.

At a rock ledge a child had fallen
and was crushed,
and laid in rock pinchers
without having a way out

Nobody could get over that
slippery rocks,
to get to help him
without also falling down.

No strong rawhide thongs
could descent at that place
and nobody could
get him out of there.

At that place
a father's hart broke into pieces
and the agony and pain of the child,
went like a knife
through him.

There he had to sacrifice his son
without getting any redemption
and while tears streamed down his cheeks,
a single accurate shot resounds.

That shot still echoes
and the child lay lifeless

and nothing can take the pain,
from a fathers heart.

Gert Strydom

An Ordinary Day (Sonnet)

There were African red-knobbed coots in the marsh
while brightly the sun climbed into the sky,
reflecting the water did glow
when those birds did spread out their wings.
I was walking in muddy-water and clay
and for those animals I were a spectre
while the sun was getting brighter on the far horizon,
in the distance cows were grazing in the field,
a goat did bleat monotonously,
in the maize field wart hogs had caused destruction,
the veldt was covered with cosmos that were rising everywhere
and the homestead was behind a hillock far away in the distance,
on the ploughed field the wind did turn whirling
while I was astonished by the flowers.

Gert Strydom

Ancient Forces Blew On The Shofar

Ancient forces blew on the shofar,
before the battle begins
and I heard trumpets sing
Aida's march,
but at the soccer
there's Vuvezela's
that makes a shrill noise
and I wonder
if our team
will win at all?

[Reference: Vuvezela=> a Trumpet like blowing instrument.]

Gert Strydom

And I Can Hear From You

I have come to know
the words that you write
in your poetry
which I read
from your anthology each night

and the images
that fills the canvases
of your paintings
hanging on my wall,

but would love
a letter much better
telling me about
your feelings
and where I
fit into everything.

I have come to know
your body and your mind
and dearly miss you

but I miss
the animals
of our little zoo as well

and I can hear from you,
or you can tell me
to go to hell.

Gert Strydom

And Now I See The Sun

And now I see the sun
hanging like an arrow
in the sky
and the clouds gliding by
like puffs of a snake's hiss
forming vapour with watery tongues
and huge shadows spread
while the sun passes
with its bright white hot radiance
and next to me
the river wriggles
mighty and free
in its summer flood
with swirling, surging waters
and I mere man is struck
by the power and beauty,
the sweet serenity
that nature holds.

[Reference: My home by Musaemura Zimunya.]

Gert Strydom

And The Island Said

I am so strong that I
will conquer the whole wide world,
I will build a railway
right through Africa,

all the way from Cape Town to Cairo
and if women and children are killed,
in the thousands, if I have to destroy
the property, the very life and farms

of those that I want to conquer,
it does not matter,
as the goal of a glorious empire
justifies the means

but when time moved on
and bombs rained down
on her cities,
when V1 and V2 rockets

was turning her to dust,
she prayed against the unjust
she went on her knees,
and demanded justice
as if she had always been pure and just.

Gert Strydom

And This Is How It's In The New South Africa:

It's a place where people hide beyond high fences
with dogs patrolling up and down
and the hope that criminals
while break in somewhere else,
while hijackers aim their guns
at somebody else
and that they will take a car with force
from somebody else,
and that they will shoot to kill
somebody else,

with the wish that foreigners
will estrange somebody else from work,
that the government
will take the possessions
of somebody else.

Gert Strydom

Andromache

(After Charles Pierre Baudelaire, after Roy Campbell)

In my mind's eye I see your valiant face reflect
at an ornamental pond just before Troy did fall
and of the grieving widow of Hector you are the subject
where you stand beautiful defiant and tall

and your crying face, your female grace, your bravery
comes back to me at a municipal park's lake
where from a black boy a lovely swan breaks free
where for the family pot he tries her to take

and I could have intervened in this kind of robbery
where the swan defiantly tried to the water to get back
but then that child was the image of poverty
and the will to intervene did with me lack

while that swan called out for help as if to the gods
after been recaptured with her head held high
but in this instance their intervention was at low odds
while she looked with a kind of dignity up to the sky.

From Hector your brave husband's arms as a princess you were taken
for his killer (Achilles') son Neoptolemus to be, a war-prize, a harlot
and night after night with dread for his pleasure you were awoken
where he was already married to Hermione and this was your lot

as if no change to this situation could ever come
while bravely you did face whatever destiny brought your way,
made a foreign place at great odds you very home
but in your heart you did for salvation pray.

To South Africa and Pretoria has come a change
which clenches my heart with great pain
and the Nigerian criminals and black concubines I do find strange
as little of the previous culture and the city's roots do remain

where out of choice they do act in this way
and the Nigerians here are criminals far from home

where on the street corners those black ladies stand day by day
while robbers and their henchmen do on the streets roam.

I think, also, about the beautiful young white girls who have to whore
in Pretoria and in this land with affirmative action to make a living
and about sad stories of women struggling there are many more
while black reverse racism does sting and mere existing

has become to some people a very hard kind of thing,
where some people beg on the streets, as they cannot recover,
while others pray that God will some kind of salvation bring
while those whites that still have work do not care about one another.

[References: "Les Fleurs du Mal: The swan" by Charles Pierre
Baudelaire."The swan" by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

Anecdote Of A Coin

I placed a coin
upon a railway track
while training at Klipdrift army camp
to go to war.

The coin was flattened
and stretched two centimetres long
and pressed upon
the image of the track.

More trains passed day and night
and the coin remained
as part of that rail.

It never would transform back
to a round and shiny thing
and have the capacity
to buy anything.

I was transformed from boy
to man and matured
before the end of spring.

I became a killing machine
and lost humanity
and learnt to stay alive
while passing through
ash holes and obstacles
with live bullets whistling past.

The battle raged in Namibia
and into Angola
where I was taken
to the gates of hell

The sentence lasted a full two years
and much longer still,
as after the initial stint
and while being a civilian

every year the call up papers
for another camp
of a month to four
kept coming in.

Flown from Waterkloof Air force base
to Youngsfield in the Cape,
transported to base,
issued and barbered and indoctrinated
and sent by rail to De Brug,
armed and motorized with armour
and send by road to Luthatla
to be trained in
and then to war
and if alive
back home again
was like a endless cycle.

How could I come back from war
and killing
and shell-shocked and a little mad
be human
and live a life again.

Gert Strydom

Anemone (Balassi Stanza)

Like big white and red eyes
opening under the skies
growing from a russet stalk
fragilely flowering
early in the new spring
when some people laugh and talk
they hardly ever see
your bright blooms hanging free
while chatting past they do walk.

Gert Strydom

Angel

Incinerated angel
who died loving me
the moon still at times
shines yellow, romantically

the waves still kiss the beach
where once you left tracks
with your fingers twisted through mine

the sun still rises in a flaming ball
with magic at dawn
where once you declared
that there is abundance of beauty
caught in its early rays

and my days are lingering on
as if I am alone in the world
while you are gone.

Gert Strydom

Angel Of The Morning Light

Angel of the morning light,
the sun is up
and the sun is bright
and still I see you sleep
on a Saturday morning.

Last night your cries
and lovely sighs
rang sweet in my ears
and now your head
is on a pillow
and your long brown hair
lies strewn like a sheaf of flowers.

I tend to the pets,
prepare some breakfast
and when you open your eyes
the gold of green and brown
glitters like fire
and there's a sweet
smile on your face.

Gert Strydom

Anna Akhmatova

I see her standing, waiting in line
outside a prison
as if becoming part of her poem
and it requiems through my mind
and I can hear her asking more
than absolution and see the Yezhov terror
through her eyes

and even when I read her love poems
and are caught in their rapture,
feeling as if she has captured the essence
between light and darkness
when her words end
she fades away like a spectre.

Gert Strydom

Anne, At The Window

Somehow I see you peering
right through the window,
thought struck looking at the sea
in the distance
and I wonder what is in your mind?

If you remember the times
that the two of us
were young and in love
and it feels as if an eternity
has been spend since then

but there's something in your gaze,
that is truly beautiful and far past pretty,
some serenity shrouding you
and I wonder if you sometimes miss me
as much as I had missed you once?

Anne, at the window
the new morning is dawning
and the sun is romantically red
and the mountains and sea
is in the distance
and you are looking very lonely

and I wonder when
someone will again your smile see?

Gert Strydom

Another Epitaph On An Army Of Mercenaries (In Reply To A.E. Housman)

In the days when heaven shook
and Lucifer an angel of light,
took a third
of once holy ones with him
in a mercenary calling, made darkness his own,
when he tried to become equal to the creator God

that army of mercenaries fought
against Michael and his host
and lost, falling in defeat
and Michael and his host ended the rebellion,
had it suspended

and the mercenaries paid the price for their deceit,
(if any of them died they did deserved it)
and they fell like comets from the sky
and burning, aflame to this planet they came
which is still revolving as it did then

and here their leader entrapped man
with a cunning elusive plan
trying to take this world
into destruction with him

but as a mortal God walked this earth,
paid the price instead of man
to make the demon's work undone
and still man has a choice
to where his affections lie

and in spite of the presence of mercenaries here
elements of love, sincerity, truth and grace
still abounds in the heart of men
who honour the almighty God.

[References: Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries by A.E. Housman and Another

Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries by Hugh Macdiarmid in reply to A.E.
Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Another Kind Of Christmas (Stave Stanza Sestets)

Female politicians act like they are gods
do not care about the poor or their odds,
spend millions on hotels and aeroplanes,
drive in their processions in traffic lanes,
they do not care about any other being,
about Christ or Christmas or anything.

Some innocent children in my country
will never be free from their poverty,
they look with inquisitive big brown eyes
at some shop windows where Christmas gifts lie,
do not know the blessings of receiving,
about Christ or Christmas or anything.

Some of them do not even have some food,
come from an impoverished neighbourhood
while they also do hear the Christmas bells,
are living in a daily kind of hell,
do not know the jolly songs people sing,
about Christ or Christmas or anything.

Gert Strydom

Another Kind Of Epitaph

The time I died first, there were days upon days
while you cried, remembering my unique ways.
I rose up and up high above the cemetery wall
while then I could fly and everything beneath looked small,

but back to mother earth I had to go, where I felt the new rain
while very slow, worms on me started to gnaw without any pain.
When my next funeral came, you graciously wanted to put me to sleep
you did not want the general type of burial where they would bury me deep

but to the fire you wanted me to go, to experience the flames of hell
and over the sea, the veldt my ashes you did blow and with tears wished me
well.

Gert Strydom

Another Theology

"No, the serpent did not
tell Eve about the apple,
he had a little bit of her,

took a small nibble
and she tasted great,
was a real treat

and she shared the new found pleasure
with the man of her dreams, the only one
alive at the time,

seducing Adam
and to this day Eve keeps on being enticing
showing her bum and her breast

and the snake keeps on laughing
and mankind is blessed
and multiplies in numbers."

Gert Strydom

Another View Of The Great Deluge

(In answer to D. J. Opperman, in answer to Roy Campbell)

When the first soft drizzle began
up and down in joy some of the children ran
while on the hot rocks steam hissed up
and this was a indication to man

that water can fall from the sky
while it drizzled as if without end while days went by
and in fear and havoc some birds did fly
while the animals fled to get to higher ground

when the overcast cloudy day came with the first hard pouring rain,
the ark's keel lurched forward somewhat came to a halt again
while almost constantly thunderbolts bashed down
the earth shuddered spat out the flaming fire that it does contain,

near to the ark some of the crowd holding on to it did drown,
when again it started to move away others were thrown
while the greatest gale force stormy winds begin to blow
and at the wheel with his huge hands on it Noah was on his own

where in prayer with open eyes he did in God trust
even while in the middle of the greatest gale-force gust
his faith did not for a moment vary
while for days he did what he must

saw thunderbolts coming down as if the sky was alight
did respect God's power and his great might
even when beneath him that great ship shivered
and his heart was broken by man's plight

while at other places in the world evil men fled in great fear
along with all kinds of animals to get from the rising water clear
and legend holds that a giant of a perverted race
knew that some of his sins made this flood appear

where he had raped, robbed and murdered to his heart's content
did have deprave parties day and night until his power was spent

did daily hear Noah for many years and thought him to be mad
but suddenly at the very end saw that there was truth in what he meant

where now he did himself brace on the top of the highest hill
from where he did without any mercy kill
anyone that came near to him
and to the sky shouted his wishes ill

as if his curses and fists high above his head
the words that he later had in terror said
could influence the omnipotent Lord God
while all around him were flouting the dead

before a huge wave swallowed him into its gigantic eddy
and from those waters nothing could be free
when as the last thing living outside of the ark
that big evil human died without any kind of dignity

while Noah and those on the arc were protected by God's mercy,
where that ship drifted on the greatest ocean that any man did ever see
until a day on which the storms did die down and everything was calm
and a rainbow said that never again such a deluge would be.

[Reference:"Legende van die drenkelinge" (the legend of those who
drowned)by D. J. Opperman."The flaming terrapin" by Roy
Campbell.]

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Gert Strydom

Another Winter (Imagism)

Biting coldness grabs me with rain on this winter night -
where I walk along the promenade
and the wind is alive
and grabs on to me and grabs me again
like a impudent child
and bleak-white a lightning bolt crashes down
and I smell the explosion of that intimacy
while the red face of the moon bursts out of the sea,
disappears and are again present,
like a swimming champion
that breaks through the water with breaststroke
and for moments I stand to watch the water
which is black, wild and stormy
like a very angry woman
and I hear the moaning of the wind,
while the stars peer at me through the wind tossed clouds
with strange earnest faces.

Gert Strydom

Another Year Will Pass

Another year will pass
with the magic of spring
where all of the treasure of nature is awakening
and somehow it will be different from the last

while that season will be fleeting
before summer in its glory will come
and blossoms will find a happy home
in fruit from the time that they were flowering

and perhaps it will be the same
in the seasons of the heart
and at a time we will no longer part
while I will be happy that you did come

and in this place of loneliness
there will be sweet, sweet bliss
while all of life might feel as only being for this day
and no other coming year might be as this.

Gert Strydom

Anthem For Doomed Maturity

"First liberation and then
education, "
thousands of voices
cried
and black youngsters
burnt schools to the ground,
destroyed examination papers
and stop others from learning.

Even though they sacrificed
education, some their lives
and in a way
brought freedom,
jobless damnation waited
for a uneducated segment
of society.

As time passed maturity came
and they were condemned
to manual labour,
thrived in criminality
and not one of them
was really free,
to become what they could
while destiny
measured out its toll.

To be living at the bottom rungs
of society,
was worst than being dead
and each and every day
was filled with dread
and the words of their anthem
faded away,
while reality structured
the tune that life played.

Gert Strydom

Anthem To The 47th Cuban / Faplan Brigade

Whom but your mothers back in Havana
and some in Luanda
mourn your lost or knows
that you were slaughtered in battle
as if human life
holds nothing sacred,

were wiped out by one
of only two battalions
at the junction of the Lomba
and Cuzizi Rivers,

that you heard Ratel armoured cars
driving in at speed,
the roar of Olifant tanks
and the thunder of their guns
or the whining stutter of machineguns
nor did you probably say any prayers
before deadly shells fell from the sky.

What remorse does your supreme leader feel
when your mothers, wives and children
light up candles
(who never really had a chance
for a proper goodbye)
and knows by now
that you will never come home.

[Reference: "The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down." Jannie Geldenhuys. 1994: At the front. P240. Johanthan Ball Publishers.]

Gert Strydom

Anthony And Cleopatra

(after José Maria de Heredia and Douglas Livingstone)

On the terrace at the palace from up high
they both saw Egypt sleep under a humid hot sky,
past some large towns and smaller villages bit by bit
oily the great river rolled toward the delta that separates it.

Now awake from where she slept in a childish pose
he felt her voluptuous body as into his arms she rose
the Roman imperator felt captive under his armor
while her madding heavy perfumed odor

invited his triumphant victorious heart
while she turned to him as if they will never part
gazed into the depths of his eyes with her face white
amid her dark shining hair and of beauty she was a sight.

In her eyes there were golden specks and in their reflection
a whole fleet of ships that was escaping into any safe direction.

[References: "Antoine et Cléopâtre" by José Maria de Heredia and
"A presentiment of the Nile" by Douglas Livingstone.]

Gert Strydom

Antitheses (Parody)

With harmony you cannot really
harass: According to Boerewitch
it is foggy and a natural building block to speak about-
So the romantic lameness of a answer
is anonymous asserted by the indiscrete text's
epidemic positions.

Accordingly R.H. Unknown alleges, that the ailment
for the stomach of refute is only reducing
by a answer's enormous potential to confess
and to reflect.

The only hallmark of the life expectancy of the melancholically affected,
is to comically tempt, with a grin coming from the stomach,
by only praising the relationships
or by feeding hornbills.

While you really with a astonishing question
want to canvass people, with a warm sensitive little voice,
in conversations wanting to plant some thoughts, to later follow the ear
to the waiting rooms: I do not use anything –

Mit der melancholie ist durchaus nicht zu sprechen!

In following of Johannes Chohl's terrifying prosody
about the melancholy! The last part is recorded by Heindrich Spiegel.

Gert Strydom

Anyone

Anyone stays at a place
where he feels comfortable
or find no place to stay
and anyone chooses a mate,
if he wants to or can
and someone stays alone.

For the beautiful and the ugly,
little and small
and for the aged and the young
and for anyone,
the same sun and moon and stars shine
and the same seasons past.

Anyone works and sleep
and laughs and cry
and play and fight,
till the sun's last rays
touch a life.

Gert Strydom

Aomed

(in answer to C. Louis Leipoldt)

The Muezzin on the minaret do proclaim,
call people to their prayers in Allah's name.

Towards Mecca the Mullah looks with the rising sun
kneels on his prayer mat and in his mind Allah is the only one.

In his beautiful palace the Sultan ponders over the affairs of state
but first he must pray and all of the other things can wait,

converted from Hinduism to Islam sombre very sincere Aomed
looks at the red rising sun that seems as if had bled;
lives chaste from any perversity
do control the things he do, the things that he does look at and see
even that which he does eat
and reclusively avoid new people to meet
and overly bold he only has contact with men
do avoid being near any women
but strangely to him do appear the treacherous jinn
and with a simple kind friendly virtuous female draws him in.

His mind does wonder if he was wrong
and he greets her courteously and helps her when she does come along
while time does move swiftly on and friends they do become
and his heart is full of joy and his feelings for her become strong
while Aomed struggles his own inner desires to control
and it's as if a new fire is burning in the depths of his soul
but where he had sworn to his own chastity
one later afternoon at the sea from all clothes she is free

and deeper she do wade in out to a nearby shoal
where down she do sit and wash off everything foal
and rising in the twilight with her back to the setting sun
she walks out slowly wading and she is not aware of anyone,
for a moment in contemplation she stops, the sun catches her body,
with her breasts mysterious and yet firm and it's a glorious sight to see
with shadows enhancing and diminishing her in utter loveliness
with her black maidenhair chaste but yet explicitly a sight of sheer bliss

while closing his eyes from the delightful beauty that he saw
perplexed Aomed is in the deepest awe
mutters to himself: "Allah is one. But godly, lovely and slowly
out of the heart of the sea comes Shiva auspiciously to me."

[Reference: "Aomed" by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

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Gert Strydom

Apocalypse

Maybe it was in a dream
that I saw them come past thundering,
heard their hoofs beating, resounding
one horse after another

white, red, black and grey
and their riders had great power to display
went out to conquer, to overwhelming declare war,
to measure off, to kill
and to annihilate

and these horses are not metaphors
but come as stark naked reality,
displaying the illness in all of humanity

where reason, passion and imagination
cannot come to the rescue,
where man takes what he wants by force,

gathering in huge numbers, to rob to maim,
to claim the land back
as if it has belonged to some long dead relative

declares war on one another, conquering,
robbing mineral wealth
and man lives without any bonds, fornicating
with whomever he wishes

and AIDS spreads and claims its toll,
man is totally out of control,
bend on destroying
and standing at the very abyss.

[Reference: Apocalypse by Charles Madge.]

Gert Strydom

Apocalypse (The Words Of John, The Beloved Disciple Of Jesus Christ)(Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to W. E. G. Louw)

I saw You, as God, King, Priest and Judge
and know that all men do only come to salvation through You
but these predictions of beasts and of times did sweep me along
where I was astounded by the evil and Your great love, mercy and omnipotence,
where world empires and powers did alternate rapidly and everything did change
where nothing evil, vain and dark before Your fierce light could be disguised
and I was in grief with how humanity spends its time during the great crisis days
where end-time events suddenly did fold open before me like a flower.
With great sorrow my profetic glance did go over the world,
where I, Your beloved disciple, did stand so unworthy before Your glory and
throne
when You gave Your revelation to me of the last events of this world,
and I was weak in Your holy light, did struggle to go on
but Your judgement and pronouncements I had to make and tell the whole world
of it,
that You are interested in each human being, nation, people and government.

[Reference:"Apocalypsis" by W. E. G. Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Apocripha: Adam And Eve

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

When in grief they found comfort in each other,
like leaves blown in a wild wind
do know of the depth of their straying
they did tenderly bind with each other,

their glances penetrated their souls,
their hearts did bounce up and down from bliss,
they were united against their cruel destiny
with love as a strong fortress.

[Reference: Adam en Eva (Adam and Eve)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Apocripha: When The Paradise Was Lost

When the paradise was lost
Eve with her very short skirt walked
right up to where the angels were standing
and held herself clumsy,
did walk deliberately right into one of them
so as if his burning sword
could not singe her to ash

and in their nature
all women are still like this
and they do endlessly lure,
with innocent eyes
they do cause amok.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: A Psalm In A Time Of Lock-Down And Distress (Refrain Stanza)

My God, You are aware of everything around me,
do know that world-wide with a virus there is calamity,
as a sinful man I stand before You perplexed
where all humanity is by this deadly thing vexed,
in Your hand there is life that you do give daily,
You predicted that deadly pestilences would come,
it's possibly the lot of rebelling humanity but its gruesome,
I beg save every person even if we do live in iniquity,
my God, You are aware of everything around me.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: From Lucifer (Prince & Ruler Of The Underworld & Hell & Other Hot Places)(Parody / Satire)

(with apology to and in answer to Stephan Bouwer)

My best friend Stephan,
the Lord God omnipotent & omniscient & omnipresent
did bring your message
with the light of a hellish thunderbolt here below to me,
so that my ears are still ringing from that lightning-strike
as I was time after time hit by it
over your Epistle re: June M.

She was not received in the better resorts but are down here in hell
& are tortured constantly to convert her from bad men & liquor
& to learn her to socialize less
& to care about the oppressed, the downtrodden et cetera
& to give & not just to hold parties
& no whores & murderers but those that truly do come to conversion
are up there where vicious cherubs as fierce unconquerable knights
do constantly throw a wall against my hordes & do cut them with flaming swords
into pieces & then send them back to me during earthquakes
& I have learned from your script
that she does choose the company & participation of murderers & whores &
thieves
& I will immediately fulfil these wishes of yours
& add insane people as well to her company
& all of them will be women as she does turn men around her finger
& since we have no lions & lambs down here
I will include for her enjoyment the hellhound & vampire & werewolf
& tikoloshe.

As far as her spirituality and spirit of mind does go literally hundreds of evil
spirits
have entered & exited her & she does well with the fire-dance,
to jump from one hot place to another constantly,
in the circle-dance on coals that do glow at a heat that puts melting-ovens to
shame
& with the torturing she does constantly call out your name,

can already like a dragon blow out fire with the heated coals of curses

but where up to now she had barely been fried,
she will now miss the medium fires
as your interaction with me, did bring me pain from better resorts
& now I will send her straight to hell-hot
& I have learnt that maybe you will one of the coming days
be singing down here along with her
in a choir that like I do despise, do laugh off and mock the Lord God
& I cannot wait to welcome you down here,
to receive you with the same hospitality as June M.
& from her cries I take it that she is longing for you.

From your friend in hell

Lucifer as Upper: Satan & Demon & Snake & Dragon et cetera

[Reference:"Epistel i/s J.M." (Epistle re: J. M.)by Stephan Bouwer.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: In The Beginning

(in answer to A. G. Visser)

It's late afternoon on the last day of creation,
it's becoming twilight with the beginning of the night,
everything that has been created is utterly perfect
where the man is waiting alone on the Creator.

The whole creation is accomplished in its fullness
and there is beauty and nobility to everything
where everything living follows the man everywhere
where birds in pairs sing jubilant around him.

Just bits and pieces are left from everything
but the man is lonely without a mate
and the Creator is content and thought-struck
where He is forming the first woman utterly delicate.

In her eyes there are stars that eternally shines gleaming,
for her smile He fetched the heat of the sun
and her breasts have the supple roundness of the moon,
in her heart He determined the storminess of the ocean,

with the iciness of glaciers, the clouds that do drip in her eyes,
the suppleness of a tiger and a lion's cruel intent,
the peace of a dove and the wildness of an antelope
but still deep in thought the Creators sits bended

as He wants to bring out the best of creation in her
and nobleness, intellect, softness and love are not saved
and He meditates on how she is going to view the man as her equal but the
leader,
how she is going to accept the man as her beloved and her superior

but He gives to her utter beauty and also a will to serve,
for the man's eye great desire and enchantment when he does notice her
and something that awakes an urge for her protection with the man
as in her the Creator do provide a equal match for the him

as the one that can bring happiness, joy and utter pain,

the one that is jubilant through the day and gladly jumps around like an antelope,
as the one in whom the man can totally pour out his life and love
and from everything in creation she is the most wonderful thing.

[Reference:"In den beginne" (In the beginning)by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 1 (Italian Sonnet)

In the dark expanse of nothing You are the light,
Your thoughts and words do create everything.
From eternity You are the only existing being
where You are always present but out of sight.

The many twinkling, glowing stars in the night
are constantly in their orbits in space moving
in the way that You had set from the beginning,
where You do create and maintain to Your delight

destine the things that do come to us in our days,
where You do know exactly the things that will be
do dwell in our thought, minds and in every heart
sanction how we mortals experience Your ways,
do eternally walk the pathways of immortality
where the universe is your canvas and your art.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 10

Where even my own poetry comes from Your hand,
You my Lord do constantly astound me with your love,
and as a steward over money, time, ability and talent
You do know about everything that I am and do get and by mercy it is free,
as everything that I have and am is Your property,
where constantly I am waiting upon Your salvation and Your Great Judgement
Day,
as to everything painful and bad comes an end in Your omnipotence
and as a mere human about Your ways I am stupid,
You my Lord do constantly astound me with your love.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 11: Like A Watchman

(after Totius)

Like a watchman that waits that the new morning comes,
I continually wait upon You and daily I am speechless
and even when the hours of darkness do fall over me,
You do remain the great saviour, the God of the universe,
and out of destruction You do turn my life around,
where constantly I do witness the wondrous signs of Your love,
while You do look at me as Your child in righteousness
and Your presence in tranquillity is not disguised,
I continually wait upon You and daily I am speechless.

[Reference: "Psalm 130" by Totius.

Poet's note: ON FACEBOOK THERE IS NO FREEDOM OF SPEECH OR FREEDOM OF RELIGION:

I just want to thank Facebook for banning me until Thursday 7 December 2018 12h22 on this day Monday 03 December 2018 while I have been publishing this poem. This poem is a Psalm that I have written to God in both English and Afrikaans.

The other two poems are love poems that I have written to my wife.
The Facebook message while banning me states that I have broken the community standards in posting this poem. If broking the community standards by writing a psalm to God then there is no RELIGIOUS FREEDOM which is a fundamental human right and is part of the constitutional rights of my country South Africa. Where is FREEDOM OF SPEECH, which is another fundamental human right and part of the constitutional rights of citizens in South Africa?]

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 12

Where constantly I am trivial against angry enemies,
You do come to the rescue and give my life new meaning
and where nowadays people do view themselves as gods
I do know that in your omnipotence You do press me to Your chest
and You do know even the greatest secret of my worst enemies
where in the impossibility you do set my ways straight
and on my knees I do look straight into Your great mercy,
while in Your heart selfless love is more than just pity
You do come to the rescue and give my life new meaning.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 13

(after Totius)

You plant me like a tree at a place where there is water
of every word, act and urge of mine You do bare knowledge
and from prehistoric times long before I existed You did know me,
even before my days and times were reckoned out in Your love
and nothing that I do and am are missing in Your knowledge
where even destiny and governments do bend to Your will,
in abundance under Your trust and Your mercy and care my days are,
day upon day You do bring my life to meaning,
of every word, act and urge of mine You do bare knowledge.

[Reference: "Psalm 13" by Totius.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 14

Even the lives of my worst enemies are in Your hand
and no power can stand against Your will and Your love.
Where daily without reason people do come in anger against me
they are lighting inextinguishable fires in their own lives,
like this a person's life becomes before You trivial like sand,
they fall into their own pits and the slippery places that they set
and constantly I can tell that You do come to the rescue with great mercy,
You do trade Your own sinless life for mine that is full of inequity
and no power can stand against Your will and Your love.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 15

My Lord, from my childhood days I have seen You as my companion,
where as a mere child I hold fatherless to your strong hand
and where from prehistory You did reckon out my days
I ask You to protect my darling, as You do know what she means to me,
where day upon day you do notice everything in our lives and in the future
and my God where she is to me wonderful like Your angels,
nothing in our lives is for You a secret
and still day after day I want to entrust our lives to You
where as a mere child I hold fatherless to your strong hand.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 16

(after Totius)

From the eons You do know the path that I have got to go
You do measure my days out in the time of my trivial existence,
unstoppable I see my enemies that daily do greet me
but from their own acts they do go to destruction
where constantly You do watch everything, every incident and conversation
where even the mockers come to an end according to Your will
and those that make phone calls and laugh cannot disguise them to me,
from Your benevolence my days carry on,
You do measure my days out in the time of my trivial existence.

[Reference: "Psalm 1" by Totius.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 17

In every small bird that watches me at the window
it's as if You do look at me with Your love
and like this the sparrow chirps, the dove does coo and the weaver twitter
while constantly I do think of You,
I see how You do entrust me with your love,
when the redbreast sing a song of praise before the rain,
when the doves constantly do sing songs to You
and I trust you like a father in all things,
it's as if You do look at me with Your love.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 18

Like in a dream the yesterdays are gone
and today You, my Lord, do straighten my ways
where only You do know what waits in the new tomorrow,
where You have already provided everything
and some days are good and others I find bad
but at my side You do still stand in Your omnipotence
while one after the other my days pass me by
where as a trivial human being I believe sincerely
and today You, my Lord, do straighten my ways.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 19

Only You do know the treasure chamber of the snow, hail and rain,
in the unseen dynamic You do remain with love the One
where all of this tells something of a God that is attentive,
You have set seasons and the rotation of their cycles,
You do bring the cycle of evaporation and the thunder together,
You do measure out the scope of the dry drought
and like this survival and undeserved mercy does rest in Your decisions,
You do know when the snow will bestow her confetti to the earth,
in the unseen dynamic You do remain with love the One.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 2 (English Sonnet)

You are the God, who feeds every wild thing,
the One walking on a tempestuous sea,
to who flocks of birds do constantly sing,
while You do determine whatever will be.

You do hold elements in their furious rage,
do wander with destiny in Your own hand,
are present from the outset in every age,
do determine the rulers in every land

and not bound by the limitations of time
Your glance and memory do contain all,
where you do righteously judge each crime,
You omnipresent glance do in love fall

on mere mortal beings that dwell on this earth
where You God, do cherish them from their birth.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 20

Daily you do command the day and night in their interchange
while birds do sing the twilight orange in prayer,
at each birth you do endow the spark that gives life
where husband and wife do set blood-bonds with each other
and You are present at each child's development,
where in life there is faith and hope that comes in the morning,
where You do surprise in life man with opportunities,
where You are involved with each noble and good thing,
while birds do sing the twilight orange in prayer.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 20 (1)

Daily you do command the day and night in their interchange
while birds do sing the twilight orange in prayer,
at each birth you do endow the spark that gives life
where husband and wife do set blood-bonds with each other
and You are present at each child's development,
where in life there is faith and hope that comes in the morning,
where You do surprise in life man with opportunities,
where You are involved with each noble and good thing,
while birds do sing the twilight orange in prayer.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 21

My Lord, in this life everyone is underway
on a crusade between right and wrong,
aiming at a place where a person do seen the unseen
with the choice to stand against You or to serve You sincerely
and through eons the struggle rages between good and bad
but still You do come to make mortal people Your children
where day after day You do get involved with each one
and like this each one learns to know truly know and are attached to You
on a crusade between right and wrong.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 22

It is as if all of spring does bring joy to You
while everywhere birds do day and night sing songs of praising,
the almond and cherry trees do carry their own wedding-gowns
every fruit tree stands with its blossoms ready
and over the scope of Your mercy I am speechless.
My Lord, You do give life and light and care to everything that does exist,
no person can fully understand Your selfless love
as Your benevolence is present in each thing,
while everywhere birds do day and night sing songs of praising.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 23

When my ways do lead to roads that stray from You
then my Lord, You do find me again
and even-though I am at times directionless a stray-child
You are the one that finds me like a Sheppard,
never You do go pass me when I am in misery
as You do find me and lead me when I am missing
to places of rest and tranquillity,
even when my own will do lead me away from you
then my Lord, You do find me again.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 24

Everything is measured out in the cycle of life
there is nothing that you do not provide or know of,
You have the knowledge of the antelope that dies when the hunter's shot
resounds
even of the hunter that falls to a predator,
about the labourer's misery, his work and sweat,
about the seedlings sprouting after the rain,
about the fruit-trees that do flower in spring
and there is unending love in Your will and in Your decree,
there is nothing that you do not provide or know of.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 25

When man is busy with iniquity and darkness
there is nothing that You do not observe and comprehend
and every monstrosity is saved for judgement in Your record
but You do only want the best for each person,
where You do hear the prayers of those that do trust in You
and the clockwork for humanity keeps ticking off
where You in Your omnipotence do arrange hours, days, years and ages
even hold the forces of destruction in check,
there is nothing that You do not observe and comprehend.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 26

You are the creator and source of the universe,
You do give life and You allow things to fall to disrepair,
by itself nothing was set in place
as everything comes from Your omnipotence from You mere command
and with immeasurable science You do create innumerable things
but much more than this You do make man to be just like You
and You are unending in Your own secrecy:
Your Godliness does not need an age-old bang,
You do give life and You allow things to fall to disrepair.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 27

Cleverly people try to determine Your Godliness
and mortally they fail to determine Your domain
as what You really are no human does know,
no mere human can determine Your substance and Your limits.
With trivial insight the Godliness is removed from You
and Your omnipotence, Your omniscience, omnipresence does remain,
while man do not get a real impression of what You really are
and even the most brilliant stays trivial and lost
and mortally they fail to determine Your domain.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 28

Insignificant I am and everything comes out of Your hand,
too wonderful and great You are for me to comprehend,
food and clothes are things that You do provide
and sincere and true I want to serve You my whole life long,
my life and that which I am You do bring forth to exist,
thankful I want to bring my praises constantly to You,
like a mere child ask for Your protection and help continually,
too wonderful and great You are for me to comprehend.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 29

I want to thank You for the rain that falls on every summer afternoon,
for all of the countless small blessings,
for all of the fruit that this summer brings
and for every virtuous wonderful thing
as You are the God, the creator and saviour of the universe,
even from the catastrophe that befalls me You do bring forth beautiful things
where I stand mortal before You and for my own goodwill You do act,
I even want to thank You for the thunder that bangs outside,
for all of the countless small blessings.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 3 (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Author of every great and good desire,
You do walk in the raging sun of fire,
in the hearts of mere mortal man you do
thoughts and actions of Your great love inspire.

You are the caretaker of everything,
do omnipresent dwell where we are living,
know the inner secrets in the heart of man
where in nature the works of Your hand sing

of Your great love, loyalty and righteousness
while man still wander in great rebelliousness,
You do bring the times of peaceful tranquillity,
is the little voice that talks in consciousness

where You do wander in eternal bright light,
do with love care for humans in Your great might.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 30

Rejoicing I want to sing a song of Zion to You
as You still have got control of every thing,
where in unemployment You do constantly provide for me,
where You do constantly notice my misery and cares,
where You do look at me with affection,
You do put governments in place and let them fall eternally,
alone You are the ruler of the universe,
and here I pray and wait on You to bring the salvation
as You still have got control of every thing.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 31 (Kyrielle)

Where this old world does strike me down
I do now feel like a mere clown
but clear everything You do see.
Oh, my God, have mercy for me.

When my whole world does fall apart
You do know all things in my heart:
I cannot beg for charity.
Oh, my God, have mercy for me.

In my country there is unrest
fire that set mere men to the test
and men are full of iniquity.
Oh, my God, have mercy for me.

Against darkness I cannot win,
I want to confess all my sin:
my lot is from apostasy.
Oh, my God, have mercy for me.

When I appear before Your face
let my sin be without a trace.
You do set all the captives free.
Oh, my God, have mercy for me.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 32

From light-years away in space and time
You are the architect, designer and creator
that do take care
of a insignificant small planet that is far away.

You do determine our days and do bond with us intimately
as a loving God
and You do provide a sanctuary
even when crudely we do repudiate You,
even when we do not agree with You.

Still You do protect everything that is living,
You do constantly provide light and the essentials of life,
even to them that do come to rebellion, that do not believe
that do yearn for darkness

and Your good-natured kindness we do not comprehend,
we do unreasonable judge You,
as a being that rules with violence and might
and do give no respect to You.

Here I want to ask for Your mercy,
that still You will look at us like a father.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 33: You Who Are A Eternal Sheppard

(in answer to Cornelius van der Merwe)

You who are a eternal Sheppard
do witness how evil the things are in this country,
how cars are stolen and hijacked,
how evil-doers do rape women,

how thy do not take notice of any one of Your laws,
have already tortured thousands of people
until death, blood-thirsty murdered them
and where we are already loosing courage
I ask that You do lead us through the valley
of death intact,

where Your body is the temple
that was again re-build in three days
my eyes are still drawn to You
and I ask that You do stretch out Your hand,

do protect every home, business and every farm
from all of these evil people,
(even every other one that do serve You)
do constantly cover them with Your almighty power
that You do draw Your laager around them
that stand faithful on their knees before You.

[Reference: "Psalm 33" (Psalm-poem) by Cornelius van der Merwe.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 34

It's as if every yesterday do today come back to me,
there is a mystic message in every flower
and through the eons You do to me talk.
When the chrysalis becomes a living butterfly,
with all the beauty I am speechless,
for others You are there far away on the other side
but for me You are right here present with Your creation,
to others You are concealed but to me You are not disguised,
there is a mystic message in every flower

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 35

(after C. J. Langenhoven)

Now each person is self-focused and keeps longing
and yearning for better days while destiny hangs over the future.
My God, only You can in advance see the future.
Do lead us through the darkness to serve You sincerely
as each one of us are caught in lust, hate, fear and own interest,
each one has got a own plan that leads away from Your ways, Lord,
where we are only mortals, while You do govern with selfless love,
as without You we are scared and caught in the lot of life
and yearning for better days while destiny hangs over the future.

[Reference: "Die woeste nag" (The wild / savage night) by C. J. Langenhoven.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 36

My God, out of many nations You did lead our nation
to eternally stay followers and servants of You.
Out of the Netherlands, from the Flemish, out of Germany and France
where our forefathers as protestants faithful did not want to deviate from You
but now our unity is being broken into pieces by others,
You did in danger, culture, in morals and language let us originate,
for freedom of will and a tranquil existence brought us to here
and only in You my nation can get its calling and destiny
to eternally stay followers and servants of You.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 37 You Stand By My Side In The Hour Of Need

You do give to me the bread of life
and stand at my side in the hour of need,
do meet me at the day-break
do protect me against each demon, man and beast.
You do feed me in the time of the worst famine,
do send me out to the ploughed land,
do keep over me Your omnipotent hand,
You are near even on the day of death
and stand at my side in the hour of need.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 38

Everywhere my enemies do gather around me
while You alone do fight the battle for me,
when I lay down it is safe when I rest in You,
I am constantly aware of Your benevolence
where daily You do stay here close to me
and nobody can in any way touch me
when daily You do straighten my ways
and they fall in their own snare and traps
while You alone do fight the battle for me.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 39

My Lord, You do hear my prayer
and without Your help and friendship I am lost,
speechless I am in my own inability
and my misery and worries You do notice.
In a world full of injustice I was born,
lies and slandering-gossip goes out before me
and it feels as if nothing and nobody can stop it,
only in You deliverance has to me been allotted
and without Your help and friendship I am lost.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 4(Refrain Stanza)

(after Totius)

There is no place, moment or event
where You my God are not also present
and outside our earthly sphere you stand in infinity
but right here in any circumstance with me
each thing small of great do carry to You meaning and intent
daily you straighten my ways against destiny
where even the desires of my heart You do see
You know all secrets and there is of mine no talent
where You my God are not also present.

[Reference: "Psalm 8" by Totius.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 40

My Lord, my prayer rings in Your ears
and without your help and friendship I am lost,
speechless I am in my own inability
and my misery and cares Your eyes do see.
In a world full of injustice I have been born,
lies and gossiping slander go out before me
and it feels as if nothing and nobody can stop it,
just in You there is deliverance for me
and without your help and friendship I am lost.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 41 *

My Lord, You do promise to straighten paths,
I beg You to heal me from my sin
where in the iniquity of others their hate lies on me,
where it's as if I do only know the bitter side of life,
it's only You and Your angels that protects from catastrophe,
in extreme times miraculously bring liberation
and in a world of darkness I want to sing of You,
You do know the secrets and the core of each issue,
I beg You to heal me from my sin.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 42: I Am (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Hennie en Maretha Maartens)

My Lord, I know that you de really exist
and that you are all wonderful and good things,
this is how I do comprehend you
and the name I AM of You is no secret,
that You are the word that calls things from the nought,
where everything has with You a origin and do come to existence
and you are the One who died for me and who do cover my sins,
do leave me daily speechless with the beauty in life
but this name, I AM, do have a certain kind of incomprehensibility
where in your omnipotence it can include everything imaginable,
it has got the mysterious things of beginnings and endlessness
where only in holy purity it does include all things,
still it's in my human simplicity that I continually do find You,
in the language of a mere mortal and of a small child.

[Reference: "Oorsprong" (Origin)by Hennie en Maretha Maartens.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 43 (Refrain Stanza)

(After Totius)

In every place, or time or scope up to eternity
You are present, even in infinity,
and nowhere can I hide from your face
constantly Your selfless love do my separate ways erase
and everywhere reins Your act of will, Your decisions as destiny.
Wherever I come Your grace do me stun
as You do regard me as Your child even if away I do run,
in love in every fierce struggle You do protect me,
You are present (even in infinity) .

[Reference: "Psalm 8" by Totius.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 44 (Refrain Stanza)

My God, senseless people ineptly do rule over me,
You know how we do suffer and we are not free
and at times I stand in life in total dismay
but hide close to You as if these dark days will forever stay.
Decades now pass with oppression as if it will forever be
I ask like our forefathers for a great salvation
as savages are killing the commercial farmers of my nation,
I beg You Lord save my nation, save me from all iniquity,
You know how we do suffer and we are not free.

[Poet's note: More commercial farmers in South Africa have been killed than soldiers of the South African Defence Force had died in the border / bush war of the seventies and eighties. I call the killers savages as they do torture, dismember and rape while they do the killing and do act these circumstances still the South African government want to dispose the commercial farms and the famine in Zimbabwe, which at a time had been the food-basket of Africa where similar action took place, is no kind of warning to oppression that I talking about is being called Affirmative senselessness and ineptness is demonstrated by South Africa going from a first world country to a third world country with electricity continually being cut-off which the government term as power-shedding and corruption right through governmental structures happening in the last twenty-eight years more crime is out of control. I have personally lost two cars, which had been stolen (without reimbursement from the insurance) and very narrowly escaped in a hijack of my gardening equipment and tools (several spades/ gardening-forks/ pick-axes, rakes, a lawnmower power cable of 25 meters and even a electric edge-trimmer have been stolen along with several fishing-rods and all kinds of fishing equipment) in a break in.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 44 B (Refrain Stanza)

My God, senseless people ineptly do daily rule over me,
You know how my people and I do suffer and I am not free
and at times I stand in life in dismay while life is in disarray
but hide close to You, as if these dark days will forever stay.
Decades now pass with oppression as if it will forever be
I ask like my forefathers to turn things around, for salvation,
as savages are killing the commercial farmers of my nation,
I beg You Lord save my nation, save me from all iniquity,
You know how my people and I do suffer and I am not free

[Poet's note: More commercial farmers in South Africa have been killed than soldiers of the South African Defence Force had died in the border / bush war of the seventies and eighties. I call the killers savages as they do torture, dismember and rape while they do the killing and do act these circumstances still the South African government want to dispossess the commercial farms and the famine in Zimbabwe, which at a time had been the food-basket of Africa where similar action took place, is no kind of warning to oppression that I am talking about is being called Affirmative Action, which discriminates in employment against white people and especially white loyment during this time has risen to record levels. The senselessness and ineptness is demonstrated by South Africa going from a first world country to a third world country with electricity continually being cut-off which the government term as power-shedding and corruption right through governmental structures happening in the last twenty-eight South African currency during this time has devaluated from about R4.5 to a dollar to now more than fifteen, which has a great impact on the prices of all imported goods and nment hospitals and clinics have gone from first rate to less than third rate. I had worked at Tygerberg and H F Verwoerd hospitals before Mr Mandela became ays had to wait for fifteen hours with my mother (a white female lady of eighty-three at the time) who had been admitted to Far East Rand Hospital after a motorcar accident before she was treated. I went to the local governmental dental clinic and the dentist broke some of my wisdom tooth and was not able to draw X-ray machine did not work. I was given a letter for doctors in a government hospital stating that I arrived at the Springs dental clinic with broken wisdom tooth. At the Medi-Clinic (a private institution) my teeth had been drawn by a first rate doctor who humanely did not charge me as at the time I could not afford the treatment. It seems that the only governmental department that is functioning properly is the taxman namely the South African Revenue ermore crime is out of control. I have personally lost two cars, which had been stolen (without reimbursement from the insurance) and

very narrowly escaped in a hijack of my gardening equipment and tools (several spades/ gardening-forks/ pick-axes, rakes, a lawnmower power cable of 25 meters and even a electric edge-trimmer have been stolen along with several fishing-rods and all kinds of fishing equipment)in a break in.]

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 45 (Refrain Stanza)

Daily I beg lead me in Your omnipotent saving light
do not hide Your holy face from me during this night,
days of darkness hang like a thick blanket over me
and nowhere I can go without Your great mercy,
around me I see evil's might and alone I cannot it fight
and it's as if my country and its civilization does fall
but in this You do remain the ruler of everything and of all.
I beg You be present here, come with your saving might,
do not hide Your holy face from me during this night

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 48 (Free Verse Sonnet)

My Lord, I have witnessed Your salvation
that in impossibility You do come to the rescue
and You did teach me just to trust in You,
that You are present in every circumstance and at anything.
Around me nations rise and others fall,
You do put rulers in place and let them fall,
You make the work of evil people undone
and still You do rule as Lord over all.
You do see and hear everything and nothing is secret to You,
when evil action brings destruction You are still near,
as You are omnipotent, omniscient and at all times present,
no power or anything can get dominance over You.
When death and devastation of a virus leaves me speechless,
it's then that You act and do turn our lives around.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 49

With the grace and mercy of the Lord God
I wish to you the crystal-bright morning sky,
the doves that coo in love in the berry-trees,
the bees that buzz on the morning breeze,
for your life to feel endlessly
for you to be very happy.

May God bless you,
turn your world around to make it beautiful,
may He alone be your guide
and lead you to a place in eternity.

May every dream unfolds as a blessing
and that blessing become reality,
may it now to eternity fall on you:
with a much better day on every morning.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 5

(after Totius)

You my God do manage and determine the human cell,
where You do bring about glorious life to everyone that do exist,
do know about everything when You bring forth perfectly the infant
and nothing is for Your omnipotence, intellect and power too insignificant,
daily You can determine the future into thousands of years,
where everything that lives You have set under man's authority,
moved in my inability I have to hesitate over pronunciations of Your glory
where You do bring about glorious life to everyone that do exist,

[Reference: "Psalm 8" by Totius.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 50 (Refrain Stanza)

It's now decades that with You I do hide
where You hear my prayers, in my situations I do abide,
like many other people I am stranded in my own land
yet I still believe You have got the upper hand,
even if destruction rolls in like the waves You do still provide,
I believe that You are waiting on the right time and do hear
even if a prayer comes without faith and in fear,
I beg do now intervene, do over human existence decide,
where You hear my prayers, in my situations I do abide.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 54 (Refrain Stanza)

Other people believe You remain deaf and mute,
that You come to my salvation I am resolute.
Constantly the birds around me are twittering,
doves do their songs of praise to You sing
and sometimes You do only act when things are acute.
There are places where I do You daily find
and when everything is overwhelming you are kind,
You turn my days around when life do me persecute,
that You come to my salvation I am resolute.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 55

Wildly the veldt is full of the cosmos
the weavers twitter the morning mad
and just where I look I notice Your handiwork,
even in what the morning holds for me
and thunder rolls there in the distance,
do slam down blue-white from the bright blue sky,
it's still in your mercy and love that I do trust
and You do fill my days with beautiful things,
the weavers twitter the morning mad.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 56 (Refrain Stanza)

You do still remain the ruler of the universe
even if man cannot the impact of a virus reverse,
even if a deadly time does come,
in the fierce struggle You do still lead me home,
where people die and some do You curse
and through dangers You do lead me day and night,
even when all kind of hope is out of sight.
You do bring rest even if the world is with evil perverse,
even if man cannot the impact of a virus reverse

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Apocrypha: Psalm 6

(after Totius)

When my Lord, I look up into the night sky
and I notice the Southern Cross above me,
where under Your omnipotence I stand insignificant,
I cannot understand the power that brought creation forth,
I see the starry-fields glistening glorious,
stars that jump and pulsars going to nought,
in Your wonderful dynamics everything is explicit,
it is as if I am looking into infinity,
and I notice the Southern Cross above me.

[Reference: "Psalm 8" by Totius.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 64

You are the God that my ancestors served from the start
and as a mere human being I do not deserve Your loving-kindness,
still I want to thank You for Your miracles that through the ages You do bring,
that You do protect me from pre-history do protect me from every evil thing.
I ask that in this age and time I am to see Your salvation
Where humanity by a virus is smitten.
I ask that You now do pour out Your salvation and also Your mercy,
as Your presence and help is sure and not just a maybe
and as a mere human being I do not deserve Your loving-kindness.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 65

My Lord, Your help can come in moments,
I pray do now turn around my life to better days.
My Lord, You are the God of the universe,
You see me when I fall like a speck of sand
and for my distress you are not light-years far or too stupid,
You know exactly with what I do keep me busy,
with everything I can trust You fully
as what I am and are even thinking You do know,
constantly Your goodwill surprises me,
I pray do now turn around my life to better days.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 66

My God, You know that I do You truly love,
I believe in You even-though life treats me badly,
You do tell me what does fit into the jigsaw puzzle of life.
I want to trust past the hardship and better days,
where an armed robbery still cleave through my thoughts.
I know that you do not squander time or effort or opportunity
and that every person is for You very precious,
You do forgive the fornicator, murderer and thief,
I believe in You even-though life treats me badly.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 68

Where You do draw me constantly much closer to You
like a father You want to draw me against Your chest,
it's You that gives everything that I have and I am
and I know that in this severe time You do still care,
while humanity under a virus does bend down.
You do know my ancestors from Adam,
nothing does pass You by through the eons
and in days of prosperity and of misfortune
like a father You want to draw me against Your chest.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 7

(after Totius)

Even if I am lost in the depth of darkness
still Your love and mercy are allotted to me,
my Lord You notice every turn-off road
that I do take in this tinned city,
Your own eye does follow my spoor from a distance,
where You do come and as my shepherd do lead me back,
nearer than any father that I know you do cherish me
and in your mercy and righteousness I am chosen,
still Your love and mercy are allotted to me.

[Reference: "Psalm 130" by Totius.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 74

My Lord, let me never forget
how glorious You did measure out the night sky,
how bright blue the dome of the day is,
where the hues vary in their secrecy,
help me to remember and know about Your love,
to notice how the morning comes in apricot,
the beauty in the black-red waves of a rose's petals
and all of these things come from Your omnipotence and Your decrees,
how glorious You did measure out the night sky.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 74 A

My Lord, let me never forget
how glorious You did measure out the night sky,
how bright blue the dome of the day is,
where the hues vary in their secrecy,
help me to remember and know about Your love,
to notice how the morning comes in apricot,
the beauty in the black-red waves of a rose's petals
and all of these things come from Your omnipotence and Your decrees,
how glorious You did measure out the night sky.

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Apocrypha: Psalm 8 (Refrain Stanza)

(after Totius)

Where with childish faith I do look upon You,
it is You keep me against Your breast true,
I realise when I look upon each dark thing and each desire,
that every human would in Your bright intense light expire,
where to You I do entrust my feeble thoughts and that which I pursue
and like this I come as a mere mortal to You without fear,
where you give me a new heart and do me from sin clear,
when at times I do fail in the things that I do,
it is You that keep me against Your breast true.

[Reference: "Psalm 130" by Totius.]

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Apocrypha: Psalm 81

My Lord, where lights cover every city and town,
man does not anymore find for you as God a place,
as if there is no wonder to the desert and the ocean,
as if man on his own want to go through life to places.
Where the firmament up to infinity stretches out,
Your heavenly-lights almost eternally do burn in space,
where You do control everything with Your omnipotent hand
and want to draw each person closer in love to You,
man does not anymore find for you as God a place.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 81 9a)

My Lord, where lights cover every city and town,
man does not anymore find for you as God a place,
as if there is no wonder to the desert and the ocean,
as if man on his own want to go through life to places.
Where the firmament up to infinity stretches out,
Your heavenly-lights almost eternally do burn in space,
where You do control everything with Your omnipotent hand
and want to draw each person closer in love to You,
man does not anymore find for you as God a place.

Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm 9

Sometimes in the silence of a tranquil night,
it comes to me that You do determine each wonderful day,
I notice the redbreast and the weaver that do frolic,
how doves do in peace drink rainwater from Your hand,
in the veldt I hear the jackals cry and the hyenas laughing,
it's as if at night You do stretch out Your omnipotence above me
and in your might and true love then I do trust,
where I stand under the starry night-sky with awe and respect,
it comes to me that You do determine each wonderful day.

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: Psalm: As Death Do All Of Mankind Befall (Refrain Stanza)

My God, I thank You for the rain that does fall,
for Your many blessings great and small,
for daily being alive in a time of strive,
I pray that You will help us in our daily life,
you know that death do all of mankind befall
but You can speak and true all possibility become,
You do love every person and not only some,
in Your mighty hand are one and all,
you know that death do all of mankind befall
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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: The Wedding At Kana (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

I was there at Kana at the wedding
and after many miles my feet were full of dust
when I saw Him, the Messiah right there,
where the waiters were serving the last wine.
It was a joyful day and the bride was beautiful
and those poor people did invite every soul,
the women did cry and also did laugh a lot
and others did yearn for their great happiness
but when they did run out of wine a silence did come
while secretly His mother did whisper to Him,
where He did wave with His hands to the helpers
and everybody did realise that there is nothing to drink.
The joy did fade but everybody was astonished
when the waiters did come with the best wine.

[Reference: "Apocrypha XLI" by M. M. Walters.]

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Gert Strydom

Apocrypha: When In Her First Clothes Eve Did Come Out From Under The Fig Trees (Ballade)

(after M. M. Walters)

When utterly lovely Eve did come out of the river
her soft skin did gleam,
when she walked to the rows of clothes that were hanging on a tree
and in the distance God was only to her a spectre

Chorus:

and Adam did languish for her,
wished for the day to end,
wanted to fold her into his arms
and wanted to kiss her in the bright sunny day

when she chose a small scanty-panty
of rock-rabbit skin
the soft naughty snakeskin bra did tightly stretch over her breasts,
with sympathy she looked at the hen that clucked with her chicks

when she skipped into the pretty mini-skirt
did find the sandals that lace up on a rock
with bands to tie around her long slender legs
and with a naughty smile she did slide into them.

When Eve came out from under the fig trees
she twisted in front of Adam around and around,
with her new fashion he was speechless
and luring she did look at him.

Her fiery deportment and happy smile made Adam full of joy
but the angels at the gateway she wanted to give a foretaste,
with her nose in the air, her hair that she threw back over her shoulder
she did teasing with buttocks bouncing up and down walk past them

and they did only look dumbstruck at her,
wondered why she now looked so pretty and tempting,
the great Snake and the other snakes did hiss at each other
and did know this is how the tempting of a pretty woman is.

[Reference: "Apocrypha XII" by M. M. Walters.]

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Gert Strydom

Appearance

A demon visited Martin Luther
without invitation
and he threw an inkpot
to make it disappear
and God's blood, the wine
expelled it to where the sun doesn't shine.

A demon visited me
without invitation
with murderous eyes glowing red
and it wasn't beautiful
but a monster, black, full of venom
but God's name, made it pine away
and that demon was uninvited.

Gert Strydom

Apples (Free Verse Sonnet)

Giant powerful Hercules could believe that he
could set aside old age, that healing would come
if he could get some apples
and that the most beautiful woman would be true to him.
William Tell had to shoot an apple down from the head of his child,
Newton used apples to determine gravity
and Eve according to legend did explicitly
bite into the soft flesh of an apple, or so it is told.
Today taste, texture and odour
and even computers are linked to an apple
with a pretty green or dark red colour
you can even find it in strong liquor, vinegar and canned fruit
and still I keep wondering about Eve and the fruit,
it sweeps my thoughts thousands of years back.

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Gert Strydom

April Chose Me

April chose me
for my awakening
and although
where I live
it's not set in spring,

there's truth
that my April autumn brings
when every thing
starts to strip bare
without covering

and beyond the smiles
beyond glittering eyes
something much deeper lies

and I will any day
have love,
take truth, honesty
integrity and friendship,

than to act as though
all of the above
doesn't matter at all
and wealth is
the only goal.

Gert Strydom

Arabic Nights (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to H. J. Pieterse)

When I come awake and see the moon peeping,
you do lie in beauty stretched out over the sheet,
while the doves outside do still coo,
with your silky hair covering the pillow.
You remind me about an oasis deep in the desert
with a Moorish minaret around which doves do flutter,
of a Eden where all kinds of sorrows do disappear
but untouched without sin or the snake,
where I am right against you cosily and hot,
your soft arm do rest over me that makes me a part
of your dreams and of your silent nightly secrets,
outside there is a bright silhouette as if an angel is guarding us,
the night is full of gardenia and jasmine,
when away into the world of sleep I do disappear.

[Reference: "Arabesque" by H. J. Pieterse.]

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Gert Strydom

Arachne And Athena (Free Verse Sonnet)

Dewdrops hang like diamonds on the web and sparkle in the light
where a small black spider do wait patiently for an insect,
between prickly pears, in this construction the weight of the spider rests
when the sun rise over the horizon in an open new day.
The girl Arachne dares to challenge the goddess Athena to weaving
and where Athena makes a tapestry of the gods in their splendour,
the fine work of Arachne of their romances is lovelier,
where Athena tears that piece of art to shreds according to the old story
Arachne hangs herself on the strings for life and death
where she views herself equal to Athena and do to eternity spin webs,
as a spider having to catch insects for a life
and still do hang in her rebellion against the gods on her web
from where she does daily look upon Athena in arrogance
and keeps herself eternally cursed as a prisoner of her own will.

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Gert Strydom

Are They Going To Dropp The Bomb?

Are they going to
dropp the bomb or not,
the though went through my head
and just outside Walvisbay
at a secret airport
nuclear bombs were stacked
on pallets in a row
glowing like copper
with tips looking like lead
and lights were blinding up ahead
and Buccaneer bombers
were ready to go
and special force soldiers
were patrolling the perimeter
and to this day
I do not know
what happened there
and what decisions were made
and what role
played fate
and saw some pilots wait
on instructions
while the bombs
were being loaded
and the rain poured
from a overcast sky
and in the distance
I heard a piper
playing a very sad song
and not a single aircraft
set of to fly that night.

Gert Strydom

Arise (Refrain Stanza)

Outside twittering the yellow-speckled barbet does sing
and now it is the beginning of the season of spring
while through the open window the sun is in my eyes
and before me another lovely tranquil happy day lies
the duties and tasks of the morning I have got to begin
but slowly my love, my lady, do in this morning arise
and already as with its wings away the day flies,
the barbet keeps twittering with each slapping wing
and now it is the beginning of the season of spring.

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Gert Strydom

Armed Iraqi Woman

I saw her in a newspaper,
standing resolute
a beautiful woman with a rifle
in her hands and needing both to carry it
and the chador had slipped from her face
revealing it,

and in her eyes were raging fire
totally resolute with her head held high
looking like an angry eagle
ripped out of the sky

and what did the well armed,
American soldiers do
when they found her?

Did they shoot her down
as another enemy,
just another casualty of war?

Did they chase her into a side street,
cornered her there
to rip the chador from her face?

And what happened to her,
nobody will ever know.

Gert Strydom

Armed Reaction In Muckleneuk Ridge

While we lived in the mansion
in Muckleneuk Ridge
our maid Rose called me at work,
about some people
with two vans at the gate

that said that they were from Telkom
to install telephone lines
and she could not comprehend
what they were doing there
as the telephone was already working.

I told her to let the two dogs loose
in the yard,
to lock the house
and to press the emergency
alarm button
and that trustworthy maid
did just that,
as she was scared
of being raped by the robbers.

Those men were in
for a big surprise
and although they didn't
enter the premises
they were blocked of
in the pipe-stem driveway
and left their vans
(which were stolen)
just there
and tried to outrun
the armed reaction
jumping some garden fences
rather than shooting it out.

Gert Strydom

Armed Robbery (Englyn Penfyr)

As they entered, there was nothing to do,
to stop them and to survive,
and to try and stay alive.

Gert Strydom

Around Me I See Sign Upon Sign (Couplets)

The wind bears the fragrance of rain
almost brings the last part of summer back again,

where some of my roses in autumn are still flowering,
as the sun rises later where the stripped oak is towering

and about death and misery rumours and reports I do daily find
as if a punishment is befalling all of mankind,

but around me I see sign upon sign
that it's not God's reckoning or of His design.

As a companion He knows me in times of joy and pain
and I find nuances that He do with me remain

that is so fine that someone else might it miss
where constantly he is present, even in situations as this,

and I pray that in omnipotence God do with this virus deal
that in times that are holy, full of salvation He do people heal

and that you know, my darling, that love at times even bears longing
as for another it only asks for the best kind of thing.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Around Me The World Does Constantly Change (English Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

Around me the world does constantly change
while science build things with heartless might,
yet in this world there is nothing truly strange,
even where secretive people work out of sight,

even if we do the new creations at a time admire
and that which seem into antiquity so very old,
still the same things men and women do desire
that for ages of their hearts has been told,

where at times they do each other betray and defy,
what is happening in the present did also in the past,
in the heart of man does no new great substance lie,
where only true love still is the thing that does last

and that is just how with you I do want it now to be,
where you do sincerely, intimately and truly love me.

Gert Strydom

Around Us It Is Dark (Couplets)

Around us it's dark in this time like night
where a deadly virus comes of which nobody has insight,

where every person as if peculiar do stand alone,
where with misery it comes to every single one,

unseen comes from China with acute distress,
as if from hell as a destroyer with death it does oppress,

but still You are here in Your invincible omnipotence,
where just over the horizon a new tomorrow I do sense,

while You are covering a great deal of humanity,
as You are full of light and this thing is not Your will to be

and even if it rages with destruction out there,
even for the leaders in their decisions You do still care,

where You are holding Your Godly hand over everybody,
even over my beautiful wife and over me.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Around Us The Whispering Rain Falls

Around us the whispering rain falls
during a Cape winter
with the wind blowing gusty
shaking the windows in their frames.

Sometimes the sieving rain glitter
like pearls in your hair
in the bright candle light

and the heat of the fireplace
is like love that spreads out wider
as if you are throwing out a fragrant blanket
that is covering us
and everything else in the room
and the smell of the rain
penetrates everywhere
and do witness of a new beginning
with us both in it.

Gert Strydom

Arrival

With a tingle that rushes in my blood
you run up to me with a great smile
when I arrive from the aeroplane
and again I am astonished by your beauty
when a crowd of people move around us
and we embrace and are lost in each other.

Moments stretch out almost eternally
when we disrupt the movement of other passengers,
when pairs of eyes stare deeply into each others
as if we see each other for the first time,
when time keeps lingers as if it does not exist
and we embrace and are lost in each other.

Gert Strydom

Arrival [1]

When the aeroplane does descend
at Jan Smuts airport
(or whatever they now call it)
lights lie as far as I can see,
they glitter like jewels in the night
and there is a hodgepodge of people
that waits upon their luggage
and I am waiting on a briefcase and suitcase

but when you do notice me
everything fades away, the big city
that does stretch from Johannesburg to Pretoria,
the crowd of people that are coming and going
and it's only you and I standing in each other's arms.

Gert Strydom

Arrival [2]

The morning sun hangs bright
over the city,
in a light blue sky
and False Bay, the big flat old mountain
and the ocean is a hue
of navy blue
while I land only for a visit.

Reflecting window doors open
by themselves as if magically
revealing a land of wonder
where the wind bristles through my hair,
hawkers, car guards gather
like a flock of flies buzzing everywhere

and thinking that I missed you,
you fail to turn up
I walk to a waiting taxi
and suddenly like a materializing angel
you are there in sheer beauty,
running up to me, into my arms
and it feels as if I haven't been gone,
as if this city could again be home.

Gert Strydom

Arrival [3]

When the aeroplane from Cape Town
descend at Jan Smuts airport
(of whatever they call it now)
lights lie as far as I can see
and they glow like jewels in the dark night,
there is a hodgepodge of people
waiting on their luggage,
and I on a briefcase and suitcase

but when you do notice me
everything fades away,
the big city that stretches from Johannesburg to Pretoria,
the crowd of people that come and go
and it's just you and me
embracing each other.

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Gert Strydom

Arriving At A Military Camp

The war went well today
and they say on the radio
that a group of terrorists
who crossed the border were shot

before they could sabotage some farmers
or plant landmines and run back
over the strip line

and after being called up for a camp,
being flown in by aeroplane
and driven to my unit
I am already weary

and at the camp
after being barbered, issued with kit
and rifles, checked by some medics

we have a meal from ration packs,
clean our rifles
and lie on narrow beds
writing some letters

and tomorrow the unit commander
will tell us about a battle to be fought
and an enemy to be taught a lesson
by real men or so he will call us

and until then we are oblivious
to danger, to hardship and whatever lies ahead
and act like civilians, in a mixed group of officers,
non-commissioned officers and men

bragging about our jobs, our women and our lives
and someone reads aloud out of the Bible
and prays for every one of us.

[Strip line -> A cleared buffer zone at the border.]

Arriving Late On A Midnight Flight

Arriving late on a midnight flight,
even the summer evening
has got some coldness to it
while tiredness creeps in
tiny bit by tiny bit.

The airport is full of moving people,
some smiling at family members and friends,
while others are tiredly waiting
and you rush into my arms
with something sweet and soft in your embrace.

It had been like this at another time
and yet the memories linger
as if you loved me only yesterday
but reality sweeps it all away
while through the airport
I walk to the empty taxi rank.

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Gert Strydom

Art

No space and time
can capture real art
and every painting,
poem and song
needs wings to get flight.

Freedom from structure, type,
form and subject matter
is an essentiality for art
to be really great
since predictability brings dullness.

Make the artist free
to make every creation,
to be what it must be.

Gert Strydom

Arthur Pendragon About Excalibur

I am confident, they say a sword is
just a sword, but that is not really true
when I draw great Excalibur it hiss,
gleams with a silver-blue kind of strange hue,
without any type of wavering
cuts right through bronze and iron, slices on
and it is a very strange kind of thing
all my fears and doubts of battle are gone;
as it came right out of the hardest stone.

Gert Strydom

As A Believing Human Being

As a believing human being
I want to daily trod
in the shadow of the omnipotent God
and find Him in every beautiful thing.

In a world where the darkness brings doubt
like a mere child I want to hope and trust
that our existence goes much further than just chance and dust
that a superior eternal love continually drives the darkness out,

that all of the planets and stars in the sky
are beacons of the eternal everlasting King,
that a superior being created everything,
even that which is unseen by the naked eye.

Gert Strydom

As A Boy

As a boy I wished for the kind of skin
that never could get hurt.

As a boy I wished for for the kind of shirt
that mother would not have to rub in
to get rid of the dirt

and I wished to be as glad
as mother constantly was,
and constantly I wished I had
a living loving caring dad
but as the years of my life did pass
some were good and some were bad

and I started to understand and appreciate
how selfless mother loves me
and that the depth of her love was great
as the love of a mother is supposed to be.

Gert Strydom

As A Child (Italian Sonnet)

As a child every single thing in my sight:
the earth, the hillock, the dale and the stream
was untouched by pain and everything did seem
was touched by the divine, as if by a divine light,

enchanting full of stars was the sky by night,
the moon in its magical soft silver beam,
where now it all seems only like a dream
where the entire world is full of fear and fright

and I wish the world were as it was before
that back to that time I could change everything
could look at the world with a child's hope and faith
but now in adulthood that world does exist no more
and yet still the birds do outside happily sing
but in my country no one is from hardship safe.

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Gert Strydom

As A Child (Refrain Stanza)

As a child I looked at God's heaven on the other side of the blue
while in fear and wonder adults did over a comet argue
as if disaster could leave the earth to be just a speck of dust,
in wonder I looked at the stars in the heaven did in God trust,
the Russians and Americans did a way to the moon pursue,
fuel-stations gave stickers away of rockets going to space
everyone did Neil Armstrong's journey to the moon trace,
teachers talked about the stars and planets and I did not have a clue
while in fear and wonder adults did over a comet argue.

Gert Strydom

As A Child I Waddled On Behind You,

in my childish tongue we had long conversations
and when darkness came
your eyes were still full of joy and new hope

but far too quickly those days did pass
and my happy childhood days could not remain,
as I went to school, university and work
and now there is a lifetime between you and me.

In my greatest trouble you were still there
to protect me like in childhood days against danger
like only a mother can
and still God has kept you for me

but my hands are empty and never can I compensate
for love that goes much further than for only your own flesh and blood.

Gert Strydom

As A Fundamentalist Of Your Body I Do Write This:

This was the holiday that we had longed for
over a period of seven hard and beautiful years:
where we could linger or swim or walk at the sea,
could together be away from the pressures of life,

could appreciate each other as husband and wife,
you were radiant, carefree and very lovely
and life was blissful without any kind of fears
where we swam, dived, walked and wanted more.

Deeply through many seasons we did each other adore
did know laughter, happiness and also some tears
but this holiday changed how our life together would be
as if into a new better world we did both arrive,

moment after moment we were truly alive
where I did talk to you and you did talk to me,
as if somehow our relationship had changed gears
did become different from what it had been before.

The news was full of killings and all kinds of gore,
we locked that out and only lovely music came to our ears
and there had been no rite, ceremony or formulary,
or anything that you and I did together or separate contrive

yet to my knees as almost in worship you did me drive
where I became to worship your spirit and your body
as if sinful this blissful experience were in arrears
moments were holy as if life had just this in store.

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Gert Strydom

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Gert Strydom

As A Mere Child

As a mere child I played the marigold game
and pulled off and did divide
the yellow leave one after the other
but now that I have got you
I do not want to determine your love like this.

Everything in life I want to share with you,
I cannot and do not want to forget you
and what does flowers know about true love?

Gert Strydom

As A Mere Human Being

As a mere human being my life is but a moment
in the gear-work of eternity
and if I do not love others,
have an intimate relationship with someone
then everything means but nothing
even if every marital relationship does fail

and if I do not act with humanity
with utterly great mercy
and even do withhold the law and justice
from those that do insult me,
that does curse me
and at times do physically assault me
my life has only become
focussed on it self

as in my mind the Lord God
has given each human being
from the time of birth
certain gifts to life
which has been cherished
by all cultures, all races
and almost every religion
throughout history
as almost holy ideas
since the existence of man
and a person can argue these things away
but nevertheless they are still having an effect

of which the first is life itself
and also the capacity to create
in community with another person
of the opposite sex,
to be able to create in art
and in technology and in different ways
to be able to create good and bad situations,
to bring happiness and disaster to others
and not even angels have the ability
to procreate.

Time is a gift of which we do simply
not have enough
and some people do waste it
while others do use it
to the very limit.

Another important gift is that of love,
love for a spouse
that is created as an equal
and maybe in its purest form
love is selfless when it comes
to the love of a parent to a child.

The gift of faith is most important
as from it comes hope,
comes a positive disposition to life
that it has got great prospects
and that there is more to life
than only existing
and it gives life to expectations
of how things can become.

Parents are a gift that do influence
how we do become,
that has got an effect
in how we turn out in life
from the genes that we do inherit
and from the way that they do bring us up.

Respect for others,
for those that do precede us,
for parents,
for those who has been appointed above us
and most importantly for God
and for the laws of the country
that is set to protect each person
are essential
as every person that does exist
do want to have esteem,
wants to be noticed,
also wants a place in the sun.

The gift of health,
goes hand in hand
with what we do eat and drink,
with how we spend our time,
with how much rest we do get,
with how we care for our bodies
and with the exercise
that we do undertake
to be able to be fit for life
and each person does not receive
the gift of health
in a equal measure
as we do live in a world
where everything does perish,
where there is a constant struggle
for survival
and also between that which is good,
pure and holy
against that which is evil and bad.

Of the talents each person does receive
a whole variety
of different things,
in a measure which differs
and some people do not know
that they are gifted,
others do not take any notice of these things
of which they have got the potential to develop,
out of fear of being rejected,
out of the uncertainty if it can come to something,
from inferiority
to others above them
or even from laziness
but the people that do not hesitate
to go to the extremes
to develop their talents
do make great contributions to society.

Individuality is a gift
that does make me totally different
from any other person that does exist,

as every person is unique
in a special kind of way
and does experience events and things
and life different
from any other person.

Gert Strydom

As A Mere Human You Did Come

As a mere human You did come,
did leave Your Godliness behind,
walked through dusty roads
to heal the sick
and to bring comfort to those with pain,

to bring a unknown peace,
causing miracles against the laws of nature
through Your Father
with the Spirit of God descending upon You
to bring to the world of darkness
a bright white pure light.

You did speak about the real meaning of love,
did let love fall upon everyone like clear sweet rain,
while You did live totally sinless,
did bless everyone everywhere, even Your enemies,
but still You did become totally human

and I that tread around in my own thoughts,
in my own words and sinful deeds
can realise Your cruel death and love,
can in my imagination hear the cat whipping,

want to turn away with my own shyness
from You hanging on the cross
but I cannot
as I am caught by your sacrifice
and very scared

I beg for it to be different
as You do know the dark depths of my life
and of Your death I am also guilty
when You call out forgiveness over everyone
and die like only a man can

but there is no one else
that has such love.

As A Mortal Man (English Sonnet)

As a mortal man the depths of love
I do not comprehend;
something that nothing can remove
that comes without end

in a world where all things do decay
must have a divine essence
even when my life in old age is swept away
but in your lovely presence

again I seem to be young and in my prime
while energy pulses from your hand
and it's as if the machinations of time
for moments silently do stand

and I wish to love you so into eternity
while it seems as if from all bond we are free.

Gert Strydom

As A Person Believe It To Be

At first you thought love could at a time abate
that it is not strong enough to eternally persist
of its abilities and nature I did then to you insist
and told you that it even at times conquers hate.

At a time to you it was something of mere fate
which you could not really in honesty resist,
something that in life does persons at times assist
as the essence of a great and happy life but of late

you know its as strong as a person believe it to be
and constantly in the week I do you severally miss
as now you are much more than all of life to me,
and we were both created for a time like this
where we both do live each day with sincerity,
where love is full of principle, emotion and bliss.

Gert Strydom

As A Poet

As a poet I wanted to make wonderful verses that astound everyone,
wanted to write words that touch hearts and did not want to disguise anything
and I wanted to write verses that stand forever like monuments
but then I did realise that everything comes out of Your hand.

Gert Strydom

As A Pretty Butterfly That Flutters (Cavatina Sequence)

As a pretty butterfly that flutters
along she came,
rapidly always running up and down;
nothing could tame
that childish sweet happy rushing spirit;
her lovely name
is not heard anymore as she is gone,
from life into death she has moved on.

Some soothing summer sunshine must be lost,
she does not pass,
no small shadow falls or lingers at times;
outside the grass
is quite soft where her small feet once did tread,
like clear bright glass
the sky is clear without a single fleck;
from her I cannot my sad thoughts direct.

Gert Strydom

As A Wanderer Upon This Earth (Terzanelle)

Far from the place of my birth
life has driven me
as a wanderer upon this earth

never truly to be free
to another shore
life has driven me

far from the one that I adore
to breath corrupted air
to another shore

where death waits prowling everywhere,
stalking like a wild animal snarling
to breath corrupted air,

far from my home and you my darling
seeking the answers to life
stalking like a wild animal snarling

I am now free from man and wife,
far from the place of my birth
seeking the answers to life,
as a wanderer upon this earth.

Gert Strydom

As A Young Man (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

As a young man just out of the army
I was smitten with you and lost in you,
you were a young woman and very pretty
and you were really in love with me too.

Never again would I love another woman
in the same kind of innocent and intense way
you believed in me, made me more than a man
were the one for whom as an equal I did pray.

It's years later and the sound of your voice
make me happy and still to me is familiar,
you do remain my first and my best choice
and maybe to you my feelings are peculiar

but you do remain my perfect companion
the most wonderful woman in my opinion.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

As Bright As The Biggest Star

As bright as the biggest star
in that dark night,
your smile lasted
much longer
than just for a while.

With the moon
straying away
to romance at another place,
night came sooner
than was expected
and your lips
was soft and sweet
upon mine.

Somewhere a bird called
for its mate,
and the night was young
and our love
was again fresh and new
and I wiped tears
from your eyes
that fell like the evening dew.

Somehow everything
was again all right
between me and you
and the sparkle was back
in your eyes
and there was passion
in your touch
and when the moon came
you were mine again.

I thanked the gods
for your spirit
had returned from the place
where it went to hide
and life was great

and just too much
for both of us.

Gert Strydom

As I Had A Walk On The Path Over The Hill (Roundelay)

As I had a walk on the path on the hill
the wind did swish and then it was quite still
the flowering of the aloes had begun
amongst the rocks in the summer sun.

A bird flapped loose rose into the sky,
up and up did some surging eagles fly
while a flock of rock rabbits did run
amongst the rocks in the summer sun.

Every bird and insect was absolutely free
and that experience remains still with me,
as the beautiful lily that I came upon
amongst the rocks in the summer sun.

Gert Strydom

As If A Kind Of Darkness Hides In Every Human Being

My Lord, my friends, family and acquaintances
are not bad but they are only people
and even our best deeds and conversations
and sometimes our desires and wishes

brings separation with You

as if a kind of darkness hides in every human being
and sometimes it feels as if I do not really fit in
when people want to do things that they do know are wrong
but probably it had been like this when You did dwell upon the earth

and now I ask You to help me to stay constantly true.

Gert Strydom

As If A Magical Barrier Had Been Drawn

When I was a teenager
my younger brother
used to wait
until I was in the bathroom

to say cheeky things to me
and to look for trouble
from the outside
beyond the frosted glass.

I'll beat you up
I used to declare
and he would laugh
and say something more

as if a magical barrier
had been drawn
between the two of us

and it went on
till one day
that I saw his outline
against the glass.

He said what he thought
and I didn't let him pass
and pieces of frosted glass
shattered and
flew away
while I knocked him
through the window
against the head
and that was the last of it

Gert Strydom

As If Anchored To My Rock

On a rock next to the sea
I see the horizon
where ocean and sky
meets each other
with blue fading into blue.

The waves smash with thundering sound
time after time
and drops of seawater
splash over me
as if she is my mistress
and are stroking me with her long fingers.

It is as if the rock
moves under my feet
the ocean wants
to get me in her arms,
but I stand unmovable
as if anchored to my rock
and nothing can let me slip down from it.

I see the green blue of her water
that is rushing near
with white foam
just before braking
and further on the dark blue
lies like colours of a gleaming eye
and I think: sea into you
I will not climb down

and when a giant wave
brakes over me,
bending my body and sucking with force
I stand unmovable
as if anchored to my rock.

Gert Strydom

As If By You I Am Desired (Villanelle)

When after a day's work I feel tired
you make me feel as if I am the only man,
as if by you all day I have been desired,

by your mere presence I do feel inspired
and I wish to have known you through my lifespan.
When after a day's work I feel tired,

you make me feel as if to loving nothing is required
when others do me and even my poetry ban,
as if by you all day I have been desired,

where my lines and rhymes are by you admired
and in my poetry you are present and my greatest fan.
When after a day's work I feel tired

you have already all essential things acquired,
do surprise me with a haircut and a rub-on tan,
as if by you all day I have been desired.

As if anything is possible, as if I truly can,
you do make me fit into every secret surprising plan.
when after a day's work I feel tired
as if by you all day I have been desired.

Gert Strydom

As If Everything Is Burning To Black (In Answer To Mongane Serote)

It's a relentless hot summer
with sweltering days without rain
where the sun comes up day after day again
and the grass, the leaves are frizzled
trees stand erect like telephone poles
with stripped branches
like silhouettes against the sky

It's a relentless hot summer
and not only nature knows the pain,
but there's havoc in humanity,
with oppression surging hotter than the sun
and it feels as if this season
will never pass
as if everything is burning to black
and opportunities for a life will never be back.

[Reference: For Don M. – Banned by Mongane Serote.]

Gert Strydom

As If Evil Was Creeping Out

Early one morning
Heinrich, the six-year-old boy
gave a big scream
and came running out
op the bathroom.

There's something in the loo
he said sacred
as if evil
was creeping out
of the sewerage system.

I went a to have a look
and behold a big healthy crab
were pinching with its claws
glaring with little eyes
into mine.

Gert Strydom

As If I Am Loosing My Past

Of the yesterdays without you there now are
only fragments left,
as if I am loosing my past,
as if it had not been
and constantly you are brightly with me,
I am bewitched
by your humanity, by your beauty and your laughter
and you do bring promises to every day.

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Gert Strydom

As If In A World Of Her Own

As if in a world of her own,
she is busy spreading feed for the chickens,
watching the mother hen
with its outstretched wings, guiding the chicks

walk over to her vegetable garden
turn a hosepipe on, starts watering
watching the emerging blooms of spring
but her mind is ravaged with ennui,

as if nothing can get her past the boring life,
not even the crowing brown and black cock,
the small dog that follows her everywhere
and she walks and works as if in

a long studied, long settled act
feeling anonymous, as if nothing in life
has the ability to make it worth living
and not even the baking sun

stroking her soft skin with tenderness,
the dew glistening on some leaves
in this early part of day, the busy bees,
the fluttering butterflies, the cooing doves

has an impact on her and she frowns
against the sharp light of the sun,
does not even think of her children,
they have all perished

in some or other way,
like her farmer husband
who loved her in his kind of way
and could no longer stay

and now everything just drags on and on
with never ending duties to perform
and she has solitude, no serenity
only experiences loneliness.

Gert Strydom

As If It Is A Jigsaw

While your cigarette spirals into the air
you breasts against me
talk in an own language
making impressions with their form and fashion
awaking feelings and they feel fragile,
though firm and soft
and I wish that this hour, this dark night
could last forever,
that past daybreak
I can still embrace you like this

and you slim body surrounds me
catches me
as if I it is a puzzle,
wherein I fit precisely, perfectly
as if moments are destined
to be absolutely unique
and breathtaking.

Gert Strydom

As If Learning To Love All Over Again

Let us every moment recall
as if learning to love all over again
from our first kiss in the rain
and let every gesture big and small

carry a message of tenderness,
let every embrace, every soft caress
be more than the daily thirst,
be much more than normal human bliss.

Gert Strydom

As If Some Aeons Did Between Us Pass (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Tonight our love feels centuries old
as if some aeons did between us pass
where with rain the whole night is cold
while thunder bashes down on the grass

and yet you look young in your beauty
while the tempest rages unlimited outside
and your skin is warm and soft against me
where only a single candle burns here inside.

I wonder what great things do wait in life
while the candle on the wall draws lines
and are so happy with you as my wife
while our passion rise and again declines

while this night is like none that came before
where we do day by day each other adore.

Gert Strydom

As If The Beast In Man Is Loose (Terzanelle)

Where in the night shells are shrieking
past and overhead
and the tracks of tanks are creaking,

corpses of the dead
I see in flashes thundering like lightning
past and overhead

and the howl of war machines is frightening
as if the beast in man is loose in all devilry,
I see in flashes thundering like lightning

as if madness has awoken in sheer revelry
and man has loosened destruction and inhumanity in his wars
as if the beast in man is loose in all devilry,

and on shores, in and out of doors
implements of death are falling like rain
and man has loosened destruction and inhumanity in his wars

and even the innocent civilians are crying in pain
where in the night shells are shrieking
implements of death are falling like rain
and the tracks of tanks are creaking.

Gert Strydom

As If The World Around Us Gives Meaning

Every wind carries memories of the past,
carries leaves, minute pebbles of dust
and sometimes feathers
reminding of places where it was,
reminding of how things
once had been.

To the eye these are only the scattering,
an unruly display of the chaos that it sees
but the hue of the sky,
its condition being open and clear
or overcast filled with white,
grey or black clouds
has an impact on the human mind,
even changes feelings

and everything is bound to circumstance,
is bound to chance
and the shining sun seems jolly,
in a bright clear sky
or even the morose sieving rain,
falling weeks long
impacts in a way

as we are beings
that observe with senses
trying to determine
where we fit in
as if the world around us
gives meaning
to whom and what we are.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

As If They Are Beacons

When the lightning did that night
flaming search the earth in blue-white branches,
mother did draw the curtains close.

On the porch I did see blue-white sparks running,
the rattle of some more thunder
did sound further away,

I could smell the fragrance of the rain
where fresh it did fume through the closed windows,
and early the power had been cut by the thunderstorm

and mother did open the Bible
at the light of a flaring candle
and did read of the rainbow
that comes after each rainstorm

and later the clouds were blown away,
while the doves did coo right through the night
and the moon did peep down from the heaven,

while I could see stars burning
as if they are beacons
that God had put into space.

Gert Strydom

As If This Summer Is Staying Forever (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

As if this summer is staying forever and do not pass away
with you I do want to live on each blessed sunny day,
do want to tell you of the nights that I do long for you
at the portals of your heart speak things that are true
while the nests of the weavers do on the oak tree sway
I want you the splendour of all of nature to observe
where nature does God in these holy days serve
with each dark urge of the depth of love I want to say,
with you I do want to live on each blessed sunny day.

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Gert Strydom

As If Time Only Belongs To You And Me

Last night while lying next to me
you did say pretty words,
you told me how much you do love me,
that your whole life long you wanted somebody like me
and there was something beautiful in each sentence,
it felt as if we were starting on a journey of discovery
and now that the morning is peeping through the window
you still hold my hand tightly in yours,
while outside doves do flutter and coo.
It's as if time is lingering
and I wonder if this is a fairy tale
when a bird looks in through the window
and I leave you to sleep like a princess
as if time only belongs to you and me.

Gert Strydom

As If We Live Under An Eternal Summer-Sun (Sicilian Sonnet)

It's as if perfect all our days together will be.
At times I do you with small things tease
and together we do have days filled with fun
while we do great beauty in each other see

with something special between you and me,
as if we will live under an eternal summer-sun
but too quickly out does our time together run
while love functions as if to it there is eternity,

as if all of life is without any kind of care
like a ocean throwing pebbles at our feet
while love brings joy in times of despair,
again and again we do at weekends meet,
I see images of your presence everywhere
while to me you are wonderful and sweet.

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Gert Strydom

As If You Just Walked Into My Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

A wedding brought you to my gate
and green-brown I glanced your eyes
as if you do hold the cosmos in their depths
and suddenly my heart jerked in me,
I heard the doves singing their songs of praise,
it was twilight the sun's rays were dim,
above us the night-sky in a darker blue,
un-asked-for there was affection in my heart
as if unplanned you walked into my life,
immediately we talked to each other about poetry
where in you I found a similar soul,
where later I became overwhelmed by hope,
as you did leave indelible impressions on me,
where I believed in love with the trust of a child.

Gert Strydom

As In A Silent Secret

As in a silent secret
seed does suddenly in the spring sprout
so we find signs of a pulse beat,
a silent rhythm in every plant and flower

and that everything has an own life,
silently does witness that a Supreme being
does look after everything,
that He does set the time and nature of all things
even on a planet where mortal people do dwell.

Gert Strydom

As In Everything You Are Woman

(after Rika Cilliers)

When in the distance the sun does tremble
the whole morning is open and silent,

when the morning comes with sun and dew
and I watch you for a mere moment,

where through the threadbare years you remain girl
and moment-by-moment I do love you more.

Between us all of life is laid open,
in every moment there is a place for you

and when you do kneel at my feet
I do love you in my heart, spirit and body

as in everything you are woman,
the one to who I do look in wonder.

[Reference: "Ek sal meisie bly" (I will remain girl) by Rika Cilliers.]

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Gert Strydom

As In My Life You Ought To Be (Triolets)

I

Since the time you I knew
you have enchanted me
where more than beautiful are you.
Since the time you I knew
with other eyes I did you view
as in my life you ought to be.
Since the time you I knew
you have enchanted me.

II

In loving you there is no penalty,
where to the depth of my heart I do
and together we do face each tragedy.
In loving you there is no penalty,
where we are together and also free,
as one we are but still remain two.
In loving you there is no penalty,
where to the depth of my heart I do.

Gert Strydom

As Long As I Have You With Me

This day passing at autumns end
with stripped trees, some flowers spent
and still two doves fly by
in a frivol of feathers
as if charming each other

the blue sky has a cold wind
touching with the breath
from a ice dragon
and the sun's rays
has lost their compassion
and are growing dim

but another spring,
another summer will surely come,
even if my years
are nearly spent and at their brim

and this is no winter of my despair
while a smile's on your face
and the fire in your eyes
makes my blood race
and everywhere life is still abounding
and your fine care
is in every little thing about me.

Let any winter then come
even if it rains for days long,
even if snow like a miracle falls
and frost leaves its mark
as long as I have you with me.

Gert Strydom

As Long As There Is Love (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

Your lovely countenance is brighter
than that worn by the hot summer season,
your purity, your integrity is much whiter
than the lily that dwindles without reason.

At a time all lovely things withers away,
disintegrate, weather, with age are frail,
to change are set and nothing can stay,
even seasons change as if they ail,

over time rhyme, poetry is not in vogue,
death removes, memories go to oblivion
people are forgotten, are out of dialogue
and even the greatest with time are gone

but as long as there is love, constantly,
your sheer beauty, men will in women see.

[Reference: "Sonnet XVIII Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? " by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

As Long As There Is Oppression

As long as there's oppression
and no comprehension of merit at all,
as long as unqualified and uneducated people
run the country and government into the ground,
as long as exploitation and corruption
goes to the rotten core
and people ride the gravy train,
as long as the borders are opened for all of Africa
and loyal citizens cannot find a job,
as long as electricity is cut unexpectedly in repetition,
as long as criminals roam the streets
and respect for others
and their things do not exist,
in time the government will surely fall.

Gert Strydom

As Man Left The Shore (Reply To Anthony Delius)

As man left the shore
venturing over the first horizon
the open blue sea
laid unknown, without route,
even a map in front of him

and it was not in his mind
that he sailed beyond where he
at first could see
and ventured further away
from the known quay

and through the fog in the west
came upon other beaches, other shores
explored new lands, found other places
set his foot on other sand

constructed buildings, shelters,
planted seed for crops
and gathered in families

and the last man still knows
what experience, knowledge
and tales of his ancestors he have learned
and prays and yearns to do service
to his God who created every thing
and in perfection
do not have to recreate or invent again
in a universe that exists without end.

[Reference: Reply to Pessoa by Anthony Delius.]

Gert Strydom

As My Eyes Gaze Into The Dark Night

I do not need stars to tell me
that my life, my destiny is written,
that somewhere someone reads
some thoughts of mine
and that everyone has a impact
on each other.

As my eyes gaze into the dark night
trying to see past eternity,
I keep looking for the light,
to see the presence of the One
that guides me.

Gert Strydom

As My Greatest Asset And True Love (Refrain Stanza)

(for Daleen on her birthday)

As my greatest asset and true love I do you deem
where you do bring me happiness and esteem
and with you I will paint life any colour be it red or green
while God does work His wonders in ways unseen
and our existence is not exactly how it do seem
while in love we do the simplest small things do
where eternally I will be true in loving you,
even if this life do with all kinds of difficulties teem
where you do bring me happiness and esteem

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Gert Strydom

As My Prehistoric Father Did

Take my words to above
to a place of ineffable greatness
and let me behold in prayer
the unnameable God
and be a child of the flock
from the vast universe
far and wide,
that has eternal peace.

Give me the primordial sense
to pray to Him
that is forever good and true
and in the silence that is absolutely still
let me hear His voice
as my prehistoric father did.

Gert Strydom

As Night Is Black

As night is black and speckled
by a glittering of stars
stretching from here
to anywhere and somewhere
in the vastness
lays suns and moons
and planets without number,
so all the wonder of His works
hints incalculable power
and reason without end.

The southern cross and other stars
guides me on the right way
just as sure as His words
is a shining lamp
that sets the path
on which my life should go.

So insignificantly small
I am against the vast universe
and yet He knows my name
and the creator of it all
made man greater
than the beasts
with the ability
to reason, think
and choose
and He loves me
in my humanity.

Gert Strydom

As Previously Advantaged, Now Disadvantaged

we are humbly sorry that our ancestors
sailed with ships from Europe
to discover other continents,
putting their intelligence and advanced
technology into good practice,
discovering the Cape of Good Hope
and developing this country
to the best of their ability and knowledge
while your ancestors migrated from the big lakes
in central Africa, under chief Dlamini
from eMbo killing the other local inhabitants
as far as they were going,
even wiping them out after they had settled.

We are humbly sorry that our ancestors
took you from the bush, tried to teach you
Christian values and a Christian religion,
instead of worshiping to ancestral spirits,
dead stones of which you believe the silence
have greater meaning and more depth
than any other teachings,
tried to teach you to earn a living
by planting crops, maintaining and herding cattle
instead of pillaging, robbing and killing others,
instead of trapping, killing animals,
with sticks, stones and iron spears.

We are humbly sorry that our ancestors
took the wild bush as pioneers
planned and developed
farms, towns and cities, mines, factories,
the infrastructure that are in them,
developed water resources,
electrical powering and laid railway lines,
developed the roads,
the harbors and airports that link them
to each other and the rest of the wide world,
which you now view as belonging to you,
to at your discretion take over by force

from the people to whom they did belong,
to rob, kill and pillage property
to rename airports, harbors, streets,
towns and cities at your own discretion.

We are humbly sorry that our ancestors
after fighting victoriously against yours
at Blood River and in other wars and battles
respected you as people living in this country,
did not like the Americans and Australians
go out to wipe you out of the country,
administered medicine when your ancestors
where dying form plagues and devastating
spreading illnesses like measles and influenza,
that they fed your ancestors
to try and save a whole nation
when your ancestors destroyed their own crops,
killed all their own cattle at the insistence
of the witch medium Nonqawuse.

We are humbly sorry that our ancestors
tried to teach you to only have as many children
in families, as you can support as parents,
not to breed as many as is possible
to prevent dwelling in shacks, impoverishment,
diseases like cholera spread by urinating and defecating
in drinking water.

We are humbly sorry that our ancestors,
and the terrible Apartheid government
tried to provide you with schools
where you urinated in cans in public,
where you broke all the windows,
where you broke tables, chairs and black boards
which you burnt down to the ground,
preventing yourselves
to get a proper education, where a whole
generation of your youth decided
on first getting liberation and later education
and are not literate at all.

We were happy to have learned discipline,

Christian values, languages, mathematics,
science, geography and any other subjects
and having received canings, for being disobedient,
for doing things wrong, for not studying
and now really prefer the teacher's union riots at schools,
especially schools where those unions do not belong,
we prefer the wanton destruction of school property,
the chaos in which teachers have got to instruct,
the new curriculum based on human rights,
the spreading of lawlessness among children,
the drawing of swords, knives and guns,
even pairs of scissors to settle issues
the disrespect, the chaos, the pregnancies
of school children, the disowning of religion
at schools, the disowning of culture, language
and well-taught values.

We are humbly sorry that we are experiencing
a secret war in which you are wiping out our families
one by one, in which thousands of white people
have already perished,

we are humbly sorry that we hear the current government
is singing inciting songs, that advises their followers
to kill us, to shoot us,

we are humbly sorry
that the robberies, affirmative action, raping,
torture and murder of our friends
and our family members
prevents us from not being bitter,
proof to us your inhumanity,
that you are secretly hiding behind
the ancient rights of pillage,
that you are openly hiding
behind human rights,
while smiling in pleasure.

We have all the reason in the world
to trust the new government
as none of its members
were previously involved in bombings,

terrorist attacks in churches,
murders, setting alive people on fire,
corruption or other financial irregularities.

We are humbly sorry that we have no trust
in the South African Police Service,
or any of its officers,
who walk us out of the way with sub-machineguns,
in shopping malls,
who search us and take our cellular phones
when we receive calls at public roadblocks,
who do not find our stolen property,
or our stolen cars,
who admit quite openly
that they are inadequate to fight crime
and have lost that fight,
while they just carrying on
as if they are really interested in doing their duty,
who do not control rioters
damaging innocent individuals or property,
who do not have a vehicle available
in a real emergency,
but arrive with five vehicles
when there's a family incident
or where a child falsely
accuses the parent of sexual battery.

We are humbly sorry that the members
of our national teams
are not selected on merit,
but on color,
that winning and patriotism is not important,
to the citizens of this country
or to the sponsors who pay the bills.

We are humbly sorry that jobs
are not determined on merit,
education, experience but by
affirmative action, that you
have flung the borders open wide
to citizens of all countries in Africa,
illegal immigrants from all

of the African countries
which are huge economic powerhouses,
are streaming here in a new migration
after kicking out the white settlers,
are becoming citizens over night.

We are humbly sorry that
that universities, hospitals, water cleaning facilities,
roads, railroads and electricity supplying facilities
are going slowly but surely into ruination
as you are preventing skilled white persons
from running these facilities,
have driven a lot away to work
in foreign countries
where there skills are really needed.

We are humbly sorry that we
do not believe in ancestral spirits,
any kind of witchcraft, urinating on trees,
on buildings, at street corners,
spitting anywhere, slaughtering live
cattle and bulls for sacrifices
in our back yards
or on our properties in town,
virginity testing, circumcision,
cures from seawater, beetroot or garlic
and any other barbaric practices
like trading for or buying
the woman that you want to marry.

This clearly state that we
come from quite another world,
than yours and that our world
which is in the whole
of the civilized western society
is inadequate against yours,

that we are truly sorry that we are not up
to being indoctrinated into your
primitive culture, way of life,
life expectancy, values and religion,
that this country will never

rise to its full potential.

I as a poet am truly sorry
that this might be the last poem
that I publish against the current government,
as from tomorrow freedom of speech may be gone
and I might be arrested for these words,
as any government that suppresses human rights,
have things to hide from its own citizens
and from the wide world.

Gert Strydom

As Something Deadly That Sneaks Silently (Hybridanelle)

Far too many people do now daily cry,
as something deadly sneaks silently as if from lore.
A virus with illness like flue cause too many to die

and for you and humanity my voice do constantly pray,
while new hope comes with the rising sun
but it does affect many more people day by day,

while the fate of everything does in God's hands lie
and this deadly thing is evil to its core.
Far too many people do now daily cry,

locked-down you my love, you are from me away,
and life has now a most difficult gradient,
while new hope comes with the rising sun.

You do remain most beautiful to my eye
and still all of life with you I want to explore.
A virus with illness like flue cause too many to die

and to me like an angel you do remain radiant,
where in my mind remain your voice and its sound
and life has now a most difficult gradient,

while in vain to combat the virus people try
and life has changed from what it had been before.
Far too many people do now daily cry,

while no working cure has been found
and still my heart do with you true love sing,
where in my mind remain your voice and its sound

and outside a myriad of birds do up and down fly
but the world is full of a pestilence and its gore.
A virus with illness like flue cause too many to die

and over the telephone your voice do in my ears ring,

with hope and expectation in its resonance
and still my heart do with you true love sing,

and it is as bright as the sun in the sky,
while this virus could remain ever more.
Far too many people do now daily cry.
A virus with illness like flue cause too many to die,

with amok its impact causes only dissonance
and for you and humanity my voice do constantly pray,
with hope and expectation in its resonance
but it does affect many more people day by day.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

As The Morning Glory Opens

As the morning glory opens
to the new day
and portray her delicate beauty
my heart opens to your smiling face
and I am filled with the grace
that loving you bring
and the honour and duty
of being with you
brightens my life.

As rivers take their streams
to the sea, going through many brooks
flowing from far away
I am going deeper than they,
past all my dreams,
flowing past inner nooks
to the garden set for you and me
in the soil of our hearts.

Gert Strydom

As The Silver Moon At Midnight (English Sonnet)

As the silver moon at midnight
watched from a starry sky
like touching fingers her bright light
were tenderly passing us by,

the gentle wind tried to woo us asleep
and your eyes gleamed in your face
while into my heart age old feelings did creep
and passion through my body did race

in moments some hours were spent
with a kind of wonder in your gaze,
in our love you were sweet and innocent,
and also happy and as if in a daze

as our deepest heartfelt feelings we did express,
and for moments utter bliss we did possess.

Gert Strydom

As The Summer Day Do Pass (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

As the summer day do pass
so does the time of roses in a glass
and while they do love express
still days run on and nothing stays as it was.

Gert Strydom

As The Sun Rises

While the sun rises and things
have shadows found,
so gently and by itself
love binds you and me

comes with a own sincerity
and brings joy, pain and bliss
while in integrity
you and I find how love really is.

Gert Strydom

As We Do Life's Challenges Face (Italian Sonnet)

In struggle, heartache and tranquility,
through a life of righteousness and sin
my best and worst days you do enter in
and with you I am bound and I am free.

You imperfections do fit you perfectly
and it does not matter if I loose or win,
fall to my knees and again do begin
as long as you do sincerely love me.

As the days, months and weeks go by
more beautiful to me you do become,
we do forget and forgive by God's grace
and there is much more to the you and I
as our days are happy and troublesome,
as together we do life's challenges face.

Gert Strydom

As We Go Into Our Tomorrows

As we go into our tomorrows,
we drag yesterday along
and where we are in the present
we aim, we search and we reach
for something better, for something new

and yet true happiness, the way forward
is right here where we are
and a tender smile, the look of an eye,
a single word, even the tone of a voice
can bring us great joy or heartache.

Constantly we live our lives
while time passes far too quickly
and the here and now
and what we make of it
is actually the only live we have.

Gert Strydom

As We Walked Upon The Unspoiled Beach

As we walked upon the unspoiled beach
the sea touching our feet swept in and out,
rushing water swept our tracks out of reach
and we laughed and splashed and did shout.

Around us little crabs rushed with their shells,
while the waters was rushing higher in the bay,
we were caught, captured in the sea's magical spell
but with the rising water could not any longer stay

as the water in splashing spray did rise and swell
to escape the rising danger, to much higher we went
as the sea was coming in, its salty odour we did smell
while we did wander in the surf to our heart's content.

we found some tranquillity, did our love renew
on a rock surf splashed, falling on us like dew.

Gert Strydom

As When In Silent Secrecy

As when in silent secrecy
seeds arise suddenly in spring
we find that there is a heartbeat,
a silent rhythm in each plant and flower,

that everything that has got life silently does witness
that a Superior Being is watching everything,
does determine the time and nature of all,
even on a plant where mortal people do wander along.

Gert Strydom

As You Are A Woman (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

All the seasons are reflected in the yearly tides
as they come and go through the months
and in you there is a speechless silence
where in love you do stand loose from this
when hatred and violence comes with destruction
where people do madly gambol day and night,
in your there are tranquillity and care and a delight
as if no misery is happening in this world,
even death sets to itself a border
where for the future you procreate children,
are loving and benevolent to each fellow human being
and you stretch out your hand virtuously in life
as if you have been protecting immortality for years,
where you are raising your children to the will of God.

[Reference:"Die vrou" (The woman)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Ashes To Dust

What do you do when your darling's
grey dark eyed wondrous cat,
lies stiff at the back door
next to the Wendy house?

If that cat follows you
out of love
when you are banned
to the flat
and makes your place its own
and loves you more
than any other.

It's tragic when its existence
becomes one with its name
and it goes from ash to dust
and you may not even
put him in the ground.

Still life rushes past
and it's really tragic
that every thing
only has a short stint
under the hot sun
and the blue sky
and destiny draws its final line,
for everything and everyone at a time
and the life energy
disappears to somewhere
while the sun still shines
for others that are in the same cycle.

Gert Strydom

Ask Me To Live My Life For You (Italian Sonnet)

(after Robert Herrick)

Ask me to live my life for you,
your own man in life to be:
I will love you with everything in me,
and I will love you sincere and true,

I will know you in everything that I do,
I will give you a heart full of hope free,
I will treat you with respect and dignity,
will you to the end of the world pursue.

You are my soul, my spirit and my heart
the essence of what a happy life truly is
where daily you do act in a way that is kind
to my existence and life each and every part
and in all of this you do bring me bliss
you are in my blood, my heart and mind.

[Reference: "To Anthea who may command him anything" by Robert Herrick.]

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Gert Strydom

Asymmetry

Nothing torments
like a traffic jam on a freeway
with all lanes coming jam-packed
to a sudden halt,
big trucks grinding down gears
with swaying wagons as they brake,
the idiot on crack cocaine
that tries to overtake being trapped
by oncoming traffic
and then tries to swerve in
where there is no space
and out of the blue
very important persons arrive
and are being escorted in a convoy
which manages to past
with flashing police lights
while you are stuck.

Gert Strydom

At 52 The Nuts Of My Country Are Stripped

At 52 the nuts of my country are stripped
so that nothing can fit together anymore
and everything in my world has changed.
At work I have been retrenched
and I can get no other work
in my profession
(for which a person does need a university degree
or two)
where the past of other people
is now catching up with me
as my country has experienced affirmative action
and that just for some people.

Some young people who are already mature
do attend church
but are not interested to be baptised,
do not even live out the principles
of that religion
and young girls in mini dresses
that is so short that you can see their panties
do lead out the song service from up front
and they do pray to daddy God
while a older gentleman
do scream in a black native language
on someone that whispers in an emergency during a service.

People do walk over others from their own people
to fit into the political correctness
where they work at the police or civil service
and the Yin-Yang (good and evil) ,
the point of view at every person is a god
and for others the prosperity religion
that does believe that those who are prosperous
are the only ones that are blessed by God
is very popular.

There are many old people who are an embarrassment
to their children,
and they are suffering from misery and poverty.

Some young children have got to wait a turn
to eat or not
and I do talk to God
over all of these things when I do kneel down to pray.

Gert Strydom

At 52 The Nuts Of My Country Are Stripped [2}

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Gert Strydom

At A Baobab In The Bush-Veldt

Where it stands as an old giant on the plain
it's painted with the setting sun
or at twilight with the golden moon.
When the yellow-finch pecks at fruit on a branch

then the morning sun far off in the east do become aflame
where the braches do spread out to the top
while a lions licks his body against the soft trunk
and do secretly glance at the game that is grazing on the plain.

While a green-black starling do frolic in the upper branches
where the baobab stands like this from the beginning of time
and when for the last time the morning star does shine in the distance
there are wild-dogs that do growl and bark far off,

the lion stretches out in the shade before he roars
and crawls up against the trunk of the baobab.

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Gert Strydom

At A Burnt Out Double Storey House (Fay Slimm Form / Decanelle)

Flames had once covered every thing, the entire
space of the floor,
with cooking gas at a cylinder exploding burning
up to the door
and now this ruin consists out of bricks and wire
sheltering the poor,
at a copse of blue gum trees, a place of mourning,
at a big moor;
in my mind I can see that great exploding fire
at the trapdoor.

Gert Strydom

At A Certain Bar

There's a bevy of beautiful faces,
moving slender limbs
and catching music that entrances
while the lot of them dances.

Liquor flows like water
and lights glitter on the glass
in front of me
and the cup of golden hunters,
bubbles over the brim
and my sight is full
of girls with alluring glances.

There's something lascivious
in every touch of eye on eye
and movement that they make
and firm and shapely breasts
of different sizes quiver along,
with the intoxicating madness
of the music.

Gert Strydom

At A Enemy Airfield

Camouflaged, hidden in some underbrush
we lay and watch with special binoculars,
scanning the enemy facilities
while the night is setting in
and twilight has magic pertaining to it

some bright lights are being switched on
and some oil or another mechanical liquid
gleams out on the tarmac
where we see some enemy Mig-23 fighter jets
being readied for war

and then some more taxiing out
standing ready for takeoff on the runway
waiting on the arrival of
a small private jet,
(maybe with military officers landing)

and with a small device
exact positions are obtained,
that we report
over a frequency hopping
two way radio system

Johnny the second in command
says that he will almost do anything
to be able to smoke a cigarette right now.

We are asked to confirm the target positions,
by another party
which is now connected to us
and we recheck and confirm
while the sound of the landing
private jet is almost deafening

and positions of other targets
and installations are asked for,
which we supply
including the control tower

and I see stars falling, falling at high speed
from the sky
making the night gleam
going off like lightning
in brilliant colors of flaming orange,
white and red
with ultra loud exploding sounds

and howitzer canon projectiles
from G5 and G6 guns are coming in,
destroying the Migs and a lucky shot
hits the commercial jet right on target
and craters are left
and the next volleys
set some of the buildings ablaze,
rips hangers open
and those deadly manmade stars keep falling,
while functioning like machines
we keep giving targeting directions.

Gert Strydom

At A Koi Pond In A Nursery

When her fingers
lightly ripple the water,
a row of fishes
dart to come to investigate.

Fins cut through the water
and big eyes,
come to look
near to the surface.

Big and small bright coloured koi's
dash past through the water,
while dark fresh water crayfish
crawl on the bottom of the pond.

The ripple on the water
rings out wider and wider,
till where it disappears in to eternity.

.

In my hart the sound
of the beautiful day resounds,
while I stand fascinated
at the fish pond.

Gert Strydom

At A Miscarriage

(for Janneman and Letitia Enslin after Algernon Charles Swinburne)

You were not meant for this earth,
will never here feel any heat or chill,
back you have been jerked to a better place.
You were not meant,

to after years of pain and conflict live as someone elderly,
to know that even love here can cool down,
to become senile and cripple like some old folks do,
~~You~~ you were not meant.

You will take God by the hand and we did love you,
where through a night of terror we still do trust God.
Your first sight of your innocent eyes will find the face of God,
~~You~~ you will take God by the hand,

without any kind of iniquity be face to face with the source of all love,
and at his time He will resurrect you and give you to your parents as a child,
in an intact world He has better plans for you,

while hatred, pain, misery and sorrow do here devour humanity.
There full of expectation speechless you will cling to your mother
and for any light here you are blinded by death's terrible darkness,
~~You~~ you will take God by the hand,

as an innocent child you will walk with the lion and the lamb,
where a person finds streets of gold, angels and unseen things
and here in lamentation our eyes and cheeks are wet.
~~As~~ an innocent child you will walk

in wonder full of awe past the loving righteous saviour of humanity,
past the high-priest of Melchizedek, past the lion of the tribe of Judah
and here no man can avoid pain, sorrow and misery

while for a time our emotions about you do overflow
but your parents, your grandma and I want rather to stay
with Michael, with you, that does decent from us,
as an innocent child you will walk...

[Poet's note: "A baby's death" by Algernon Charles Swinburne.]

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Gert Strydom

At A Pan At Night

In the dark night I hear horse hoofs
coming on thundering
and there are sparks
bursting from the quartz rocks.

In the sky
there's a sickle moon
and the hairs
on my arms raise

while blue thunder
fall like shots around me
and I can smell fire and sulphur
on the wind.

For a moment
while a church bell
rings of midnight in the distance,
there's a horse standing neighing
on its back feet.

Just one look
frightens me past being awake
when another lightning bolt
strikes down next to us
and a horse
with a man without head
passes me at great speed.

In the distance at a ruin
I see an old woman in white
with a shrill voice
cutting through the night.

"Can nothing stop you
Jan van der Meer? "

[Reference: Die ruiter van skimmelperdpan by A.G. Visser. A legend from the second Anglo-Boer war.]

Gert Strydom

At A Prize Giving Speech

The words of an inspector became meaningless
as if he was all along talking rubbish and turned clueless
when he heard the music teacher fart
and without excuse had a attack of the heart
and his droll stories couldn't amuse or bless, became nothingness.

Gert Strydom

At A Restaurant

I once went to a restaurant
called the tent
somewhere in Sea point
and the owner laid a feast
of lamb stew
and rice in front of me.

The Turkish coffee
was without sugar
and extremely strong,
but a belly dancer
danced up to me
and smiled sweetly
and every motion
had a rhythm of its own.

There was electricity
when I danced along
and passion glowed
in her dark eyes.

Gert Strydom

At A Rock Music Concert

The howl of the magic guitar
brings me intense pleasure
and he is stroking string after string

while he walks his tripping step,
dancing along in a school uniform,
bringing me intense pleasure

as if I am also filled with the magic
and feelings wash over me
while he dances along in a school uniform

and it is as if the music fills my whole being
the whining, the clear sound
and feelings wash over me

while he gets pleasure out of it
enchants me and I know that this concert is uniquely great
the whining, the clear sound

surpasses all previous experiences by far.
The howl of the magic guitar
enchants me and I know that this concert is uniquely great
and he is stroking string after string.

Gert Strydom

At A Stop Sign There's A Red Toyota

At a stop sign there's a red Toyota
that halts and it's as if
I see you behind the steering wheel,
but my thoughts play with me
and that car drives past
and I feel like driving to your work
but know that it's silly
and know that the missing
will never end.

Gert Strydom

At A Time

At a time science will lie in pieces,
then no one will say a false word about Jesus,
when every eye will see Him in glory worldwide
and then humanity will have a true insight about God.

Gert Strydom

At A Time And Place

About the origin and the road that we did travel
to come here
we can keep fraying.

The one was there long before our existence.
on the other we can write about what we do know
and over everything that life does teach us.

About the spark of life
and how to get it going in a material lifeless thing
no one really knows.

That death comes with an impact
do remain a fact and so even the mummies
are a failing attempt to keep surviving.

If man do keep the Lord God and Jesus
from all of these calculations
and the power of creation
then our origin, our existence and even the future
do become a dead meaningless thing

and then we are only in life
in a mere moment
in a place and time
were imperfect everything do tend toward destruction.

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Gert Strydom

At A Time Everything Was Right, Pure And Clear (In Answer To Ernst Van Heerden)

At a time everything was right, pure and clear
on a perfect planet,
before daybreak brought forth Lucifer flaming
and now all earthly beings have forgotten it.

In Gethsemane the torches burnt bright
in the nightly visit of the officialdom
while Judas betrayed the Son of God
and received silver shekels for it.

At Nürnberg Hitler preached under flare light
of new living space for a super race,
under loud applause and a whole nation become accessory
to misdeeds as if coming from the protoplasmic swamp

as if God is not the creator, does not contemplate
and do not fold His hand over human existence.

[Reference: Fireflies by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

At A Time I Did Truly Love (Sextilla / Sestet)

At a time I did truly love,
as if it comes from God above
with something in every kiss,
something that I cannot explain,
and I longed for you again,
longed for happiness and bliss.

Memory brought me to this place
to your words, to your smiling face
the kisses from your glowing lips
and all of this comes back to me
as if I can once again be
between your loving tender hips

but life cannot be as before,
time we cannot turn back, once more
and sometimes we do love in vain
and although we know to forgive
the words, all that I then did give,
brought nothing to me but sheer pain

and time now does move somewhat on,
years and some feelings are now gone
and at a time love meant something,
to some it stays through a lifespan
and now I am another man,
who finds life and love amazing.

Gert Strydom

At A Time I Wanted To Flee Away From You

At a time I wanted to flee away from you
but the remembering continually catches up with me
and your summer laughter resounds in my ears,
your heart beats in my blood
and from love nobody can escape
or even walk away
and it's as if you are a part of me
and later this afternoon when you walk in the door
I will be happy to see you,
we will talk about the things of the day,
together wonder about the things of tomorrow
and at dusk we will see the evening star.

Gert Strydom

At A Time I Was Caught

in the glare of your eyes, in their bright glance
was aware of the dimple on your cheek
and my fingers did knot through your hair.

At a time weavers did sing,
ibises did slap their wings protesting
with their unexpected flying up
and suddenly you were apprehensive

and the zinc wing of the windmill turned around and around
while minutes stretched out like hours between us
when cool water came from the depths of the earth
and we drank some before I pulled you into my arms

and then you did suddenly smile
and that day changed to the most beautiful I had known.

Gert Strydom

At A Time When All Of My Hope Seemed Gone

At a time when all of my hope seemed gone
in darkness Your love brought me new light
when the weight of life was heavier than stone
You made every morning a time of hope and bright
and still You remain the only One
whose blessings and sacrifice shatters the night

Gert Strydom

At A Time When You Wanted To Leave On A Bright Morning (Villanelle)

From me do not take flight,
we should be happy at the brake of day□
when the darkness is conquered by light.

In the morning suddenly everything is clear and bright,
even birds on the branches do twitter and play.
From me do not take flight,

know that my feelings for you are true and right,
are there in times of sorrow and when everything is gay,
when the darkness is conquered by light.

Even if at times we argue, at times in conversations fight
you still do love me even when you threaten to go away.
From me do not take flight,

sometimes you look lovely even through my tearful sight
and here now I beg you to stay,
when the darkness is conquered by light

and love me as intense as you did last night,
know my true feelings I pray.
From me do not take flight,
when the darkness is conquered by light.

Gert Strydom

At A Time You Were Only Part Of A Dream (Strambotto Romagnuolo)

At a time you were only part of a dream
that came to me on a dark rainy cold night
and at that time a fairy tale this did seem,
as in the early morning, the bright daylight,
away was the dream, decayed as the rose,
and it faded from memory as time goes
till one day into my presence you did come
and from its wandering my heart found its home.

Gert Strydom

At A Utter Lost In My Own Country (In Answer To Kelwyn Sole)

I. Outside on the porch little bells dangle in the wind

Outside on the porch little bells
dangle in the wind
(a new expensive set that you have bought)
that we hear chiming even in our bedroom.

My eyes follow you while you
dress in a bathing suit
to plunge into the neighbour's pool
and later I climb over the wall to join you.

You slice spinach, feta cheese, along with
mushrooms, onions and tomatoes with quick
chopping movements and everything
goes into a shining frying pan

and on the porch
we watch the setting sun
enjoying our meal
with some glasses of sweet wine

and later while we watch Dr. House
you lie with your head on my chest
and after a while we begin to kiss,
to caress and to undress.

II. Passion sweeps us away

Passion sweeps us away
while only the dogs
and the big yellow moon watches
until spent, we lie against each other

and you tell me
of the difficulty of your childhood days,

of a father who liquor turned
into a kind of thoughtless man

but how he could excel in poetry,
still at times tried to live
in the ways of God
and that you really loved him

and I tell you about growing up
without a father, about how my mother
did her very best to offer us
a great kind of life

about the destruction, the desolation
and the impact of war,
of being a soldier
of killing another human being

about being shell-shocked,
with bullets whistling over your head,
about my friends, comrades
being shot dead

while somewhere else
people are eating out in restaurants,
are visiting movie houses,
are dancing or watching a television show.

III. Outside gardenias are waving against the windows

The noise of the machines outside
almost sound like the echo's
of our hearts and on the dressing-table
there is a vase with deep red roses

while your body sticks to mine,
I see the grace with which you are breathing
and in your golden eyes there's a lovely spark
that reminds me how splendid it is

to be young, to know that we are living

and when you later doze off against me
your breath whispers ingrained into me
like a sweet melody
and outside gardenias wave against the windows
in a bushy pergola while I play with a nipple.

IV. I make tea for us

I make tea for us
and you say that only I can make tea like this,
you eat some of my rusks
while our hands are just touching each other's

and it's already after nine
that you have returned from the gym
and you turn the teaspoon
around and around

while you look at me with big eyes
and I wonder what you want to tell me,
see your eyes disappearing before mine;
you are tired and want to go and sleep in your house

and early in the morning I get an electronic letter
telling me that our relationship has ended.

V. I know

I know that people
sometimes do things
to get someone back
or to let the self dominate
or just because it's possible

so as if they are totally free
of each other in a relationship
and everything
just turns around the self and me.

Not apart from the damage

and irreparability
that it leaves
or the great impact
that this destruction brings

as if deeds
do not have consequences
and all the time circle out wider
and yesterday, today and tomorrow
are to infinity the same

and it's a fact
that the reasons at times
go beyond comprehension
and the answers
sometimes for ever
stay away from you.

VI. Eyes full of water confuse the picture that I keep

Eyes full of water confuse the picture that I keep
when I leave Pretoria on my motorbike,
when I say farewell to you,
at speed cut past cars on the highway

where your auburn hair is now sun-drenched
but destiny throws out its dice,
while I am already missing you
and I have got to jump to where it throws my life

and the black road twists like a snake,
still the sun is hot in a cobalt blue sky,
while the motorbike takes my full attention
and I see a swarm of birds flying up high;

part of my life buzzes past with the wheels,
while you stay behind.

VII. I am already sleeping when you phone

I am already sleeping when you phone
(as if I have left you by my own choice)
you tell me about your loneliness,
say that you are missing me a lot,

that you are alone and do not want to affront me
and it's as if the walls are folding in on you,
but the conversation is really saying
that you now see things in a different light

and I realize that you are scared and your voice becomes thin,
is full of uncertainties and you want to know if I have got someone else,
in the distance over the phone I hear lightning bashing down,
the cat comes in through the window and climbs on the sideboard,

I see that the big old clock pointing to after eleven
and I put the telephone down and wonder why you are phoning?

VIII. I lost you suddenly

I lost you suddenly
when I was again without a contracted job
and this crisis (of being without work)
happens over and over again

and every time I have got to start from scratch,
while I am looking in confusion in the fog of life
that folds around me for meaning,
to something new to encourage me.

You say that you also now at times
listen to Handel's water music
and although it is beautiful, there is pain for me in it,
everything between us feels so final and settled,
it is as if your voice has stopped whispering in the evening wind
and it is as if that music starts my sadness.

IX. Near Shoprite

In the parking area near to Shoprite

in a remote corner three white people are sitting
with plastic bags, blankets,
unshaved, with uncombed hair,
two men and a woman
and the leader of the little group
turns tobacco from cigarette stubs
that they have picked up
into an old glass jar.

Later they make cigarettes
from a old telephone guide and late afternoon,
sometimes at sundown,
this is their gathering place
and I see him drawing a match
against the sole of his worn leather shoe,
later they ask at DJ's
if the black café owner has some leftovers
that he would throw away anyway.

They ask me for cigarettes
and I cannot help them
as I do not smoke,
I do not even have enough money on me
to buy a bread for them
of maybe a litre of milk,
I see how they try and make sheltering
from boxes for the night
and wonder where they hide
against the winter chill,
about what they do when it rains?

I long to have a conversation with you
and get an electronic mail
at the Internet café and you say

that you have got a lot of time,
have thought about the problems
that you find
in your own personality

and I wonder about your relationship
with your new friend,

who is probably working in Nelspruit,
but it's not my concern.

X. Away I am drawn from your words

Away I am drawn from your words,
by deeds that I cannot make undone
as if the truth is taken
away by the torment flowing from
the words you are telling,
a tempest now enkindled
in your heart.

I did not choose to part
but are like a sawn off tree
falling where destiny demands,
not where my desire wants,
grasping ever grasping
for the way that life used to be,
trying to have you close to me.

XI. How sad it is

How sad it is when fog the whole morning
hangs over this autumn,
and now I wonder where did I fit into your life
or were we just for moments, caught in each other?

Today I wonder about you
who with golden eyes could shine over my whole world,
see a couple of rainbows
where light comes down through the clouds,

and now after almost a year
I get an answer on my comment at your "ordinary woman"
and I am sorry that my words then did not spare you
and now wonder about the meaning of your words

where you write: this poem is for you
wishing me well and I remember our times together.

XII. Is it you or I?

How did I have to know
that love
carries no meaning to you
and what was between us
you viewed as a prison

as if I am not even
a little bit in the picture
and the Lord God
does not behold everything,

still I wonder
who in the end
will suffer the most
is it you or I?

XIII. What is left to say?

What is left to say
that compulsively I wanted to get on my motorbike,
that today I wanted to love you like yesterday,
wanted to ride all the way to you, past the distant horizon?

That when dusk came I was wondering
if you are missing me,
that I was astounded by the beauty of the setting sun
and I wonder if the clouds are just as pretty, at the place where you are?

What is left to say
when I am still wondering where the end between us started,
wonder about opportunities left in this country,
and now I am a stranger to you whom I once loved?

Maybe He had driven us apart,
or maybe you had mutated away?

[Reference: Uttara by Kelwyn Sole.]

Gert Strydom

At Baalbek

(in answer to Totius, in answer to Dolf van Niekerk)

Against the crumbling six pillars stand sky-high
even at this utterly heathen sun-worshiping place,
where the colonnades do stand alone at Baalbek
I look at the bow of a Jupiter-arch
and totally desolate everything lies for the eye,
where an earthquake in 1759 brought destruction,
the extent of this place jumps into my mind
and over the whole earth God has got His scope,
even at this utterly heathen sun-worshiping place.

I need no oracle to tell me about love,
when in this ancient place you lay your hand down into mine
and even if as a mere human I am confused and stupid about love,
you and the Lord God do constantly astonish me.
I only know that I do want to love God first and thereafter want to love you
and God and you with your love do turn my days around,
where at this evil place you do come to me with open arms
nobody and nothing can stop this love,
when in this ancient place you lay your hand down into mine.

[Reference: "Baälbek" (Baalbek) by Totius. "By Delfi gloei die rotse" (At Delphi the rocks glow) by Dolf van Niekerk.]

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Gert Strydom

At Balito (Mono-Rhyme Stanza)

Next to the ocean I stood with you,
past the horizon the sun did draw its line through,
while waves did against rocks splatter a male couple did argue,
a yacht sailed to somewhere and held to north true
the legend of Poseidon slumbered as a Great Dane did its owner pursue,
the presence of God did everything subdue,
that silent tranquillity in my thoughts still do continue
speechless only you and I had of Him a clue
and locked-down I still recall that ocean so invitingly blue.

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Gert Strydom

At Ballito Beach (Free Verse Sonnet)

At Ballito the sun burns ultraviolet,
pierce through the ocean's navy-blue,
where I have a picture of your body
and do remember that summer so very clearly.
Aquarelle is the sea and the beach painted white,
the sea is in the air; I smell it on the breeze,
where seagulls screeching roam above the sea,
while I have joyful moments with you,
exuberant a man's dog is barking,
when just like Aphrodite you come out of the water
the dog runs, jumps joyfully up and down,
for moments I am speechless with my goddess,
when we swim the water is both hot and cold,
what happens between us is ages-old and brand new.

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Gert Strydom

At Bethesda

I lie here delivered to my lot
before man and God
and nothing happens time after time
and year after year

as if God has no powers,
doesn't notice me,
or I do not follow Him
dutiful enough

and why I have to carry this burden
I have already asked everyone long ago
and they think that it's from sin
but are not really sure

and I do not know
when and where I did wrong
and it's already thirty-eight years

and when water is only stirred
everybody wants to get in
and sometimes some are healed
but just not me
as nobody helps me in
and I am almost without hope,

but then a wonderful day comes
that a man finds me
at the bath of Bethesda
and he says to me:
"get up, take your bed and walk"

and something in his eyes
the very way that he looks at me
let all the pain, the paralysis disappear

and suddenly I have power
and I am healed
and dance overjoyed

in front of Him.

He finds me in the temple
and then I know that it's Jesus, the Christ
and just there and then
I want to talk to everyone
and tell them about Him.

Gert Strydom

At Birth

At birth we enter this world
from the great unknown
and make life our very own
as human beings with senses
of touch, hearing and seeing

and from being born we are on a sojourn
as travellers that feel and experience
the way that life is
and we do reach to each other in bliss
and true happiness
while we do work, play and laugh and cry
until the very day that we die.

Gert Strydom

At Birth We Come Into This Life Alone (Rubiyat / Persian Quatrain)

At birth we come into this life alone
and when in death the last of it is gone
all that we wanted to be and achieve,
all love and pain is done.

Gert Strydom

At Cape Point

As I drive past Cape Point
and the winter rain sieves down,
I see the track going up the hill
and see walking up the slope
my girlfriend and I
on a long gone summer's day.

Her smile was like the sun
and the tranquillity
as we walked up the hill
is with me still and what we said
does not matter at all

and at the top we looked
at the great rollers of the sea
where two oceans
and two strong currents meet
and saw huge waves crashing below

and through the telescope
we watched a liner sailing bye
and the wind ruffled her hair
and only the two of us were there
my girlfriend and I

and as feelings go
never have I felt a thing like that
and was the great world
as lovely as just then
and now I would give almost anything
to be back there
while my solitude
is giving way to loneliness.

[Reference: Cape point: A place where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet and the hot Agulhas (Mozambique) and cold Benguela currents.]

Gert Strydom

At Church Square He Stands

At church square he stands just in front of the steps
and the statue of old uncle Paul
with a guitar in his hand
in a torn dirty jean
and the wind flutters the old washed-out shirt
of the curly head blonde singer
and he looks dumbfounded.

He notices people walking past
to offices, busses and cars
(and some of them are chatting)
and only a few does notice him,
leave silver
and even a bank note in his hat.

In his memories he goes back
to a time with food in the house
and his mother and father that did love each other,
to a time when life was still simple and free
and his eyes catch a bolt of lightning
that flashes blue-white in an open sky
and he wonders if it is later going to rain
while he plays and sings a sad song.

Gert Strydom

At Creation (Couplets)

"only God knows
and He isn't perched on any tree" - Christy Brown

(in answer to Gail Dendy)

He spoke with omnipotent power,
created everything even each fragile flower

but created man and with careful care,
in him did His image share

as a existing perfect living thing
and around him the birds did sing,

the female form came from man himself
was beautiful, charming and fragile like an elf,

of all things created the living soul, the man was the best,
and overjoyed on the Sabbath God did rest,

on Adam and Eve God did His love bestow
and truly they did the Lord God know,

daily they spoke to God to His very face,
did live and work and have fun in the most idyllic place

and much later from Adam Eve did wander away,
all around her all of lovely nature did play,

she found a snake perched prettily in the branches of a tree,
did not know that she did the most vile of all beings see

but very subtle and slyly Satan brought man to a test
and of the sin-fall all living humans do know the rest,

about a world full of pain, hardship and death
as man does draw every live-giving breathe

but for full recompense God was crucified on a tree,

to offer life and to save you and me.

[References:"Lucy" by Christy Brown."The Apprentice" by Gail Dendy that was published in her volume of poetry: "Closer Than That, " Dye Hard Press, Sandton,2011.

Poet's note:I am quoting "The Apprentice" by Gail Dendy here:

"I moistened the clod of earth
with my bare hands
and felt how it slopped and slithered"

"as I fashioned a figure
almost complete, but still reliant
on something else: "

"the right temperature,
a jolt of energy,
the perfect heartbeat."

"Then with the breath from my nostrils
I made a howling wind, and I
tipped the sun so close"

"to the pine trees
that they all exploded.
Not a good start, I admit."

"But this was the prelude
to the Sabbath, so I broke off
a branch from that living thing"

"and called it 'a rib',
and the clod and the rib
were two, and separate, "

"and they were naked
and somewhat embarrassed.
I should've known better, "

"no sooner had I turned my back
then they were up to their tricks

and the Boss"

"was walking in the garden
at the breezy time of day
and I was needing to hide."

"I crept to the centre of the garden
and pretended for all the world
to be a tree."

"Ok, this was a sham,
a silly kid's trick,
but I had nothing to lose."

"And you know, after years
of standing there
I was regarded as wise"

"and full of knowledge.
Perhaps the Boss didn't notice
because he went and started"

"all over again and somehow
I was able to blend in.I don't
need to tell you what happened next."

"A bloody disaster.
Since then I've tried to say sorry
I did.I really, really did."]

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Gert Strydom

At Dusk

At dusk when the night
had stolen the last rays of the sun,
I heard you laughing outside in the garden
and your blouse was a bright yellow.
There were bushes of daisies flowering
and hand in hand we walked
before the shadows did come
and suddenly the sky was dark but open
with stars bedecking the whole heaven
as if they were hanging on a gigantic tree
and some were green, or blue or white
and like a young deer I caught you
and wanted to share these things with you
while the breeze was playing through the old tree.

Gert Strydom

At Dusk (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

Bloody red is the sun's last display
at the end of yet another tranquil day
but tonight it seems as if you are right here
where twilight comes with a tranquil atmosphere,
the poplars do gently in the evening breeze sway
and forever you do remain dear to me
while the night does come with its own mystery,
the stars do hang shining and yet so far away
at the end of yet another tranquil day,

II

in my mind your eyes glow in their own glare,
around us birds do flutter here and there,
on the wind intermittent I hear a voice
while the doves do in their love-songs rejoice,
of God's presence we are suddenly aware
where in silence He walks with you and me,
brings to the night still more tranquillity
and this night has got great beauty everywhere,
around us birds do flutter here and there

III

and real peace and love and joy do our hearts fill
where in my thoughts you do visit me, as you will,
as our love is something that cannot be denied,
are like always almost angelic lovely and big-eyed
where under the twinkling stars I stand still
while together we both do into eternity see
and I wonder how our lives is going to be,
it will be winter soon says the night's chill,
where in my thoughts you do visit me, as you will.

Gert Strydom

At Dusk 2

I

Memories of the past day do flood my mind
and my whole world has changed from what it was before.
I see a movement at the window's blind,
hear you walk on the wooden floor past the door
but thought struck pass the world rushes on
and the setting sun says that the day is gone.

II

At twilight my study is a peaceful place
and you walk in with a bright smile on your face
and the tranquillity is no longer mine
but outside nature is at rest as if touched by the divine
and inside it's only you and I
while the first stars do touch a pitch black sky.

Gert Strydom

At Dusk The Old Zinc Roof Creaks

At dusk the old zinc roof creaks
like Dad's Chev with its fins
or the big old branch of the blue-gum tree
and when it gets dark mother calls me in,
Dad is reading the sentences of an essay
where he is marking composition books,
at times works late into the night
and there's jasmine on the wind,
when the neighbour suddenly drives off
and he finds some time for me.

Gert Strydom

At Dusk When The Weavers Rollicked In The Back Yard

At dusk when the weavers frolicked in the back yard
and were picking at small crumbs and seeds
some were yellow and others red
and I did imagine
that again as a child
I was playing at the march

but the darkness of the night came quickly
and suddenly the back yard was empty
with the fireplace of the neighbour
blowing a cloud of coal smoke into the air.

Gert Strydom

At Easter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Olga Kirsch)

Paint with the own blood of Jesus Christ
the portals of the human heart red,
where He destroys the works of Satan,
where He does indemnify us from sin.
When the fierce battle in life does rage,
let us with Easter invite Him in again,
open every portal just for Him,
even if we do not suspect His coming or Him being near,
as the yeast-free bread reminds us of Him,
the sparkling wine of His severe suffering and pain,
where He as a human being stood in our place,
where He did come as the saviour of man,
where our despair and our travails in and through Him do disappear,
where Jesus are forever victorious against injustice and the enemy.

[Reference: 'Paassang' (Easter song) by Olga Kirsch.]

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Gert Strydom

At False Bay (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrains)

Silently in the west the sun died away,
sunset brought a blood-red shimmer over False Bay
screeching a seagull flew up against the African coast
and twilight came suddenly in tones of gray

while our lips met and intimately we had nothing to say
and in the distance glittering and busy the city of Cape Town lay
while waves licked at our feet and a ship's lights glowed yonder
and in those moments of enchanting beauty to God we wanted to pray.

Gert Strydom

At First Light They Started To Climb

At first light they started to climb
did later become two specks against the mountain
with the smell of snow, with boots gritting forward
the hammer that repeatedly were hitting pegs into the rock

and almost breathless they were gasping,
while moment after moment they were ascending higher
with steel clamps that did shine in the sunlight,
sometimes they did slip against the granite treading places

but the climbing rope
were stringed constantly between the two of them
and at last
they were on the top snowy-ridge

with the entire world stretching out
small and toy-like beneath them
and at the top they had few words
before they started with the descent.

Gert Strydom

At Forty-Five

At forty-five he was at the point
of becoming a director of the board,
a financial genius who, could look
through sheets and sheets

of wiggling figures
and see trends, danger signs
like a prophet could
declare where things were going

but to some he was a little too big for his boots,
far too intelligent, far too clever
and a real and ominous threat
and he was removed from his post,
retrenched with three females
an Asian, a Black and a Coloured
appointed in his place.

Gert Strydom

At Grass

There is a cheering crowd in the stands
with some people waving betting cards
while majestically they thunder past
in bright colours with jockeys
standing in the stirrups, bending low
running the distance at full speed.

Some people cheer with joy,
while cameras flash, video cameras record
others disappointed, sit down
waiting for the next race
while crowds of empty cars
wait outside and women parade
their dresses as if on show.

Gert Strydom

At Half Past Five After Work (Sonnet)

At half past five after work
I lead my darling
along the shore on the beach
with the wind blowing lightly through her hair,
it does sandpaper against us, let us shiver
and the sky is dull blue
while I hold her tightly against me
and at times we do embrace.
The Cape sun still is high
like a big yellow eye
that is watching us
when we notice a ship far away in the blue ocean
just before the horizon and the smell
of fried fish lies finger-licking good on the evening breeze.

Gert Strydom

At Headquarters

It's a evening in the week and the bar is packed,
while rain sieves down from a pitch black sky
with white lightning flashes streaking down
every now and then sounding as a growling monster.

Two half drunk yuppies raise their draughts
clinking the mugs before knocking each other around
bruising each other's arms with a couple of blows
and going to the counter to fetch some more beer.

A couple of musclemen circle the pool table
shooting the billiard balls into the pockets
and one curses when he misses
and it's the turn of one of the others.

A couple of girl's are playing
at the gambling machines inserting coins
and pulling levers and when one hits a jackpot
the lot of them are cheering, sounding like choir.

There are puddles of water at the door
and the yellow and green neon light flashes outside
while a black and white cat sneaks around
among the parked cars

undisturbed by the human laughter,
the ruckus of partying people
and it finds shelter against a wall
when the rains starts pouring down again.

Gert Strydom

At Heart (Sicilian Septet)

Far too many times it had been broken
and at times I had given it away.
Now I have quite suddenly been woken
at the very breaking of the new day
as it beats with a different kind of stroke
a thing that is here to constantly stay
while the coming of death is unspoken.

Gert Strydom

At Heart I Do Read The Lines You Write To Me (Swannet)

In your poetry I see endless possibility.
where through your eyes things are distinct
as if in writhing you have a hidden instinct,
at heart do read the lines you write to me

and I notice your hands when you do paint,
how with colourful hue you do things shape
and not a smile or small gesture do me escape,
while some images are bright and others faint

and my life is like a miracle when you are near,
as if anything in it is suddenly quite possible
and your art is not only in itself passable
but the excellence in it to me is clear

In your poetry I see endless possibility.
at heart do read the lines you write to me
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Gert Strydom

At Home You Are Already Asleep,

are curled onto your side,
with your hair spread out like a sheaf
and outside the branches flutter in the breeze

while the odours of rosemary, lavender and gardenia
softly penetrates the room
and when I get into bed to find my resting place
you look for lingering moments at me

with eyes that gleam like those of a cat
and you claim a song
that tells about my love and longing
and bodily urges awake between us.

Gert Strydom

At Hout Bay The Fishing Trawler Sails Out

At Hout Bay the fishing trawler sails out
while the rain pours down
like water out of God's hosepipe
with engines roaring in the ears

and clouds of smoke hang over the boats
with every fisherman for a moment being caught
in a own world while fog whirl about the boats
that rocks up and down to the harbour mouth.

The waves crash, the sea foams and bubbles
and "my girlfriend has a good lover, "
is sung by one while the trawler sets its course
on the look out for barracouta, cod and sea trout.

"Look at the shining bodies, tons of trout, they are running free, "
a fisherman shouts against the wind that pulls and pulls on the boat.
"Salmon man, salmon" roars the tiller man back and walls of water
roll past and the boat turns to get fishing gear ready.

"My girlfriend has a good lover and he's a gelded goat, "
the tune goes on and something clatters down
drawing the attention of the fishermen and the water shines
and when the boat is full they tell jokes that they guffaw at.

Gert Strydom

At Houtbay Beach

A young girl and an old man
walk down steps
to the stretch
that the beach at Houtbay
throws against the sea.

There are some small fishing boats
in colours of blue,
orange and white
that sails into the sea,

but big white cabin cruisers
bobs up and down
next to the quay
some distance away
as if they are ownerless
while their bosses
play somewhere else.

The smell of sea-pike
roasting on coals
lies on the light wind
and their stomachs growl
of sudden hunger
and here and there
the girl stoops
to pick up shells.

His sturdy boots leaves flat tracts
on the firm sand
and there's a brown wood walking stick
with a lion head in his hand
and the girl's
bare foot tracts
run in advance.

The sea swishes in and out
and the wet sand
reflects a bright open day

and the blue water
stretches out
as far as you can see
and it's as if he gets new power
next to the foaming water.

Gert Strydom

At Lambert's Bay

When the ocean at Lambert's bay
does lie smooth as a pond
when the sun in the west
does change from rosy coloured to red

then I am caught,
while I see a few gulls turning above the boats
but the big longing
stays in me

to have a place somewhere at the sea
with you living with me
but my words and thoughts
only do remain in memories.

Gert Strydom

At Lambert's Bay The Fishing Trawlers Sail Out

At Lambert's Bay the fishing trawlers sail out
where clouds of smoke hang over the boats
while the rain pours down in buckets.

The waves hit, the sea foams and bubble,
it looks as if a storm is rising
and 'my girlfriend has a fine fellow, '

one sings in darkness before he starts whistling
where clouds of smoke hang over the boats.
At Lambert's Bay the fishing trawlers sail out

seeking snoek, cod and sea-trout
and the boat turns to get out fishing gear,
it looks as if a storm is rising

and the men wait on the sea's first gifts
with rain like only God's hosepipe brings
while the rain pours down in buckets.

'Look at that shining bodies, tons of trout, they are running free, '
the song continues and something falls down
and the boat turns to get out fishing gear,

with engines roaring loudly
every fisherman is caught for a moment.
At Lambert's Bay the fishing trawlers sail out

'my girlfriend has a fine fellow and he is a wild goat, '
one sings against the wind with more joining voices,
the song continues and something falls down

and the tiller-man wonders about the sudden rain
but the fishermen are catching
while the rain pours down in buckets

they are standing ready but half-blinded
'Where are we going on the wide, wide sea'
one sings against the wind with more joining voices,

gigantic waves hits and pulls the boat
and some fishermen are scared.
At Lambert's Bay the fishing trawlers sail out
while the rain pours down in buckets

while the fishermen sing their song:
'The waves hit, the sea foams and bubble, '
'where are we going on the wide, wide sea'
and 'my girlfriend has a fine fellow.'

[Reference: Barracouta is known in South-Africa as 'snoek.']

Gert Strydom

At Liberty (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

You do me truly from the depth of your heart know
and still in live some things do never again return:
like in a moment how your eyes did lovely glow
with an intense heat your kisses did to the heart burn

and all of these impressions of you does remain mine
where not a single moment with you I do deplore
and I do constantly remember how your eyes do shine
how on a beach long ago the ocean did in tempest roar

where against each other sheltering we stood
and with its magic the mind may pictures weave
where you are gorgeous above a great multitude
and for many years about loosing you I did grieve

but now or lives and love is totally at liberty
where true love beacons us together to be.

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Gert Strydom

At Magnolia Dale

We walked laughing over the grass
while the dogs were running loose
and Kyla was swimming in the cool water.

On the riverbank Tinkie
sniffed on a few white flowers
and Jeanie walked from tree to tree

while Sasja barked at everybody around her
and rather silly followed Kyla splashing into the water
where like a lady Flippie paced off her steps.

Only Gator had to be kept on a leash
as he was like always out of control
and nobody could teach him any manners.

Gert Strydom

At Margate Beach (Cavatina)

One after the other or in some pairs
the seagulls fly,
while a green, blue or purple hued calm sea
does catch the eye;
on the beach a myriad of girls tan,
men do get dry
or return to the surging surf to have fun
and children enjoy the hot summer sun.

Gert Strydom

At Midnight (Ballade)

(in answer to C. M. van der Heever)

In ancient times a woman told a story at a fire,
a fantasy tale in the midnight hour
where some of the men laughed at her
but one did look deep into the red flaming coals.

Chorus:

If a man at exactly midnight
yearns terribly for a woman
and at a certain place go to the beach
the seals will astonish him.

In drunkenness at another time she said
that only the bravest hero does not agitate the seals
and that he will find a lovely woman on the beach
where the story again did amuse the men

but there was one that did not laugh at her
and night after night patiently did wait
to find out about the right beach
and he was careful of the other men.

One night at midnight in the moonshine
the bravest hero did disappear without a trace
and went to the beach to wait on the seals
to appear out of the waves with their shiny bodies

and he was totally astounded as his thoughts were going mad
as the most beautiful women did disguise themselves in seal-skins
where he noticed them dancing around in the moonlight
and the most pretty suddenly did notice him and came straight to him.

[Reference:"Wie om twaalfuur snags"(Who at twelve o'clock in the evening)by C. M. van der Heever.]

Gert Strydom

At My Second Job

At my second job,
before completing my degree,
like any other day
we were capturing
Debtor's accounts by the hundred,
in a place where
accounts never ended.

The girls were talking
about their boyfriends
and some of the older
ladies about winning
at the slot machines
and the new girl
smiled at me.

I smiled back
and her eyes
and the way
that she walked away,
told me that she liked me.

From that day
it was really fun
to be at work
and every working day
was a new working experience.

Gert Strydom

At Nigel Dam (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Cornelius van der Merwe)

It's icy cold at the dam and you are fully woman
where a cloud of fog like a smoke cloud hang chilly,
and next to me you look at the line and policeman,
with me are catching fish on a winter morning,
like ancestral-spirits water-damp rise at the island,
circles appear on the water like an African myth
as if something unearthly wants to come out and you take my hand
but it's fishes swimming around the bait and no rite,
the grass is white with frost and still the doves coo in the trees,
your line tightens and you jerk and reel in while the water whirl,
I put on bait and you throw in with confidence
later stand for a photograph to be able to explain the event,
you shiver from the cold water when you set the fish free
and you stand like a beautiful goddess next to Nigel-dam.

[Reference:"Roodeplaatdam - 4 Mei 1992"(Roodeplaat Dam -4 May 1992)by Cornelius van der Merwe.]

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Gert Strydom

At Night

At night helicopters do patter past
with searchlights that do shine down
like hornets out hell
and others do fly quickly to hospitals
and emergency situations
as if they are angels
that does bring mercy to those that are hurt

while the sirens of patient fire-trucks,
those of the unhappy police do disfigure the night
and at another place in the world on the other side of the ocean
a terrorist that does serve his own Allah is found,
where he wants to take the lives of others
and do want to destroy himself along with them

and the Police and some soldiers do come armoured
like a force from the underworld
with sirens that do scream so loud
that they do awake even the realm of the dead
when they do storm with masks,
helmets and machineguns
and switch on terribly sharp lights,
do corner him like a moth against a building.

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Gert Strydom

At Night Sometimes, Sweet Voices I Hear (Terzanelle)

At night sometimes, sweet voices I hear,
distant angels, glorified beings
singing in my dreams, from another sphere

rejoicing at the happenings
in the whole of creation, glorifying the king.
Distant angels, glorified beings

sing with powerful voices that ring,
acknowledging his blessing,
in the whole of creation, glorifying the king

as if endlessly pressing
their voices like flowers in a holy book
acknowledging his blessing

rejoicing of the great deeds that he undertook,
about his transfiguration from almighty God to mere man,
their voices like flowers in a holy book,

sing about his love filled plan.
At night sometimes, sweet voices I hear,
about his transfiguration from almighty God to mere man,
singing in my dreams, from another sphere.

Gert Strydom

At Night The Fragrances

At night the fragrances of jasmine
and lavender
comes in through the window
along with the love songs of the doves,

the moon hangs golden yellow
like a sunflower
and in the distance cars pass
and there are the noises

of ambulance and police sirens,
the hooting of a train
but you do lay hot and cosy against me
and the outside world passes us.

Gert Strydom

At Night The Mind Plays Its Tricks

At night the mind plays its tricks
reliving situations from days gone bye
as soon as there's darkness in the sky
and sleep heavies the eyes
dreams bring out their gimmicks
of loves lost and wars past

but I would rather dream
of only you
of the sky blue
and how lovely it is
to be true
and trying to make it last.

Gert Strydom

At Night When The Day Puts On Its Dark Cloak

At night when the day puts on its dark cloak
and blackness covers the heavenly blue
then there is a place that we want to make our own,
a place where you reach with your hand to mine

where you love me past time and sense and sensibility
and somehow it's a place of shelter
where the madness of life does grow faint,
where an own piece of Eden begins.

Gert Strydom

At Night When The Stars Flower In Bunches

At night when the stars flower in bunches
in blue-white, red and green colours
then on the air the fragrances of gardenia
and jasmine floats and comes in through the window
while the evening flower spreads her cups and does astound
and the wind rustles mischievous against windows and doors,
while the lizards hide against the chill in their crevices
and the corrugated roof groans from old age,
while the wind carries the laughter of people around tin can fires
where they are jolly early in the morning at the old mine compound
and I wonder if you are also missing me so intensely
where fences and walls do protect us
and in the distance an old gong resounds
when you are very deep in my thoughts.

Gert Strydom

At Peril

I The great deluge

A time came that the minds of men did only evil breed
and only a small handful did God's commandments heed
and the rebellious angel Lucifer was at his prime
while he inspired men to greater evil time after time

and God could use the elements, or lightning, fire or rain
to turn men back to Him again
could catapult fiery stones of hail,
slingshot lightning bolts that would not fail

but He never did force anyone,
did from their heart any wish remove
and suddenly all righteous men but almost one
who did trust, did believe and did love
was from the great world gone

while the evil dragon, serpent, snake
led most men to in the vilest things to partake
to have religious orgies, to sacrifice their children
to honor him and above all God to forsake

when in the hearts of men rebellion,
murder and every animal urge was awake
when their hands were with blood vermilion
and they burned to possess and with force to take
the livelihood from those who stayed to God true and good
and even their very last bit of food.

From reptiles they built war machine upon war machine
and nothing was as it had been
while they exalted themselves to living gods
and they became more evil than through eon's holy angels had seen

and day and night
the deeds, the acts the words of men upon the earth
was in God's sight
and He was sorry that He granted them birth

while every vile and evil thing was right in His face
across the barriers, the vast abyss of space

and God instructed his servant Noah to build an ark,
to in a great time of trouble during a deluge to embark
on sailing with the reverent few on waters as high
as the highest peaks that were almost touching the sky

and at the right time into that great ark's hold
all kinds of wild animals by their own volition came
while the mystery of God's protection and love did unfold
and thunderbolts did put the world aflame

while the molten fire beneath the earth
blasted into the sky from its girth,
and cities, buildings, mountains where turned around
while in huge earthquakes everything went underground

and from the sky poured floods of rain
while from the vaults of the earth some more water flowed
while huge waves lashed at the ark's hold again and again
and the sky that was thunder lashed as if aflame glowed

while Noah prayed and prayed with his mortal hands at the wheel
of that great jumping, shuddering, swaying ship
with its almost indestructible ironwood keel
at times dead animals, the bodies of men past would slip

and for forty days and nights the sky the whole world was dim
while he was glad that God and His angels were protecting him
while all of the elements did roar as if God Himself was at war
and cleaning the entire world from what it had been before.

As a tremendous tide of water did all evil men devour,
and the elements did angrily rage
even Lucifer feared that it was his last hour
and the end of the rebellious war that he did wage

but God did His promises to Noah keep
and saved him and his family from the eternal deep.

II Fire from the sky on Sodom and Gomorra

They were proud of their most evil deeds
while things like rape in their hearts did leave small seeds
and the rainbow that did come again and again
promised that God will not destroy with a deluge or rain

and when holy angels as men came to the city's gate
the sons and men could not wait
on the holy ones to use sodomy, to rape
and they cornered them with no escape.

Although they were struck with blindness
they did remain evil and were almost mindless
while with anger they did roar,
did become more wicked than before
and laughed while they did
the wrath of God implore

and did provoke and challenge Him,
until the light of day did go dim
and far away Abraham did pray
for God's omnipotent hand to stay

but in Sodom and Gomorra
the people did continually their wicked games play
while Lot was but a pariah
and the people did the vilest things night and day

and from the sky God did his fire and brimstone pour
as a tide of fire that did evil men devour,
with a brightness that was like a falling sun
and even Lucifer feared that it was his last hour

when Lot and his daughters were left alone
while two large cities was turned to molten stone
and in great haste away Lot fled
while the most wicked people were gone

and still the sins of man goes on and on
till the dawning of the sun on the last horizon.

At Scottburgh's Beach (Free Verse Sonnet)

The sun burns ultraviolet
for miles do pierce the ocean's navy-blue,
where I have got a picture of your brown suntanned body
and today I do remember that summer so very clearly.
Aquarelle the sea is painted and at places violet-blue,
the sea-salt is in the air and I smell it on the beach wind
where sea gulls wander up and down above the sea,
while in my thoughts I find enjoyable moments with you,
like a mad thing someone's dog is barking,
where you do look like Aphrodite that has just come out of the ocean,
Gwenevieve and Raleigh runs to an thro and jumps full of joy,
for long moments the beauty of my goddess do me amaze
but when together we do swim the water is past icy cold
and sparkling is your smile and your eyes are naughty.

Gert Strydom

At Sea Point (Stave Stanza Sestets)

At Sea Point where we both said our goodbyes
I saw tears coming from your bright green eyes
the stormy Southeaster did pull and shove
while I was aware that we were in love,
I might have diagnosed our feelings wrong,
life was beautiful, my heart sang a song.

At Sea Point I did not have any care
but of your loveliness I was aware
as you walked on, your head you did toss
we had our feelings, our hearts played boss;
to me you turned back and came along,
life was beautiful, my heart sang a song

Gert Strydom

At Seven (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

Right through that summer the boy would wander
through the hillocks,
finding wild flowers, wild fruits and then left
burning hot rocks
and then returned to the large farmyard,
heard crowing cocks,
sneaked to the large shed on the heat of day,
while on business the farmer was away.

He would smell some diesoline coming from
the tank outside,
the oil and grease of the three big tractors
while he would hide;
ploughshares, the harrow, spades and picks
would be each side;
in his mind the farmer's harsh words had been:
'boys have to outside play, are not to be seen.'

[Reference: 'Eleven' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

At Springs

I am trying to get a job
at Springs
and wonder why people live here
away from Johannesburg
and Pretoria

and what fountains
spring out at this place
and all that I find
is rotten smells
rising from the Blesbok river
where sewerage is flowing in freely.

The town lies stretched out
up to Brakpan
and has two internet cafés
that I know about
and a computer shop
where the people
know less about computers than I

and my animals
may not come into the house
and I must explain why
they are barking at the gate.

One of my cats
Lurks in the a storm water drain
against the road

and I am tired and fed up
with lifting concrete blocks
with a crowbar
to free the Persian cat
on his cries for help.

The mines are stripped bare
and at places there are pans
with poison

that has accumulated there for years

and at times there are friendly neighbours
with whom I talk
and virtually every second day
the weather is overcast
with falling rain
and thunderbolts
hitting outside around my animals

but mother's garden
is a real idyllic spot
with hollyhocks bursting out pink
over fallen trees
in a rock garden,

geraniums of all colours
growing very rampant,
flame lilies blooming orange,
morning glories coming up anywhere
and a much larger vegetable garden
than I could plant in Pretoria

and over the yard
the Creator spreads His hand
and there are new flowers
sprouting almost every day

and I am astonished
at how easy
things grow here
and how high
the plants are suddenly

and the yard is so big
that the animals
almost play in a field
and it's actually past lovely
to stay for a time
with my mother
as she loves me very much.

At The Bedroom Window Of The Small Hotel

At the bedroom window of the small hotel
Helderberg mountain towers
with its black peaks reaching high
and the other windows do display the beach
where the ocean dark-blue and green at times
does constantly go in and out
and it seems as if life here
can be a lot of fun

and in my thoughts there is
another place and time where you
ate barracouta hot from the coals
in Hout Bay
when I did know about our love.

Gert Strydom

At The Beginning Of A New Life

I. Bond

When we were in love, full of love on the beach
walking around on honeymoon, with happy people everywhere
to me her eyes were shining like stars
with a sign on her finger as my pledge.

II. Pregnancy

When the seed took root in her
becoming human, for her there is a whole territory
that stretched into the future,
I see obligations appearing from nowhere.

III. Predestination

She knows that in our love and passion lays new life,
have got dreams and images that she wants to be concrete
knows that there's a heritage in chromosomes
that something precious lies in her pelvis.

IV. Growth

When there is turbulence in her abdomen
she is joyfully aware of new life,
to her love becomes reality,
to us it is the blessing on our union.

V. Début

We are wondering if it will be
a he or she
coming into our lives
and with the pregnancy we are ecstatically happy.

VI. Shelter

Where you are now safe in her,
without any worries
destiny is already determining
your future without any pity.

VII. Posterity

Where we as humans are mortal
you are becoming an antipode against this sentence
the knowledge that we are continuing in existence
comes as light against the eternal darkness.

VIII. Development

You grow without fear and want to be born,
want to come into the world
as life and destiny determines,
to leave us speechless with your first cries and laughter.

IX. Formulary

That we bring you into a sinful world
where hardship, pain and suffering abounds
we cannot change, even with the greatest love,
but we know that His love reaches through everything.

Gert Strydom

At The Beginning Of Spring

Around me at the begging of spring
I see the works of God disguised
in the scheherazade of white, pink and yellow
flowers on the trees,
hanging with sweet innocence,
but not without coincidence,
still a part of an eternal plan
of the way that things are bound to go,
which includes man

the being who with choice
can live with integrity
or without conscience
be just another animal
in the great zoo
called the world.

Gert Strydom

At The Beginning Of Spring [1]

At the beginning of spring
my true love said to me:
"let's start gardening
as nature is awakening"

and in a few weeks what we planted was rising,
some of the most beautiful flowers we could see
while a flock of birds did sing jollily
and were everywhere gamboling.

Gert Strydom

At The Beginning Of Winter

At the beginning of winter
I have witnessed black frost
in sunny South Africa
destroying perennial plants,
have seen geraniums, margarets,
daisies and gazanias
that was in full flower
wilt at the bud
and I wonder if man is experimenting
with the atmosphere
and if the seasons
and all of nature is changing
by his mortal hand
and what the omnipotent God
who sets the treasure troves of the rain and hail
thinks of this?

Gert Strydom

At The Big Dam

Just once more I want to throw
a flat rock at the big dam,
see it jump when it hits the water
as if on top of it,
it can go right over
until it does flop down in the distance.

Gert Strydom

At The Big Old White House (Refrain Stanza)

At the big old house against the hillock
mother believed that sense she could into us knock
while her Bible she constantly did study
about God taught my brother and me
and at night she took of our lives and her own stock
but in that house God did rule supreme
and He was in our hearts and in every scheme
and sometimes she did us in our rooms lock,
mother believed that sense she could into us knock.

Gert Strydom

At The Blue Pool

Just past Mayville
is the place,
where we find coolness.

The pool lies square
like the place in Bethesda,
that brings comfort and healing
and there are children
diving in jolly and jumping in splashing.

The sun is white hot
in the heaven
and there are big green trees,
which at places
gives dark cool shades.

I look at the water lying
open, cold and sparkling blue
stretched out,
almost like a small lake
or the wave less sea
of Galilee
and when you dive in an arch
and the water folds
tender round you.

I go in more sensible
to keep water out of my ears
and there are men making bombs,
children baptising each other
and some clinging to their parents,
girls falling in love,
women floating
in the arms of their husbands
and you are circling that like an acrobat,
scouting the blue.

Gert Strydom

At The Breaking Of Day

At the breaking of day
you came to me on a new tomorrow
and unfastened your hair and looked different in a way
while on your face were happiness and no kind of sorrow.

Your company blessed me,
while your tenderness brought some tranquillity.

You removed you red-red dress,
for long moments physically we did our love express
and some may call it a kind of iniquity
but you loved me gladly.

Gert Strydom

At The British Motor Show

At the British motor show
in London
I do not know what
caught my eye first
between the red sign
triangulating down stating:

"Join Vodafone today
for your chance
to win this Maserati Spyder
worth 74000 pounds sterling, "

or the blonde girl dressed in red
in front of it
with a red Ferrari T-shirt
accentuating her breasts
and red plastic close fitting pants
stretching much too sensual at places

standing next to a blood red Ferrari
Grand Prix car with Bridgestone,
Shell, Vodafone and Olympus stickers
plastered all over it

with one hand on her hip
and the other down
at her side
and red polished nails gleaming
just as bright as her smile
and I would have seen her
by a mile.

Gert Strydom

At The Butcher

Beyond the glass counter she stands
like a child that is stuck
in a shop full of sweets,

do watch the different strips of biltong
do want to get a tasty bit
before the butcher does weigh off some for us,

does cut some steak in thick slices,
do place everything in neat packets
and do give some sausage as a gift to us.

I notice how he does look at us both for moments,
his glasses do reflect dim candlelight,
a waiting kingly meal,

the blade of his sawing machine
does screech sharply while it cuts the biltong into bits
and very cheerful
she does walk out with a few parcels.

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Gert Strydom

At The Cross Road

When I stood at life's cross road
in a time of dire straits
and called on the Almighty one
and the world still went on,
He decided in His time
and even out of destruction
brought something great to me.

Gert Strydom

At The Crucifixion (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to I. L. de Villiers)

They mocked the king of the universe,
did thoroughly enjoy their cruel game,
saw Him fall under the lashes of the cat-of-nine-nails,
already wanted to steal His cloak from His body.
With a single word He could bring destruction
but no words came over His lips,
while around Him they laughed and jumped around
and screamed: "The king of the Jews, look at him! "
When Pontius Pilate washed his hands in the basin,
quickly they did weave a crown of thorns,
where it fitted them and neatly did fit into their game,
they were the masters and He lower than a servant.
Innocent they nailed Him to a cross,
too late realized that He did pay the price for the world.

[Reference: "Spel van die koning" (Game of the king) by I. L. de Villiers.

Poet's note: "When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, 'Surely he was the Son of God.' Matthew 27: 54.]

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Gert Strydom

At The Dam

(after Totius)

When the morning sun do burn the fog away
two coots do land at the dam,

where like a mirror it does between the hillocks shine
and from the maize field the moaning of guinea fowl do come

but across the embankment poplars stand in a row
and in the bush a klipspringer walks past,

while a herd of duiker do eat on the rough grass
and the flat rock of a child jumps over the water,

alarmed the coots cry out with wings beating
while I walk back closer to the dam,

where a swallow descends at the edge of the water
to fetch clay for its nest,

a dragonfly hangs over the surface
where it catches a glance of itself,

while sugar bushes do everywhere blossom fragrantly around me
and everywhere there are honeybees

where a silence comes with a slight wind
and I do find the presence of God.

[Reference: "By die dam" (At the dam) by Totius.]

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Gert Strydom

At The Dam (2)

On this early morning our fishing-lines are thrown in deep
where the sun hangs over the surface that reflects it,
that shiny flat sheet lies motionless without a ripple
while coots pass with their calls as they fly over us.

It's still a bit chilly in this early morning,
the sheet of water seems untouched and undisturbed
when you go to fetch a thermos flask full of hot tea
and in silence we drink and see the morning star in an azure sky.

Like a silver flash a carp suddenly leaps in the distance,
it's just a speck that is as small as a pin
while it curls in the air and then falls back with a splash,
we are both dumbstruck by the sheer beauty of it.

From a nearby tree a fish-eagle calls its mate,
the coots pass and guide their chicks to the reeds,
this moment seems absolute holy
while silence hangs across the dam.

It's as if God does pass on a morning visit
and even the yellow and red weavers
do stop their frolicking and twittering,
the nearby bush-doves are silent too.

Away at the jetty a motorboat's engine roars alive,
it drags a water-skier up and down across our lines,
some water-bikes criss-cross to and thro
causing all of the birds to in alarm fly up.

Some Zimbabweans pass with reeds that they use as rods
and huge plastic buckets that they are going to fill
with even the most tiniest fishes
and anything that they can catch to use as food.

You say, "They are going to strip the dam of all fish.
They grind the small ones to make fish-cakes."
I wonder why they do not stay in their own country?
You do read my thoughts.

"There is famine since they have evicted
the commercial farmers from their land
and now they are here in South Africa
to find better opportunities."

Some more boats and water-bikes do pass
and they are sailing very near to the shore.
"They do not have respect for anyone."
You are convinced that we can just as well pack up.

The reels sing as both our lines start to run off,
the bended small black sly-hooks do their thing
while we both jerk our rods upward
and I wonder who is going to help with the dip-net?

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Gert Strydom

At The Dark Hour

Our love was conceived as a secret,
an oath between you and me
and in silence we adored each other
and I felt your pulse beating in your nipple
with only a sigh from your tender lips,
but your eyes spoke words
talked their own sentences
and I sensed the language of your body
of your whole being when you enveloped me
and although war is a damned thing,
filled with sorrow, with a unknown tomorrow
it did bring us together,
maybe to cling to life during the fading light
and your loving
in this night, this hour of darkness
will forever stay with me.

[Reference: At the dark hour by Paul Dehn.]

Gert Strydom

At The Dentist

In Springs, Gauteng
where I had just moved
during November 2009
I broke a molar at dinner
while chewing a piece of bread
and opened a nerve and the pain
was so excruciating
that I couldn't close an eye that night.

Not even clove oil,
or tablets that could kill a migraine
was up to it to lighten the pain
and I was almost going insane,
was tempted
to write a poem against God
as this was the pinnacle
of all the problems
that had beset me,
but wrote a poem
to honour the Lord instead.

Before first light I was already up,
shaving, showering and got dressed
but could get no appointment
with the dentists
that my family knew about
and even the Medicross Clinic
could not take me
and I went to the government clinic
and even its dentistry department was closed
for that particular day.

Then I prayed and at the library
a black lady told me about a dentist
and he was willing to see me.
In the hour that I waited
in the air-conditioned lounge
I paged through every women's magazine
and travel guide that was there to read,

saw a whole family with father, mother,
small daughter and son
coming for their checkups
before it was my turn.

The dentist took an x-ray
with a device
attached to his notebook computer
applied a couple of painful injections,
suddenly the pain was gone
and then he delved into my mouth
with drills, pliers, a scalpel
and a sucking thing
and the tooth was impacted on the bone
and he applied pressure
with a big pair of pliers,
I heard the tooth break
and he removed bit by tiny bit
while with an open mouth
I was sitting right through it
and sweat was running down my face.

Gert Strydom

At The First Sign Of Early Morning Light (Sicilian Septet)

At the first sign of early morning light
there is something strange and incandescent
that is disposing of the darkest night
and when it is over, suddenly spent,
my very own eyes have got the first sight
of a new day that is from heaven sent
and everything is crystal clear and bright.

Gert Strydom

At The Fishpond (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

Over the water mirror of the fishpond white lilies float around,
golden-fish and needlefish are everywhere to be found
and next to it a abundance of aloes flower bloody red,
when the stormy wind drags flowers from their beds
and at one side lays Carla the Jack Russell hound
watching everything presisely and inquisitive,
where she looks at how the fishes do live,
at doves that peck at crumbs on the ground,
golden-fish and needlefish are everywhere to be found,

II

when a dragonfly notices itself in water's surface
it shoots away as if not trusting an own image that it does face,
where rocking reeds do over the water hang as they sway,
the dragonfly do return again where its image the water do portray,
a bird of prey out of the sky do turn with a own kind of grace
and when it dives down the dog does enraged get up and wings do beat
while the does jump snapping at up and down on its feet,
while the bird of prey upwards try to race,
it shoots away as if not trusting an own image that it does face.

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Gert Strydom

At The Forest Path

Wild aloes, some proteas grow along the forest path,
some mushrooms are sprouting near to it

and doves sit cooing in trees as if in love,
the sky is hued with a deep blue

and a light wind rustles through the trees
like a new visitor coming to watch the picture perfect view

with the ocean lying far below, clearer than jade
your hand in mine, with sweet promises made.

Gert Strydom

At The Fountain In The Ranges

Something stirred below the water
of a pool,
where a fountain splashes in.

There was no wind
and the long grass was motionless
and the branches of a sugar bush,
hanged somewhat protecting
over the pool

It was early morning
and the pool was still dark
and in its depths,
there were black spots
that stirred ominously.

When the day got brighter
a sunbird came to drink water
and looked time after time,
at its image on the water.

.
There were water beetles
that played in circles
and tadpoles, .
swimming up and down
and a dragonfly hanged suspended
above the water

Life was trapped for a moment
and out of the depths
a predatory fish appeared
and when the dragonfly touched the water,
it disappeared into the bill of the fish
and into the depths.

Gert Strydom

At The Front Gate (Rondelet)

At the front gate
I saw you smell a new red rose,
at the front gate
this afternoon I could not wait
for you to come, to hold you close,
to you I wanted to propose
at the front gate.

Gert Strydom

At The Grave Of Guido Gezelle (Refrain Stanza)

The poet that although trampled upon did dedicate himself to God I do see
the words of his "het schrijverke" stays with me
in the city dreams and prosperity and success everywhere is celebrated
but as a poet in his own time Guido Gezelle will stay humiliated
in Bruges full of canals and church-towers the spring is in every tree
I am alone at his grave's marble-stone, cars drive past in the street
I think of this poet's struggle feel alone although I do people meet,
after his death his poetry only came to reality,
the words of his "het schrijverke" stays with me.

[Poet's note:

Just a few lines from "Het schrijverke" by Guido Gezelle about the water beetle:

"O krinklende windklende waterding...
wij schrijven, herschrijven
den heiligen Name van God! "

My free translation from the Dutch:

"Oh winding twisting water-thing...
you write, rewrite
the holy Names of God! "

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Gert Strydom

At The Graveyard (In Answer To T.T. Cloete)

It's exhausting, painful with tears
there at the grave,
old ladies blow their noses and cry, old men
pass away all of the time
with surreptitiously a big argument about who
will inherit everything,
when cousins glance at each other
sometimes kiss, embrace and reach out hands.

[Reference: "Ballade van die kerkhof" (Ballade of the graveyard) by
T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

At The Hunting Lodge

The hunter's .308 Musgrave hunting rifle
lies next to him in pieces
in the faint light of the hunting lodge
where he is cleaning the weapon

and in the distance a jackal
is calling at dusk,
he notices a swarm of wild doves
landing in the marula tree.

When the parts of the weapon
is joined as it belongs,
he carefully puts the weapon away
before he walks out
joining his wife at the barbeque fire

and the smell of fried lamb chops
makes his stomach growl
while he takes a pair of frying tongs from her,
turning around strings of sausages

above them the stars in the night sky
are shot-gunned into the black,
there are hyenas attracted by the smell
of the frying meat

laughing behind some trees,
somewhere he hears a kudu snorting
and the moon hangs yellow-gold above them
while he stirs the porridge

in the black three-legged pot
and his wife can swear
that a leopard with glowing eyes
is peering at them.

Gert Strydom

At The Last Supper (Free Verse Sonnet)

It was dark outside at that last supper,
while joyful His disciples waited upon the time of Passover,
the Lord Jesus Christ did fetch bowl
while brave Peter did laugh at a joke of John
and while He washed their feet like a servant
the men around the table did become serious and silent,
while God did astonish His own disciples with that deed,
did pour out His mercy and blessing on mere humans,
Judas smiled thought that His plan was very clever,
the bread was brittle without yeast in His hands soft,
the red wine did gleam fragrant in a big jar,
He kept them in awe while He spoke about the salvation of mankind,
did look with tears in His eyes at Judas and every sinner,
like a sincere man the saviour of the world did look.

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Gert Strydom

At The Maharani Hotel

It's December and in the late afternoon
the North beach is still packed
where you sit at a table
at the Maharani hotel
drinking a glass of cool drink
or maybe a Smirnoff twist
and the sun falls through your golden twirls
your beach jacket falls open
to your slender thighs
that are burnt golden brown
and your legs and breasts are displayed
in a tiny bikini.

The waiter brings you
a glass of icy-cold apple cider.
When our eyes do meet
I see how really beautiful they are
and the porter does whisper something into your ear,
gives you a note
that makes you smile radiantly,
and some of the other women
look covertly at their men
and it's strange that a lovely woman like you is alone.

Gert Strydom

At The Marsh

African coots and wild geese drift past
the bulrushes and bushes of reeds
and deeper in the marsh
there is something that comes alive.

As a small child I am at the tributary
and see something strange coming out of the water
and suddenly a monitor appears
that astounds me with its swishing tail

before it gets on its hind legs and touches the air with its tongue
and to me it looks like a crocodile
while another swims around in the stream
and in fright I want to yell and yell.

Gert Strydom

At The Marsh And Lake In The Morning

The flaming sun hang over the lake like an orange balloon,
in the twilight the picture was too perfect for a cartoon.

Slowly almost regal the stork did arrive from the west
landed on its stick like long legs before motionless it came to rest,
for minutes with a clicking sound it did call to a mate
but nothing of it took any kind of interest.

A mother of some African red-knobbed coots waded in
checked her chicks before the swimming did begin.

A slight wind was swishing some of the reeds to and fro
while weavers chattered and much whiter the sun did glow
and slowly I walked nearer to the little lake and marsh,
towards the idyllic piece of Eden that I did know.

Black long-tailed widow birds were flying almost hanging slow,
almost gliding along the reeds where the river did flow,

suddenly hadedah ibises landed at the edge of the shore
where they did sparkle like red-brown copper ore,
in a thin line started pecking at earthworms and snails
but then a Egyptian goose noticed me and nothing was like before.

In red and yellow lines the weavers twittering flashed away
and the widow birds disappeared from where they did play.

Screeching the ibises with great effort took to the sky
while running on the water the coots did prepare to fly
some guinea fowl chattered like a rusty swinging gate
and totally alone at the lake and marsh was I.

Gert Strydom

At The Movies

I meet you at the coffee shop
of Exclusive in Hatfield
and we share some ice coffee
and you admire the rose
that I give to you.

There's small devils dancing
in your eyes
and something in your smile,
make you very cute.

You pay for a steak at Caio
and in the candlelight,
I see stars
dancing in your eyes.

I watch you carefully
and know how lucky I am,
to have you in my life.

We sit in one of those big benches
and I steal a few kisses
and give you a handkerchief
when the movie draws tears.

You take my hand and press yours
against mine and its very nice,
to be with you..

Gert Strydom

At The Okavango Swamp

It was in the Okavango swamp
that the dark ghoul came at night
and passed so near
that I could smell its stinking breath.

Every morning the four-toed tracks
lay in the sand
everywhere in the camp
where it came to break into
what ever it could find.

With powerful jaws and premolars
made for crushing bones
it gnawed into anything
that it could lay jaws on.

Till one night that the dog like
brown-grey carnivore
with black spots
got a shocking surprise
and I saw yellow eyes glowing
while it draw closer and closer
while crying
like a hysterical human laughing

and walked straight into
an electrified wire
fitted to a couple of landrover
and four by four batteries
running around the camp
and blue white sparks flew
and covered that hyena

like a character
in a computer game
it was covered in lightning
and it howled and howled
rising in pitch
and never came back again.

Gert Strydom

At The Places Of Death

(in answer to George Weideman)

I cannot forget
how the Ratel IFV's and the Buffel troop carriers
made the soft red ground
hang almost sky high in a dust cloud
at Ondangwa
when we passed in a convoy as we did drive at speed
and on a farm
did find the slaughtered remains of a farmer,
his daughters
and wife were left in the bushes
where they were raped
and murdered without any mercy.

I cannot forget
how we did jump out of a Puma helicopter
near to Oshivelo
on a hot pursuit operation
at the Etosha pan
and a trooper on his first firefight
was shot out of his boots
and I did smell the blood and death,
did mechanically fire
with the LMG from the hip,
did sweep the bush clean
and the silence hanged with the smell of gunpowder.

Then I do remember Oshakati
from where we did track down Ovambo-women
as they were returning from Angola
and I did wonder how they could be terrorists?
Near the chop-line
one of the landmines that they did carry
was dropped by one of them
and there was a mighty blast
and only pieces of meat and blood did remain.

From Katima Mulillo

we were on patrol and without sensing danger
near Bukalo
between the termite-heaps Blackthorn
and Red-bark acacia trees in the desert-grass
we did walk into an ambush
where rockets and mortar-bombs did blindingly explode,
where the odd sweet smell
of human meat that burns made me vomit continuously
when a phosphorous bomb
did singe one of my fellow soldiers.

I cannot forget
how we did find the deserted fires at Omuhonga
and Okanguati,
when the school children were abducted,
had been taken away
to a enemy base in Angola
and the patches of maize
were scorched into the ground, into ash,
the goats
were slaughtered and were left for the predators
and the parents
that did resist were decimated.

¶Envoi

That desert-country
that is a God-forsaken place on the backside
of the world,
where the thirst and gnats do hang around you,
where every thorny-bush
continually does pierce and cling to you
I had left
when the army stopped
asking me to give a blood-price.

[References: "Herinneringe van die terugkeerende soldaat"
(Recollections of the returning soldier) by George Weideman. A Ratel IFV is a
Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle. The chop-line was a cleared area on the border
between South West Africa (now Namibia) and Angola. A LMG is a light
machinegun.]

At The Pleasure Sea (Couplets)

At the tide-pool some tanned couples walk about,
some children do run around and joyful they shout,

the water is crystal clear with a deep hue of cobalt blue
while some bathers do dive in and swim right through,

others cling to the walls where they stand and chat,
dressed in a bathing-suit on your head there's a straw hat,

where in perfect proportions your entire body gleam
and nearby into the lagoon flows a bubbling stream,

the sand of the beach is creamy-white and soft underfoot
while we wait on chilled drinks from the car's boot,

away the ocean stretches, in the distance its green like grass,
but its sunburnt surface lies calm and it seems flat like glass

while a milk-white ocean-liner appears over the far horizon
and with a lazy dip into the pleasure sea our afternoon goes on,

our two small toddler grandchildren seem beyond happy,
their parents more reserved while a barking dog runs free, m

the water that rolls in and out barely touches their feet
and picture perfect with your smile the day seem complete.

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Gert Strydom

At The Plum-Tree

Packed with sour-sweet fruit,
heavy hangs the branches of the plum tree,
the smell is both sweet and bitter,
and bees and beetles buzz around
where the purple fruit does fall,
do burst open after the rain.

The fruits are purple but red inside
lovely with every bite,
where I pick buckets full
for eating and for jam.

You smile at me with both eyes and lips,
the morning is bright while you eat
and I am picking some ripe fruit for you
while you swallow me with your glance.

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Gert Strydom

At The Red Sea

In the distance he see them coming,
war chariots filling the horizon
and the rumbling of horse hooves
are getting louder
as they are getting nearer.

Caught between the deep blue sea
and the desert
men, women and children stand
around him
and fear is in their eyes
for the vengeance of Pharaoh
who regards himself equal to God.

They glance away
from the cloud that gives shelter
and the morning's manna
that was sweet on their lips,
are also already forgotten
and most are truly convinced
that he is leading them
to utter destruction.

Horses neigh a lot closer
when he hits the sea
with his mighty staff,
the sea cleave open
and walls of water glide away
and gather at two sides
till a dry road
leads right through to the other side.

There are thunder rumbling ominous
from the cloud above them
and a strong eastern wind
spraying water
like vapours of rain from the sea
and blowing it to the enemy.

While Pharaoh and his soldiers
witnesses these things
they come at speed
following the path through the sea
and in the middle of the waters
they begin to sink in
and the last
of his people are through
and he lift his eyes up
to where more lightning bolts
now come from the column of cloud.

Then he reaches his hand out
over the red sea
and hold that mighty staff
into the air

and everywhere
thunder hits reaching over the sea
and suddenly walls of water break
with angry power
and enemy chariots, horsemen,
horses and men are gone,
covered by water
and every one there
know from where
their salvation comes.

[Reference: Exodus 14: 1-31.]

Gert Strydom

At The Red Traffic Light

At the traffic light he stands waiting
armed with a plastic spray bottle
that he rises to spray soap on the windscreen
to take a forced toll

on whoever stops for the red light
and this kind of thing
goes far beyond irritating
as another kind of begging

and although anger wants to erupt in me,
his tattered clothes, his half starved body
on this cold winter morning
tells an own story about his need.

Gert Strydom

At The River (Englyn Lleddfbroest)

The fish was spilling its roe
while in a kind of birth throe,
while at the river a doe
trampled a hyena's toe

Gert Strydom

At The Salt March

When the wind is adrift
not a pebble of sand is stirring
at the salt marsh vapours lift

snipes, sandpipers, curlews run
racing out before you
as brown grey spots in the early morning sun,

the flat stretches of sand glisten shining
waves ripple in gently from the sea
in the distance a ship's horn is whining

and sea and sky meets at the horizon,
seagulls fill the air in screeching flocks
while some fly on and on until they are gone.

Gert Strydom

At The Sea Of Galilee

As the coach comes to a halt
the sea stretches to the horizon,
looking blue-green and cool
while the air conditioner chills the air.

Pilgrims, tourists and I
walk from sight to sight,
while the sun is piercing,
the wind thugs at my shirt

and everywhere there is dirt,
some poor people struggling,
some Arabs drinking coffee,
armed Israeli girls patrolling

while this fresh water lake
looks desolate
but in my minds eye
I can see Him on a boat in the distance.

Gert Strydom

At The Small Farm-Dam (Refrain Stanza)

I caught crabs where in the farm-dam they did in hiding lie,
a swarm of coots hanged screeching in the sky,
bright on the water the afternoon-sun did gleam
and when I got out on a rock anything did possible seem,
silver needle-small fishes darted by,
grown catfish came up and dived down again,
the hillock smelling like sugar-bush do in my mind remain
and for no other place longed I,
a swarm of coots hanged screeching in the sky.

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Gert Strydom

At The Strand Beach

(for Annelize, after Matthew Arnold, in answer to Mike Nicol)

Flat like a mirror the sea lies tonight
with only the distant lighthouse's light
flashing round and round, giving it's warning,
and on the beach you come into my sight.

The wind ruffles your hair; you are beautiful like years ago
where we are now splashing where it is shallow
while the moon hangs silver-white in its romantic presence
and of the soft perfection of your lips and body I do know.

Once in dreams we wandered at this perfect sea,
and then I thought that it would never again be
but after years of war and then oppression,
here you are with me living through a time of tranquillity

where to each other we are true,
as if eternity and everything that there is I have found in you,
where my long sought love has become my own
and although it's night the sea and sky does remain forever blue.

[References: "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold. "Lines" by Mike Nicol.]

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Gert Strydom

At The Tidy Yard In The Corner Of The Street

The doctor, the police and a mortician did visit the house,
the tidy yard in the corner of the street,
the man had been stabbed to death, the woman raped
and our whole country is cursed with the plundering and killing.

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Gert Strydom

At The Time That My Two Cars Were Stolen

At the time that my two cars were stolen
an older black gentleman gave me a lift

and day after day for two months
I travelled with him for free

and as far as we were travelling
he told about the greatness of God

and we sometimes talked about the Bible
and he told me about the things

that he was doing in his free time
at prisons and among poor people

and every morning at that contracted position
he prayed for everybody there and for me

and at times he encouraged me
and when the time came for me to leave I knew that:

everybody is His missionary,
His messenger and His prophet

that you measure a man, rather on his deeds
than on mere words.

[This poem is written to my friend Geoffrey Gollolo.]

Gert Strydom

At The Vaal River

At the Vaal river finches twitter
and nests hang all over the willow trees
and the fishermen
sit from dusk next to the water,
to try and catch a big one.

I see a monitor
going from the water
into the undergrowth
and hear how the rippling stream
flows over rocks at places

There's a water beetle
that swims around and around
in a calm pool
and tadpoles that rush to and fro.

With time spent at the river
I find some tranquillity,
while the cars above at the bridge
rush by frantically.

Gert Strydom

At The Very End Of Night

At the very end of night,
he had become awake,
saw the morning star fading
as the sun crept over the far off hills,

saw the lights in the streets been shutoff
while only here and there a car was passing
and she cuddled closer in her sleep to him,
still breathing evenly, smiling at a pleasant dream.

Gert Strydom

At The Victoria Falls

From a distance I hear the thundering roar
where the mighty Zambezi falls down a ravine
hissing with vapor rising just like steam
and it's a sight that I have never seen before
a creation from the hand of the divine
while on the river eagles turn and scream

and I come to wonder at the significance of life
while I see the greatest sight
and clasp the hand of my own wife
while a river flows with all of its might

and at times every human being is just a speck
on the great canvas of the universe.

Gert Strydom

At The Victoria Falls (1)

There is sprinkling-rain that sieves down at the waterfall,
the Kariba is overfull after the terrible rain
that follows after years of drought in dark Africa,
in anger the Nyaminyami in rage does roar
the natives say and with these words they look scared,
where the Victoria Falls roar
and over the precise water do fall down,
the deep cliff is stretched wide while the river-god of the Zambezi
spits out mile upon mile of water,
where three rainbows hang simultaneously
over that stretch of water that are falling
and in a gigantic flood nothing can placate that evil river-god.
From the Devil's Cataract to the Great Gorge
gigantic columns of spray rise up high
as if the river-god roars like a water-dragon,
where I look down a hundred and ten meter and feel insignificant,
where the waterfall looks gigantic over its two-kilometre breadth,
while more than five hundred and fifty mega-litre of water flow per minute
do thunder to far below.

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Gert Strydom

At The Zoo

There are street hawkers
selling their wares
next to a wall build
of rocks and stone
on all sides of the entrance.

Carved wooden walking sticks
african faces in black wood,
grass brooms, pottery,
hats and t-shirts
and African drums
and paintings line the sidewalk.

Light pink flamingos
parade next to their dark brown pool
and walk among long palm trees
while they call to each other.

Some white swans
drift on a lake in the park
and catch something to eat
with dipping heads
from the dark water.

a Couple of elephant throw
red-brown sand
over themselves
and their pleated skin
looks like rough sandpaper
and at the back
there's an old white farmstead
with a green roof
and some hay
for them to eat.

Some spotted Hyenas
swim in a stream
and their dark brown
dots stand out

against their light coats.

There's some long walkways
going through gardens
that stretch into the distance..

Just the head and back
of a lonely Hippopotamus
rises from a dark brown pool
and it drifts with its nose
under the water
in the direction
of some other Hippopotamuses.

Some bridges run
over the small stream
of the Apies river
which splash over rocks.

a Blue crane
combs its blue-grey coat
next to a striped Kudu cow
that grazes on the green grass
with the Kudu bull watching
the visitors.

a Big brown bear
walks up a rock slope
and splashes in cold pool.

Some Impalas are gathering
on a rocky slope
and a narrow path
stretches up the wooded hill.

A Tiger lies sleeping
under a tree
and two black-backed jackals
stand grinning next to each other.

There are yellow-gold lions
that hides in the long green grass

and a slim female
with two cubs
steps out and watches
and the big male
comes out with a twisting tail
and roars menacing at the crowd
while one of the keepers
are giving them meat.

There's a great view of the buildings
of Pretoria from the top
of the hill
and some high rises
and towers jump up
into the sky.

I take a cable car
for the long way down
and see the Union buildings
far in the distance
and miniature animals
flash by on the bottom.

A Leopard growls
when I leave the cable car
and I hear the calls
of some black Chacma Baboons.

Some African Buffalo
stand grazing like cattle
and a Rhino
lies stretched out
on the grass.

Some of the gamekeepers
are feeding a giraffe
and it stretches its neck
over a high wall
and time catches me
and something of the animals
stays with me
when I walk back to the car.

Gert Strydom

At This Place I Have Been Before (Sonnet)

At this place I have been before
where life like a smashing breaking wave just thunders on
and I do not remember anymore
as all those old memories are now gone

but in your eyes there is a kind of light
that keeps burning bright

and you have been my own darling
(of that I am pretty sure)
as there is something familiar to you
and yet holding you feels somewhat strange
as if again our lives have been rearranged
but still our hearts and feelings are true
as if past time and memories they do now endure
and knowing you stays amazing.

Gert Strydom

At Times (English Sonnet]

At times she says that she does love me
but my innermost feelings to her is unknown.
Sometimes she is angry, chilly or acts with sincerity
and it feels as if on the big old earth I am alone.

At times my words she does not notice, or when I pass by,
or even the small things that I in love do
and I wonder if another has caught her eye
when her words and actions hurts me through

and daily I am more and more lost while the world goes on,
whilst at times rain pours down, or brightly the sun does shine
and all hope and what is left of life seems gone
while she lives in her own world and I in mine

and she acts as if she knows me barely,
as if continually from me she wants to be free.

Gert Strydom

At Times He Is Shattered, Dumb From The Impact Of Life

He zips his leather jacket
looks life right into the eyes
and when his motorcycle breaks
he feels like putting it alight
but struggles on until it gets life again

but it's empty in him
and sometimes he is shattered, dumb from the impact of life
as if everything around him loses meaning
and existence is only for the here and now.

When he stops at a traffic light
a street preacher shouts over a bullhorn
about the love of God which is endless,
but he doesn't see God, just girls looking at him

even one with a baby in her arms
who asks almost inaudible
if he feels like screwing her
when he parks his motorcycle
at a shopping centre
and she gets out of the car next to him
placing the baby on the car's seat

and bends over
as if she has lost her contact lenses
and he sees her hard big nipples
that appears braless, uncovered pink brown
making his male member awake, aflame.

He wonders if there are answers
in bodily pleasures,
if a person has to screw every beautiful thing
that comes your way
have to find pleasure, just where you can

and looks at the wind whirling leaves aimlessly,

people walking to and thro to cars
and the sexuality of the woman next to him
is like a living flame
and he wonders about the endless love of God
and bodily pleasure takes his shaking hands into hers
and her nearness goes like a thunder stroke through him

but it's empty in him
and sometimes he is shattered, dumb from the impact of life
as if everything around him looses meaning
and existence is only for the here and now.
and his appetite for her is almost unstoppable.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Can Loose Myself In Sadness

At times I can loose myself in sadness
although the sun still rises in the morning,
the stars glow in their myriad at night,
the wind rustles in the great oak trees

as you have left me, have gone to another
and I truly did love you and thought that you
had a place for me somewhere in your heart
and in days and nights like this we were together

and there is some kind of detachment in the loss,
as if the world is much more immense without you
as if I will somewhere, somehow again find you
but you are nowhere and days turn into years

and what we had is gone and totally lost
while memories keeps on lingering.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Think Of That Summer (Cavatina)

At times I think of that summer with you,
with affection
about how very happy we were then.
Recollection
brings me back to a time now forgotten,
a connection
had formed between us, some call it love,
it is something that no one can remove.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Wonder

At times I wonder
why stormy winds
daily rock's my life
and to where
life's seasons
are taking me
and if I will stand alone
in life's winter.

Sometimes I just want to understand
why thunder bolts
threaten my existence.

Where are my spring
and summer fading to
when early winter
are already leaving
it's first signs
in my life.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Wonder About The World Beyond The Blue

At times I wonder about the world beyond the blue,
while I see the sun growing dim beyond the heaven of stars,
then I wonder about a place where God is the light of everything
but I know that He holds His hand over the entire world.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Wonder How Love Dies

At times I wonder
how she can so easily
decide on the dot
that she feels nothing for me.

Still I wonder how love
can vaporise by it self,
as if it was never there.

What does a relationship mean
when you darling fails you,
at the time of your worst crises
and you still
spend your last pennies on her.

Still I want to try again,
but one more time
I cannot get from her
and I do not know
how to get though to her.

Gert Strydom

At Times I Wonder Where Her Thoughts Go (Sonnet)

At times I wonder where her thoughts go
if of my loving, caring and commitment
she really truly knows
or is there a kind of excitement,
in lashing out pain and verbal blows
and then when I am broken and spent,
she carries on as if nothing has happened while my tears flow

and yet our feelings are brighter
than all the stars set in the skies
my love is much more pure and whiter
than any new pluck lily or rose
and I wonder if she knows
about my silent cries,
when she brings pain to our goodbyes?

Gert Strydom

At Times I Wonder Why

At times I wonder why
those I love pass away
and battle to live,
when for others
destiny calls screaming.

One glorious summer
I loved a girl,
who like a blonde angel
came my way,
but in that autumn
death took her away.

Although that summer passed
and some memories
are fading,
sometimes I dream
of a blue eyed girl singing
at the throne of the most mighty God.

Greater than bright angels
her clear voice keeps ringing
and she is white and pure
and everywhere the radiance
of that holy place is beaming.

Somehow that dream
comes back to me
and although I cannot understand,
the way that life
is measured out
I see the Holy One
and His mighty hand
points out my way
and somehow somewhere
life gets meaning
and what was lost is retrieved.

At Times I Wonder2

At times I wonder
what the Almighty's plan
with my life is

At times its as if
destiny has its own way
with my life.

I still try
to make the best
out of every situation
and to stay free from the onslaught

Still there's an unknown way
that lies ahead of me
and at times it unfolds
and my Master
makes wonderful things
happen at His time.

[Reference: "God has a plan with our lives that He has not made known yet. For this reason every holy day is filled with astonishment and waiting." Phillips Brooks.]

Gert Strydom

At Times It Feels As If All Beacons Are Gone

Every night
the same stars shine above us
and the night brings darkness
that does separate

and at times it feels as if all beacons are gone
but on every new morning
we do again see the light of the sun
and it turns that which is between us
to days of hope
when together we walk life's road of love.

Gert Strydom

At Times It Might Look (In Answer To W. B. Yeats)

At times it might look and feel if the young
are truly living, are really happy,
as if to them the whole world does belong
in their bliss, even in iniquity;

some call ageing trifling, even paltry,
but in the eyes of the honest true love,
age brings a kind of great maturity
and nothing can the loveliness remove

which in each word and deed selfless express
the greatest kind of sheer loving kindness
when a heart does unwavering love possess
and love has a own unique blindness

that does overreach everything else,
a deep thing about which any poet tells.

[Reference: "Sailing to Byzantium" by W.B. Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

At Times Longing Brings A Kind Of Pain

At times longing brings a kind of pain
when I am totally alone
and do want you right here,
when every occurrence
lets the day languish far too slowly
and then I do know sadness,
want to tell you of my love
as something to remember.

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Gert Strydom

At Times Love Has Visited Me

At times love has visited me
and left, left me
and has gone away.
It has gone to different shores,
leaving hurt, sadness
and the want for somebody
to be steady with

and every time like a fool, I am caught
in the snares that love sets,
believing in its charm, believing
that it really exists

as something more than mere passion,
as something greater
than all wants and needs
and the hope keeps alive
flickering like a candle in my heart,
for a real relationship to start.

Gert Strydom

At Times Love Has Visited Me [2]

At times love has visited me
and left, left me
and has gone away.
It has gone to different shores,
leaving hurt, sadness
and the want for somebody
to be steady with

and every time like a fool, I am caught
in the snares that love sets,
believing in its charm, believing
that it really exists

as something more than mere passion,
as something greater
than all wants and needs
and the hope keeps alive
flickering like a candle in my heart,
for a real relationship to start.

Gert Strydom

At Times Love Has Visited Me [4]

At times love has visited me
and left, left me
and has gone away.
It has gone to different shores,
leaving hurt, sadness
and the want for somebody
to be steady with

and every time like a fool, I am caught
in the snares that love sets,
believing in its charm, believing
that it really exists

as something more than mere passion,
as something greater
than all wants and needs
and the hope keeps alive
flickering like a candle in my heart,
for a real relationship to start.

Gert Strydom

At Times My Whole Life Feels In Disorder

At times my whole life feels as if in disorder,
there are times that I perceive your eyes
with every sunshine look
as if they are staring at me continually

and I see them in the sky's bright blue,
there are times that I observe you
in the pretty face
of every other woman

while you want to live alone,
I am scared that you will disappear into oblivion.

Gert Strydom

At Times The Four Walls

At times the four walls
seems to fold in on me
and the places between
the dark and the white,
stretches the tolerance
of any soul.

Yet love and peace
and the grace
and realities of life
tries to destroy
and yet I still stand
and the Almighty
holds my hand.

It's just the way that life is
and there are places to go
and people to meet
and every day
has the ability
to really be great.

Gert Strydom

At Times To Me You Are Lovely

At times to me you are lovely,
yet solemn and somewhat serene
sometimes with expressions I have never seen
as you in love daily do regard me

while at times love feels like slavery
and your beauty and sheer loveliness
is sometimes somewhat hard in words to express
as I am caught and never want to be free.

Gert Strydom

At Times We Are Free (Cavatina)

At times we are free from pain and sorrow,
when bright sunlight
brings a new tomorrow with hope and joy,
when each long night
sparkles with some romantic attractions,
where we both might
live lives together to the utter brim,
might truly love in a world that is grim.

Gert Strydom

At Times We Are Only Set On Passing (American Sonnet)

At times we are only set on passing,
without any place to stop or call home
and then we miss the smallest little things,
while it feels as if we do not belong,
as we are set, forever more to roam
as if we hear faint whisperings among
a myriad of people, with dusty loam
that sticks and clings to our very feet

and then we miss the small bird's happy song,
see unfamiliar faces in those we meet,
in life we are constantly swept along,
as if the ocean has only some foam
and to it there is nothing really sweet,
at times we are only set on passing.

Gert Strydom

At Times We Are Only Set On Passing (American Sonnet) (1)

At times we are only set on passing,
without any place to stop or call home
and then we miss the smallest little things,
while it feels as if we do not belong,
as we are set, forever more to roam
as if we hear faint whisperings among
a myriad of people, with dusty loam
that sticks and clings to our very feet

and then we miss the small bird's happy song,
see unfamiliar faces in those we meet,
in life we are constantly swept along,
as if the ocean has only some foam
and to it there is nothing really sweet,
at times we are only set on passing.

Gert Strydom

At Times When I Wonder

At times when I wonder
about the great beauty of the sunset,
when the magic colours that are hanging in the clouds,
suddenly catches me unexpectedly

when the very presence of God is almost palpable
during the twilight,
when stars reach into the depths of the soul,
then life becomes an adventure;

it's almost as if I can count the stars one by one
where they sit on the dome of night like pieces of hail,
then there's a message that all of nature does tell,
as if it does possess pieces of God's love.

Gert Strydom

At Times With You I Feel (Sicilian Sonnet)

At times with you I feel as if I am blind,
as if the thing called love a great mystery
but throughout life you do bring me felicity
and constantly you are gracious and kind,

and separate we do each other again find,
you are both wonderful and strange to me
as if with you all of life is supposed to be,
as you are in my heart, soul and my mind

and memory holds each act and remark,
daily with you my heart and soul sings
yet at times it feels as if I am in the dark,
I know that I am full of shortcomings,
yet like a match to me you are the spark,
the light that bring me to lovely things.

Gert Strydom

At Times You Are Full Of Love (Rondeau)

At times you are full of love and you treat me kind
and I easily follow your state of mind,
fall under your charming spell
and although I know you well,
broken things do me of your anger remind.

There are so many things that to you I want to tell,
the depths of your soul at times I want to find
and I hate it when you scream and yell;
at times you are full of love.

I love you too much to leave you behind
but at times on your teeth you do grind
and at times you treat me like hell,
yet at other times you are like a fragile shell
and my whole life to you I want to bind;
at times you are full of love.

Gert Strydom

At Times You Are My All In All (Hymnal Octave)

At times you are my all in all,
and we are not alone
but at times you make me feel small
as if your love is gone
and at times your heart has a wall
build from thick hard ironstone
and at times you do make me tall
as my heart's only one.

Gert Strydom

At Times You Do Astound Me (In Answer To Fanie Olivier)

At times you do astound me
and in your presence sometimes I feel brave and a fool
like a child that is lost in a store full of sweets
when continually our love comes to new heights.

[Reference: "By 'n weerbegin" (At starting over) by Fanie Olivier.]

Gert Strydom

At Toni's

Just before I want to drive
through the portcullis at work,
you phone me
and I have to stop
to hear
what's on you mind.

The roar of the motorbike
makes that I must listen well
to hear what you say
and you want to go to Toni's
and I wonder if you know
where the new precise are?

I have just cut through the traffic
and parked my bike beyond the house
when you stop at the front gate
and the barking of the dog's tell me
to catch some speed.

The afternoon sky is clear and bright blue
and its still hot afternoon
and I give you a nice kiss
through the car door
that you open for me.

You are very early
and had left early at work
and the watering
of the vegetable garden,
have to wait till later
and there's magic
in your smile

At Toni's which now
is just beyond chamberlain's
small lamps are already burning
and although we arrive without a booking,
a table is quickly

given to us.

The evening is romantic and peaceful
that's much better than just nice
while the sun slowly sets
and your eyes
glitter and shine with the lamps.

I wish I could drag hours out
like this with you
and throw a bit of
balsamic vinegar in my plate
while the calamata olives
and pizza
taste heavenly
and you
and the sweet desert
with a cup of strong coffee
make the evening special for me.

Gert Strydom

At Twilight

At dusk I took you by the hand,
from the earlier rain the streets were wet
and together we walked through the shiny streets,
you smiled at a mischievous joke,

(together we could be lost in this wonderful world) ,

while the sun hanged red at the horizon
and your perfect silhouette caught my eye
while the evening-breeze jerked on your locks of hair,
in the moment I was enraptured with your beauty,

(we were like a man and a woman in an own story)

and it is God that brings meaning to mere moments,
against the sunset we were both minute,
the fresh smell of rain was everywhere around us
and your intimate glance quickened my heartbeat,

(glances talk without words but in a own language) ,

while next to me you looked at the world in wonder,
the plovers went on with their shrill calls,
the evening star was silver-white high above us,
fireflies and mosquitoes did buzz around us

(and we wondered about God who does determine the destiny of man) ,

about how insignificant everything and life constantly is
and still the smallest of things has got great meaning,
you came to a halt and again did look at me so silently,
I did look and look at you:

our love was intimate and holy while the sun was setting slowly.

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Gert Strydom

At Twilight (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

At twilight when the day begins
in into the cobalt endlessness
I did myself imagine
that you do share my life with me,
that we do sincerely and fervently love each other
and this thought did caress my heart
but it was as if something of your company
did part with the first red rays
while only the longing did stay
when the sun became much brighter
and sometimes I do wonder if you do feel like this over me
while only the yellow weaver did spread out its wings at the window,
did twitter as if was greeting the morning
and the moment was lonely but sweet.

Gert Strydom

At Twilight (Refrain Stanza)

At first light the doves cooed me awake
and up to heaven the morning star my glance did take,
still the moon hanged silver and glittering
and for long moments I was lost in longing,
I stirred sugar into my hot tea and of you my heart did ache
and fast asleep you were in all possibility
but so intense I wanted you with me,
late the neighbours did their trip to work make
and up to heaven the morning star my glance did take.

Gert Strydom

At Twilight When The Sun Dips Beyond The Nearest Hill (Rubiyat/ Persian Sonnet)

At twilight when the sun dips beyond the nearest hill
the dark winter night comes with its entire chill
and when in the early evening the last car drives by
silence falls over the neighborhood and everything is still

and at times I could see no stars or even the moon in the sky,
or even a lonely light's solitary eye
while slowly the dark hours creeps on
and on the wind I hear a child's forsaken cry.

At times it feels as if every kind of heat and brightness is gone
as if in this great big world I am the only one
and on such nights I do wonder about life and the meaning of it all
when even my body and heart feels as cold as stone

but then suddenly the early morning does come
and again this big old world feels like my home.

Gert Strydom

Attack

At dawn the veldt emerges filled with thorny bushes
covered with fog creeping in from the river
being burnt away by the white-hot sun
smouldering through the red-brown dust
and smoke pouring from moving
armoured cars and battle tanks

and the barrage begins with shells whistling past,
from howitzer guns
while it is always forward towards the enemy
driving in at speed before coming to a dead halt
with the Ratel-90 armoured car,
before firing, driving away
and returning to fire again at the same enemy battle tank

with the ninety millimetre cannon
slicing through enemy armoured cars
and the enemy troops on foot being mowed down
by its two machine guns
turning into cadavers of blood and guts

and the armoured car driving next to ours
is knocked out with a direct hit,
is covered in plumes of smoke
tongues of exploding fire.
"Lord, I cannot watch them being killed"
and we fire another projectile
at the guilty enemy tank at point blank range

and the battle doesn't stop,
it just rages on and on
till every enemy facing us is either dead or gone.

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Gert Strydom

Attempted Suicide

You were like a nuclear reactor
that was overheating
and mere heavy water
would not be enough
to cool down
your plutonium core.

Depression more than fury
had driven you past
all danger signs
and both kids
were already as if radiated,
the one by heroine
and the other past caring.

I had to brake the locked
bedroom open
where I found
rows of empty bottles
on the dressing-table
next to you.

Freed, you were unconscious
and I had to carry you
by myself to the car
while vapours
came out of your mouth
before you're retched
right over me.

The trip was a nightmare ride,
where I skipped traffic lights
and stopped at casualties
of the state hospital,
followed by the Police.

You were less than a step
from paradise
and I had to force doctors

to immediately treat you.

When you resurfaced
you were crying
and cursed me,
for saving you
and said thanked me
and in a way
you were happy
to still be alive.

Gert Strydom

Aubade

Early morning, even before sunrise
I hear the birds sing, some of them cry
or sit chattering
feeding in the berry-trees
while in the distance neighbours
open gates, talk and greet, drive off in cars
with lights sneaking past
and dogs barking their goodbyes.

A little later the black-collard barbet
or some green weavers
knock on my windowpanes
seeing themselves mirrored
while the sun throws
pink, orange and orange-red rays
and the freshness of the new day
breezes in through the open window.

In time the heavy curtains will become light
and the darkness in the room
will be disappearing turning to its own dusk
and outside the day will be bright
fulfilling the promise of a new day.

Gert Strydom

Aubade (Free Verse Sonnet)

At the window a yellow weaver twitters
while in the early morning I long for you,
it sounds to me like a senseless rant
but I notice one hanging upside-down at a nest
and at your window I also want to sing a song of praise,
early when the morning-red appears the first time,
with the dew bring my sincere love to you
and amaze you with depth and beauty.
I see the morning star and moon hanging low,
when dumbfounded I think about you as a woman,
both are so bright and pretty blue-white
while my prayers and thoughts do go to you
and when the morning does swallow the wind,
I do want to embrace you tightly.

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Gert Strydom

August 1968

It's spring and people
are dancing in the streets in Czechoslovakia
and in Prague people are free.

Until the gigantic Russian bear growls
and beats its chest
and rushes in for the kill
and gobbles up
everything and everyone
that it find in its way
and still stays a monster,
without any sense
of being more
than an ignorant bloodthirsty beast.

Gert Strydom

Auntie's Curse

She said to me, now in her old age
to stay away from the dogs and cats,
as if they were spiders, snakes and bats

being scared
that I would catch
something from them

like lice or ticks or fleas
or maybe some hidden disease
and although I had used frontline on them,
had dusted them with karbadust,
had sprayed shoo-fly on their heads and necks

she wished that I would catch lice from them,
or the illness which they were carrying
like a member of the flat earth society,
still believing in vain
as if cats and dogs infected with
the one or other pest
were going to rain down
out of the sky
and infect every one

and then she bought some expensive shampoo,
bathed, washed her head
five times a day
to kill the pests
which she believed
was now crawling over her
and was very angry at me
for not comprehending
life exactly as she did.

Gert Strydom

Autumn (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after I. D. du Plessis, in answer to N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Motionless like skeletons the branches hang stripped, the summer is past,
the air is stuffy and the clouds are grey and black and heavy,
the wind rustles through the dry earth grabs here and there a leave,
etched against the dark sky stands the gigantic oak trees in a long row
where you get an impression of the eternal waiting of trees,
of the winter that is coming with the first chill of the fall
but still the doves do sing their love songs where they do woo
when swarms of other birds do trek away to avoid the iciness,
where the sun does break through at place after place but still hangs dull dying,
the oaks gleam dull black, do gigantic stick their fingers into the sky,
while the grassy veldt yellow-brown do stretch into the distance
when a person does long back to the fruitful days of summer
and do find God in the silence of the resting time that suddenly does come
when the first snow does cover the peaks of the Hottentots Holland Mountains.

[References:"Herfs" (Autumn)by I. D. du Plessis."Vroegherfs" (Early Autumn)by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

Autumn (In Reply To Archibald Macleish)

Like the end of life that comes with old age,
Autumn stripped
turns most of the trees into skeletons,
in cold nipped
days are windswept, the sun without its glare,
we are gripped
by the first spells of winter that is coming,
as if death is already in homing.

[Reference: Immortal Autumn by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

Autumn Evening

(after Breyten Breytenbach)

When the sun sets I wait upon my sweetheart
after office hours
to drive into the yard
from the gym
with the eyes of her car
cutting with searchlights around the corner.

I do embrace and kiss her
when she gets out of the car
while the stars gleam high up in the sky
and I am infatuated by my beloved.

I bring a hand full of flowers
of which the fragrances hang glorious around us
to my love
while the big old yellow moon
scrutinize us from the heaven.

[Reference: "herfsaand" (Autumn Evening) by Breyten Breytenbach]

Gert Strydom

Awaiting Execution (In Answer To Dikobe Wa Mogale)

Somewhere in a semi dark room
right next to the gallows
a man daily awaits his doom
and obscurely destiny
reaches out its fingers
clamping like a knot around his neck
and although his hands
is red with blood,
he is stained by a terrorist act
he feels free
as if the slaughter
of a innocent white citizen
or a group at that
was done in just cause
and moments pause
as death hangs in the air
and he can sense
its intimate presence there
in Pretoria central prison
and his soul already rots
from the innocent blood
lying on his conscience
and a thrill goes down his spine
while a prison door slams shut
and death is somewhere
almost forever far too near.

[Reference: crucifixion by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Awakening

Early in the morning the white hot sun is already baking,
could I then awake,
before the rain pours down later.

Gert Strydom

Awakening [3]

When I bring you fried eggs, tomato and toast
you wait upright in bed,
look at me with big eyes
and your face is full of innocence like that of a child

and it's as if you have not really waked up,
as if you are still a bit confused by sleep
and you open and close your eyes as if the light is too bright,
as if somewhat blinded you are trying to see

while I put the tray down,
before you give me a soft kiss
draw me nearer into an embrace
and I do smell your fragrance like soft rain

while outside the two dogs are waiting
for their pieces of toasted bread.

Gert Strydom

Awakening Storm

I stand on a cliff and the below the sea roars like thunder
and water foams with sweeping fingers
and a storm wind from the sea swishes in.

I stand on a cliff and the below the sea roars like thunder,
waves crash with a mighty roar
supported by shattering force.

I stand on a cliff and the below the sea roars like thunder
and water foams with sweeping fingers.

Gert Strydom

Away Into The Wide World

My golden ginger yellow eyed cat
went away
and it's three days
that he's already gone.

I wonder where
he is wandering
and miss
his praying eyes
and the gifts
that he brings to me.

It's as if his white and black friend
knows something,
but not how
to express it
and at times
jumps from a tree
and comes to call me
and I cannot
find Musso anywhere.

It's for him another thing
to have to move
and for the first time
to be locked out
and not being allowed
in the house

but choices I do not have
in connection with this
but to have
my animals still
or to say forever goodbye.

With the first rain
the dog Sasja
is wet at the window
and Musso

is busy
splashing water from his fur

and in my heart
and in my soul
there is a knife
that cuts right through me
while I hear
them moaning and wailing
and sometimes,
I also want
to go away into the wide world.

Still I pray for him
and do not want him
to suffer somewhere
and I wish
to have him back again.

[Note: I found him this afternoon (after writing the poem) in the storm water drain next to the road, from where he couldn't get out. He replied when I called him and I had to lift and move concrete blocks with a crowbar to get him out.]

Gert Strydom

Axis

I feel you around my conduit
giving warmth, in passion tightening
until the charge flows between us
like a bolt of lightning truly uniting

and you scream in ecstasy
holding onto me, with nails ripping
into my back

and I see the raw power of passion
flaming in your golden eyes
like two suns in a hydrogen reaction

and feel you tighten and shiver
filled with new energy
which makes your whole body glow

and I am in your centre axis
coupling exerting energy, giving life
and for a moment it's a divine connection
blazing us together, making you mine.

Gert Strydom

Baba-Jaga (Free Verse Sonnet)

In Russia there is a big dark wood
and in the snow and fog the winter there is cold
where a witch Baba-Jaga does live in a house on stilts
and she is a children eater and many years old,
with cruel hard chilly bloody eyes
and they tell that the old vixen of a woman have got the ability
to fly around on a broom in the moonlight
and Satan gives her instructions and has dialogues with her,
where he sends her out to catch naughty children
and later she hangs them in the wood around her house
or she lets them work from dawn to dusk
and out of hellish fear they do just as she asks
but she remains skimpy and emaciated
and nobody can find or stop her.

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Gert Strydom

Baby Lies So Fast Asleep

Baby lies so fast asleep
that I dare not take her
into my arms,
too big the chance to wake her.
Rosy cheeks and a raspberry mouth
like a little angel, a sweet delight
but she's someone else's.
Sometimes at night
nothing can cuddle her tears away
and a shrill little voice
hangs in the air, piercing the darkness
cutting right until day
and those are the times
that mothers and fathers do pray.

Gert Strydom

Baby Lies So Fast Asleep [1]

Baby lies so fast asleep
that I dare not take her
into my arms,
too big the chance to wake her.
Rosy cheeks and a raspberry mouth
like a little angel, a sweet delight
but she's someone else's.
Sometimes at night
nothing can cuddle her tears away
and a shrill little voice
hangs in the air, piercing the darkness
cutting right until day
and those are the times
that mothers and fathers do pray.

Gert Strydom

Babylon

Babylon is no more
and lies shattered
against a desert plane
where it has fallen
centuries ago.

Yet Babylon's spreads
wider to cities
all across the world
where unreligious people
stay and play
on the microcosm
of humanity
and strife to be greater
than the gods
and create places of sin
and utter rebellion.

Only when the clock work
strikes midnight
are the hand seen
that writes on the wall
and only then,
there's some comprehension
that all evil will perish
and that the city fortress will fall.

Gert Strydom

Babylon [2]

While towers do reach for heaven,
while from ancient times man
tries to escape from this world
and the misery that threatens here
as if a way to God can be built
and than to be able to self-righteously
walk into His portals

with overwhelming ideal upon ideal
out of the earthly Mecca America
that tries to lay down rules for the whole earth
as they want things for people
and do try to determine the ways of nations

I do stand alone as a single person
that do resist with other ideals
that I have got as high and holy
and I do only bend towards God,
to Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him
as I do know that no salvation
will ever come from Babylon
and that the true answers
do only lie with the omnipotent Lord God.

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Gert Strydom

Bacchantes (Sonnet)

The fawn skin tightly covers your perfect figure
and the light yellowish brown goes with your hair
when at night you kill for Dionysus but at day are considerate
and when you wait in the darkness to the midnight hour,
in the bright moon your eyes glare like those of a predator
when sly plans are made to drive those to madness who do diverge
and all morality is lost in that which embodies an aeon-old religion
where you do make yourself one with everything living in nature
and in your hair you show off the coral tree's flower redder than blood,
in your hands you hold life and death, your body smells of passion sweat
and your breath is summer-fresh like on the ground the smell of rain
where you are dancing joyful, feminine breathtaking in the glare of the moon
as a luring tempting beautiful girl that no man can forget
but of whom a mother does warn and later does cry through many nights.

Gert Strydom

Back In The Hazy Horizon Of The Ancient Beginning

Back in the hazy horizon of the ancient beginning
you were hardwired into my being
and braided and poured in
the chromosomes that would later become me

and when life made me a man
only in my later years you were known to me
as the one with whom I am bonded soul to soul
as the one that would lead me back to God like a child.

Gert Strydom

Ballad Of The Nightly Hours

(After N. P. van Wyk Louw)

In the early evening
you were luring right against me
with long legs and breasts
that did dance yearning

and in your eyes a wild glittering
something past enchantment, that thirsts lascivious
for ecstasy and at the table
you did spill some wine over me,

did invite me to your apartment
for coffee and to wash my shirt
but did show me how neatly
and with pleasure I did fit into your depths.

With arms that does surround,
you did lead me to the bed
and overwhelming

did ride me wide legged,
did rake your nails on my back
and later you did lie
right against me

with your hair spread all over the pillow,
your breath burning against my cheek
and I did smell new life in the rain
that was sieving down outside

I'Envoi

and now this morning
that which was between us is flowered out
and withered you do glare at me
and do tell me that death

was present in our caresses last night
as you do carry AIDS

and you want to know quite incidentally
if I have any desire left for you.

[Reference: "Ballade van die nagtelike ure" (Ballad of the nightly
hours" by N.P. van Wyk Louw.)]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of A Man In Love

(for Annelize, in answer to G. A. Watermeyer)

Your eyes do tell an ancient story,
do remind me from when Adam was lost in Eve,
do shine with the same intimate and intense light
and your image do return to me a thousand times,

Chorus:

I am smitten with you,
do view you different than others do you see

with the beauty of your face
and from my young days my feelings for you are sincere
as if destiny does destine our being together,
as in my humanity you are always somewhere present,

when your lips say against mine barely audible things,
when your fingers do lie tenderly on my heartbeat
and it's as if your pulse is beating together with mine
in a language where the blood wants to have a own woof,

where your lips and mouth do wordlessly understand the words
and soft and shining and tender, wild-berry red and ripe
do express feelings and do share your own humanity with me
and time and again half-unwitting you do constantly stir me,

where constantly I do yearn for you and long to be with you
as God Himself have turned the suppleness of your flesh
over your limbs and body and the rounding
of your femaleness and we are from the same spirit and soul,

as you are like Eve to Adam the first woman to me
and years ago you did seduce me with your eyes and smile,
did touch the deepest depth of my soul and flesh
and now for many years I am far past falling in love,

but sometimes love is a bitter glass that does burn to the inside,
in the body, soul and mind
that does fit into being human and into life like a puzzle

but it also has a glorious other side,

where lovers do really understand and know each other,
in elements that are far too holy and deep to pen down
where joy, bliss and pleasure do come to their fullness
and like this I do want to win your heart as my partner, companion and wife.

[Reference:"Ballade van die dronkparty" (Ballade of the drunk-part
and party)by G. A. Watermeyer.]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of Doge Enrico Dandolo And The Fourth Crusade

(after W. E. G. Louw)

Being against citizens of his country being detained
at the Byzantine Court as the ambassador of Venice
Enrico Dandolo's eyes was burnt out by emperor Manuel
and later Dandolo becomes the Doge, the ruler of his own country.

Chorus:

Enrico Dandolo:

"My blindness cuts through my heart like a dagger
and how can I interpret God's will in this?
No human will bring me justice
and I will claim my own ransom
as everything is set on the self and are distorted,
even for the Pope this is but a trivial thing."

For the fourth crusade Doge Enrico Dandolo comes to a agreement
to use the ships of Venice to transport the crusaders
and all of the crusaders are together in an enormous army
but they cannot pay him and are drawn into an attack on Byzantium
where as pretence they first do attack the town of Zara,
where after five days it does fall before the assault of the huge army
and the letter of Pope Innocent is in vain and laughed at
while the crusaders do plunder, do destroy and let Greek fire explode.

When Pope Innocent does excommunicate them
Doge Enrico Dandolo takes that great crusader army,
sail with five hundred galleys to the Byzantine Empire over the Bosphorus River
with knights, horsemen and horses incited to an attack on Constantinople.
With the lion of Mark that flutters under a baldachin of red silk
the Doge of the Venetian republic at eighty-eight does go to war,
dressed in white while cymbals do keep the rhythm for the oarsmen and he is
very happy
that the great attack on his enemy and for huge monetary gain has started

In Constantinople Alexius does believe that the spear and cross,
Jacob's rock and the staff of Moses and the Bosphorus that does flow strong,

does protect him and his kingdom as it has for a thousand years,
that angels like a huge wind will come down from heaven,
where mechanical lions do roar in his palace,
where drunk in the arms of whores he does every night lie and twist with
pleasure,
where eunuchs do disconcerted look on and where his throne does ascend with a
cord
and nobody can depend on his kingly word
but as a human, emperor, Patriarch and immanent God,
Alexius lives as an insult, as a bluff,
where Jesus, the Father and Holy Ghost are being mocked by his way of life
where he has refined lust and perversion to an art,
where churches and images of the saints do usurp each other in the city
as if these people do press Christianity upon others
but as it goes it's only a big game
as many do live like their ruler totally twisted.

Under attack by Greek-fire
the threefold armoured wall of Constantinople does fall
with crusaders dishonouring women and children of both sexes
and do plunder whatever their hearts do desire,
where they do rape the sanctified Sofia,
do murder Christians to accentuate their blood lust
and as if they do mock God and scoff in laughter at Him
they do force a naked whore to sit open legged on the Patriarch's throne
and the blind Doge Enrico Dandolo has got his gigantic booty
that does join with his wealth in Venice and with that of the state
as gemstones, gold and silver, patens, chalices and chandeliers
and the four bronze horses at St Mark's Cathedral in Venice is part of it.

[Reference: "Vierde Kruistog" (Forth Crusade) by W. E. G. Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of Phil And Jill In The Big City

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

Past blocks of apartments where black whores do peer into the night
the rapid transit train did shake on its iron tracks
where it took me into the city's neon lights

Chorus:

but I do wonder what she will say
over what she wants in life and from me,
do know that everybody will have to report to Him
where the world does lie in the greatest darkness
as at a time the omnipotent God will come
and here in this world I am just astounded

past the zoo where the water glittered
and swans, wild goose and coots were swimming on a dam,
where one dived down and sank beneath the water

and out of the station I suddenly was with a multitude on the street
but at the park on the opposite side doves did peck at crumbs
and the narrowness, the scuttle of the city I did hate.

In front of a building with the logo of a gigantic steel-triangle
brick-a-braces and sweets were piled against a wall
where the head office of a newspaper looks like a real honeycomb

but inside the restaurant I did listen to the tranquil notes of a piano
while I did drink coca-cola die fold the serviette over time and again
where I was waiting on my girlfriend with a gift-wrapped in shiny-paper.

She did not come and when I did walk out there where thunder in my ears
from where labourers worked with electric chisels
with a orange-brown diesel power-generator roaring

while a cat scratched around in the garbage
outside between the cars at two fish and chips cafés
and from this buzz of the city I wanted to escape

to a place where roses, lilies and Margaret's do flower

as suddenly it was as if everything here was for me too much
but tired I walked on until I got to the play-park

where children and adults were screaming from the big wheel
and high almost in heaven hang above the earth
in a refreshment of spirit, body and soul

but when she did suddenly find me there I was off my guard,
we did kiss each other hello and did go and ride on the merry-go-round
but this one was different and from up high the lights was like a fairyland

where a fun-machine did bite with enormous jaws
that kept opening and closing and it did spit out sweets
but everything was tinned and at a cost

and when eventually we were on the ground again
she had to answer about her feelings for me
when I gave the gift to her as her property

where she cried with joy did cling to the engagement ring,
and much later after the cinema and dancing in my bedroom
her face was again wet with tears but now from pleasure

and we were bound together with love
when suddenly a helicopter did fly to and thro with a searching light
were looking for someone of something and did draw attention of all the dogs

and through the open window I smelled gardenia and the air was somewhat cool
while in the big old bath with candlelight she did run some more water
where my house felt like a place of heaven on earth,

as if our lives were fitting neatly into each other's
but then she screamed from terror and I found a bat
that flying round and round and then into her.

Again she did scream and it did come in through the window
and angry I grabbed that furry thing and tossed it out in the direction of the pear
tree
but it shrilled and did hit a flower-bowl in which geraniums were flowering.

When I stood against her and she came naked and wet into my arms,
for moments I felt her scared heart beating and it was just she and I in the whole

world
and wordless we stood for some time as if dumbfounded

while her wet arms were clinging to me in a embrace,
where with clothes she pulled me into the bath
and much later both of us got out.

In her eyes a new light was burning
outside the doves did coo and other birds did twitter
and there was joy, happiness and tranquillity on her face

but above us the Lord's starry wheel did turn,
outside all the barking dogs did calm down
and we did love each other with body, soul and spirit.

[Reference: "Ballade van die Gysland" (Ballad of the Greyland)by D.
J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Cannibal

(after A. G. Visser)

He is larger than a big giant
with a strange mole on his nose
and his grip is so hard when he grabs naughty children
that his great hands do bruise them.

Chorus:

When unexpectedly the dogs do growl outside
and it's almost midnight,
when children treat their parents with disdain
then you will see him
where he is laughing with his missing teeth

and always slobber runs out of his huge mouth
in which there is only one yellow tooth when he opens it up
and even if he bites right through a rebellions child,
he is only busy licking his lips for another twenty.

The mole looks as large as a pumpkin
and on his one strange foot there is a shoe
but with the other great paw he walks barefoot
and people find strange tracks where he is doing evil.

There is a strange lump behind his right ear
but when he does sneeze it sounds as if you hear the thunder
and it is told that he walks very strangely
sometimes skew like a crab or backwards

and the blood on his grey-white beard is dry
where he stands meters high, almost like a tree
but it's weird how ugly he really is
and do look into two directions with a brown and a blue eye

when he touch the ribs of those that he wants to catch to determine if the are fat
and before he takes them he hits them unconscious,
sniffs at those that he carries away when his mouth does drool some more
and so slyly he does catch the children that they do remain missing

when he does disappear into Bushy Mountain in a dark hidden cave
and many people say that it's a story and that place is only fabricated
but if you pass the mountain at night there are children crying
as he fattens them with honey and their time is running out.

[Reference:"Die mensvreter" (The cannibal)by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Covenant

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

You did create the world perfectly
when man decided to be lost in sin,
in spite of Your love, favour and friendship
they did go astray, did wander off to dark evil.

Chorus:

You are the one that brings everything to order and pure light,
who does give the beauty to each fruit, plant and flower
who does open the windows of heaven for the labourer
as Your own child and with all of this I am astonished.

You did create everything in great perfection
with times of endless happiness and fun
man brought a curse on himself
in the contempt of Your stipulations and Your law

but still You did promise Yourself as deliverance
but still further man did decline into unbelief,
did chase after sin, chaos and pleasure and shame
and then You did cleave the world open,

did shake the foundations from the inside and outside,
did only protect a hand-full against the great Deluge
caused volcanoes to burst out, turned the earth-crust over,
caused rain to pour down and did use Your Godly power

to once again bring forth order and righteousness
and yet still every small and big living thing
is destined from Your omnipotence to exist in a system,
to function as an integral part of the whole and not just as an inspiration.

In the cave, the cavern, in the backwoods and right here,
in the swamp at every reed and in the far off distance
everything does function to be able to exist as if from a master plan,
not just dreamed and left in the caprice as a loveless god

[Reference:"Kontrak" (Contract)by D. J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Crossroad

(after C. M. van der Heever)

I

At the crossroad a whirlwind started,
a lightning-bolt did blue-white break the thorn tree
suddenly the devil stood right there
stroking the strings of a steel guitar.

II

Chorus:

Who wants to go closer has to sell his soul
and into dark powers is baptised as a follower
(if you want to sing perfectly or play an instrument)
even for poetry people are trapped there.

III

Not the wild things that a person would expect,
the song was so tranquil and soft
and so beautiful while he played there
that any person does yearn for more

IV

and there was something special to the sound,
some notes were short and others long
as if the steel guitar did get a life of its own
and in the distance the dogs did howl sadly

V

but enchanted the devil did dance right there
burning fiery lines on the tar and ground
and when he sang the loveliest song
came perfectly from his mouth

VI

but when silence did suddenly come,
a German car stopped in the middle of the crossroad
where someone in his own blood did sign an agreement
and with the music that he could suddenly make he was astonished

VII

but every Christian person has to guard against that place,
do have to protect him or her against this monster
as just from the hand of God does real art come
and with the devil nobody has any control.

[Reference:"Outa Hans" (Old black-man Hans)by C. M. van der Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Entrepreneur

I

On the way to the office
Jacaranda trees are flowering,
here and there some people stop me

asking for a cigarette,
some want a Rand or two
and the day is very bright after the night of pleasure.

There are smoke fumes curling into the air at Iscor,
a train passes groaning on the track,
while machines are whining unendingly.

The girl at reception smiles at me
and bend over so that I see her well-proportioned breasts
before she blushes,

men with white helmets and white coats
rush into my office
and quickly I give attention to figures and sketches

until everything around us suddenly goes silent,
a thunderous bang whips somewhere in the factory
and somebody screams hysterical

and I run quickly
to where smoke clouds are rising,
where people in confusion are talking.

II

A worker has been killed, has been shocked dead
by a machine of which I had drawn up the plans
and other employees are seperated from him.

Fear cuts right through me
that a medical doctor will have to come

and that I will have to avoid him.

Immediately I make corrections to the machine,
that nobody can lay a finger on me,
before he gets attention and I am calmer

and to his wife I will say that he was stupid,
had gone against guidelines,
did not want to fit into the company's plans.

The employees are astounded from shock
where they are standing talking
but work on, separated from each other

while ambulance men take the body away
and the doctor and I have a conversation
about negligence and he does not raise any more questions.

That afternoon I drown my worries
at the local pub
and feel weak and tired.

III

The days rush past
while the factory is running well
but in the evenings the killed employee haunts me

until I cannot take it anymore
hear voices, see faces and cut my own wrists
and see blood splashing in all directions.

Where I come to my sense in a mental institution,
people with white jackets gather around me
with their faces hidden behind masks

and other patients are separated from me
where I am tied down to a bed,
before a doctor pushes a lever and I am shocked by electricity

and fear now goes right through me

when some more medical personnel and doctors appear
and I want to avoid them

but get some more electric shocks
and yesterday, the day before that and the other day all evaporate
and I am free of all my worries

and my soul is stripped away,
I scarcely know who and what I am,
when somebody tries to talk to me.

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Grey City

(after S. J. Pretorius)

How very lonely it is in the city
where rain does sieve down for weeks
and the roads full of strangers are wet,
with a windblown man on the bench of a park
that unemployed haven not got any relief
do watch his last cents for bread.

Chorus:

Still you will find that here some people do still pray to God
do sit in church benches on Saturdays and Sundays,
do trust that He does constantly keep His hand over their lot,
do try and follow Him sincerely while to others it does seem inane,
where some others only do come to brag with their wives and cars
and in the portal and outside they laugh out loud over any nonsense.

How excessively jolly, without values and self-focussed
young people do dance in the city at the places of fun,
some are from drugs somewhat shaky
while you will notice from crude humanity some inclinations
where they do touch, feel and kiss each other
and go to the toilets to do their thing.

How terrible the people are in this city
where married couples do together hold sexual parties,
do drop keys in a hat and each man does take a key from it,
do then fold his hand around that of another man's wife
at a huge mansion where the most expensive cars do stand outside
and people do only exist for their own pleasure and profit.

How cruel animals are caged in concrete and steel,
where small apes do constantly insane shout at each other,
where the zoo does draw the inhabitants of the city to this imprisonment
with the tiger, the leopard and the cruel lion
and then they still do talk about preserving
as if like this they are saving the lives of the animals.

How inaccessible it's for workers from the Aurora goldmine

to loose their houses and everything and to sit on the street
where the two new black owners had for ten months not paid them,
did disappear with the money
and nobody does anything about this
when those people do loose all hope and take suicide
and the local newspaper does overflow with this.

How extradited are human beings when the casualty doors do swing open
and doctors and nurses do wait upon you with forms and papers
when an ambulance does drop you for something deadly at a hospital
as if they do regard profit higher than the emergency situation
or at the Far East-Rand Hospital you do get no treatment for fifteen hours
where you do wait with a huge crowd in a row.

[Reference: "Grou mure" (Grey walls) by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Guard Commander

II

At dusk the sun sets fiery red
behind the bushes
where in beauty it brings tranquillity to the bush-veldt.

There are guards that I inspect as commander
where they stand neatly in a platoon
and I look at them one after the other and then right through them

walk to the guardroom on top of the shooting tower
and in the camp in the operational area
every thing is in order, the guards are capable.

Early in the evening another officer
comes and plays a game of chess
and we drink icy glasses of beer

but when it gets later there is silence and peace
as if it's just another evening in a thousand
and for some time I am still attentive to my duties

until the shadows draw out long against the walls,
my non commissioned officer starts to yawn
and I lie down on my camping bed

telling him to take charge, while I get tired
and sleep closes my eyes,
when an explosion wakes me.

II

Somewhere in the camp another bomb explodes,
I grab my firearm instruct the shooting tower to start firing
and fear is in me – that the general is going to come.

Tracers cut tracks through the night

torches are fired into the sky
and outside it's bright as day

and we fire into the bushes
while I cannot determine where the enemy is
and do not really know where the firefight had started.

In the camp another bomb explodes,
I see a trooper throwing a hand grenade
and I am totally astounded

and fear is in me – that the general is going to come,
what am I going to say about what is happening here,
what am I going to report about the men below him?

It's clear that it's no enemy attack
and on the watchtower I lift my rifle
and when it resounds it's an own man, an acquaintance

that I shoot down before he throws some more hand grenades
and everybody thinks that an enemy bullet pierces him,
while they shoot into the bushes and fire at will.

III

The morning is grey
and rainy when the day breaks
while there's fear in me

where I have got to give account
about wounded men in three tents
and the death of one I carry with me,

while soldiers are on patrol in the bushes
and with a knob in my throat,
I know that no enemy is there and feel tired.

When I notice a helicopter it is clear that the general is coming
and the Lord knows that I had to shoot an own man,
but what will I show him of the preparedness of the camp?

With narrowed eyes

we wait on the parade ground
and eight of my men are wounded.

The dust rises from the turning blades
while the helicopter lands
and the blades turn slower.

Out of the cloud of dust three figures walk
with the general looking inexorable,
while my ears sing from the noise of the aircraft.

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Headless Man

(after A.G. Visser)

On a distant road through some hillocks
a young Boer greets his pretty wife
and the robust man
holds her against him for a moment.

Choir:

In the sky there's a moon
hanging sickle,
when I pass the bottom of a cliff
where I notice a man on his horse biting at its bridle.

Later when the weather gets cloudy
and bolts of blue lightning fall like shots about me
something happens that can take away a brave man's courage
before the first drops of rain come down like gunshots.

When the hoofs of a horse thunder past
while a church bell rings of midnight in the distance
and nobody still walks around in the streets,
when the doors of most of the houses are locked,
there's something unearthly
that stands straight up in the stirrups.

Just a glance when another thunderbolt crashes down
is so frightening that I almost lose my faith
when I look at the horse and its rider
and that thunder crashes sinister
while a headless man leans forward
as he passes at a hell of a speed
while he fires his rifle that his fingers are clinging onto

and at an old dilapidated ruin near to me
there's a woman in white spectre form
whose shrill voice cuts through the night,
screaming at the passing horseman:
"Can nothing stop you? Jan van der Meer? "

[References: "Die ruiter van Skimmelperdpan" (The horseman of Skimmelperdpan by A.G. Visser and "At a pan at night" by Gert Strydom. This poem is based on a myth of a horseman that had been decapitated by canon fire during the second Anglo-Boer war.]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Hippopotamus-Hole

(after C. M. van den Heever)

At the policemen of the lines the fishermen do stare,
under a gazebo they are protected from the sting of the sun
where they do keep looking down into the dark-blue pool
and do experience another bright sunny day in conversation

Chorus:

but suddenly a water snake does wriggle
where a cloud of dust hangs over the water-pool
when a lightning-bolt do cut thundering down to below
while the natives nearby do long for escape.

Where the river has flowed for centuries
below in the pool it does foam, there is something glowing,
when every rod does bend, the lines powerfully are drawn to below,
when the waves do splash and lap and a golden thing is wrestling

where a gigantic snake does twist on the water-surface.
"Escape from the water-snake, " the natives scream
and astonished the fishermen stand with bended rods
when a thick fog-curtain do surround them suddenly

grey and black clouds do cover the sky
lightning comes thundering down at place after place
where the fishermen are trying to catch the wriggling thing
and a terrible shower of rain pours down

but the lines break when a hellish blue-white lightning-bolt bashing out,
even the steel feeding-line is melted by the power of the beast
where it wriggles, do whirl into the sky while it flees into a curtain of fog
and it disappears into the sky and the fishermen are lame from shock and
powerless.

[Reference:"Oor die seek'gat" (Over the hippopotamus-hole)by C. M.
van den Heever.]

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Ballade Of The Hours Of Darkness

(after N.P. van Wyk Louw)

Our love did wither like a flower,
with the morning-light came silently to an end
and this morning we both are without words
as we do not really know each other.

Where we had been deeply involved in bodily pleasure
we are estranged and blunt with each other
and the emotions that were overwhelming
they now are stripped and bankrupt from love

and last night desire did burn in us both
with a tingling in your hand
when it was soft and vulnerable in mine
and your smile was luring and forward,

your eyes the brightest blue
and when I did hold you closer
there had been something that I could not place
when you spilled wine on my shirt

and now that it's the new morning
you are much prettier than in the darkness of last night
but that which had been between us is past
and now carries no meaning

and only the smells of love and whiskey does linger
where the sun radiates brightly into your kitchen
and with you here in your own home
I feel redundant, unwelcome and lost.

Our love with the morning-light came silently to an end,
did wither like a flower,
as we do not really know each other
and this morning we both are without words.

[Reference: "Ballade van die nagtelike ure" (Ballade of the nightly

hours) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Hours Of Night

Our love had bloomed fully
when naked you came to me
with a small towel covering you,
when it fell from your body
and your eyes caught mine glittering,
when silence hanged luring between us.

There was a kind of hunger and thirst in me,
when your lips found mine,
with your hair braiding through my fingers
when the alarm slowly counted the time
and we both were longing for something eternal,
when silence hanged luring between us.

Like falling rain was the smell of us both
on the big old fluffy blanket
with your legs and arms crossed over me,
when my heartbeats sounded in my ears,
and there was a much deeper more intense urge
when silence hanged luring between us.

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Impundulu

(After A. G. Visser)

I

In the late afternoon when lightning comes down with a thunder
the people shudder that do go astray from the Unkulunkulu,
the children are sheltered big-eyed in all of the straw huts
where they hide and are afraid to breathe

II

Chorus:

and everyone is afraid that the Unkulunkulu does want to destroy,
do take judgement with the thunderbird the Impundulu in a stormy wind,
that the Unkulunkulu sends him from its nest in the great Tamboti tree
that connects the under-earthly, earth and heaven with each other.

III

In his hut the witchdoctor Inyanga boils collected herbs
that on the doorposts does show the Impundulu away
that he finds in the cliffs of the mountain for his dark superstition
when in the summer he is afraid of the constant thunderstorms

IV

but still at times the Impundulu hits both animals and humans,
in the huts it does smell airless and rancid
and in fear all living things do tremble when he comes down
as to his deadly power there is no real border.

[Reference: "Impundulu" by A. G. 's note:According to legend The
"Impundulu" is the thunderbird that lives in the upper branches of
the great Tamboti tree, in the clouds where its nest is. This tree has interestingly
the same properties and is indeed similar to the Nordic "Yggdrasil"
legendary tree that connects the under-earthly (hell) , earth and heaven with
each "Unkulunkulu" is the Great-Great, the omnipotent Lord God.
Inyanga is the witchdoctor, the medicine man.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Little Cattle Herdsman

(after C. M. van den Heever)

In the twilight the hillocks around him is grey
where the small herdsman do take the cattle to a corral,
his thoughts is miles away at his own straw hut where a fire burns
and on his ghoera he plays a soft tune that lingers

Chorus:

he is somewhat startled when the cattle come to a halt
suddenly he do notice that the cattle are chewing the cud and going nowhere,
in the footpath there is a strange small man-beast
a monster that do only exist in nightmares,

he realises to nowhere he can flee quick enough,
tests the sharp assegai with stabbing movements in the air
and fear brings him to a halt next to the cattle
when the monster walks nearer and nearer and coughs.

"You play well, so very beautiful, you small umfaan,
play another song just where you are standing, "
the boy lets the assegai and ghoera drop,
looks with anxious eyes at the tikoloshe

it's if his legs become lame under him
when the tikoloshe do come still closer to him
"Umfaan, tell me from where do I come? "
From shock the herdsman is speechless

but the words of the tikoloshe again rings with thunder
The dangerous little man walks closer still.
"You come from there far, from the mountains of the Unkulunkulu, "
he follows the eternal plan and the tikoloshe does not take another step.

Where the word Unkulunkulu keeps him from the child
while with dark murderous eyes he looks at him:
"It's right Umfaan, I come from the mountains of the Great-Great
do carry on with these cattle, " but the herdsman do not trust the peace

looks away from the monster, slowly picks up his assegai and ghoera,

do take the footpath with the cattle and play a very sad tune,
the footpath cuts past a small stream when the tokkeloshe does disappear
but for the child the tikoloshe remains a monster straight from hell.

[Reference:"Die wagtertjie stap" (The small herdsman walks)by C. M. van den 's note:A ghoera is "a primitive music instrument made by natives and played by them, consisting out of a bended stick where a sinew-string is spanned between its ends, with a flat piece of feather-pen inserted on the one end of the string; by holding the mouth on the feather and blowing softly, the player can let a few soft sounds of various pitches come forth." A Umfaan" is a young "Unkulunkulu" is the Great-Great, the Upper being and omnipotent Lord assegai is a slender iron tipped spear of hard wood especially used by South African native peoples.]

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Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Monster

(after Jeni Couzyn, after Ted Hughes)

She says he has been deformed like this since birth,
to me almost like some strange thing coming from the earth
with blank bloodshot eyes, sometimes right and sometimes squint
and in silence of his presence you would not have a hint.

Chorus:

He has broken plates, pots and pans in great anger,
to me at times has been a great menacing danger,
a mentally impaired unscrupulous living thing
that do its fists, knees and feet swing when it's attacking,

where on padded feet he is always sneaking up
with hands and arms bent round like a cup
but the yellowwood floorboards creak under his weight
where he stares from just taller than a tall man's height,

does always attack the back or kidneys in huge rage
and at thirty acts as if at a primary school child's age
where he has broken doorknobs, left holes in doors,
has scattered broomsticks that he broke on the floors

do at any time night or day burst into our bedroom
do even when she is bathing go into the bathroom
and she thinks that he is tamed and in her control
while constantly around cursing he does stroll.

For thirty years he has been king in that house
and for the slightest his great anger do arouse
as he is an expert even in other people's speciality
and he kicked me, did hit me and broke a broom over me.

"He loves you, is just challenging you, " she said
and I knew if this continues at a time he would be dead
as any man will defend himself at a time if facing this,
as even Christianity has a limit and I walked out instead.

[Reference:"The Beast" by Jeni Couzyn."The Minotaur" by

Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Rose

In the morning you smile at me
while the sleep
still burns in your eyes
and like a white rose
that doesn't yet fold open,
is the image that I have of you
and "rosa pallida" for you.

In the afternoon the fire is glowing
in your golden eyes
and when I look into the depths of them
I see how beautiful you really are
and how perfect your humanity is
and there are messages
that is deeper than I can understand
and a deep red Rose folding open
is the image that I have of you
and "rosa perfecta" for you.

In the dusk while the sun
hangs glowing red
the water glitters bright
on your body
while you come out of the shower
and I wonder which flower
could ever be more beautiful
and be better than perfect and be eternal
and your beauty is what I keep with me
and "rosa incarnada" for you.

[Reference: => Ballade van die roos by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Ballade Of The Thorn Tree

(after Totius)

Only as a sprout the tree was totally treaded down
when the whole British Empire did walk over my Afrikaner Boer nation,
the nation was mangled and that sprout almost broken-off
out of the deadly concentration camps women and children could not escape

Chorus:

but after that war my people, that tree, did heal by itself
did out of own resin as pioneers bring about farms, towns, cities, mines and
factories,
did lay out infra-structure and did build schools, universities and hospitals
gigantic big that tree did become and with its scars did astound the world

but dark forces out of Africa, Cuba and Russia wanted to break the branches
when every white Afrikaner citizen was forced to march in soldier boots,
to go into war on the border and in Angola and in Africa to stand indelible,
with branches that reach the heaven the tree did pierce every intruder

and when peace came the traitor was disguised as the best fruit of the tree,
where affirmative action and unemployment came down like a hellish
thunderbolt,
where my people as a mere minority was shown away and oppressed
where the sprouts of the tree across the world do by themselves come up

and systematically the tree is shaken in to its own roots where it still stands
where murder, rape, torture, plundering and robbery is normal to the day
where everything do slowly dilapidate under awkward lack of skill
and where the tree reaches to the sky the scars to it do only multiply.

[Reference:"Vergewe en vergeet"(Forgive and forget)by Totius.]

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Gert Strydom

Banished

Early morning there's again
rain pouring down swishing
as if we are in the middle
of a wet season
and the small dog
knocks with her front feet
on the window
to come in
and my heart breaks
since just like me
she is banished.

Gert Strydom

Baptism Of Fire (In Answer To Dikobe Wa Mogale)

Even when you cast glowing iron
into spears and sharpen them,
draw the blades
of your panga-swords,
ram magazines into your pistols,
into AK-47 assault rifles,
dance around fires
trying to ensnare ancestral spirits
chant the songs of killing
and begin to hate,
curse the anvil of unity
and decide to be free
from every living white human
and bring death and anarchy
as a harvest of the fire
and continue the endless killings
I will still bow down
on my knees
and pray to the almighty God
even if in the presence
of my enemies,
even if thousands gather as foes
and trust that He will deliver me
and every single person
of my nation.

[Reference: baptism of fire by by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Barbet

Brightly covered in yellow and black
with patches on your wings
you do land on the mown lawn
do peck here and there
while you do walk to and thro
inspecting the grass,
as if in search of something.

With a flutter of wings
you fly up into the apricot tree
and watch the world for a long moment
before you start to peck again.

For a long moment I do watch
and you do watch me
do turn your head askew
while in silence we do gaze at each other.

My wife later do tell me that you are a woodpecker,
yet I do wonder still at your presence
and if again you will be back.

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Gert Strydom

Barefoot Through My Heart (Free Verse Sonnet)

By beautiful woman in whose eyes the Southern Cross does gleam
for me you are pretty, secretive and clever,
but I do always only find your row of footprints
where constantly you climb back into my heart,
the road to you becomes stroboscope
as if on it I am walking an eternity
where I am on speed and it looks as if I am standing still
but from you on the horizon I do always get hope
as you remain barefoot like a child
so that I find signs of you everywhere
right through the tracks of my heart
and I do know you and are not in love and blinded
where the love in you gather like rain clouds,
your smile glitter brighter than the daybreak.

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Gert Strydom

Barefoot To My Heart

(for Annelize)

Time after time you do sneak barefoot to my heart
and when I find myself you are already there
where like a scared child I do find you big-eyed
and I although we are apart I never do hear you come,
but it's the place where I do constantly find you.

Gert Strydom

Barn Owl

Like a ghost somewhere from a tree,
sometimes from the roof
it calls out and people shiver
believing that death
is associated with its voice

they hear the chilling noise
and I
a fluttering of wings,
the sound of snatching claws,
a startled peep from a mouse or rat
and in reality it is only that
and nothing more
than a hovering predator
calling out before a kill
to some with a thrilling voice
full of death.

Gert Strydom

Bars

He paces the space off
between the bars,
draws a cigarette out of his ass
and a match
that is hidden beneath the mattress
which he draws against a cement floor
and the match lights up
and in ecstasy
he draws in the marijuana fumes.

Just now somebody
are going to enter him from behind
in the shower
and he tries
to get it out of his thoughts
and thinks about the Vaseline
with which he is going
to wipe his body glowing
and suddenly the cigarette tastes bitter
and like a animal in zoo
he is caught and caged in

and monotony eats through his humanity
and he count while he measures his paces,
do a few push ups
and forces a grin
as he thinks that a hero character would have

¶Envoi
but the longing for drugs
is already in him
and to be bound to it
is another kind of penalty, a jail
where no light ever comes
that is making him an animal
who acts irrationally
waiting for the next fix.

Bartholomew Diaz Sails Around The Stormy Cape (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after Luis de Camões, Roy Campbell and Totius)

I

Where he stands on the deck of his ship
in the worst storm the ship raises and do dip,
he notices a spectre that from the water rise,
the sails flutter and the rain is cold like ice,
there is tremendous waves making it a dangerous trip
when a thundering voice do suddenly speak to him:
"To return here you chances are slim"
in the sky the moon hangs over a flat mountain's tip,
in the worst storm the ship raises and do dip.

II

"Here people do as a god to me pray, "
past the being Diaz notices no clear way,
the ship's lantern sways to and thro while the waves do bash down
astounded with the monster Diaz thinks that they are going to drown.
The spirit roars:"To all life I do here claim lay."
"No spirit or beast or whatever you are
in secrecy can the Lord God bar,
I sail in the name of God and Portugal by night and day, "
past the being Diaz notices no clear way.

III

In a tempestuous storm Diaz do their lives wage
and the beast is nearer in a hellish flaming rage.
"I Bartholomew Diaz do serve God only
and I tell you demon in His name be gone before me, "
the winds howl and the sailors do barely manage
"I Adamastor am here from prehistory
and to punish their enemy the Khoikhoi beacons me, "
but Diaz is still bravely full of courage,
and the beast is nearer in a hellish flaming rage.

IV

"The mast is going to snap!Get to that sail! "

Fearlessly Diaz is determined not to fail
where they are sailing straight at the beast,
the ship do lurch, the beast is gone with sun rising in the east,
everyone is astounded that they did prevail
and with cannon, musket and sword for the Khoikhoi they are ready
if a savage attack on them is going to be,
while they plant a cross and do God hail,
fearlessly Diaz is determined not to fail.

[References:"Os Lusíadas:Canto V Vasco da Gama" ("The Lusíads")by Luis de Camões."Rounding the Cape" by Roy Campbell."Dias by die Cabo Tormentoso" (Diaz at the Cabo Tormentoso)by Totius. Poet's note: Luis de Camões and Roy Campbell write about Vasco da Gama and Totius about Bartholomew both the poems of Luis de Camões and Roy Campbell the titan Adamastor appears as the mythological spirit of the Cape of storms after the Greek myth where the titans are driven apart and in the poem of Luis de Camões Vasco Da Gama is involved with a deadly skirmish with the Khoikhoi people of the the poem of Totius the spectre is named the "spirit of storm and wind."]

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Gert Strydom

Basic Training Out Of The Eyes Of A Trooper

Encamped upon a plain
raw recruits twelve companies strong
run up and down to every fence,
crawl through ash holes
with live bullets buzzing overhead
while instructors with continuous curses
and sarcasm drives them on.

National servicemen called up
like ants in a crowd
loose individuality,
become just numbers,
are barbered with hair cut
prisoner style and length
and dressed in brown overalls
and plastic green helmets.

The food is gut wrenching
and slops into everything else
on a silver tray
and gives everybody stomach flue.

Every platoon has a PTI-corporal
who lets you run,
fall and crawl
the whole day long
and laughs when you bleed.

At times people wonder
from under what rock,
or out of what hole
did that that bugger crawl?

Some inspections
in the middle of the night
leaves cupboards and beds
strewn upon the floor,
although every thing
is just right

and clean and sharp
with punishment following immediately.

It's a hell of a thing
with buddy pt, running
with poles and truck tires
till one day,
that you are super fit
and laugh at the idiot
with the stripes.

Gert Strydom

Bat

Where my eyes do catch the sparkle of the stars above the porch
when I see a bat hanging squealing above the porch-light
it's a hot high-veldt summer evening with a golden moon
where my mother does call out and scream, as she is scared of it

where upside down it touches down on the fixture of the light,
as a black winged fluffy thing against the white of the wall,
do constantly as if anxious make small squealing sounds
and I wonder what it is observing

with all of the world and everything in it upside down
where the own radar of it, like at military installations that do protect,
do constantly send a signal into the heavenly realm
and I do not want to affront the small animal thing

but later the night swallows that bat
when it goes hunting for its prey.

Gert Strydom

Battle At The Lomba River

That night guns roared
all around us everywhere
and the field was acrid
with the smell
of the man made judgement day.

Howitzers flung their projectiles
miles high into the sky
flying by past the horizon
like glowing stars.

Tanks and armoured cars
crunched, raced on
over trees, anthills and almost anything
coughing death left and right
through flaming barrels

and some lions, leopards, hyenas,
jackals, suricates, scorpions
and snakes in the veldt
thought that this night
the world will come to an end

and later still the world
went on like before
while man had a armistice
and then again another war.

Gert Strydom

Be Merciful, My God

(after Judah Ha-Levi)

Be merciful, my God, and I shall prosper.
Let not Your punishment sweep me down.
My life, my love, my existence depends on You.
You know every weakness,
You know even my greatest strength.
You are the one that is my constant companion,
who knows every thought, every word
even before I comprehend them.
Not only on Your companionship do I rely,
I draw my strength, my words and my life from You.

[Reference: 'Heal me, my God' by Judah Ha-Levi.]

Gert Strydom

Be Truly Kind

I beg you please, to be truly kind
and if you have to go away
stop besieging me with an inconsistent mind
and in the going away then stay

from vexing me with things to which love belongs
and let everything between us then end
before hitting me with the worst of wrongs
and I on your mercy have to depend

and then let your love nevermore be mine
even if you do this in mistake
and let from you I then any offer decline
and nothing more from your generosity take:

If you truly love me let me know,
if not then let me go.

[Reference: Sonnet 92 "But do thy worst to steal thyself away" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Beach Crab

Running, always running
in the breaking swell
while sheets of blue-green water
rushes in and out
he clings to his tiny shell
before the next wave breaks
and with foam and spray rushes in,
he stays preoccupied with survival,
preoccupied with life.

Gert Strydom

Beautiful

Beautiful is the rising sun
that touches the dark world
glowing red hot,
like a coal from the fire
of the gods

Beautiful is the crystal blue sky
that stretches to the horizon,
with its purity and brings serenity
to every living thing.

Beautiful is the yellow moon
that awakens dreams,
of how wondrous
life on this earth
really is.

Beautiful is a wave
crashing over a rocky shore,
that sprays the intensity
and mysteries of nature
on the earth.

Yet all of these things
fade away into insignificance
against the smile on your face
and nothing can describe,
the light and expression
in your golden eyes.

You are far more
than beautiful to me
and no white Lily
or dark red Rose,
will ever hold
the same significance
that you bring to me.

When all is said and done

my life is completely empty
when you're gone,
but when you are with me
life plays like the sweetest melody
and my greatest gift from life is you.

Gert Strydom

Beautiful Girl (A Reply To Octavio Paz)

Beautiful girl staring out of the page
of a magazine, your perfect body
is cast in lovely rounded lines

with a ravishing smile that catches the eye
of most men, how easily did you cast
your web over me, before I turned the page.

Yet I know you in touch and flesh
and have stroked your blonde hair
and at times read the sadness
hidden behind your charm

and know how you battled life
to find a way to care
when intelligence and education
couldn't pay for raising
the two children that you love.

[References: No More Clichés by Octavio Paz.]

Gert Strydom

Beautiful Was The Past Weekend With You

Beautiful was the weekend
with you
and much too soon it rushed past,
like it is with all good things

There's a fresh smell of life
that rises from the ground
after the good rain
and it's as if I am standing
before one of God's miracles.

Still more exceptional and wonderful
are the times that you lie against me
and I am caught in your depths
and feel your heart beating against me
and I feel life pulsing through me
and I am glad that you are woman
and the greatest thing of God's creation
I experience in your love.

Gert Strydom

Beautiful, Solitary In The Field (Cavatina)

Beautiful, solitary in the field
I hear her song
where it forever will haunt my mind;
I pass along
the twisting long road, hearing it again;
it does belong
to a small green bird that is twittering
as continually lovely it does sing

Gert Strydom

Beauty

Beauty is something
that the eye can see
that still lingers
in the mind,
long after its presence is gone
and still one can find it
in unconcrete things
like honour, passion and love
which have the ability
to remain great.

Gert Strydom

Beauty Like Hers (Sonnet Corona)

I

Beauty like hers has an unknown quality
as in a radiant mystery that is sublime
as for a while caught in time
even unto life's finality

with a natural adaptability
as something past reason and rhyme
even apart from spring in its prime
and when she smiles at me it is in humility

and each day there is more glory than before
as if a spirit divine is in her heart
as if this sweetness can last forevermore
like in a masterpiece of art
can stretch even past this life's shore
as if we will never part.

II

As if we will never part
she sometimes watches me
her sweet smile lights up my heart
and to her there's an unknown quality.

Who and what is she
that so many young men
want to suit her, want to be in her company,
unlike most other women?

I wonder if she's as kind as she is fair?
As beauty shines right through her,
and flaming hangs her auburn hair
but somehow I wonder if love is there?

She reminds me somewhat of spring,
she's really startling.

III

She's really startling
and the way that she looks at me
says that she might become my darling
and even although I want it to be

I know that love is blinding
but to me she looks like an angel as if holy,
I wonder if she wants something binding
have never seen her with any melancholy

her smile is rather ravishing
with a type of grace
and every movement is touching,
to her nothing is commonplace

with a fiery radiance, with an own true light,
her eyes are shining as the stars in the night.

IV

Her eyes is shining as the stars in the night
has some tranquillity and mellowness
and they sparkle bright,
with charm and consciousness

displaying character and sweetness her face
reminds me of serenity
as if its tenderness' dwelling place
but she is filled with sheer dignity,

yet there's sometimes a frown on her brow
and I wonder how she really feels inside
and who will ever know
as her grin is enchanting and wide,

dressed in the colour of the sky;
on the street I saw her passing by.

V

On the street I saw her passing by
as if with looks she was embracing,
and in her beautiful eye
was something enticing

that was reaching out to me
and flustered I let her go on her way,
let her go to stay free,
as if destiny will come knocking on another day

but at times in my mind I see her still
with her beguiling looks
as a uncanny thrill
like a bubbling brook, staying with tiny hooks

and never have anyone else been so pleasing,
in my mind so full of life and wit and teasing.

VI

In my mind so full of life and wit and teasing
she did not want to fade away
gave up the house that she was leasing
and she was suddenly gone one day.

She didn't trot on un-trodden ways
but went on the high road
and left me behind for nights and days
even went abroad

while I found the other way round,
discovered the error of my way
and she had me perplexed, confound
while she was somewhere astray.

At the marsh the wind made some reeds shiver,
the streams entwined with the river.

VII

The streams entwined with the river
and the river flows into the sea

and rain is drawn forever
from the ocean by the sun's plea

raining in fresh emotion, running into streams
and not being single
as in the sweetest dreams
all of these things mingle

and the earth, mountains and sky
find ways to caress,
finding each other like she and I
and in a way posses

an intimate bond in sweet tranquillity,
beauty like hers has an unknown quality.

Gert Strydom

Beauty Like Yours Is Very Rare (Italian Sonnet)

(after Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

Beauty like yours is very rare and do not fall
in Homer's, Keats's or Shelley's poems sublime,
as concept as Michael controls the mechanics of time
and from no other do I such looks and personality recall,

not even in the passing four season's footfall
and you do only live in these few words of rhyme,
like a ephemeral creature in a untouched clime
that throws at times just a shadow onto the wall,

as if pure magic does your existence bequeath,
where as if to nothing and no one you do belong,
with pure eyes and a divine smile look at me
where in a love-rite you do in this verse breath,
only by what is written here do grow strong,
where in you the essence of all women I do see.

[Reference: "Genius in beauty" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

Because I Do Not Wish To Hope Again

I

Because I do not wish to hope again,
to like an eagle spread my wings,
because I do not wish to gain
experience and to learn new things

and do not wish to soar up against the blue sky,
wondering what lies
beyond the scope of the vision of an eye
and with time in me all hope dies

why should I be afraid
when the darkness closes in,
when destiny has knotted my life in its braid
and I do not know what comes with the new morning?

II

Because am not the man I used to be
and the things of my youth now is of no interest
with age taking effect of my body
drawing me closer to the place of eternal rest

and on the other side of the beyond
there's only darkness that I see
and to this ageing body I am bound with life's bond
that is slowly leaving me

when the reality of life in death makes me aware
that life is only transitory,
that destiny has its impact everywhere
then as a tired man I still lift my eye to God in His glory.

III

Because the moments of tranquillity
have left me as if they have never been
and I am now enfolded in fragility
as if my eyes have never seen

the greatness beaoning on the other side of the beyond
as if no word or deed from me will last into eternity
as if no beauty, greatness I have found
or left a mark of my integrity or sincerity

I wonder what the reason for living is,
have difficulty to comprehend
what life holds
what pain, fear, joy and bliss
brings before the last of my life is spent?

IV

Because I know that time is running out,
that even a newborn child is bound to destiny
and it feels as if it's no use to beg, pray or shout
as every single human being is covered in iniquity

I am left to pray to God for His mercy
and ask Him to let me forget the dreams, the plans and hope
that was once mine, and every single fallacy
that as a human being once did envelop

my mind, my heart and when His righteous judgement falls
may it be lenient as there is no way to live again
and deeds and words well meant become spent when death calls
as every human being is destined to walk the darkening plain

¶Envoi

to at an allotted time expected or unexpected depart from life
and even from the time of birth
the seeds of disaster and strive
are build into every human being living on this earth

and therefore I pray to meet You Lord
to experience the depth of your love
as is promised in Your eternal word

lifting my eyes to You who reign from above.

[Reference: Ash-Wednesday: I. "Because I do not hope to turn again" by T. S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

Because You Do Call Me Your Darling (Free Verse Sonnet)

My candle burns tonight only for you
as you do take me as your darling
while friends do estrange themselves from me,
where you do still believe in me and trust me,
where others look at me with disdain,
from my circumstances conclude
that friendship should also wane away
and you do still keep me against your heart,
as you are intimately and sincerely in love with me,
do truly know me as a human being and a person
while destiny messes me around
and my prayer for you does tonight carry meaning,
where with love God does dwell in your heart,
your heart beats in my blood and in my chest.

Gert Strydom

Before Everything

God Before everything, in the beginning
God did already exist and from nothing
he created, brought substance, brought forth life.

Gert Strydom

Before I Can Write A Word Down (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after H. J. Pieterse)

Before I can write a word down
you dance slowly on the music of the radio,
tempt me to the embrace of your body
where shadows do mimic you on the wall.
Hot arms pull me close and do lock around my neck,
when your eyes gleam brighter than the stars outside
and in the faint candlelight it's just you and me
where you do climb much deeper into my heart.
Against my face I feel your sweet soft breath,
there are promises on your lips and in your eyes,
outside the stars dance on the orchestra of the night,
in that what love is I can trust and believe
while the music brings us nearer to each other,
where we hear every creature singing along in the night.

[Reference: "Raga" by H. J. Pieterse.]

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Gert Strydom

Before Sunrise I Lay Sleeping Peacefully

Before sunrise I lay sleeping peacefully
when you awake me
and outside the stars glitter in the dark beyond
while the moon shine silver-white.

Carefully I try to read the signs,
see the lines that only I know,
there is something in the intimacy
and your green-brown eyes gleam tenderly.

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Gert Strydom

Before The Altar Of Life

Before the altar of life
He stands with a bowed head
and nail marked hands spread wide.

Some prayers rise up to Him
and in the souls of others
there's some cry out that He hears.

He stands there longing for the breaking day
when He will wipe all tears away
from the cheeks of those that follow Him

He was once clothed
in humanity and now is at His place
at the right hand of the Almighty One.

"See my blood and offering, "
says He to His great Father
while they measure the insignificant lives,
words and deeds of man.

Gert Strydom

Before The Final Darkness

Before the final darkness

I want to forgive you for every wrong thing,
making you the centre-point of my life,
I want to know that what we have is really love

and to you this is not a secret confession,
that you enrapture me, making my whole body shake,
sometimes letting me feel as if I am gliding on my feet,
that daily I miss you desperately

and already time is drawing its line through our lives,
our bodies are already overwhelmed by age,
although it feels as single moments are still lingering,
you are the core between all the details,
the one that astounds me matchlessly,
who can determine the direction of my life in only moments.

(For Annelize)

Gert Strydom

Before The Storming Of The Casinga Trenches

The past was going in seconds
while I was being sheltered
behind a small wall, with bullets,
mortars and rockets
whining and exploding, dark was everything,
dark was all

with death spreading its tentacles,
gripping mostly the enemy
bringing them to a fall
but for those barely out of range,
covered by trenches
the change from living to dead
were only minutes away

but the present was catching up with them,
with sniper bullets, mortars homing in
and hand grenades arcing dead on target
and the enemy trench lying straight ahead
to win the battle, the only way to tread
and the future of living or dying
was drawing down on the intersection
of the order: to take the trench.

[Reference: Full Moon At Tierz: Before The Storming Of Huesca by John Cornford.]

Gert Strydom

Before You

Before you I was drifting
like a piece of driftwood on the sea
and thought that I knew integrity,
passion, romance and dedication
and in every loving touch
thought that I was connecting
with that which gives life meaning,

but you are much more than that to me
a place to shelter against storms,
a place filled with tranquillity
and in a way far more pretty
than any girl who kept me company.

Gert Strydom

Behind Your Green-Brown Eyes

Behind your green-brown eyes
intense secrets do hide
where at first light
next to each other we lie whispering.

Outside doves
coo, woo and flutter
while a church-bell
calls out the time

when the sun loving like us
gives its last caress to the earth
and the moon's soft satin
which is swallowed by the darkness of the night

becomes a memory of tonight
where it already hangs naked.

Gert Strydom

Being Bilingual

There is something
in being bilingual
and when I grew up
we were forced
to take both
official languages at school
being English and Afrikaans.

It was another thing
to be taught maths in English,
when your home language is Afrikaans
and where I was taught in Afrikaans
up till then,

at a school that was
supposed to be
double medium

and to really struggle
with unknown terms
and not being able to comprehend

and to this day
I despise Mrs. Ritchie
who thought that I was stupid

and without the teacher caring
or being able
to teach in Afrikaans
I struggled along

but at university
a professor teaching
Algebra and Calculus
really did care
and taught me well.

Gert Strydom

Being Carried Along

Like a tree trunk or a piece of wood
that is being carried along
by a river or the sea

and here and there bash
against rocks or the shore
and then again drift farther

I went through life

until we did meet
and I got resolution from you
and I do know what real love is.

Gert Strydom

Being Cut Off From You

Being cut off from you
and the truth
by other thoughts
going through my mind

I write some poems,
watch solitary birds
fly past and some
coming to the window
pecking alone on it

and caged into my study
living as if I am dead
in a kind of purgatory

still thoughts with sin
and you in it
instead of prayers
keep rushing through my head

and sometimes I wonder
what I miss more
your personality or your body
or probably both.

Gert Strydom

Being Green

At the starting of the Angola Civil war
during December 1975 a armoured car
of battle group X-Ray attacked the enemy
in the town of Lobito who did run away and flee

and the commander of the Eland-90 armoured car
got instructions to be part of the stopper group
on the enemy's escape route
and stopped the armoured car
in the middle of the road
on top of a small hill
in the turret under position

when Unita joined in and looted the town
and a little 1200-Datsun approaching at full speed
and the crew commander jumped down
shouted at the breaking car not to proceed

and when it got to a halt told the occupants
(who consisted of three enemy officers and a Cuban)
calmly in Afrikaans to reverse
as the armoured car's main weapon
cannot shoot at such a short distance
and took his position again
in the crew commander's hatch

and the men were young and green,
exploding RPG-rockets had never been seen
and a swoosh sound was heard and a loud bang
that was so close that it made their ears sang

and Unita captain Johnny Cappella did shout:
"har pee gee" over and over again,
and unexpectedly it started to rain,
the people in the car realized there was no way out

and the little Datsun reversed and turned around,
caught speed spraying mud and lots of ground
but calmly the armoured car's gunner took a HE 90 shot

and the little car exploded with a thunderous sound.

Gert Strydom

Being Locked-Down (English Sonnet)

Being locked-down on my very own,
it's almost as bad as been left behind,
while where the death virus is, is unknown,
where I do struggle real answers to find.

This kind of thing split families apart,
do bring great longing to the human heart
while life is not what it used to be.
I do miss you my wife and you miss me

and always you are in my heart and mind.
I pray for you and our whole family,
that it will not of us, anyone find,
that God will constantly with each one be

but most of all I ask to protect you:
in where you go and whatever you do.

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Gert Strydom

Being Pissed-Off About A Poem

Before Christmas a mad old man told me
how to write a proper English sonnet
as free verse was not to him any poetry
and great anger was all that he did get.

About iambic pentameter he spoke,
instructed me about the rhyme scheme
but I thought what an awful old bloke
and of this poem he is the only theme.

Free verse sonnets do exist for years
and no person can them to death bestow,
I could tell that engineer how to cut gears
as better than him I do simply know,

maybe right here I can mention his name,
act just like him and do exactly the same.

Gert Strydom

Being True To Conscience (Orléans Roundel Prime)

Being true to conscience is more than only caring
for the self, it holds some sincerity,
brings a kind of awesome tranquillity
based on commitment, truth and sharing

and in this there is a kind of daring
to find a kind of solidarity.
Conscience is more than only caring
for the self, it holds some sincerity

to the truth a kind of pure unity,
with its own kind of solemn forbearing
that for the self is not overbearing,
it does not change with opportunity.
Conscience is more than only caring
for the self, it holds some sincerity.

Gert Strydom

Bells On The Porch

Sometimes the august winds
abates at September
and the bells hang lifeless on the porch
while the silence echoes deep in you and me

but later when we are apart from each other
it's to similar days that I do long,
to you with bells
that sometimes hangs ringing on the porch.

Gert Strydom

Bellville

I stand on the dark balcony
while the almost endless rain
sieves down continually

and the streets of Bellville below me shines
where lights gleam everywhere, with cars
that continually drives up and down

and I wonder
how a lightning bolt that decent over the city
would look like

if it would also branch out
like in the Transvaal of my childhood day
before it touches down blue-white
but I only see rain, concrete and glass.

Gert Strydom

Beloved

Beloved, sometimes I wonder if
I will find you again
at another place and time
and if that which gives life,
will let us exist together again?

Or is this the only
single chance,
that I have to truly love you?

Is this the only time
that we exist
and will memories be the only thing,
that remains of us for a short while?

Or will you wait for me,
in the hereafter
and will we be together again?

Gert Strydom

Beloved Girl(Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

Beloved girl, it is very strange to think
that you who I love, a short time ago,
I did then not even really deeply know
and now we have this ultimate link,

and I cannot put the right words in ink,
I see your lovely face, your body glow,
you are perfect like tiny drops of snow,
from your essence continually I drink.

You are making my life wonderful,
with great joy in the day and night
while of every moment I am aware,
with you my spirit is abundantly full
in your presence I do constantly delight
and you do treat me with tender care.

[Reference: "When I think" by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

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Gert Strydom

Beneath A Cherry Tree

Beneath a cherry tree
a German officer, a general of the third Reich,
dressed immaculately in black
with a skull and crossbones emblem
on his official cap,
somewhat like a pirate sign,
but more obscure
boots shining reflecting the garden
catches a young Jewish boy
(who was forced to labour in that garden)
eating some of the sweet red fruit.

His right boot shoots out
and catches the boy
just under the chin
and he kicks the slender boy down
tramples him into the ground
and keeps on kicking
while the child
tries to cover himself
against the blows
somewhat like a scared dog.

A hand covered in a black leather glove
grabs more red cherries from the tree
smashes them into the boy's face
press them with pits and all
along with some broken teeth
down the boy's throat,

before that devil in black
gets hold of the boy's head
and drags him
into the tool shed
where with one hammer blow after another
he kills him
and when he lies without any life,
without any movement,
brushes off his gloves, his coat

calls to a SS-guard
with lightning flashes on his arm
to dispose of the body
and returns to his study
where the death
of thousands more Jews,
more children, women and men
awaits his signature.

Gert Strydom

Beneath Stars We Could Find Silences

Beneath stars we could find silences
with your hand at times straying into mine,
the smell of gardenia was on the wind
with the moon shining with every golden ray,
your lips were mine with an own language,
somewhere a bush shrike called
and it was icy cold on the red porch
with a star suddenly shooting past
and every previous wish I then recalled
before it faded into the naught.

Gert Strydom

Beneath The Southern Cross

Beneath the Southern Cross
are two pointers that catch my eyes
and I wonder to where
their direction is taking me,
while the whole world
with time is estranging around me.

The Southern Cross is bright
against the dark sky
and I am trying to find direction
and see a bright light winking,
past and through the darkness
and this light draws me
like the wise men
that it lead to the child.

Gert Strydom

Benediction (English Sestet) [1]

Let God from you keep all kinds of evil
let Him banish all kinds of constant fear,
all wicked men, fiends, the very devil;
while His mighty angels always draw near,
draw a fiery laager around you walls,
that they may only be hallowed halls.

Gert Strydom

Berry Bush (Parody)

The shot half uncertain
sniffs on the ground, as an expert
hired to loose our cheap entertainment
in its tracks.

She finds me under the berry bush,
where I am anchored with a thick stripe,
it's high up on the pants, searching, impudently.

She dare not know
shut-eyed is how it has to be,
in double symbolism.
A snake is loose in the grass.

Gert Strydom

Better It Would Have Been (Sonnet Corona / Crown Of Sonnets)

I

Without you much better it would have been,
if in this wide world under all the skies
I did not know you, I had never seen
the glimmer, the attraction in your eyes.

Better it would have been if I unseen
at the braking of that particular day
joyous, somewhat sincere like a teen
went on another different kind of way,

I would then have totally missed you
as our love, our joy was sealed in vain.
You would not have opportunity to do
things that leave much heartache and pain

as your heart was set in some treachery,
your blunt rebuke was not sought by me.

II

Your blunt rebuke was not sought by me,
yet you gave it to me as if earned,
as if from it I was not to be free,
its impact did hurt and really burned

right into my depths, my heart's inner core
and still I then very much loved you
every day more and even much more
as something very sincere and true

but my Lord I loved more deeper still
as He always dwelled in everything
and I try to live by His very will,
with your love being at times a cursing

and at times there was water on my glasses;
when the wild wind rushes through the grasses.

III

When the wild wind rushes through the grasses,
it is something that you will never see
nor the beauty of the places where it passes
as you can never be really quite free

from the rich earthly things that embraces
you in wantonness, in deep iniquity
and at many different kinds of places
high up on the hill and down in the lea

diamonds adorn grasses and wild flowers
as if nature cries for you and me
as tears of dew that shines, not from showers
while life is how it's determined to be,

when you had chosen a fresh sort of start;
I did not ask you to return my heart.

IV

I did not ask you to return my heart
you have trampled it again and again
and now it would be really just in vain
as it is broken in every part

but now from each other being apart
we live separate lives of joy and pain
and the simple fact does still remain,
it does not take someone really quite smart

to know that when you do not have me
your whole life becomes somewhat mundane,
then you do not really want to be free
and I know that it sounds very inane

but obviously I cannot anymore be
yours in love's strange painful mystery.

V

Yours in love's strange painful mystery
were without any tears and full of glee
but left me totally broken hearted
then I noted after more than fifteen years

that you did not take a last kind of kiss,
from me was taking whatever you could,
had totally forgotten our sweet bliss,
maybe I knew this was the way that it would.

I wish time and again not to have know you
in the way that it ended when you were gone,
while then you had been wickedly untrue
had have intimate sex with someone,

it's sometimes hard to be the only one,
when at night in darkness I lie down alone.

VI

When at night in darkness I lie down alone
the golden moon and all the stars are bright
and some of them to me are quite unknown,
Orion and the seven sisters gleam at night

but life does continually carry on
the morning sun seems at times out of sight
and it is stripped from all affection
but can constantly bring back life and light

to what is still left of my kind of world,
as if everything is falling apart
and in all the things that I do behold
you seem to be somehow the crucial part

as if everything was astray leaden,
as you left me, my life did then deaden.

VII

As you left me, my life did then deaden
as if being tied up and underfed,
walking away, not anymore a maiden,
leaving my heart filled with only dread.

In love I saw you as pure and holy
a mother for children, true to the gods,
but with your lover you acted lowly
as you did cast me away to life's odds

and you have lost all the joyful graces
with the very thoughts of you that remain,
images of your many different faces
are filled to the brim with utter pain

and to meet you again I am not keen,
without you much better it would have been.

Gert Strydom

Between Bright Stars One Had Lost Its Way

(after Eugène Terreblancé)

Between bright stars one had lost its way
whipping a third of the other stars down
with its curly tail, inciting them to decay
and I wonder about the origin of that one

but a much brighter light shone in the heavens,
leading wise men from far off in the east,
moving past every other star and planet,
with a host of angels coming with a confession

that the God of the heavens
had come to man on earth,
daring life as a mere human
and a crowd followed Him

at first wanted to make Him king,
and when they did not comprehend His kingdom
they became thoughtless,
hitting nails through the God of heaven and earth.

[Reference: Dwaalster (Stray-star) by Eugène Terreblancé.]

Gert Strydom

Between The Time That The Day Dies

Between the time that the day dies
and the sun hangs precious
like a ruby in the sky
and the time that the day breaks
and the sun is fresh and new
like a orange
in the morning dawn,
man and woman
is entranced with the night
which gives flight
to their passions to be one
and although they are
destined to die at a time
the bliss of life
and the intimacy of loving
and the wonders of the world
is their pleasures to share.

Gert Strydom

Between Us Love Did So Suddenly And Unexpectedly Sprout (Sonnet)

Between us love did so suddenly and unexpectedly sprout
that in the depth of our friendship we found something more,
something that we could not stop,
something different that astounded us with each other
and in this time of early old age
for this kind of feelings there were no resistance
and in a world where everything does change
you did suddenly turn over my life
and I wonder why at this time in life I do suddenly find someone
that has the ability (more than any other woman)
to bring the utmost joy and pain
and to me you are precious and given by God,
the one who makes my heart full of sorrow and let it sing at times,
the one who I do want to love and at times want to resist.

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Gert Strydom

Between Us The Words Were Few (Rondel Prime)

Between us the words were few and far between
while we were in the act of love and its bliss
were tenderly you did again and again me kiss
while we changed from how we had been

where our new future was still unknown and unseen
where I realised all of my life I did you miss.
Between us the words were few and far between
while we were in the act of love and its bliss

and naked like this I had not you before seen
but I was happy if life was to be just like this,
it seemed that this is the way that love is
and to know me better you were keen,
between us the words were few and far between
while we were in the act of love and its bliss.

Gert Strydom

Between Us There Is No Thing Like Maybe (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ilse van Staden)

Between us there is no thing like maybe,
every piece of the puzzle fits perfectly into each other
and in dreams you had seen me before
when God did determine us from the beginning
and when we are far away from each other
shadows fall as if it wants to destroy everything.
In my days of absolute darkness
you do bring the pure bright holy light.
Love is much more than just use,
or times of emotion and lust,
you are to me the marble-jar,
the source of my constant rest,
where the ways of God traverse everything,
when in my heartbeat and blood you are alive.

[Reference:"Miskien" (Maybe)by Ilse van Staden.]

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Gert Strydom

Between White And Black (Sonnet)

I am so caught in technology
that my moments do turn to nothing
when the Escom / municipal power is missing
as if nothing do remain in powerlessness
but then I do think about Your presence in the here and now,
how it is when that bright light does suddenly go dim,
how it would be if a person full of darkness and sin
have to see You in Your full glory
but we do live in a world full of fear
between the being on and being off,
(especially at Koeberg)where spanners do fall into nuclear power plants
where nuclear power plants do explode with radioactivity (especially in Russia)
where a more stupid than earth government do invest in Russian nuclear power
want to erect Russian nuclear-power as if we do want eternal darkness.

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Gert Strydom

Between You And Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

Between you and me years do lie
with the times of our lives
as heroic deeds and victories,
also defeats and pain
and in this history there is love
the inside knowledge, trust and comprehension,
the simple and complicated concepts
between a man and woman that do love each other
and far too long we have both been alone
where together we become an impenetrable fortress
but in these things the beautiful memories do remain
of that which love is and still can become
although everything around us is in unstoppable crumbling
as love is an eternal gift from God.

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Gert Strydom

Beyond Borders

(for Annelize, after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Naked and stripped from my own conceit
it's where my soul and heart and spirit now stand before you,
where you do constantly alone wander in my dreams
still do exist as my pure sincere darling.

That you are completely woman with every obscure and dark urge
is as a man that does love you for me of the greatest interest
and I want to tell you the things that lie in the twilight of my heart,
pure things over which people do hesitate to which the heart does stay longing

that flickers in the inter-text between words that are holy in their knowledge
that you even in brokenness are to me perfect as a woman and a darling.

[Reference: "Grense" (borders) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

Beyond Enemy Lines

Above me there's an onyx sky
and the tarry night is fading fast
and I hear the roar
of enemy armour
and the crunching of tracks
echoes and sound very
near to me.

An electronic signal rushes
thousands of kilometres far
and goes into a night
filled with bright white stars
like a lighting bolt
falling in a dark black sky
and branching out to where
it has to go
to a place where Jacaranda trees
stand in purple bloom.

I match my wits against my fate
and crawl deeper into cover
of a thorn bush
and gird my soul to face
the enemy in war
and we lay and wait
and there are three of us
against a horde of enemy armour.

The light of dawn is still grey
and they get very near
and it's a thundering sound
when the first tanks
and armoured cars appear
like hungry dragons
coming to the feast.

I look up in an indigo sky
and eagles and vultures
bend down out of the sun

and descend in deadly haste
transforming into Cheetah
and Mirage fighter jets
and the radio
let me talk to them
and the end of life
and dire chaos
is unleashed unexpectedly.

Only the birds of prey
save me from the hate
of great steel monsters,
that is ready to squash and kill
and missile and rocket arrows
leap descending out of the air
and red and yellow flames appear.

After a while the planes of war
thunder away to the South
and the fire fades
and around us there are
upturned and destroyed wrecks
of man's war machines
and a slaughtering of humans
and the smell of death
cuts right through my breath,
as if it wants to engulf
and I retch and feel inhuman
and my comrades smile bravely
and say very well done
and around me
all other life is gone,
but for the three of us.

Gert Strydom

Beyond Legend In Egypt (English Sonnet)

About a land beyond the sands of time I do know,
where hot like fire merciless the sands do burn
and once a civilization with its power did glow
where some wish hope and pray for its return

and yet at that dark omen Christians do still frown,
where its marble statues lie swept into death and decay,
while that sphinx, pyramids and temples are of stone
but occult still the power rages secretive to this very day,

where a pharaoh tried to stand against the Lord God,
wrote notices on stone for all mortal men to despair
as gods did not think himself or Horus, Isis, Seth odd:
here and there still artefacts and occult emblems appear

as if some dark unknown secretive power will come home,
again the earth in deadly unhindered evil and pestilence to roam.

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Gert Strydom

Beyond Sworn Reality

I

Beyond sworn reality
there is a dimension where the world is threadbare,
far away from the natural familiarity

reality is being fabricated,
outside of the terms of time,
there is a place where another reality does start,

far beyond midnight
time is totally lost,
somewhere in the last part of the night

and the subconscious tries to find a way to it,
in dreams do build a magic carpet
that can find a bridge to that place,

then there is a world that suddenly does appear,
that usually at daylight wears out
and does disappear away into the naught.

II

Sometimes however strange objects are being seen,
people see blinding lights in the sky
when unknown forces do work in on nature,
do believe that extra-terrestrial beings do want to find them,

do want to measure strange energy fields
as proof that other alien entities are present on this planet,
it's as if they do know something about strange things,
are trying to do scientific research into unknown knowledge.

Yet it is know that a war does wage
between Michael and his forces
against the demonic evil forces of darkness
and at times this war wages everywhere

and between all of this humanity is caught
when words and deeds do let hang the destiny
of men in the balance.

[Poet's Note:"Michael (Hebr., "who is like God") , called St Michael in the Christian churches,
one of the seven archangels in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, presumed to be leader of the
angels (see Daniel 10: 13,21; 12: 1)and guardian angel of Israel. According to the
pseudepigraphic Book of Enoch, Michael and his command of faithful troops defeated the
rebellious archangel Lucifer and his followers, casting them into Hell. In the Talmud, his
relationship to the other angels is compared with that on earth of the high priest to Israel; thus, he
is considered the immediate lawgiver to the prophet Moses on Sinai (see Acts 7: 38) ." Microsoft
Encarta Encyclopedia.]

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Gert Strydom

Beyond The Days Of Yore

Gerrie went past the days of yore
to a world where trees
are gigantic in size
where the small farm dam is so big
that it has fish in it
and you are sure to get lost
at the big dam up in the mountain.

On his own he tried to row with the boat
over the small dam
but muddy water flowed in faster,
than he could get away from the shore
and then with difficulty
he had to draw the boat out of the water.

He found a dark brown crab
larger than his hand
and caught it from the top
and opened the small lid
between the pinchers
and small crabs came out from it.

There weren't other children
to play with Gerrie
and he took the road
all the way through the hillocks
to the big dam

but when he was crossing the main road
Gardiël was passing
with the green John Deere tractor
and stopped and loaded him on the trailer
where Gerrie was standing looking out
at the grating and the wind blew
his hair apart
and at the Lucerne field
a guinea fowl hen
with a lot of chicks were passing
and it sounded as if she was screaming bankrupt

and Gerrie knew that they were poor
but not as much as that
and was wondering
from where she was getting her information?

At the stable he helped Thomas
to clean the milking machines
and saw him blowing out blue smoke fumes
after he rolled a cigarette
from a packet of orange-yellow BB-tobacco

and Thomas told about the tokkelossie
that at night
sneaks around as a ugly cannibal dwarf
catching naughty children
and disobedient wives

but Gerrie wasn't afraid
of this nonsense
and if that creature maybe came
it would get an iron marble from his catapult

and later Thomas smiled broad
while the tractor drove away
and waved at Gerrie
until he faded away
becoming smaller than a dwarf.

Gert Strydom

Bicyclers

As if the road does belong to them alone
they come next to each other in threes
and even on as four riders,
with bright coloured T-shirts
short pants
and like a woman their legs shaven smooth.

The spokes glitter, the wheels sing
and they ride straight through the traffic
only aware of the road and the journey
as if there is something magic
in riding a bicycle.

Gert Strydom

Big Brother

The big machine ticks over softly
and in its inner workings
people are crunched to numbers,
with some being retrenched,

with others being appointed
according to the affirmative action laws,
(the new racism reaction)
and solitary some white men stand

who are masters at their trade,
educated to the highest degrees,
with wide experience do not know where to go,
what to do to earn a living
and inhumanly the machine doesn't care,
just stares back selflessly, without a heart, without a soul.

Gert Strydom

Biker With The Big Heart

His heart is big,
so big as if
he can fit the whole world into it,
but there's only place for two
on his motorbike
and while the refs
of the years climb
his life slides past
with a speed leading to a end

and the loneliness grips him
as his mate has been gone for a long time,
missed life
and wasn't on time
for their last motorcycle ride
and now it's only him
who are alone
in the saddle of life

and at times he still wants to open the throttle,
feel the wind flow though his hair
washing like a river in flood,
experience the heat of the sun
and feel the adrenaline
flowing like something living through him,
but the road is far too long
and the end stays distant
as he doesn't reach the intersection
of life and death
and his love and melancholy remains
and the biker always drives on
searching for answers
that doesn't exist.

Gert Strydom

Bird Of The Night

The blackbird of the night
covers the sky
and it's rather dark
as if the stars are dim
and on this night some are gone
and there's something electric blue
in its colouring.

Maybe the feathers
of a white breasted crow
with some clouds here and there,
some would say

or something more menacing
than a type of raven
is tonight in the air,
like a vulture
or some kind of giant eagle
with huge ripping claws,

but to me there's lightning
that I see reflected in its coat
with blue-white bolts
flashing down suddenly

and later when the rain is gone
the sweet notes of a songbird
is in the air
and maybe the bird
in the sky tonight
is a very special one
that only exists in my mind.

Gert Strydom

Birds Are Chattering (Persian Quatrain)

and everywhere they sing
of the beauty and the imminent arrival
of a new spring.

Gert Strydom

Birds In The Twilight (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

At the marsh there is a beating of wings something profound
where I find many birds swarming around
that at twilight does descend from the sky
where the dying red sun radiates over the water and birds do fly
and swarm upon swarm of weavers, sparrows and doves are to be found
where like exiles they do return to the nests
twitter, chirp coo and crowd together where on branches they do rest
and to God they do utter a joyful sound
where I find the birds swarming around.

[Reference:"Voëls in die skemering" (Birds in the twilight)by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Birdsong (Free Verse Sonnet)

At the window a yellow weaver leaves me speechless
with its love-song.
As the twilight of dawn comes after the night
it is busy frolicking to its mate
and it sings the twilight from red to white,
the mercy and love of God is undisguised
while that bird knows that He turns the days around.
When in the beautiful summer-day I think about you,
there are sparrows and doves that I notice,
and love comes forth from their twittering,
as you sleep peaceful with the innocence of a child,
hadidah-ibises flutter down out of the cobalt blue
while to you my heart sings a song of praise
and the morning has promises that I do find everywhere.

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Gert Strydom

Birth

To mere humans He gave power
that when in love they come together,
they do create just as Him
and together forge new life
and on every new creation day,
when for the first time a child cries
it is witness about Godly power
and we do become inundated with joy,
when we are bound to a child
and to each other with blood
while we also find part of ourselves
and we want to find and presume only the best,
when the world is different from what it has been
and everything becomes tangible real like flesh and grass.

Gert Strydom

Birth [2]

To mere humans He gave power
that when in love they come together,
they do create just as Him
and together forge new life
and on every new creation day,
when for the first time a child cries
it is witness about Godly power
and we do become inundated with joy,
when we are bound to a child
and to each other with blood
while we also find part of ourselves
and we want to find and presume only the best,
when the world is different from what it has been
and everything becomes tangible real like flesh and grass.

Gert Strydom

Birthday Night

The golden light
of twelve candles
sparkled on your skin

while you came to me
like a goddess
stepping back into my life

and a shadow
followed you
on the bedroom wall

and I could see
your beautiful big eyes glowing
as if set alight.

There were still drops of water
on your naked skin
which was warm to my touch

and you blew all the candles out
and in sudden darkness
your kiss was soft and hot.

In having you against me
there was something familiar
and something new

and things felt as if they
were destined to be
and I could hear
your heart beat against mine.

Gert Strydom

Bit By Bit (Free Verse Sonnet)

Bit by bit you give me your heart
and the days come full of love and sorrow,
where constantly I do long for you,
while for many days we do live separate.
When you do leave gaps that I do not suspect,
you do still beat within my heart
and you are the one that do stick with me,
while the worst storms rage around me.
In the time of my greatest inability
you do change everything when I do it least expect
and when live do come merciless again,
you do give me hope for each new day.
I have found the angel of my heart:
it's you my big-eyed woman.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Bittersweet Day That Arrives

Bittersweet day that arrives,
bittersweet the sun is burning
another man came between her and me
has broken our love down to nothing
and now she loves him
with everything between us shattered.

If I look for the things binding us,
there is only pain that I find in memories
as if everything between us turns away
to something forsaken and strange
I am still blinded; only find the words of a child.

Big-eyed memories
shatters my heart apart
with the pain, the sweet joy that it brings,
I try to again to be intrusive
but between us everything is finished.

[Reference: Bitterbessie dagbreek (Bitter berry dawn) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Black Was Everything Without Any Light (In Answer To Ted Hughes)

Black was everything without any light,
in a endless night
until in the brain of the creating One
the miracles of life did come

and dazzling blazing light appeared,
the sky unfolded in a deep blue hue
under a yellow-white sun
and all in black space hanged,
the creatures, the plants and everything
on a planet called earth
where creatures dwell from the time
that the first one appeared and thereafter
from there birth

and no crow came from nightmare,
the evil hand or anywhere but from
the hand of the creator God
who thought and things became
from the sheer energy of His spoken words.

[From Crow (extract) Two legends by Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom

Black-Green Starling (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after D. F. Malherbe)

Black-green shiny starling
I hear you scream constantly
where you peck at the leaves of the apricot tree,
out of need do search for food in a hungry age,
do curtail the fruit coming from spring by half
while rain do pour down for days from the sky,
do even peck at the spinach sprouts
and I wonder what destiny does hold
when the wind like in winter does blow and whistle
and I cannot escape your hungry image from my thoughts
do later see the apricots and peaches coming to fruit
but in my mind your voice does linger
until on a day you land fluttering
and well-fed are like always cocky and impudent.

[Reference:"Die rooivlerkspreu" (The red winged starling)by D. F. Malherbe.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Blaze Through Your Days

Do not fade away when life nears its end,
old age should rage with the knowledge of its years,
till its last power is spend,

even if your days are just a godsend
and longing brings its tears
and you do not know to what end.

Blaze through your days to transcend
the expectations of others and their fears
even if your reserves are spend.

Do what you want to, even if it takes all weekend
to carry it through and your body feels as if pierced by spears,
even if you feel completely at an end,

call on every one you hold dear and every fiend and friend
before the last days nears
while there is still time to spend

to express your will, to let them comprehend
that you are still living, even if things are too far in arrears
and you my mother, live on to the end
even if you hate or love me, until your last breath is spend.

[Reference: Do not go gentle into that good night by Dylan Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Blessed Are Those (In Answer To Dikobe Wa Mogale)

Blessed are those
who jumped at Cassinga,
courted death while outnumbered
by the enemy and Cuban battle tanks
and are still living
to tell the story

blessed are those who are killed, slaughtered
in the thousands on there farmsteads,
while the police
do not tract down the killers
and these killings continues
to still go on

blessed are those who are burgled, hijacked
and raped
in the cities
and are still living
while every criminal in Africa
floods in to the country

blessed are those who choose
to remain here as white citizens
while being oppressed
by the laws laid down
by the current government
and are left without income
by the effect
of affirmative action
and who still believe and pray
while their days drag on aimlessly.

[Reference: blood of the martyrs by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Blockhouses Had Been Erected Right Over The Country

Blockhouses had been erected right over the country,
farms had been entered and burnt to the ground,
Livestock and animals had been slaughtered
and women and children were rounded up
and interned into death camps.

Young boys
were set against white walls
and firing squads
was set against them

and a super power
clenched its fist around this country
and stood gigantic
against every Boer farmer.

Envoi

That time will be forever black
in history
with the misdeeds of the British
that is well known
and the ruination of a nation, arousing from it
where women and children perished as targets
at the commands of Horatio Herbert Kitchener.

[Note: My own great grandmother died in a British concentration camp and my great grandfather was sent by the British to St. Helena as a prisoner of war and as a result of this, my grandfather(Gert Strydom) grew up in a orphanage.]

Gert Strydom

Blonde Curly Head

When you run joyous into the garden
the whole world lies open before you
while it's autumn, leaves are stripped from branches
and you look great-eyed at the small lizard
where it hides in a small hole in the wall,
and you notice a pool with big Koi fish
that watches you from beneath the water of the pond
and then you try to touch and feel
with your small hands and the water is cool,
while you catch a small frog
and press that animal against your cheek,
while it feels as if eternity is lingering there
and suddenly it jumps from your wet hands
as a strange wet thing.

Gert Strydom

Blood River

They came in thousands
and their spear points glitter,
while the sun's first rays
folds over the plain.

In the laager the men are drinking coffee
and are eating biltong and gather,
to read out of the bible
and to pray
and make a holy oath and covenant
with the Almighty God
to stop an overwhelming foe.

Out of the fog they rise
and the impi forms
in into all its battle lines,
like a storm sea
of which the waves gather ominous
to smash to pieces.

At every wagon there's thorn branches
and four hundred and seventy Boer farmers
stand with their flintlock guns,
while the women and children
are melting lead at the fires
and they wait fearless on the enemy.

Their war cries hangs chilling
and Abatagati resounds
like thunder out thousands of mouths,
while the impi
storms in a killing frenzy to the wagons
and spears like a swarm of bees
fill the air
and descent deadly.

Shooting and loading
are repeated without end
and rifle barrels get red hot,

while thousands storm almost unstoppable
to spear and bash dead.

The Lord hears
and thousands are stopped
in their tracks
and before the dark night comes
the river's water is blood
and on the battle field
three thousand Zulu warriors are dead
and Umhlela and Dambuza
and their whole impi,
is destroyed
and there is nobody
to return to Dingaan.

[References: Abatagati=> Kill the magicians. Dingaan=> Zulu king. Umhlela and Dambuza=>Captain's of Dingaan.=> Dingaan's generals. Impi=> Zulu army. At Isandlwana 1329 British soldiers died en and at Rorke's Drift eleven people were declared heroes and still they could not stop death against the Zulu impi. Only three Boer Voortrekkers were wounded at Blood River and they had faith in a Almighty God.]

Gert Strydom

Blood River (In Answer To Don Mattera)

Maybe forever the blood river remains red
as a token of the thousands killed,
who came to destroy, plunder and pillage
while they madly were beating their war drums

like they did to Piet Retief and his men,
but by His almighty hand God intervened,
helped a tiny band of civilian men
with flintlock weapons to defeat

the tens of thousands who rushed with assegais
and killing batons upon them
and when the British army faced the same enemy
years later with Martini-Henri rifles at Isandhlwana

and with many more men formed an unbreakable square,
that square buckled, was swept away
while death came to them

but still thousands of white people in South Africa
are raped, tortured to death and plundered
as if barbarianism still remains,

as if a pact with the almighty God
means nothing, while black men
trample the freedom of others
and rob what they do possess.

Gert Strydom

Blue Sky Memories (In Answer To O Ingrid Jonker, For Daleen)

Blue sky memories continually comes to me
of a day under a bright summer sun
as if a part of you stays lingering,
when I love you even more (if I could)
while continually you are snared in my remembering.
Even when times of bad weather want to come
there is an unbreakable bond between us,
while continually I am astounded by our love.
Blue sky memories continually lingers in my thoughts
when I forget all of my previous heartaches,
when continually I am lost in you
and I always know about the depth of our love.
The sparkling sun continuously brings new hope,
when we walk days, months and years together on a road.

Gert Strydom

Blue-White Thunder From The Sky

While I close the gate next to the car
blue-white thunder comes down from the sky,
do smash down with sparks that do run right next to me,
like a bomb, a mortar that hits and do explode
and in my inner-eye the smashing ray is etched
for moments and around me
it does smell like gunpowder, sulphur and rock
like when a person does hit quartz-rocks together,
and I run away
before the next thunderbolt does hit
while great drops blatantly do fall
all around me.

Gert Strydom

Borders

Past the borders that divides us
of seeing, feeling, hearing and tasting
past thoughts, sensations of you and me
the ways how

we experience each other, the reality,
I want to go deeper to you
so that somewhere there
my inner eyes, my thoughts penetrate

to that which is the essence of our humanity
and in simplicity I do not want to wait longer
past the empty and vain game with a deeper meaning
not heeding the shallow things of the world

so that we can be aware of that which is holy,
more splendid and base love on eternal light.

[Reference: Borders by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Both Of Your Cheeks Glow (Hymnal Octave)

Both of your cheeks glow like a peach,
and very peacefully
the sun sets on the far off beach,
that looks beautifully
while we both do love each to each
and very gracefully
far across to me you do reach
contended blissfully.

Gert Strydom

Bouquet (Parody)

(with apologies to Louis Esterhuizen)

Far off against the water source
she and her brothers every day finds grief,
for hours they walk along, like bearded angels
tired of the forgetting

and in the afternoons, after finding the apples for the day,
she comes with teeth full of green pieces to me,
she walks with dignity sucking every wet finger
to show proudly how the clinging soot

cannot wash off from her teeth -
Showing exactly how hard she has to bow and walk around,
while she is sucking up
every last drop

and I am waiting, while I have already forgotten.

At first light she comes to say that she is sorry,
I find tears while my darling
is really longing-

For the late afternoon's thank you, her bouquet is already wilting.

Gert Strydom

Boy In The Veldt (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Etienne van Heerden)

As a child he was taught that the judgement day of God would come,
of angels that do hold a laager of protection around him,
where the pastor and Sabbath School of the church said
that God's territory is everywhere and limitless
and he believes that he serves the Lord sincerely and faithfully,
that God does even witness the smallest injustice on earth,
do shoot with his catapult the mynahs to death
where they peck at the other birds like demons that some feathers are lost,
do hear the babbler roaring with laughter at him
and believes that it's a message coming from God
that right and righteousness must occur everywhere
as the world is the jurisdiction of God
where the doves again sing their songs of praise,
of a God that do even to birds bring salvation.

[Reference:"Seun in rietbos" (Boy in a reed-bush) by Etienne van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

Boy With A Catapult

I remember how my brother Japie one afternoon did dare me
at the dairy to take out of the air
a speckled rock pigeon with my catapult,
as if I did not really know how to shoot with a catapult.
It was near to lunchtime and the sky was open and blue,
the sun had been hot and white
and I aimed and pulled back the elastic bands
the round river stone buzzed away
and high above us I saw blood and feathers scatter
how the bird from its flight did fall to below
where head over tail it tumbled down and it felt like a eternity
and in my throat and heart it jerked, as I did know that it was dead,
a piccaninny did jog up to me with the bird in his hand
which I gave to him for his lunch

Gert Strydom

Boyhood (Novelinee)

As a boy I lived in the midlands
not very far from the blue raging sea,
life was carefree without any demands,
in the mountains did find some tranquillity
and a reel and rod was like a new toy
while beautiful and lovely were the days
and the fish in the river brought some joy
while meadows and high hillocks were my ways,
while I enjoyed the summer's hot rays.

Gert Strydom

Brand (Oriko)

Burning glowing iron
Reaches out to lying bull
And beyond the pen;
Numerous cattle are herded
Down a narrow brown dirt track.

Gert Strydom

Break Of Day

As the rays of the morning sun turns on,
fall through the window on your face,
your presence brings to me amazing grace
and love is still present when the night is gone,

when the sun blazes on you, my only one
who brings light in to my life's darkest space,
I have to leave to work at another place
and let you be for some hours alone,

in moments when business takes precedence
and we are removed in space, place and thought
when that which is between you and me
and everything that we hold dear and in confidence
to standstill is brought
by a career's claims on what love is meant to be.

[Reference: "Break of day" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

Breakfast Bliss

Watching the television news,
even following a commercial without any emotion
concerning the affairs of the country,
the world displayed on his face,
he sips his coffee see homes destroyed

by another tornado,
a flooding disaster,
eats the big breakfast,
hurrying up chews a little faster on toast,
fried eggs and lamb sausages
enjoys the food,
puts down the knife and fork
take the newspaper
to look at prices of new cottages

put it down folded neatly,
smiles at his wife sweetly
embrace and kiss her goodbye,
see an aircraft that do pass overhead in the sky
through the window,
do notice the shadow of someone at the door,
hears the knock
and knows that it's seven o'clock,
time to leave for work.

Gert Strydom

Breaking Point

Sometimes mere moments do linger,
when your eye catches mine intimately and honest
then I am simultaneously both scared and happy,
sometimes mere moments do linger,

when your eye catches mine intimately and honest,
when you linger with me without words,
sometimes then our love is pure
when your eye catches mine intimately and honest,

when you linger with me without words
and you wait that I tell you about my day,
about the glory and hell of work,
when you linger with me without words,

and you wait that I tell you about my day;
when I rather want to know more about you,
when I want to forget the rush, the distress
and you wait that I tell you about my day,

when I rather want to know more about you,
when a moment comes to a breaking point,
then sometimes I am surprised by your beauty,
when I rather want to know more about you,

when a moment comes to a breaking point,
sometimes mere moments do linger,
when we both remove our own masks,
when a moment comes to a breaking point;

sometimes mere moments do linger,
when your eye catches mine intimately and honest
then I am simultaneously both scared and happy,
sometimes mere moments do linger.

Gert Strydom

Breaking-Point (Free Verse Sonnet)

Sometimes next to you I lie on my back
while I rest during the dark hours of the night.
Sometimes it's in you that I loose everything and myself
when we desire each other in eternal moments
and sometimes when you look so pervading at me
it is as if everything in the here and now comes to breaking-point,
when I know how the depth of your humanity looks,
while I stand as a man before you without any disguise.
When you do draw me deep into your embrace
I feel your lips burning hot upon mine,
how your soft arms do surround me
and then you lead me to a better and other place
where the scope of a moment becomes eternal,
like this you and I do know each other in the secret of love.

Gert Strydom

Breathless

(for Annelize)

Outside I see the sun peep,
hear doves coo for each other,
know that where you are it does also rise
with the beauty of it I am astonished,

in my heart you are beating in my blood,
another day races on
while you do wonder in the silences of my heart,
without gasping it

as you are breathless-far away in the nought.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Breathless (Rubliw)

Breathless
you do leave me
under a pale blue sky.
With a glance of your eye
I do float without any gravity
and I wonder what does remain
of how we were before
as loving is
like this.

Gert Strydom

Bride And Groom

With wonder and joy, like two gods
they are smitten with each other
at the new discoveries
of body, of soul and of happiness,
as they are the first to find
each other in this way

sprawling together, they get more intimate,
more intense, but with full sense
and while the days draw out
stretching in length
they take infinite care,

to be aware of each other,
in every detail and need
with every sense
as if tomorrow this feelings
may be lost.

Gert Strydom

Bright Sun

Ah, bright sun, so red and then so brilliant white
shadows, fall everywhere, moving as if having fun
vacationers tan, on summer days to your hot rays
turn their bodies from toe to tip, to be beautiful brown.

Gert Strydom

British Inhumanity During The Second Anglo-Boer War

(in answer to Thérèse Bartman)

The Boer's extensive
and masterly-planned guerrilla warfare
did almost paralyse the British army
where most Boer citizens
were snipers and expert horsemen,
their generals and commandants,
especially generals Christiaan de Wet and Koos De la Rey
did use superb strategy
and the Boers were experienced in fire in movement tactics,
could live from the veldt
if there was any wild food
and could get food from their farms

but Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener's
severe tactics, which do accentuate British inhumanity
caused the British to win the war
as they did devastate the farms of the Boers,
did burn down the homes, possessions
and the fields unto the ground,
did scorch and did singe the earth on the farms totally
did catch and take all of the animals
or shot them just were they were,

did take non-combatants,
mainly Boer women and children
by severe force into concentration camps,
did even aim rifles as firing squads at mere children
as happened to Japie Greyling
and near to thirty thousand
women and children did die
from illnesses such as inflammation of the lungs,
typhoid, measles and dysentery

but still more than this
the local black population were armed

by the British with rifles and send out
to the farms to cause amok
and according to Veldt-coronet Jacobus Potgieter
various farms were looted in this way and many women
were assaulted and raped on the farms by armed black men
when the farms were being plundered.

In the Pietersburg concentration camp in 1901
it was as if the angel of death did go through the camp,
as in every tent people were deadly ill
where mainly Boer women and children
were held as if they were people under a sentence.

The cattle were infected with fire-illness and lung-disease
and the sheep with measles and heart-water,
were slaughtered in front of the Boer people in the camp
and the British did know of these illnesses
but it was the food
that they gave the Boer women and children to eat
and these illnesses were carried over to the women and children.

Daily Veldt-coronet Jacobus Potgieter
did dig seventeen graves
and he was one of many people that were digging graves,
he did urge the women and children
not to eat the meat
and with the women and children did insist
that the English doctor
should examine the animals
and that doctor did find
all of the animals to be infected too severally to be eaten
after which the sheep was slaughtered and buried.

Subsequently they did received tinned meat
with grain and sometimes grinded glass
and fishhooks that was in it,
then also sometimes grinded glass
in the little flower that they got.

After only two weeks in that camp
the children of Jacobus Potgieter were ill,
many people did get measles

and all of them did die from that illness
where all of these things as utterly inhuman
do hang over the shoulders of the British people to today.

Powerless Veldt-coronet Jacobus Potgieter
and his wife did pray together three times a day
for God to protect and heal their children.

[References: "Bloemfontein-konsentrasiekamp" (Bloemfontein-concentration camp) and "Springfontein-konsentrasiekamp" (Springfontein concentration camp) by Thérèse Bartman.

Poet's note: This poem is based on the true events in the life of Veldt-coronet Jacobus Johannes Potgieter during the second Anglo-Boer war as rendered by the "J. eter Manuscript: Eric Swardt. My own great-grandmother did die in a British concentration camp and my great-grandfather was send to St. Helena as a prisoner of war and my grandfather (Gert Strydom) did grow up in the langlaagte orphanage. The historic heroic story of Japie (Jacobus Johannes Cornelis) Greyling during the second Anglo-Boer war, the poem "Japie Greyling" by J.F.E Celliers, the book "Fear and Be Slain" by the British captain Jack Seeley affirm the heroism of the boy Japie Greyling in front of a British firing squad.

Terms: Veldt-coronet: During the second Anglo-Boer war: "A official burdened with (military) order in a district. A officer with a rank equal to that of a captain." National Dictionary. "A important official, in the local government that was subordinate to the magistrate and did practice functions of great significance as far as local, administrative, judgemental and police matters did go; in his district the Veldt-coronet did represent the magistrate." Hand woordeboek van die Afrikaanse taal. (Hand Dictionary of the Afrikaans language)

Commandant: An officer with the rank equal to a lieutenant rank between major and officer in command of a Boer commando in the second Anglo-Boer war.]

Gert Strydom

Broken

Sometimes I wonder why
I constantly feel in disorder
in Your presence
as if I am still becoming

and maybe it's because You are totally perfect,
that love that is so self sacrificing
is almost not understandable.

Gert Strydom

Broken Between You And Me

a Photo frame's glass
has broken
between you and me
and lies in pieces
like it should be.

The photograph of when
we were happy,
has also know better days
and comes from a time
that shouldn't have been.

Just like you that glass
cuts me,
when I try and put it together
and it will have to stay broken.

Things are forever broken
between you and me
and I still thank God,
that you went away to another.

Gert Strydom

Broken Country

Broken country, you know the sadness
of millions of people that are leaving you
and the silent fury and hatred
that is constantly present
and about pain and injustice you do bare knowledge,
about the silent yearning on each face
for something far better and on the street
you sometimes witness violence but also pity
do witness people that want a own life,
that want to have the right to a own work
and do want to reach out for a place in the sun
but you do know that many will never have it
and how deep the despair lies in their hearts
and that people want to live if they only could.

Gert Strydom

Broken-Wing Angel

Out of a sapphire blue heaven
I fell down to earth,
while I reached with my right hand
for the stars.

Michael and Gabriel was with me
when a thunder stroke
clapped blinding out of the darkness
and hit my right wing and singe it.

The forces of darkness
was suddenly everywhere around me
and with a last desperate swish
of my left wing
and with a flaming sword
I tried to stop
that they lay there hands
on a child in Clanwilliam.

Today there's a marble statue
at that child's grave
and no man knows,
why I protect that piece of earth
with a broken wing.

Gert Strydom

Buffelskraal

(after I. D. du Plessis)

At the Buffelkraal farmstead once lived a beautiful girl
near to the Matroosberg Mountain with a crown of golden hair
and when the first winter snow falls and covers the hills,
as the moon comes out glistening a scene is acted out.

White is the snow flaking down
and the moon is golden
when a gorgeous girl entices a boyfriend
and for moments they stand together
while moonbeams fall yellow
as she smiles as the loveliest girl in the universe;
white is the snow flaking down
while the moon is golden.

Just more than a hundred and forty years ago
the dreams of Francois came true like an answered prayer
when the loveliest girl in the district asked him for a flower
while she amazed him with a stolen kiss.

White is the snow flaking down
and silver-white is the moon
where a pretty girl entices a boyfriend
and he goes home with a song in his heart
when the moonbeams fall icy white
as she smiles as the prettiest girl in the universe;
white is the snow flaking down
and silver-white is the moon.

Blissful is the knowledge that she loves him
when he faces Groothoek cliff,
bravely he loads his blunderbuss
before he starts climbing the hill.

White is the snow flaking down
and bleak white the moon
where a pretty girl entices a boyfriend
to pick a disa flower and when he slips

falling down a rocky ledge to his death
she cries like the most raving girl in the universe;
white is the snow flaking down
and bleak white the moon.

Fleeting the snow flakes down
as on a night she walks in her nightdress,
escaping into the Hex River Mountains
and a ghostly tale begins.

Splashed with blood is the flaking snow
and dark is the moon
when the death of a boyfriend draws a girl to the hills
and as a rock shatters she falls down a cliff,
deep into a gorge
and another sweetheart dies in the universe,
splashed with blood is the flaking snow
and dark is the moon

At the Buffelkraal farmstead once lived the loveliest girl
near to the Matroosberg Mountain with a crown of golden hair
and when the first winter snow falls and covers the hills
as the moon comes out glistening a scene is acted out.

White is the snow flaking down
and the moon is golden
when crying a girl tries to entice her boyfriend
as she stands in a white nightdress on the cliffs
while moonbeams fall yellow
as she smiles as the loveliest girl in the universe;
white is the snow flaking down
while the moon is golden.

[References: "Rietfontein" by I. D. du Plessis, "The witch of Hex River" by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

Burden Of Conscience

Feelings of guilt arise and spread unseen
to the rulers in skyscrapers,
where people in the midnight-hour
sit together in secret meetings.

Unseen people are scared on the highest thrones,
there comes an unknown fear,
a feeling of guilt to those who do oppress
that the omnipotent Lord God on His time

will hold a terrible punitive reckoning
and at night people mutter before demonic powers,
ancestral spirits are called for advice
and still the rulers do remain scared

that the Godly vengeance will unfold at His time,
from childhood time the words of the Holy Book is remembered.

Gert Strydom

Burning In

I will always remember you
with golden eyes
swimming in mine,

the way in which
you shake your head
to get your locks
out of your face,

the bite mark that your teeth
leaves loving on my neck
and how with this little act
you mark your terrain off,

but mostly you will be
in my thoughts
when we are apart from each other
and then without you
I will remember all the beautiful things
that is now burning in to my memories.

Gert Strydom

Burrow (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Clinton V. du Plessis)

Together we did plant many flowers
and all of the lilies, dahlias and geraniums do bloom,
as you do hold our garden and maybe a cosmos in your hands
and where others do drive pass slowly as it does astound them,
it is in your heart and flesh that my love is really sprouting,
where eternal flowers have their space and place of sun,
as in your love your soul, spirit and body is my territory
and others can look at the beauty of our home
where all kinds of trees, bushes, plants and flowers do grow
when in spring that idyllic spot looks like a small Eden
but in your heart is the place where the loveliest flowers do show,
where the flowering time do never elapse for our love,
where God is the labourer of selfless love
and do prune and plant and water in His own mystery.

[Reference:"Wroet" (Burrow)by Clinton V. du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

Bus Ride At Night

At quarter to five
the driver refuses,
that I get on a bus
in Burnett street
because it is already full.

There are men, woman and children
and we talk various languages
while we wait for the bus
and I see a car guard
dancing in the street
while he does tricks like a clown.

We wait on the next bus
and the afternoon passes
and the bus is very late
and it stays away
and just Putco and North Star busses
stop at other places.

At dusk the bus appears
and it's got a double deck,
but is also full
and on the top level the roof is so low
that I bump my head
while it draws from the curb.

There's no place to sit down
before we travel halfway to the city
and there's a crowd of people around me
and we sit tight against each other
and in the front a child is holding onto a bar
while she licks the window with her tongue
and try to draw spit lines.

The bus braids through cars,
but it takes longer than an hour
to ride two stages
and a woman calls her husband

to pick her up at church square.

In Visagie Street the cars stand in a traffic jam
and it becomes night
while we wait in the traffic
and I embark from the bus
and twist through the pedestrians
and everywhere there are people
that stand in dark corners
and alleyways
and shout at each other in foreign languages.

At Church square I see stars in the sky,
but uncle Paul looks friendly
while the lights
of a few cars passes by
and I see how his men
are protecting him
and there's nobody else in the street
and I wonder what to do
if the last bus has already left.

I wait at night at a bus stop
and an old black man
comes and stand near me
and we are both glad,
to catch a ride
on the last bus.

The bus is lighted brightly
And it's comfortable and hot inside
and I see the zoo passing by
just before the bus stops for me
and red lights
disappears in the distance
and the evening wind tugs at my jacket,
but my house is near.

Gert Strydom

Bus Trip At Night

In the winter outside it's already dark
where we sit in the bus, ordered to a determined trip
and vague acquaintances from the daily coming en going do rise
while some others do dare loud conversations.

Outside a sickle moon hangs bright when the bus does brake
and your fingers do lock around mine and your eyes glitter like shining suns.
Your smile do entice a smile of my own and the worries disappear
where we are in a dungeon as slaves travelling between work and home

and strings of lights hang high and catch the eye,
as a enchantment to the cold city
but most of the people are grim, some somewhat sad
others are very tired and the bus does wobble on
roars up the hillock like an overeat monster
that does vomit at the set bus stop.

Gert Strydom

Bush Telegraph

(after Johann Johl)

We drive along the Kolkhoz road
where it passes near to an old battlefield
of the third German empire
of which nobody now bears any knowledge.

Its already spring and in the wood
some blossoms are appearing
and here and there
wild flowers grow next to the dust track

which are slushy from the mud
and we slide and slide
almost like on a rally track
until the road ends at the datja
where we want to spend the weekend.

We hear a black Eurasian woodpecker
knocking tick-tock against some trees
with the sound resounding right through the wood
as if he wants to signal
an unknown message to us.

The bush looks like something
out of the Baba-Jaga witch tale
and while Tanja tells me
about that evil cannibal

it's as if somebody walks over my grave
and the hairs of both my arms rise
but I view it as coming from the chill.

Like peasants we stop
and look at the scene,
breath in the fresh air
and see how our boots
leave tracks on the loam.

Quickly we carry our baggage into the dwelling
and Tanja's face is blushing
when we walk through the wood

where I am picking some wild flowers for her
and her smile is far past lovely
and her braided hair
swishes cheeky to and thro.

She carries a basket and we walk
from berry bush to berry bush
to fill it with brambles
that grow everywhere around us

and the woodpecker knocks out its signal
even louder and louder
as if his messages is becoming more urgent
but still we are not able to decipher it.

The Marconi-bird
suddenly flies past screaming,
knowing that his warning
is not regarded
and it's black with a red crown.

Tanja walks in advance
to the next bramble bush
is looking picture perfect with her blue eyes
which are shining brightly

when a German landmine
suddenly becomes alive beneath her
and the crackling explosion
of sunken scrap-iron
spreads her much higher
than the birch trees.

[Reference: Bostelegraaf (Bush telegraph) by Johann Johl. Kolkhoz:
Community farm. Black Eurasian woodpecker: Dryacopus martius. Datja:
Russian holiday home. Baba-Jaga: Russian cannibal witch.]

Busy With A Small Cosmos

(for Daleen)

Recollection comes alive
in the spring while the roses do flower
when I see you coming near to bushes of daisies
with your hair white blonde in the early morning light,
grace and great wonder is on your face
and you are digging in a small flowerbed,
with the ground in your fingers you are speechless
as in your thoughts you are busy with a small cosmos.
Later when the redbreast outside in the rain does dance and sing,
the thunder does draw blue-white lines in the garden,
you do smell the rain falling on the fertile red-brown earth
the presence of God comes to you as a suggestion
where He is covering the whole planet with both of His hands,
does give life, tries to lead everybody away from the eternal abyss.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

But How Long Will This Peace Last

The night that peace comes
torches are launched into the sky
like stars
to glide hanging to the ground
and as far as I look
I see fireworks near and far,
but how long will this peace last?

Nelson Mandela walks out of jail
and there are people cheering
and dancing from joy
and some think
that now they are totally free,
but how long will this peace last?

His rainbow nation disappears
into the naught
and although the sun still shines
work are reserved for some
and people begin to leave the country
while others from all over Africa stream in
and South Africans are jobless,
but how long will this peace last?

There are incapable people getting positions
and the country goes years back
and murder and killings
are totally out of control
and the police are powerless
to stop it,
but how long will this peace last?

The government takes legal firearms in
while crime spreads wider
and the state are trying to control lives
more and more
and corruption, fraud, rape,
murder and robbery
happens every day,

but how long will this peace last?

Envoi

The slaughter of black on white
and robbery are urged on
and reverse racism
talked good
and the country is in chaos
with incapables controlling it
and the dilapidation nobody can stop
but how long will this peace last
before the country
gets another hell of a war?

Gert Strydom

But Then I Met You

Once I loved a girl,
who left me
for another man
and that deceit
I could never understand
and wretched did that pain appear

Once I loved a woman
and her children
who left me
to live with another guy,
without knowing the
reason why
and a life spent in vane
left a lot of pain.

At times love
seemed to be for others
and the worst kind of curse,
but then I met you
and the world changed
and true love enchanted me
and I knew how deep
love could really be.

Gert Strydom

But Who Knows?

We are scared about nuclear bombs,
chemical and biological weapons
but live as if man
have got to give account only to himself
and through knowledge and science
are like gods on this earth

and every passion, every pleasure,
every sinful thing and materialism
is being pursued in rebellion
and somehow love has disappeared
and we do not grant anybody
the freedom to make a life
and claim resources with military might
as if we even dare the almighty God,

but who knows
somewhere in space the almighty One
takes his Godly decision
and man's last days are measured out

and a big asteroid, comet, planet,
quasar, neutron star, nova, pulsar, red giant
or even our own sun or moon glides
with speed from its set course
and hits this earth
with a hell of a flaming ball
causing it to disappear out of the universe.

Gert Strydom

Butterfly In A Jar

How far can a butterfly
fly when a jar surrounds it
and see-through windows
cases it in to a place
that is just an empty space.

Crimson, blue, yellow
and green speckled unfolding wings
have no wind or breeze
to drift on
and no space
to move in.

You look like a butterfly to me
and the green and gold
of your lovely eyes
shines bright at times
and the grace
of every movement
brings dignity where ever
you are.

Still life encases you
in body soul and time
and at times I want
to set you free
and help you make
the whole world your place
to make your own destiny in.

When I see tears
in your eyes
that grows dull at times,
I want to take it all away
and give you the ability
to be really free
from the things that hurt
and help you heal
little by little

and be the person
that you are meant to be
and I truly want to love you
since you are really precious to me.

Gert Strydom

By Chance

(after Heinrich Heine)

By chance when you were my fiancée,
I met your sister that looks like you,
that similarity not a person could miss
but it's softer that your eyes do glance at me.

Her smile to me was full of hidden meaning
and her eyes did not want to yield before mine.
She looked at me with the knowledge of years
but from you I will never deviate.

While smoking your dog bit her and I was full of sympathy
but nothing between the two of you is similar
and you did cry when at night I left with my motorbike,
she was stereotyped as worldly and you are in simplicity glorious.

Years later when we visited her from shock you were stunned,
as she pushed a gun against my head and I did avoid it,
she said that I am too religious and to me she is like an extremist,
where you are both beautiful descending from the French.

Like all dogs hers has with me a bond
and from terror and fright it did pee poor Hannes wet,
did not trust his good intentions kept receding from him
but that small animal did jump onto my lap.

[Poet's note: "Als ich, auf der reise" by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

By Man's Own Actions (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

By man's own actions
the world has become dreary
and sly foxes sneak around
among the rubbish dumps

but my people
have a covenant with the almighty God
who mercifully rescues them from distress
and everyone that follows Him is chosen.

By man's own ingenuity and profit mongering
there are natural disasters waiting,
the unrest of the sea is instigated
while factories fill the air with smoke

and according to the word of God
He is the source from where selfless love comes.

[Reference: 1999½ by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

By Nature Man Is Born

That by nature man is born
in a world where destruction is set
where each infant is met
with a build in thorn

of germs of the plague and unadorned
enters it almost as the Creator's pet
struggles to get
through the passing years, headstrong and stubborn

surviving against the tooth and claw
with a higher purpose in man build in
to comprehend, to be self aware and to love,
to build splendid things from mere straw,
to impact on everything living
reaching with prayers, with hope to God above.

Gert Strydom

By The Meaning Of It

We do not live through things,
but by the meanings of it:

At home a parent
carries the image of God
over to a child,
who finds God's character
displayed in the parent.

a Marriage binds much stronger
than staying together,
when it find the true meaning
of promises and the love that it claims.

a Child goes into the army
and comes back out of it
as a man,
who knows duty and discipline.

Still, if we give love,
its greater than honour
and to teach self-respect.

Gert Strydom

By Their Choice (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To John Donne)

By their choice once perfect happy beings
as Lucifer,
Adam and Eve lost immortality,
they did offer
jealousy, self-centredness, evilness
and did transfer
their loyalty away from selfless love;
their trust, security they did remove.

God's laws, his loving character was clear;
disobedient,
in rebellion and eating from the tree
most deficient
as if not knowing Him they did become;
God omniscient,
had in place a faultless salvation plan
to come to the rescue of mortal man.

Lucifer and his angel followers
did not want it,
they wanted to be gods in their own right,
some bit by bit
more evil, unkind and cruel they become,
they were not fit
to live in love, harmony or in peace;
hatred, evil was a spreading disease.

Gert Strydom

By Way Of Praying (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Hans Warren)

Where I hang in pieces of despair onto our love,
you are like spring with your slender fingers
that rest lightly on my cheek and caress it,
while I am praying for words and verses,
do not want to transform you to something else.
When a thousand pieces out of our days
in vain try to leave us dumbfounded
where I still do care for you and love you sincerely,
have no other of false god before your face,
where as if into the waves of the sea
I go deeper into our love without sight,
do keep my breath and your arms do reach out to me,
I can feel your heart beating as if you are in my blood,
where everything between us become heavy and eternal in moments.

[Reference: "Bij wijze van gebed" (By way of praying) by Hans Warren.]

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Gert Strydom

Caedmon

I

When I was out and about
on the farm one day
tending the chickens,
mending a door

I heard a jolly tune being played
and maybe I was daydreaming
but I believe I had an apparition
of a noble man playing a harp.

II

I heard him sing
of the Guardian of heaven
playing on a string
in a merry tune to liven me up,

about the power of the Creator
who in wonder made angelic beings
greater than the fallen prosecutor
and the God that created man and all things

made the blue hued sky
the earth as man's dwelling
even you and I
and the sun that's rising

and his words were sweet and sincere
came into my heart precise and clear.

III

and then smiling at me lowering the harp
he said: "write lad,
write about anything
and let your words sing

about the sun's rising
and about the beauty of spring.
Just write anything."

Gert Strydom

Cain

God had blessed Abel's offering
but not his and with rage filling him,
he saw his brother feast
in the mercy pouring down from heaven

and single he stood as the one
feeling harassed and roaring in anger
hitting blow after blow where his brother curled in pain
until his life was gone, lifeless as if petrified

and God Himself as judge gives the sentence
and he hardened his heart
picking up his possessions
and lived under curse and anguish

and the deeper pain
of his brother's murder, does not really disappear.

Gert Strydom

Cain (Ii)(Free Verse Sonnet)

His dad Adam, told him to put God first,
about the lamb that would come and carry the sin of the world
but great jealousy was in his heart
when Abel brought a lamb as a offering and asked God for His mercy
where in rebellion he brought his own best fruit to God:
grapes full of juice, peaches swollen out and sheaves of grain
as the work of months for recognition in a hidden kind of yearning
when the blood of Abel's lamb did drip over the altar and were set aflame
and his offering did not even want to smoulder as if God turned away from him,
a terrible rage and great hatred did suddenly rise in him
while he did hit Abel that his eyes did pop out and thought that he would
disfigure him,
with Abel's blood on his hands he was totally astonished
where he looked at a bloody altar and saw Abel's shepherd-staff
where he did hit Abel to death and knew that he did deserve God's punishment.

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Gert Strydom

Calculating

It's as if you talk in a foreign language
with my hard drive
and still the operating system
knows instinctively where
to find answers
to bind words

and gestures to meaning,
but my eyes are blinded
like scanners
that find no picture of you.

Somewhere the data did disappear
in the harassment of life
and I am trying to calculate
where the dragon lies in me

that eats up the facts
but maybe it's better
to get a appointment
and to load your new programs
person to person

and to communicate
with lips upon lips
and to operate body to body
than to unscrew this old rattletrap
to replace my heart.

Gert Strydom

Calculus

Zero divided by one is zero,
but it bothered me
from my first conception
of mathematics
that one cannot
be divided by zero
and that it is incalculable.

When I found Calculus
new horizons
opened for me
and I saw mathematics
in another light
and I could find
how one approaches zero
and suddenly
Algebra became clearer.

At first the Calculus dragon
tried to incinerate me
and lengths, volumes and areas
looked like madness to me,
but later I understood the functions
and derivatives
and exponents
and logarithmic functions
became clear to me.

I understood that real numbers
have no greatest
or smallest number
and that there's always
a larger number
that goes on infinitely.

Limits, gradients and curves,
maximum and minimum values
of functions
and rates of change

and integration and differentiation
made that I
could write my own formulas
and could solve problems
that where unsolvable before
and the Calculus dragon
protected me
and became my pet.

Gert Strydom

Can I Like A Child

Can I like a child
walk barefoot through life
without worrying,
where my feet treads,
the world would have stayed
big to me.

No stones of thorns
or hot tar roads
would have stopped me then,
to go back
to the old places.

Only in thoughts
a person can stop
somewhere in life
and see things,
through the eyes of a child.

Still life goes on
with its own pace and outcome
and we are all destined
to the reality of life
and of time
that ticks on
without delay.

Gert Strydom

Can This Be Love?

There is something in the way
that you look at me,
something in the way
that your eyes sometimes
shift away and back to mine again.

There is something
in the inter-textual things
that is hidden between your words
when feelings are betrayed

in the subtle way that you let
the stresses fall
and there is nothing obscure
or superficial in the way
that you speak with me.

A sudden joy fills my heart
when I hear your voice,
when I look at you
as if the hidden meanings
have an own distinct reality.

Gert Strydom

Can You See The Pride Of A Nation?

Can you see the pride of a nation
when it's young men,
march of to war
and some to return no more?

Can you see the pride of a nation
when the battles and the war is won,
but destiny and betrayal
still makes a deadly mark?

Can you see the pride of a nation
where even the integrity
of its leaders lack?

Can you see the pride of a nation
that turns its back on its own
and disregard their abilities?

Gert Strydom

Cape Town Days

Streets are full of vivid bougainvilleas
while clouds start to touch Table Mountain,
white horses are running from the sea to the beaches
and the southeaster blows at its full strength.

Later in the afternoon the Table Mountain is stark,
naked and clear, the ocean stretches out tranquil and flat
with its dark blue much deeper in turning to green
and the hot Mediterranean sun basks in the sky

and you long to be on Clifton beach
between a myriad of topless girls
with shiny brown tanned bodies
and in your office you can almost smell

the coconut suntan oil,
can almost hear them talking
and their sweet laughter,
can almost taste the salt of the sea on the wind.

Gert Strydom

Cape Winters (Em Du Toit Rondeau Type)

On the Southern tip of Africa when the southeaster blows with mighty main
oak trees sway, break and are uprooted on the shores
while people shelter indoors
from the daily sieving winter rain,
sunless life seems mundane
while doing the same chores
on the Southern tip of Africa.
Sunless life seems mundane
while people shelter indoors
oak trees sway, break and are uprooted on the shores
and the storm wind rattles every windowpane
on the Southern tip of Africa.

Gert Strydom

Caracal In The Zoo (Refrain Stanza)

He lies with eyes of hate that wants to burn the days open in a cage,
glares at everyone that walks past on the other side with rage
and the pointed tufted ears are pricked up where he is ready to bite
where he does growl and hiss and claw as if everything does him incite
fights against the bars with claw and teeth as if they do escape encourage
bloodthirsty does constantly jump madly to and thro
like a wounded angry thing that does not know where to go
where against every living thing he does his war wage,
glares at everyone that walks past on the other side with rage.

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Gert Strydom

Carnations (Balassi Stanza)

Carnations grow lovely,
perfect beauty I see
in vivid colours of white
red, pink, some are yellow
with loveliness they glow,
are usually quite bright,
they smell somewhat like cloves,
have purity of doves,
they are flowers drawing sight.

Gert Strydom

Carnations In The Garden

There are carnations in the garden
in colours of ruby red,
pure white and blossom pink
and some pink with deep purple inside
and others purple-blue.

I smell the sweet fresh flowers
and look at colours
hue as if by magic
into each other.

Some grow in flowering pots,
some are planted in flowerbeds,
others even in the rock garden

and the flowers at places are mixed
to catch the eye
and everywhere there's care
and a lot of love
that went into the tending of it.

Gert Strydom

Carrion

a Enemy soldier lies motionless
and his limbs are twisted,
reaching for the last
energy of live
and a hand still holds a gun.

Blood and guts
are splattered about,
where a mortar bomb
hit home
and some flies gather.

The strong sulphur smell
mixed with fried human
burns my nose,
where smoke rises
from a shot out
enemy battle tank.

Another tank stand moveless
with its barrel
still aiming somewhere
and the remains
of its occupants hatched inside.

About a hundred Cuban tanks
and twice that much
enemy armoured cars,
stand lifeless in the African bush.

The battle scene is a graveyard
and my Ratel tank destroyer drives past,
to cross the Lomba river.

Before nightfall I fight
the darkness of my soul
and struggle with God
and to this day,
still no one can answer why.

[References: => Ratel tank destroyer=>Ratel ZT-3 (the anti-tank guided missile version) . Reference are given here to the "battle for Africa, " fought by 61 South African mechanized battalion group and 32 South African battalion group against four brigades of the Soviet-led FAPLA forces (the 47th,59th,16th and 21st brigades) in Angola in August 1987.]

Gert Strydom

Cars

The doors open
and constantly we climb into the metal monsters
do switch the engine on and the journey does begin
as it's too far to walk
and constantly we want to buy the newest and the most beautiful,
do want to fabricate our wealth and prosperity with this thing
or if we are young do drive away with spinning wheels
and if we become reckless they land on a scrap heap
but they do eat each other at times
and bring great danger to us,
can drive into all kinds of things
or even glide down precipices
and if they do eat blood and flesh
the police do measure out the full letter of the law unto us.

Gert Strydom

Caryatids

It could have been
the temple of Apollo,
more surely that of Athena
or maybe an even greater god

with female figures draped
in royal cloth somewhere in Sparta
supporting the entablature
dedicated to a god.

Set in rows like the porch
at the temple of Erechtheum
at the Acropolis, but facing out
as if every single one
was standing alone
carrying a frieze around the top,
carrying the weight of the world.

Dedication plastered on beautiful faces,
without joy or any other emotion
woman was making man
forming him in an ancient mould
and taking him to the heights
that he could reach.

Standing as the foundation,
carrying him from birth,
ever caring and nurturing
dedicated to help him rise
to where destiny demands.

Gert Strydom

Cassinga

Just like spring when the blue sky is full of falling leaves,
there are three hundred and seventy parachutes that decent,
on a ominous day
with enemy AA-guns reporting
and the enemy are more
than a thousand and a half in number.

The barrels of the enemy AA-guns are lowered,
to break us
and the enemy tries to sow havoc
and to decimate us.

Enemy snipers are shooting from trees
and from everywhere
there are shots being fired,
that munches pieces from us

From behind ruins
we fire almost endlessly
at trenches where some enemy soldiers hide
and launch mortar bombs
all over the place,
while bullets are coming down like rain.

We return heavy fire
to the enemy at the AA-guns,
while other soldiers replace them
which keeps the battle hanging in balance

Shot after shot are being fired
and the smell of death
is strong in the air
and there's nowhere
for the enemy to escape to.

The last resistance disappears
and there's apparent peace
and dead enemies everywhere
and some of the bats,

get into pumas
and the rest of us wait
with nowhere to go.

The border is too far to walk
and there's nothing to drive away with,
when Cuban tanks and armoured cars
find us there.

.
With RPG-7 iron fists
four tanks are destroyed
and a landmine stops another tank in its tracks,
but only paratroops against oncoming armour
are canon feed
and nothing diminishes the danger
of a Cuban mechanized battalion.

Till two Mirages destroys ten armoured cars
and everywhere there's smoke and dust
and a Buccaneer comes from the sun,
to let moments turn into eternity.

Time after time
it flashes by and fires its rockets
at the oncoming tanks
and with no ammo left,
dives fearlessly over shooting AA-guns
to make the tanks take cover.

It's very ruff going
but the last pumas land
in a clouds of dust,
to evacuate us
while enemy tanks keep firing.

I try and hold the rearguard with a LMG
before the shot out ruins fades away from me
and we leave forty living enemies behind
and all of us are safely gone,
but for four brave men
whose lives are spent.

[References: AA-guns=> Anti aircraft guns. Bats=>Parabats=>Airbourne soldiers. RPG-7 iron fists=> Rocket propelled grenade launchers=> Bazookas. Mirages=> Mirage fighter jets. Buccaneer=> Buccaneer ground support bomber. Pumas=> Puma helicopters. LMG=> Light machinegun.]

Gert Strydom

Cat (Italian Sonnet)

(After John Keats)

Cat, past your prime you do your little body lick.
How many birds have you caught in your days?
In vain you do so very innocently at me now gaze,
with amber eyes, in vain you do your ears prick.

Into how many rats did you your talons stick?
A gentle mew you do now in innocence raise
but I want you to tell me about all your frays
about every fish, mice, rat, dove and chick

but you look away begin licking your writs
seem for a brave fighting beast so very small
like a innocent boy's pet and to him just a toy
but my words let you draw your paws like fits,
it's evident that for females you did others maul,
did every little pest that you came upon destroy.

[Reference: "Cat" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

Catharine

(after I.D. du Plessis)

Catharine of the Western Cape
was caught by passion last night
and she knows that nobody will understand
and this morning she is sleeping late.
Love and the deed of it take many forms for her
and at night the men whistle
when ever she goes into the dark streets
when the old church bell rings off the late evening
and her bitter work does begin
and sometimes she gets a chance
to eat out like a beautiful woman can
but mostly she acts out her age-old trade,
are smiling, impudently forward and sometimes scared
while she longs for better days and another life.

[Reference: "Katrina" by I.D. du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

Cats

At night with eyes big and bright
the cats go out to play and at midnight
there's just one law that they obey

they sneer and wail,
swing their tails,
bare their claws,
sometimes scratch them against doors

cavilling with each other over territories
making some dogs growl
uneasy as if some demons form hell
are sneaking on all fours
having them under a spell
with evil in mind

and tiger, leopard and beasts they are,
not feeling anything for the welfare
of others of there kind,
as sleek killing machines that prowl
not hindered by bars
with eyes that glare

Gert Strydom

Cattle In The Rain

Although nothing is without end,
even the rain hammering down with hail,
it sometimes felt that way
with lightning bolts falling
down from the sky
like angry whip lashes
the young oxen milling around,
ready to stampede away
into the direction of the swamp
where the deadly tulips grow.

Your horse neighs frightened
drawing up her front hooves
with every thunder bolt lashing down
and you let her gallop at the edge of the cattle
to round them into the shelter of the camp,

cutting off the leading troublemakers
and the hail coming down in force
feels like buckshot from the old shotgun
and one ox, gigantic in size snorts
starts running on

crashing through small trees
of which the stems whiplash past your head
and when in anger you reach it,
it turns back and starts to walk back
into the direction of the camp
looking at you
with big eyes as tame as that of a cow.

[Reference: Cattle in the rain by Musaemura Zimunya.]

Gert Strydom

Caught In A Web (English Ballade)

(after Heinrich Heine)

He thought that their love was something deep
where as a thief at first he stole her heart,
off her feet time and again he did her sweep
while he was excellent at his criminal art.

chorus:

She was a tramp but with beauty did the eye fill
and he was far too good at his ill-begotten craft,
took too far to killing his deadly skill
where she at every incident just did laugh.

For a time their lives were full of only joy
while everything that she desired he gave
and to her he was like a prince of a boy
where he left with a kiss and a wave.

At a time his deeds of the past
caught up with him and to jail he went,
the authorities was happy to hang him at last
and a last request with tears to her he sent:

Come to me before it's too late
he begged and did her miss badly
and in vain did upon his darling wait
while as if in joy she acted gladly.

At daybreak his time on earth went by,
while away from him with a drink she did him toast
but they hanged him high under an azure sky
where to death he swung on the hangman's post.

[Poet's note: "Ein Weib" by Heinrich Heine.]

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Gert Strydom

Caught In Time

There are great images and events
that for ever
are caught in my thoughts,
like pure mathematics,
where things doesn't continue
and are frozen
while the clockwork stops striking.

The Eagle that tries to catch
a fish out of the water
of which the feathers
with the dive
rise up,
that hangs frozen
above the waves
before its claws
can ever break the waves.

The sun that stretches out
its first feelers over the horizon
and hillocks,
as if the bright day
never is going to brake.

'a Golden full moon
that rules big and bright
over the night,
where it sits
halfway into the sky
as if it's never
going to move further.

a Rainbow that brightly
touches the earth after the rain,
as if a painter
placed it perfectly
in a beautiful painting.

Lightning bolts that branch white-blue

in the night sky
and resound in the heaven,
as if they are never
going to strike the ground.

Rain that on a cloudless day
fall out of a blue sky,
while no thunder rumbles
anywhere near.

Maybe I can look at precious moments
that still stays with me,
and made a difference to my life.

The knowledge that a Almighty God
really exists
whose hand is stretched over my works
and just where I go,
I can see His influence
in everything around me.

The first time that I saw my darling
and the image that remains with me
of glowing golden eyes
and red-brown hair,
through which the sun shines
and my heart that felt
as if it wanted to stop in my chest.

The first nice kiss
that I got from her
and the fragrance of her perfume,
that forever
stays with me in my thoughts.

My child that gives the first cry,
as if there will be no other cries
that really matters.

The super hero
that I am in my children's eyes,
as if no other man

can ever be better.

My dog that waits
day after day at the gate
and hops up and down from gladness
and barks and cries,
as if after a thousand years
I am returning home
and as if it has
no comprehension of time.

Gert Strydom

Cecil John Rhodes (Italian Sonnet) (In Answer To Rudyard Kipling)

Some people followed your dream in your day
but to others it brought pain and death, as they died,
in war and concentration camps while you were full of pride
and for deliverance women and children did pray

while some saw you as gay, but not only in the happy way,
while roughshod you did over any opposition ride:
beware them that was not on you or your queen's side
as with the lives of nations you did play

and where you are in eternal rest
the judgement of God will at a time be on you
as only He does the ways of nations ordain
your deeds, your life is forgotten at best,
as only to your own pocket you were really true
and to the innocent you brought poverty and pain.

[Reference: "The burial 1902" by Rudyard Kipling.]

Gert Strydom

Challenger Shuttle Disaster (Terzanelle)

The launching deck is now a memory cast in stone
and when the space vehicle launches, suddenly
to travel far and from the platform, is gone

people cheer, while a omen encompass me
in the distance it shimmers
and when the space vehicle launches, suddenly

with flames exploding it glimmers
raining down in pieces and smoke
in the distance it shimmers

and anguish suddenly makes me choke
when man stays locked to destiny, bound in time and space
raining down in pieces and smoke

apocalypse unfolding during that sheer climb, against earth's face
seventy three seconds and then catastrophe
when man stays locked to destiny, bound in time and space

is caught forever vividly in memory like a universal apostrophe:
The launching deck is now a memory cast in stone,
seventy three seconds and then catastrophe,
to travel far and from the platform is gone.

Gert Strydom

Chameleon

I have seen you turn
night black with anger
when you think that you are in danger
the colour of a brown urn

when you are sneaking between rocks that burn
with the heat of the sun, watching me the stranger
with curious rolling eyes while you linger
and I have seen you turn green as you return

to your hiding place in the tree
carefully placing your grabbing toes
with your pink rolled up tongue shooting out
quick as a lightning bolt from which no fly can be free
and sneaking around as most insects' woes
while turning into a leaf or a sprout.

Gert Strydom

Change Me God Almighty

Change me God almighty; as you
are changing me, are trying to mend
that which my will and life has bend
and by your constant love I am becoming new

although in myself nothing good is due,
but I beg you to dwell with me to the end,
against the flaming demonic angels to defend,
my life, my longings and wits and to keep me true

and let me walk along your way again,
let all my own selfish ways die,
while with love you set me free
even if it brings me pain,
batter me so that I will know your love; will your kingdom see.

Gert Strydom

Chant For Hours Of The Night

(in answer to Dorothy Parker)

Some women cannot make their minds up,
will walk and talk to every sales person
as if it's a game that they play
that goes on and on
and they will never shut-up
while time is wasted and passes away.

Some ladies cannot pass each other at church,
will gather in groups to gossip
on every holy day
until as if by drunken delirium they lurch
and tiny hurting words will slip
that ugly, insincere others do portray.

Some females cannot pass a gathering of men
will want to know, inquire about the things
that they with each other do discuss
(as if it could be interesting to women)
and they will try and hamper some proceedings,
when not included sometimes make a big fuss.

I'Envoi

Right through their lifespan
females are interested in male human beings
which is to some an indispensable annoyance
without which they cannot go
and they will love, even worship them if they can,
include them in most happenings
and at the end still very little about them they will know.

[Reference: "Chant for dark hours" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Chapman's Peak Drive

I did have a dream of our honeymoon:
Chapman's peak drive twisted
up the hills
along that sapphire blue sea
with the sky a much lighter hue
and you and I
drove past that mountain peak

stopped at a viewing point
and the sea breeze ruffled through
you long blonde hair
almost blowing your straw hat
right over the edge
while we had a picnic
and the white-hot sun
watched us like a lonely eye.

Down below the cliff
waves pounded as they still do
with a thundering splash
but distance broke the sound
and nobody else was around
when I kissed you
and your eyes glittered
with different colours like opal
or the rainbow that one gets
from a mother-of-pearl shell
before they became golden again
and I was sure of your love
when screeching gulls
broke the spell
trying to rob
whatever was left on our plates.

Gert Strydom

Cherishing

When your fingers steal upon
my spinal cord
and your naked beauty
is soft and hot against me

and I can feel your heart beat,
even can feel you breathing
then I do know how wonderful it is
to love you
where you are laying closely against me.

Gert Strydom

Chernobyl

When Russia tried to keep quiet
over the disaster
of a exploding nuclear reactor
the whole of Europe was radiated

satellites saw the explosion
with flames shooting up,
radiation going into the air
being swept away on the wind

and all of the people fighting against the disaster
got a death sentence,
the towns of Chernobyl and Pripyat is now empty
with no living beings moving there

and the impact circled out much wider
and in Russia people are still suffering from it.

Gert Strydom

Chernobyl (2)

At Chernobyl Russian technology do become dilapidated with a bang,
when a nuclear reactor explodes and there is radioactive fallout,

Russia and Europe are contaminated,
as far as poisonous substances are carried by the winds,

all that does remain of Chernobyl and Pripyat,
are ghost towns where nobody can live,

a small girl writes on a board at school: "look after my cat"
and people cannot take a whole life with them.

Painfully scientists do die that were exposed,
sorrowful parents do hold their misshapen babies,

for many people cancer came from this
and now my government wants to trust Russian nuclear power.

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Gert Strydom

Chieftain Mtikana

(after Cullen Gouldsbury)

In the history of days long gone
in my mind a warrior chief stands alone
when Lobengula ruled as the Ndebele king
Mtikana, the cloud, the fearless one

who did not hesitate to face his death
before a whole impi did not loose his breathe
when the Amanxusa came to kill him
and songs do his valor bequeath.

Mtikana did marry Makwa the daughter of the king
but this to him was a very sad kind of thing
as she tainted him, spoke against his honor
conspired with other chiefs to death to him to bring

where they did speak of Mtikana ill
and anger did the heart of Lobengula fill
where in council he decreed to bring Mtikana in,
did summon a witchdoctor and impi captains in his iron will.

Bribed by Makwa the wizard Manega came
to cast the bones, to judge in the king's name
with a ferret-face, gleaming with fat, feathers in his hair
he brought the gallant sincere Mtikana to shame,

proclaimed that the facts of rebellion is plain
that all wizardry against Mtikana is in vain
as the power of the elements and the sun, moon and stars
he did against the king and his kingdom gain.

Mtikana rose and said: "My King slay me now,
do death to me bestow
as in no prison I can live at your scorn"
and to the ground before the king he did bow.

Lobengula spoke as if to be fair:
"Brave Mtikana your life I will spare

as respect to your innocence,
but he who rebels against the king beware! "

They told Mtikana to go
who bowed, with dignity walked out slow.
To the captains: "Muster the whole Amanxusa impi regiment
and do swiftly death to the traitor bring, " the king spoke low.

"Bayete! "They cried with spear stocks smashing down,
made the hunting down of Mtikana their own
and when they came upon him
fearless he faced that whole Ndebele army alone

where they did come to a halt right up against him.
"Do not let my position before you myself exalt, as a whim,
do your bidding as only duty does the soldier lead,
the moon is low and the stars are dim."

Then with the thunder of feet to him they did rush
they leaped with spears to him to meet in a deadly ambush
while they shouted ominously
did him with their spears stab and with their war-clubs crush.

[Reference:"The slaying of Mitikana" by Cullen Gouldsbury.]

Gert Strydom

Child

At a time I was to you like a god,
could do nothing wrong in your eyes
and my car was far better than any other
but somehow somewhere something did change
and you did become distant as if I am a stranger,
as if you do not want to know me anymore
but at times you do still look at me,
want me to help you with your problems
and sometimes you do turn up the volume
of your music system to the very limit
and people have to avoid your room
but just when I thought that our relationship was coming to an end
I heard you say to your friends at the swimming pool
that I am the greatest dad in the entire world.

Gert Strydom

Child Of Eve (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Johann de Lange)

There is something incomprehensible that I now know:
that at the same time love can burn in flames to ashes
but like raindrops bring forth life and wash the hurting away
and it is something that brings rapture in fear and sadness,
the kind of thing that you rather want to forget
when it does fit neatly into your own life
but I still do cling to the inconceivability,
as no one does completely understand love,
where you do make me a better person than I am,
in your sincere humanity do exorcise all kinds of fear,
when you do love me in your flesh, heart, soul and spirit,
openly you do live love's secret
and you make it complete and greater and much more:
you come with faith and hope into my days.

[Reference:"Purdah" by Johann de Lange.]

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Gert Strydom

Childhood: Sedaven, Heidelberg, Transvaal (Free Verse Sonnet)

A long dusty meandering path brings me to the dam
where I walk in and do open a female crab at the bottom,
find a lot of small pink ones that crawl over my hand
and go and sit against the trunk of a shading tree.
Up in the hillocks I find almost the whole of creation:
night-adders, cobras, rock rabbits, steenbok and chacma baboons
but all of this pleases me as a wild playful child
where I kill the snakes and take a stand against the baboons,
do ingeniously drive them away from our peach orchard
where they strip the trees and do not even eat a tenth
but do climb back into the wild reserve with a chattering quarrel
and little did the danger of which I knew bother me
while my catapult did protect me like a angel's sword
when I went into the wilderness (into the garden of Eden.)

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Gert Strydom

Children Carry Cellular Phones And Pistols

Children carry cellular phones and pistols,
chop others dead with swords,
are bladed by barbarians,
kill people of a different colour
with axes and hammers.

Johnny and Sally grows up with
Thabo and Thandi
and are taught by the education system,
as are their parents,
and are indoctrinated
and have to believe:

that both heterosexual and bisexual
relationships are acceptable
that Chrisna, Allah, Buddha and God
is one and the same
and somewhere Jesus Christ
has disappeared with his crucifixion
between the lines.

Gert Strydom

Children With Soap Bubbles

Like smoke the bubbles whirl up
in the wind's frolicking game
hopping like horses that gallop

and other children have got to look out
or their eyes are going to burn.
Like smoke the bubbles whirl up

against the arms and heads of others
before they heave into the air,
hopping like horses that gallop

with children blowing over a soapy soup
soap-bubble after soap-bubble burst,
like smoke the bubbles whirl up

like balls kicked off by the wind
when mothers scold their dirty children,
hopping like horses that gallop

and later an adult looks after them
to set rules for the game,
like smoke the bubbles whirl up
hopping like horses that gallop.

Gert Strydom

Chirping It Landed In The Rain (Cavatina)

Chirping it landed in the rain, pecked,
left little prints
in the mud as it trampled here and there,
at bushy mints
it searched, meandered up and down
leaving small hints
that a tiny bird was coming quite near,
its joyful twittering song I did hear.

Gert Strydom

Christmas

The church bells ring,
Christmas decorations are in windows again
and in churches congregations sing
while summer rain

falls like confetti from the overcast sky
and in houses wrapped gifts are hidden
and in the street the last busses past by
and some old people are bedridden

but the true story of Jesus Christ brings smiles
even to them, to the poor beggar child
who with big eyes waits a while before walking miles,
to his parents shack and over a handout his joy is wild

and the God who was man watches with great care,
witness's people sharing and the jubilation of man everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Christmas (Tuckerman Sonnet)

(after A. E. Housman)

Home are the soldiers, they are home and free,
they are home from the far off battlefield
never to a man's will again to yield
home with loved ones, some friends to see.
Home is the farmer from the working field
where many acres of land lies prepared,
he is at the place where he wants to be
safe under God's almighty constant shield

free from all kinds of dark iniquity
tranquillity is in the open veldt,
the evening falls, twilight is at hand,
with his cattle all having being cared
and soldier's dance with a happy band,
close the farmer's wife is being held

[Reference: XXII "Home is the sailor, home from sea" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Christmas Child

One dark night a farmer heard his sheep bleating,
went out and above him saw a strange star,
with his walking stick the old man walked
to the shed and he hoped

that he was worrying in vain,
he was aware of the bright light above him.
At the cowshed a lamp was burning
as if two teenagers impudently

was spending time with each other,
but he found a mature couple that were sheltering there
and the woman was giving birth,
it was too late to take her home and she was shy;

the farmer, his wife and child
were overwhelmed by the Christmas child.

Gert Strydom

Christmas Eve (Cavatina)

With flaming torches the carollers came,
their songs of joy
of Jesus born in Bethlehem brought magic;
their small convoy
quickly drive away to their big houses
to there enjoy
their own Christmas Eve, to celebrate,
to together feel somewhat good and great.

Gert Strydom

Christmas Night Legend

When the aurora borealis on Christmas night
throw magical lights over the north pole,
Lucifer rises out of his hell domain
to look at the outside world.

A single night away
from the terrible fire
can feel as it last a eternity
and when the ice glitters silver white,
he stares over the pure ice fields.

There are guilt thoughts
that rises ghostly out of the silver white
and overwhelming
are for a moment in his heart.

Above him the northern lights gives magic to the night
and reminds of a place
with glowing precious stones,
where he once were
when without fault in his construct
he gathered with the sons of God.

Magical colours are reflected on the ice fields
around him
from lime green to sapphire blue,
canary yellow to crimson
which vanishes into purple.

Ænvoi

He remembers the coming
of the almighty God
as a baby child,
the strange star,
archangels appearing rejoicing
to the shepherds
and children's cries
disappearing in the dark.

He lifts his fist clenched
against the Creator of the universe
in a sign of opposition
and trembles when a lightning bolt claps near him.

Gert Strydom

Church Going

I hear voices singing inside
and notice big signs asking for silence
in the foyer
for when respect is lacking,

but groups of people, mainly women
stand in the entrance whispering loudly
and when I walk in

people are in their suits, best dresses
with hair done to the newest style
and almost every eye follows me

with my leather jacket, motorcycle helmet
in my hand
and formal pants as if trying to see
why I am different.

I take a backbench, just in front of the one
marked for mothers with babies
and the wood is hard and uncomfortable
probably to keep churchgoers awake
right through a monotonous sermon.

With the congregation I kneel down to pray
and the elder makes a long drawn out preach
of it and I feel
some kids still staring at me
and through slightly opened eyes see them looking,
whispering and indicating to each other.

At the front, at the holy end a woman plays the piano
and another plays along with the organ
while the congregation stand in song
and I listen intently to the minister
preaching about the love of God,

see an old man with a bold head
falling asleep in front of me,

his wife hitting him with the elbow
in the ribs every now and then,
a small girl colouring pictures
with different crayons
and just after the last song walk out
before the people gather in cliques
and are the first to take to the road
with my motorbike.

Gert Strydom

Church Matters

It has happened that a minister visits me
and ask for assistance,
that I cannot give
at that moment.

If a minister prays
that my eyes must be opened,
I consider at times
at whose eyes are really closed.

If his prayer turns into a preach
and he uses prayer,
to force me into his will
and he twists the arm of God,
I marvel at who sins more?

Gert Strydom

Church Street Bomb Blast

Forgive
forgive them
who set the bomb
slaughtering nineteen people
wounding and maiming two hundred more
who sit in parliament with blood on their hands
being responsible in ordering numerous killings,
not being held responsible or caring about it now,
killing innocent civilian children, women and men
whose blood, body parts, guts and broken bodies I saw
and now the elements have washed away what was left of some
and yet I will not forget this madness and cruelty, which made man loose all
humanity.

Gert Strydom

Church Street, Pretoria

Right down the street the traffic lights are green
and a couple of homeless men stand around a fire
in a half drum and ambulances and police cars scream
while they past rows and rows of flats for hire
and a couple of kids stand smoking at the stream
and this is reality, the heart of the city.

On the sidewalk pedestrians walk in crowds of men,
women and some children, some booted up to the knee
others with mini skirts short enough to condemn them
and my city stays lovely to me.

People queue for fried chicken, fish
and chips at shops and cafés and the smells fill my nose
and tomatoes and onions, lamb and steak are fried with a hiss
and in the traffic an angry speed-cop tries to retain his pose
when a minibus taxi almost runs him over, gives him a fright
at a flickering traffic light
and cars stream by into the coming night.

Gert Strydom

Cigarettes, Whiskey And Wild Women

Cigarettes, whiskey and wild women
can be a recipe for fun,
or for death on the long run.

Cigarettes are great to smoke
and some people say
that they stay slim
and that it does something
to calm the nerves
and as a boy I tried some
and decided not to make that thrill mine

Yet smoking people
smell awful and so does
every thing around them
while they dispose of their ash
without a care.

Tuberculosis or lung cancer is a terrible death
and to die slowly
out of breath is something
that I will gladly pass by.

a Girlfriend introduced me to Whiskey
which was great
and it was really something
to drink that fire water
between some kisses
and to feel the passions build,
but like a good woman
it should be taken
in adequate measures
or it will change you
and by its power
get rid of every thing you have.

Wild women may be really fun,
and sweet and really beautiful,
but the chance to get

a lasting or deadly disease
is the risk that goes with them.

Some guys sleep with every girl
that they meet and think of it
as something great and sweet,
and thrive in having a string of girls
at a time
and play and play again
and have a lot of fun,
since no girl is ever the same
in respect of personality, smell,
texture, body and sex.

One girl is hard enough to understand
and love,
and there is much more
to making love
than just to procreate
for recreation's sake.

I read Anne's poem today
and prayed,
to keep on the narrow way.

[Reference=>Cigarettes, whiskey and wild, wild women by Anne Sexton.]

Gert Strydom

Cinderella

On the white sheet you lie stretched out,
your hot breath is caressing my cheek softly,
with the yellow-peach rain you did come
when the thunder hangs grey-white curtains.
The deep smell of your perfume overwhelms me,
lingers in clothes as it sometimes do,
we become part of each other, time passes,
when dreams and reality meet
and on the morning I find your lost shoe.

Gert Strydom

Circe

Day after day I yearn, look at him,
watch where he lies naked against me,
I see the sun rising red in the east,
I yearn that in passion again he will take me.
I want to stop all the sadness in his eyes,
I want to bind him for a while to me,
I want to stop him from going into further danger,
I want to blind him with kindness and love
but when he walks restless up and down,
staring out far over the ocean for moments long,
then I want to keep him but all of my hope fades
while I know that he cannot stay any longer
and still I wish for him to be with me,
while I look far away, far past his gaze.

Gert Strydom

Circe (2)(Free Verse Sonnet)

In rapture he stared at her
where she formulated rites and followed them with a gesture
when she noticed that on him who looked upon her as a man
no magic had any effect
but when he came to his senses he was angry,
at that first daybreak wanted to strangle her
where all of his men had become squealing pigs
but it took no heroic act
as out of pure love for him she turned them into humans again,
did look upon Odysseus as if he was a god and touched him lightly,
did without any words lead him away to her own home
as her magic powers could not do anything to him
and out of her heart she adored him, intimately came to love him,
did plead for a whole year for him to stay.

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Gert Strydom

Circe To Odysseus (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Here where I am to you beautiful and ardently loving,
I do ask that you do grant me one more night with you,
I know how it's going to ache in the future when I do miss you,
where I know about the dangers that are waiting outside on you.
Go to where your duty and gods do lead you
when later I try and stop you in various ways,
do want you to stay eternally here with me,
as you are more than anything on earth to me
but do stay now until daybreak does come,
where with your ship you will have to sail over a tormenting sea
and my love and feeling I cannot now disguise,
where it is written over my face and body
and against the evil I want to protect you with my wings,
but you are free where the rest of your life does stretch out before you.

[Reference: "Circe" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Civet

At night a civet
sneaks around in the chicken pen,
biting Bantam-fowls, big white Leghorns
and every chicken
that it finds dead.

At sunrise it is gone,
with dead chickens lying in a row
while those that it could not find
are cackling frightened
as if a snake is in their nests.

In the mornings mom is way past angry,
buys a spring trap
to catch the chicken thief red handed
and to me the teeth
that springs shut
looks strange and deadly.

The spring trap is set
but the wild cat is far too clever
for that thing and sneaks past
night after night,
until mom gets wolves poison
that she mixes with the guts
of one of the dead chickens.

The next morning
the grey civet
(just a little bigger than the housecat)
with its black stripes covering its body,
lies rigid and stretched out
and around it
the chickens are pecking in peace.

Gert Strydom

Clifton

I walk down the hill
and on the beach there are rocks
that rise here and there where proud girls
lie without bikini tops and in the distance
a ship sails past and a seagull hangs screeching
but on the wind there is the smell of suntan lotion,
the sea rolls in and splashes foaming
and a tinfoil container does float out
do catch my eye shining
when the rich lie everywhere and tan,
the sun is hot and hangs high
and some people are hand in hand
where very much in love they walk past
and the day is beautiful and open.

Gert Strydom

Cloudburst (Terzanelle)

The clouds are dark as the night
until the sky opens it sluices
with here and there light

pouring down gathered juices
with wild bolts of blue-white thunder
until the sky opens it sluices

with lightning falling with feelers, ready to plunder
splitting trees, setting the veldt alight
with wild bolts of blue-white thunder

bashing down, and people flee in fright
and hail, thunder and rain pelts down
splitting trees, setting the veldt alight

splattering in fury, causing people to drown
and man and beast is desolate
and hail, thunder and rain pelts down

with people struggling past fear, past hope, past hate.
The clouds are dark as the night
and man and beast is desolate
with here and there light.

Gert Strydom

Clouds

To some people clouds are
a unsubstantiated experience
of form and matter
which drifts indifferently
always changing shape
like a living painting
caught on the cloth of the sky,
but to me
they are tokens
of the magic
sprouting from the hand of God,

signs of coming rain, filled with blazing lightning
or devastating hail, twisting ominous tornados
spinning down in devastation,
or of new life that comes as a gracious gift.

Gert Strydom

Clouds Gathering

It seemed like a perfect life,
with the two of us skinny dipping
in the lagoon,
walking on the beach in the full moon,
sunlight on your face,
the two of us walking hand in hand,

but then that is how dreams go,
while we were sipping champagne
on the veranda just after dusk
and I remember you
flashing, opening the towel
while you passed giggling to our bedroom
and reality stepped in,
with death that was lurking in the shadows
which entered unexpectedly
like a severe thunderstorm.

Gert Strydom

Coals Glowing Orange Red

Coals glowing orange red in the half drum
blazing through the holes in the sides of it
and a guard warms his hands
where he stands watching, with eyes alert

one hand touching the baton
as if testing if it is still there
and his shadow is gigantic
on the white building behind him

and above him, in the night
God's coals are aflame
burning through the holes in the sky.

Gert Strydom

Cocotte

(after Ina Rousseau)

Time and again she stood on the street corner,
looking at every passing man
to share bodily pleasure with her,
throwing her beautiful gaze reckless,
inviting each man indecently
until the soullessness caught up with her one night
and without even realizing
she played herself out bit by tiny bit
and was wondering about serving God again,
about really loving someone
and she dreamt about a child just like her
but when she expected the very worst
she found a man that truly loved her,
with his gaze going to the depths of her heart.

[Reference: Cocotte by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

Coda

(after Dorothy Parker)

There's a time that there's pleasure in living,
to it there is something really divine,
when love is essence to taking and giving,
and life sparkles happy like good red wine

but when time does its thing and rushes on
the body loses all its usefulness
when most of one's days are totally gone;
cynical one views friends with aloofness

while in art you hunt for some catharsis,
some seek the beauty of a younger lady
while they do want the essence of bliss
but life at the end becomes somewhat shady

while you conclude final moves in life's spell,
to grasp the ways between heaven and hell.

[Reference: "Coda" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Coffee, Tea And Liquor

My friend says:

"Coffee is for a man of steel
who knows how
to get his capital out of it
and tea for a tiller man
who can give direction
in a lighting struck stormy sea
and let the liquor
stay with me
and then for a time
I will be free
Of all my problems."

Then we didn't bend a bottle
and did not even
have liqueur or champagne,
but we stayed with tea
and the tiller man
is ashore
while life's thunders
are striking right around him
and he waits on his ship
to come
and his Angel stands with him.

Gert Strydom

Coke

There's a bottle coca-cola
that stands icy and black
on my desk, .

My manager wants to know
how I can drink Coke so early in the day
and when I pour a glass
for a colleague,
he believes
that I am trying to kill
a bad hangover.

The cold liquid
burns delicious
all the way
down my throat.

Gert Strydom

Cold War

I experienced a cold war
and silently it sneaked in,
first in the way that you looked at me
that was cutting right through me
and your words becoming blunt
followed by a little rebellious gesture.

In a winter night
you did not want to lie with me
and went to sleep at another place
and I had a cold bed
next to me.

Gert Strydom

Coldly The Wind Blows

Coldly the wind blows
when the black ripe falls with damage,
coldly the wind blows
as if it cannot find a place of rest,
a bag flutters against the fence,
spreads like the grace of God.

Gert Strydom

Colour (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Tientjie du Toit)

Grey is the turtledove that comes down fluttering,
delicately bodied the laughing dove looks at him
where greedy they do peck the crumbs
and with the swarm of birds I am astonished,
with the sparrows, collared-barbet and yellow weaver
that frolic to and thro and up and down between them,
the yellow speckled barbet that peck amongst them
and open the sky is blue with the sun shining brightly
but your hair is dark-brown, darker than the ground,
and redder than watermelon is your soft mouth
with your eyes green-brown but brighter than the sun
where I see you at sunrise
but brighter is your smile at the homecoming welcome
when with arms wide open you wait upon me to meet.

[Reference: "Kleur" (Colour) by Tientjie du Toit.]

Gert Strydom

Come Along To The Place I Love

Come along to the place I love,
near the ocean and sparkling clear rivers
that is lovely as paradise
or a place in one's dreams.

Let us float in the blue lagoon,
go beneath the waterfall,
feel all of the water's kisses
while desire rises like the golden moon.

Then let us embrace each other,
while your naked skin clings onto mine
and I experience your gentle loveliness
as we continually get closer

to the very edge of the abyss,
let us be caring and totally careless
with every kind of tender caress
with water splattering over passionate hot flesh.

Let us intertwine
and meet in the centre core
of the body's heat
while around us the waters hiss

let this be much more than just lust,
and a kind of bliss
when we kiss and kiss,
while stars sparkles above us.

Gert Strydom

Come Drink From Unending Waters (In Answer To A. E. Housman)

I would rather believe in waters
that are offered without a price,
that quenches the soul, than like others
in a Godless world and a harsh and stark demise.

As in the greatest love He has offered his life for me
have not stolen anything but has created this world
brought from injustice and pain tranquillity
paying sorrows even in His holy word untold

and with your blaspheme
challenging the Supreme Being
you only show your own inadequacy
in knowing, conceiving

that something more than life exists and in the cold
you leave His love untold, choosing to rot in the mould.

[Reference: XXII "Ho, everyone that thirsteth" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Come In The Spring (Ballade)

(for Annelize, after A. G. Visser)

Come in the spring when the days do stretch out
and see how the roses astound with their colours,
when the dewdrops do cover the leaves
and just after twilight the sun does rise.

Chorus:

Come in the spring to my garden, come my love, do come
do not wait a moment longer
as decades of my life do turn around and around,
that I can tell you how much I do yearn for you.

Come when the gardenia, lavender and jasmine
linger on the morning air,
when the morning glories do open when the sun does appear
when you can catch the deep-blue colour of them.

See the white spider lilies bursting open
and the daylilies that suddenly do fold open,
wait a moment at the irises and do stop,
look at the pure white and yellow and purple and blue.

It's as if moments do hold something holy
with the secrets of the new season
where spring is unfolding in her glory,
as if God is present right here.

The redbreast sings it's longing for the rain,
when inquisitive sparrows frolic in the garden,
the doves do flutter down and coo their songs
and the bakbakiris (bush-shrikes) dart about in the top of the oak.

[Reference: "Rosa Rosarum" (Rose of the roses) by A. G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Come Into My Life

(for Annelize)

Come into my life with your summer laughter
when the winds of change do blow through every sunny day,
when from high in the oak tree the owl does call
and the doves do sing their laments right through the night.

Bring me your happy sparkle
when my whole world do fall apart around me
as if love will never again be present
come and find me where I am hiding and forswore all kinds of fear

when the bakbakiris (bush-shrikes) flutter, dance and sing their dialogues
be the one that brings love and new life to me.

Gert Strydom

Come Joyful Sun (Novelinee)

Come joyful sun and shine brightly upon
the gloomy, cold and rainy winter chill
until every mark of winter is gone,
let flowers bloom at my house on the hill,
bring the dainty, lively and lovely spring
let bright wild flowers everywhere appear,
birds sing; butterflies fly on each small wing,
as if once more creation is drawing near,
while the skies are dark blue and crystal clear.

Gert Strydom

Come Live With Me

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you

and we will wander out to sea
sit on the rocks, witness the how the waves
knocks, splash thundering
and only you and me
will hear the seagulls screech.

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you.

Gert Strydom

Come Live With Me [1]

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you

and we will wander out to sea
sit on the rocks, witness the how the waves
knocks, splash thundering
and only you and me
will hear the seagulls screech.

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you.

Gert Strydom

Come Live With Me 1

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you

and we will wander out to sea
sit on the rocks, witness the how the waves
knocks, splash thundering
and only you and me
will hear the seagulls sing.

Come live with me, be a love to me
and I swear by God in the sky above
that I will be true to you.

Gert Strydom

Come My Darling

Come my darling,
come and be reckless with me
and let us tonight
swim nakedly under the stars,
let the moonlight reflect with a golden shine
on your wet white skin
when you get out of the swimming-pool,
let your eyes be big like fountains
where in I read
the depth of your love for me.

Gert Strydom

Come To Me

Come to me
in summer, autumn, winter
and spring
with the love that you bring.

Come to me whether
the weather is clear,
or a thunderstorm is near
and bless me with your caresses.

Come to me
whether I live or die,
whether here
or beyond the sky.

Let us always be together
and come to me.

Gert Strydom

Come To Me (1)

Come to me in the brightness of a day
or in the darkness of the night
and then let be whatever may
even if it seems wrong or right.

Come to me in the experience of a dream
and do compassion and love freely give
as there is much more to life than what it does seem
and with you I do want to constantly live.

Gert Strydom

Come To My Flower Garden

(After A. G. Visser)

Come in the spring and see my flower garden
when suddenly after the winter it bursts out in beauty,
when the roses do bud and later start flowering,
when the irises astound with all of their colours
and furtively morning glories trumpet forth the sun.

Come in the forenoon when a swarm of doves coo,
rejoice and flaunt and sing love songs to deep in the night
and daylilies open their cups yellow, orange and dark-red,
when the tiger lilies and gladiolas awaken after the winter
and the afternoon-ladies do peep at the sun.

Come in the afternoon when the jasmine, lavender and gardenia
carry their fragrances as they did in the early morning,
when the geraniums are full of flowers right up to winter
and the rain lilies flower in the purest white,
when the evening flower brings magic to the sultry nights.

Come at dusk when the sun sets over the hillocks,
when some flowers wait upon the arrival of the moon,
then find the magic that twilight brings
when the weaver, redbreast and sparrow do sing love songs
and you are surrounded by beauty from everywhere.

Come when the moon rises red and later becomes silver-white
when in longing I yearn to have you close
that you my darling can experience the magic of each flower cup
before they wither away with the course of time
and I can show you the loveliest of our flowers.

Come let us together experience the colours and fragrances
and in love and happiness visit and laugh
before the summer of our lives come to a end,
past the last years of old age
where only in thoughts we will have a piece of this paradise.

[Reference: "Rosa Rosarum" by A. G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Come To My Garden

Come to my garden
when purple irises flower perfectly,
morning glories summit over every thing
and be speechless by the glory
of sunspots that trumpet their beauty purple-blue
and violets that rise up everywhere.

Come to my garden
when purple irises flower perfectly,
see roses from crimson to auburn
and find no words and become dumbstruck
by odours and colours that my plants trumpet forth
and come and look at every thing, come my most precious flower,
come to my garden.

Gert Strydom

Come To Our Flower-Garden

(for Daleen)

Come to our garden of flowers my love and be surprised
and see how the crowns of thorns astonish with their beauty
when you come out at the porch at the front door
Take my hand and hold onto it tightly

and walk into a world where nothing impairs nature,
see how a chameleon disguises himself in the flowers
where daylilies, irises of all colours are blooming,
where water continually splashes into the fishpond.

See the bright gazanias, verbenas
and turn a snow white rose around and around in your hands
when a beetle hums near arum-lilies and calf's eyes
and see the bright purple, red and yellow dahlias.

Come to our garden of flowers my love and be surprised
when the late afternoon lingers before sunset
and see how you fit into my life and into my world
when sparrows, weavers and doves do descend in swarms

to peck up seed and bread crumbs on the grass,
where the honey bush and afternoon lady grows in paint drums.
Come and look and experience everything thoroughly
where the loveliest flowers in our garden bloom

where trailing geraniums hang walls full
and come revel like a innocent child,
let the fragrances of gardenia and jasmine catch you
when everywhere we find the most beautiful treasures.

where angel-wings blow red white and pink in the wind
where roses grow white, red, pink and yellow tree high
before the night does devour the day
and darkness gets its enchantment with the moon.

Gert Strydom

Coming Home [3]

I am back after twenty years
and my childhood memories
are clear, but this place
is no longer as it had been.

Farm buildings are dilapidated,
the old farm house is now a ruin
with the pretty garden gone
and only a few tokens
that at a time people was living here.

The fields where maize used to grow
lie empty now, with no tractors tracking the land
only open veldt and a few thorn bushes are left

and I feel bereft, as if even the memories
are now dying, but the big oak trees
that I used to climb
are still where they used to be
and their shade is welcoming.

Gert Strydom

Coming To A Standstill

One rain Cape winter day
when with my BMW
I come through the mountain passes
on my way to my home in Pretoria

and the wind does blow stormy
a luxury bus did drive
right in front of me
and nowhere
I could pass it

and when eventually I got an opportunity
I had to gear down
and use the full power of the six-cylinder engine
to pass the colossus
that was swaying to and fro.

When I stopped with my BMW
at a fuel station in Beaufort West
ambulances, the police
and fire brigade did rush past

and the fuel attendant told me
that the particular bus went down the abyss,
that it was going at speed
and lies broken down in a ravine.

Gert Strydom

Commandant Gideon Scheepers

Not only was he assassinated
as a ill man captured in the field
by a British firing squad

but was buried in the ground
in a grave unmarked
planted without a coffin,

buried like rubbish,
or rotting dead meat,
like weed
without anyone heeding
where they laid him down.

Gert Strydom

Commandant Gideon Scheepers

They tried to send him to hell,
as if he was one of them,
a traitor, a rebel.

The British killed a captured ill man,
that they came across in the veldt
without decency, or any military law being honoured.

They shot a Boer commandant through the heart
and without a funeral note,
they hurried, to get him buried.

A brave man devoted
to his country, to his God,
whose burial place was not noted.

Turning sod after sod
with spades, they dumped him
in a unmarked grave

in the dead of night
without using light
they threw ground upon his chest,

laid him to rest without any honour
and left him alone
without a marking stone.

[References: The rank of Commandant is equivalent to that of Lieutenant Colonel. The heroic story of Gideon Scheepers during the second Anglo-Boer war, who was captured while being ill in the veldt as a normal combatant, but treated like a rebel and shot by the British, who buried him in a unmarked hole in the ground.]

Gert Strydom

Communication In Days Of Great Trepidation (Couplets)

Some people think they can withhold the absolute truth
from adults, old people and the youth,

distort the true facts as racism and twist it
to suit their agenda bit by tiny bit,

where from China the virus comes deadly,
do now affect all of humanity

and the communist Chinese
did not say a word and lived at ease,

while to every nation it did spread
and left far too many Chinese people dead,

while the Chinese communist regime
did not have any kind of scheme,

but it's religion, communism, did fail
as all own efforts at first to stop it was of no avail.

The virus says I will make people deadly ill,
as many as I possibly can I will kill

and for it millions now must be scanned.
Two other poets can ask to have me banned

for stating that it was not in China contained,
that as a treat to all human life it has remained,

for this honest open truth reporters can yell,
without manners cause all kinds of hell,

without really asking questions try to indoctrinate
\and all human liberties to violate,

but of Chinese communist incapability this thing reeks

and here I am locked-down for five weeks,

stripped from all normal kinds of liberty
while a thing from China haunts me,

do kill my countrymen, leave people unemployed,
leave economies and businesses destroyed
and suddenly changes every single thing
as it affect human life and even existing,

but in all this God's mercies I do see
where He still acts with great capability.

Gert Strydom

Communion Service (Sonnet)

While the pastor does ignore the clock
the congregation does become restless at twelve
where he does look well fed in his neat black cassock
and the minister does into scripture much deeper delve
while the couple with their child does each kneel on a red hassock,

a high-school child does page through an old songbook
while the congregation waits for the child to be blessed,
a teen-age boy does pinch another with a mischievous look,
a widow dressed in black seems utterly depressed
and the stern faced head-elder does no dissention brook.

The normally empty church is packed to capacity
when the communion service does begin
and some people bring their expensive cars for all to see,
while adulterers, cheats and businessmen act as if free from sin.

Gert Strydom

Compass

Will You be my compass
that always gives true direction,
even when its dark night around me
to help me find direction again
while the thunderbolts fall around me?

If the stars are torn loose
from the heavens
and the moon shines its last rays
and mercy for sin
disappears from You
may I be in Your heart
and read love in Your eyes?

When the sun turns for the last time
around its own axle
and rise scorching,
would You then fold your hand about me
and still keep me under Your protection?

Gert Strydom

Comprehension

(after Marlise Joubert)

Past the summer, sun and good times,
wives with groceries and bakeries,

past hope, trust and faith
even with a bowed head

my beautiful and painful memories do walk
and I wait with love for you.

Past old age, illness and sorrow
and past the days that a person wants to forget,

past senselessness and meaning
is the place where absolution begins

and right through the dark night
I am still waiting on you.

[Reference: "ingreep" (intervening-grip) by Marlise Joubert.]

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Gert Strydom

Conceived In A World Of Sin And Pain (Cavatina)

Conceived in a world of sin and pain
by divine grace
I am from all my iniquity free,
as without trace
you take all of my own sins far away.
Your Godly face
like a father delights in all my ways
as you bring gladness to all of my days.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Confession

First above all things I have tried to regard God
did try and fix this in my behaviour
and will bow down before no one else
but to the Lord God on whose coming I do wait.

A worldwide church treated me
as if I am busy with hellish whoring,
as if I wanted to get any innocent woman into bed,
as if I was a threat to everyone
and had only to slap my fingers

as if I do despise God
and every higher official above me,
do not have any respect for authority
and with this my life was torn to pieces
as a human being no one of them did regard me,

where never I tried to get involved in any relationship
with any woman at the office
although one did act like a prostitute,
as if she had a hellish illness I did avoid her
but very true I did remain and tried to keep my integrity
and no sexual illness has ever infected me.

Where no woman did really want to stay with me
and here I do talk about a world of hurt
where my tears do oceans fill
and in any case it's no one's business
who I do court.

With gossip stories they did surround my world,
saw me as a kind of threat,
wanted to make money,
where I did only try to have an own life
and they tried to break me off
like a flower at the stem.

My money dried up
and from my debts I was not free

and people did liberate my career from me
with their acts and words,
did make sure that I do remain unemployed
as if for something of which I do not know
they were trying to take retaliation.

Sometimes I tried to bring change with my poems
as if with a Moses-staff with thunder
I did want to jump out,
to fix things at the best that I could
but many times it did lead to my own humiliation

where the truth and their own words and confessions
were seen as hatred-speech
and some of the resistance came
from the jealousy of others
to make my life hell
but where at times my life did come to a standstill
and people did not even regard the things that I do
more and more I did get involved into my own poetry.

Unemployed for years
I did work for free for others,
was brave and heroic against the hardship and disdain,
did decide that in this way I could serve the Lord God
and I had lost my friends and they were amiable
in a pasted-on way.

One man at the local church went out of his way
to pay me for some work
as if he does really understand
but others treated me openly with contempt
and so my life does continue
where I have never been a beggar
and will never be
and still less is toady for some one or something.

I wanted my poems to stand like monuments,
as great poems that do continue to eternity
and still I am trying to find that one right poem
while I do write many.

Still in life I do remain an adventurer,
someone that is searching for much more
than just the here and now
and where in my writings I do cry and laugh
please do tolerate me
where I am trying to celebrate humanity

and everything that I can
I try to experience,
do lurch into a world and its things
but life is but a dark way
in which we do strife to greater unseen things

where the laughter and the crying,
good and bad things
and love do sometimes come and go
but at such times God does guide the way...

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Gert Strydom

Confession (Terzanelle)

Just once your eyes, your mouth,
your heart and soul belonged to me
in our time of youth

did I stars in your eyes see
kind, gentle beautiful lady,
your heart and soul belonged to me

and everything was clear and pure, nothing shady
the moon, the sky all had their magic
kind, gentle beautiful lady,

but destiny held the cards for me, grim and tragic
slicing right through our intimacy
the moon, the sky all had their magic

but an end came to the relationship between you and me.
You kissed another, bound him under your spell
slicing right through our intimacy

sending me to hell.
Just once your eyes, your mouth,
you, kissed another, bound him under your spell
in our time of youth.

[References: Les Fleurs du Mal: Confession by Charles Pierre Baudelaire.
Confession by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

Confession Of Faith In The Afternoon

I notice the mechanical chisels jerking the road to pieces,
how the foreman pushes a hand under his helmet
then with a frown does look at a watch on his arm,
do roar out a command and the workers do smile from happiness
when everything for the afternoon lunch do come to a standstill
and the workers stand like a hungry crowd around him
where he does distribute tasty sandwiches
and when he does pray for them I am astonished in the central business district
when later men do laughing eat sandwiches and drink coffee
and that he is a sincere Christian do sink in.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Confrontation With Baba Yaga

In Angola

I saw Baba Yaga
come out of the wood
and in the blue sky
she hanged dark and hideous
with a canon in her beak
and rockets on her sides
that draws red lines
when she eats soldiers
by wiping them out.

No uglier witch
you could get anywhere
and she hanged bony
in the air
above our heads
while she collected skulls
with a shrilling noise.

Day after day
we were on recognisance
and she was there
until a stinger missile
fired by a Unita soldier
dragged her from the sky
and she went flaming to the ground
and ploughed a furrow on her side.

[References: "In a number of East European and Russian myths, Baba Yaga is a cannibalistic witch who lives in a hut on the edge of the forest. She is also called Jezi-Baba or Baba Yaga Kostianaya Noga ('bone-legs') , referring to the fact that she is rather skinny. She is regarded as the devil's own grandmother."
Confrontation with a Russian Hind helicopter gunship.]

Gert Strydom

Consolation

How great it is not to be going
to Zimbabwe this summer
not having to go through
a packed border post,
the ruins that's left of her cities,
or visiting friends on their farms,
since they have all being driven away.

No need to hunt for petrol
from fuel station to fuel station,
no need to find your way
through a crowd of hungry children
and no need to feel guilty
because you have food
and a car and a place called home.

There's no Victoria falls here,
no Zimbabwe ruins built from rock,
no Kariba lake to live in a boat on,
no great Zambezi to white river raft on
and no need to be afraid
because you are white.

How much better to take the familiar highway
past Durban down to Margate
or to go somewhere on the South coast
and not to study outdated maps
of the unknown to find a place
called Mana pools
on a dirt track
in the middle of the veldt.

How much better to eat in great
familiar restaurants,
that does not charge in US dollars
and to holiday
right next to the big blue ocean
and to tan on a choice of beaches.

Robert Mugabe can have his whole damn country,
even if he's not the chosen leader
as long as he keeps
his population there,
but everywhere I look
there's Zimbabwean aliens appearing
out of the blue
and even on a lovely beach
a Zimbabwean girl
swims in panties and a bra
or walks without any.

Gert Strydom

Constantly I Am Astonished

Your beauty astonishes me constantly
when humility
does surround my whole life, shadows do fall,
with nobleness
you do become far more than just my princess,
oblivion
falls over the past when we do laugh together,
when I do yearn for each kiss from you.

Gert Strydom

Constantly I Am Astounded By Your Beauty

Your beauty constantly astounds me
when your loveliness
embraces my life, shadows linger,
and with nobleness
you do become far more than just my princess,
oblivion
falls over the past when we laugh together
and I do yearn for another kiss from you.

Gert Strydom

Constantly I Do Realize

Constantly I do realize that who and what I am,
the gifts and abilities that I have
only is grace from God,
the possessions that I have
are only borrowed to me
for a limited time
and that God does daily use small things
to make a big difference in my life.

Gert Strydom

Constantly I Notice

Constantly I notice how You do repair my life
do touch the days of darkness with Your light
and every time when I stumble and want to fall
it's You that everywhere do protect me.

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Gert Strydom

Constantly I Wish With You To Be (Villanelle)

Again I want to tell you how I do love you,
that you are like no other woman to me,
through life and further you I want to pursue

and in this my intentions are real and true
where in you a real angel I do see.

Again I want to tell you how I do love you,

that together with you I want to continue
but locked-down no one is now at liberty.
Through life and further you I want to pursue

and I know each imperfect thing and virtue,
also each part of your lovely personality.

Again I want to tell you how I do love you,

that at heart struck the little things you do
where constantly I wish with you to be,
through life and further you I want to pursue,

when this virus will end I do not have a clue
but this love can last for eons past eternity.

Again I want to tell you how I do love you,
through life and further you I want to pursue.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Constantly I Wonder How Can I Be Part Of It?

Constantly I wonder how can I be part of it
of a literature in which I read contempt to God,
in which people sing about relationships with the same sex;
use cursing words, the lowest language without fear?

Without Godly protection
even the mightiest fortress will fall
and this beautiful language, Afrikaans
is part of me as a born in thing.

When a great Afrikaans poet then tramples over me,
I know that he is not walking in the steps of God;
honour to the own self, self-elevation
is time and again betrayed by his words.

Still my verses in Afrikaans is holding strong,
while savages are ruling the country and are doing as they seem fit.

Gert Strydom

Constantly She Brings Joy

The voice of my love is like a melody
and constantly she brings joy to me,
her eyes is more lovely than the sky,
and in her presence truly happy am I

while I see the brilliance of her smile,
eternally with wit she does me beguile,
until all life leaves me and beyond
to her I will be forever fond.

Gert Strydom

Constantly The Hour Work Ticks On Slowly

Constantly the hour work ticks on slowly
and we are caught in the mechanics of time
and even mere moments we cannot bring to a halt
and it's as if everything hangs in the balance of destiny
and even when we do regret the deeds and words of yesterday
today and its hours and seconds still run on,
and we do find new meaning
in the moments that constantly do appear
but there is One that exists beyond the limitations of time and space
and He folds His omnipotent hands over the whole universe
and where everyone of us become but a mere speck of dust
His love continually is poured out
in provisions and stipulations right through the universe
and even with us in the soft falling rain.

Gert Strydom

Constantly Waves Toss And Fling (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrains)

Constantly waves toss and fling,
with water and sand are covering
the outstretched white shell filled beach
as more and more tiny grains they bring

and this process is present night and day,
as waters roll out in the bay
while seagulls sandpipers peck around
screech run and play.

Gert Strydom

Construction

At the skeleton of concrete and steel
huge black pipes with running cement and stone
snakes in and are shaking while huge machines
are busy working day and night
and men scurry around like a huge nest of ants
that has been opened
with the gang-boss shouting instructions
above the noise and the architect checking in
every now and then and men drilling
with thudding boring machines,
yellow cranes are almost bending under the pressure
of what they lift and level after level
is rising while more and more trucks pull in
unloading their cargoes of materials.

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Gert Strydom

Construction Workers

I have seen them, big yellow machines,
sometimes coloured orange or red
controlled by robust dependable
Sam, William and Dan
and every civil construction man
had been chewing at the earth, digging holes
sometimes planting electricity poles
and doing man's improving work,
always busy constructing something
and in reality destroying the veldt,
destroying nature at its barest core
and no place is sacred anymore
before this armoured brigade.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Contact

When I called you on my cellular phone
to tell you about the depth of my love
the signal broke
and I could not say a single word to you.
I could have send a electronic mail to you,
to say that I cannot take the loneliness anymore
but the internet cafe was already closed
and it was at a wrong time and hour.
When I picked up a pen
I did want to tell you how your absence troubles me
but continuously
I was spelling everything wrong.
Then I decide to risk arriving
unexpectedly at your door.

Gert Strydom

Continually Our Love Surprises Me

Continually our love does me surprise,
as sometimes you bring me pain
and sometimes you hold on to me

while sometimes it feels as if I am reaching into a whirlpool
but sometimes you take away everything bad.
Continually our love does me surprise,

and sometimes tears run over your cheeks
but sometimes it's as if the sun shines through your eyes
and sometimes you hold on to me

while our love is much stronger than just a maybe,
and I am smitten by the look on your face.
Continually our love does me surprise,

as if new depths continually comes to it,
you become part of my awareness
and sometimes you hold on to me

and it's as if we perfectly fit into each other's lives
while continually you are part of me, of my existence;
continually our love does me surprise,
and sometimes you hold on to me.

Gert Strydom

Continually Surges Break On The Shore (Cavatina)

Continually surges break on the shore
by design, not chance,
as if it is written by Godly wit.
In every glance
the beauty of nature does overflow.
In a balance
the laws of nature are set exactly,
while continually chaos wants to break free.

Gert Strydom

Continually The Red Weaver Gambols

Continually the red weaver gambols around,
when the dove continually sings in sorrow
and he lands frolicking on the wet ground,
before it takes insects to its chicks
that twitter, jump up and down in the nest,
and at night when the moon rises silver-white,
when small sounds pierce through everything
then I hear a joyous song and then I hear him
tell about life, about every small thing,
when that small bird sings with caring affection.

Gert Strydom

Conversation

Dad, I believe that you are resting where you are
that you are unaware of everything
as if you are only sleeping
but sometimes it feels

as if you are aware of my whole life,
then I wish that you could read my verses
as you were living for Afrikaans
and it was as if poems were in your blood

and I am wondering what you would have thought,
would have said as I am writing
every poem in English as well,
that it is the Scottish blood running true?

Sometimes when I see lightning bolts
trailing white blue down to earth,
getting the smell, almost like sulphur
where a thunderbolt falls

I am unafraid from being a child
and it's as if I hear the voice of God
as if you are also near
like when I was a toddler

taking my hand in yours
and then I could not comprehend
that they were putting you in the cold earth,
it was if you had just left by your own will

which is a really strange thing
as you were truly in love with mom,
loved me and my younger brother
as if you would give your life for us

and when I go to your grave in the hillocks
at Heidelberg, at times I am dumb
as if an old pain
comes into my heart

and again I want to
walk into the hillocks with you
to gather protea flowers for mom
to give them to her in a glass vase

to together stand on the porch
while lightning bolt after lightning bolts
falls exploding form the sky,
to get the smell
of the first drops that are falling.

Gert Strydom

Conversation In My Inner Room (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Johann Johl)

My Lord, where for years I have had problems
to find a job while I am qualified and were yearning for a income,
people did view me as less than nothing,
at times I want to come into resistance to this country,
call out: "Everything is in vain! " Do want to prohibit anyone from me
as I witness how people do scoff me constantly,
do say that I cannot work under authority (do slyly wait upon my nemesis) .
Past a career I have been affirmed. Your power does go beyond any law.
Where I now live on my own annuity You have got to forgive me.
Like them I want to strike out when they do expect it the least,
also want to set all corruption and wrong things straight,
want to make my enemies from mere fear flee and tremble,
do want to bring them to total destruction after years of research
but this is not Your way and these things keep troubling me.

[Reference: "Binnekamergesprek" Inner-room conversation by
Johann Johl.]

Gert Strydom

Convictions

You believe in the mystery of cards falling,
a star jumping by in the dark sky
tealeaves that you stir,

that happiness is just around the corner
and I see the flame
dancing in your eyes that are much deeper than mere passion.

You tell stories about heroes and heroines,
try to thresh out your dreams
diligently are looking for Eden, heaven and the hell

and I believe everything that you tell me,
also that you love me with your soul
although you have other boyfriends in between.

You believe in an almighty God
whose mighty envoys guard every life
and that nothing can estrange a person from Him,

that if you lift your eyes
your words go through time and space
and that He intervenes on request

and I believe in the power
lying between your loins
and the pleasure that I see in your eyes

if you like a noble flower
fold around me and I hear your heart beat
when we embrace each other.

Just like yours my faith is implacably strong
as it is grounded on something noble
and the indescribable things between us

and when passion is swept by
care, tenderness and love remains
that lies unfathomable between us.

[Reference: Convictions by Paul Verlaine.]

Gert Strydom

Coots At The Dam (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after C. M. van der Heever)

It's twelve o'clock and the sun hangs high in the sky
the reflection does catch the eye,
babbling water laps on the dam, the wind jerks on my shirt's hem,
whispers through every reed and stem
and it's as if every animal longs for freedom as it passes by
when a coot-hen with her fowls do pass on water that fall and rise
where the motherly love of the bird does one surprise,
while a motorboat sails wildly up and down
and the mother do try to shelter her own
while again the boat at speed passes and almost do fly,
the reflection does catch the eye,

when the scolding of the coots you do hear
while they flap their wings in great fear
and disfigured is the picture that did allure
as if man does threaten almost every animal in his pleasure
and yet the sun hangs high and clear
when still scolding the coots fly away
the boat out of control do up and down sway,
into a crash with another do steer
while they flap their wings in great fear.

[Reference:"Die vertrekkende wildeganse" (The departing wild geese)by C. M. van der Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Cornered At Traffic Light

Union bosses and some politicians
were protesting on television
against a new law
brought in by the opposition
which did hold the unions responsible
for damage committed by strikers,
for harassment to innocent civilians

and suddenly I was back in the situation
where I was cornered at a traffic light
by a bunch of municipal workers on riot
with the police following
and not intervening
and remember rubbish being flung at me,

how a big cockroach was darting
over the motorbike's fuel tank
then flew up
like a kamikaze pilot
searching for self destruction
right onto my leather jacket,

much resembling some union bosses
with spectacles,
with eyes darting here and there,
looking like some of the politicians
totally unstoppable,
above the laws,
before I smacked it
into a blotch and pulled away
driving over a red traffic light
avoiding being mobbed.

Gert Strydom

Cornfield

I see the young green buds
and smell the rain falling on fruitful ground
somewhere in the distance there are thunderbolts
that every now and then falls, explodes and branch.

A long forgotten summer still stays with me
and the glow of your bright blue eyes
where in the shade of a big old oak tree
we had a picnic next to this cornfield,

the rain that suddenly falls from a cloudless sky,
lightning bolts that ominous get closer and closer
and you and me running like elated children
in the cornfield
to the shelter of the shed
and like naughty children
embrace against each other

but here life has also passed me
and what I have of you, is only memories,
a grave where I sometimes put flowers
and sometimes it's as if you
are still invisible keeping near to me.

Gert Strydom

Cosmology (Rondel Prime)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Like a jumping star that flaming does fall
of which the power does flow out into space
acts and words do become commonplace,
arguments do hurt although they are small

and the affects of it a person cannot stall
where words and deeds a person cannot erase.
Like a jumping stars that flaming does fall
of which the power does flow out into space

this has a ripple effect on everything and all
and it pierces my heart when I see the hurt on your face
as to me you are the most special person in the human race,
on God for help I do at times call
like a jumping star that flaming does fall
of which the power does flow out into space.

[Reference: "Kosmologie" (Cosmology)by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

Cosmos

So much rain fell
that the grass
was like a swamp
and next to the road
suddenly wildflowers bloomed
in colours of white, pink
and crimson-brown.

On long green stems
they grew together
the petals almost
in the shape
of a forget-me-not
but much more spread
at the front edge.

Some kids might take them
to play the I love you game,
but do so in vain.

The smell of cosmos
hangs soft in the air
and there were patches
of colour everywhere.

I picked some with regret
to see the petals fold over
to hide their heads
of yellow and black specks.

Far too brittle to the touch,
still their beauty was too much
and I thought God,
You made nature really great.

Gert Strydom

Could I Compare You?

Could I compare you
to a single summer day
being kindly warm
and ever caring
shining with a own sweet serenity
in a tranquil cloudless deep blue sky
with the same feelings
that is transparent in your eyes
with a fresh breeze sweeping in
much alike your presence
and still it would vastly
not be equal to you
and your beauty that shines through.

Gert Strydom

Could I Sketch Pictures With Words (Free Verse Sonnet)

Would it make a difference to you,
even if the night folds dark around us,
if I could touch you with wise words,
would it bring new hope to you?
Could I sketch pictures with words
about a world that is different and better,
could I etch the beautiful deep into your soul,
of happiness that is deeper than sympathy?
When destiny brings the dark night,
the events in the world want to swallow me,
when the lightning-bolts circle out much wider
would you then with love embrace me?
Sometimes I wonder where love does find meaning,
or are words and acts blown away by the wind?

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Gert Strydom

Count-Down

Underground sits a man with his finger
on a red flashing button,
Lucifer smiles bitter while calamity comes from his gaze,
a clock against the wall beats like a heart that is near to death

hatches glide open and nuclear missiles stand ready
while time does measure off man's existence.

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Gert Strydom

Counterparts

In your body I float
as if destiny awaits me
to make another living being
and I rise and fall on your sea,
hearing the waves breaking
with sheer intensity
while your voice rise in passion
and drops squirt swimming
with their own life
while you quiver under me
and your nails dig into my back
and tears of pleasure
stream down your cheeks

and I can hear your heart beat in your breast
while you lay with your head on my chest
and you are mine and I am yours
and your fingers clasp mine
as if nothing will ever
separate us again.

Gert Strydom

Country That Is So Own To Me (In Answer To Lina Spies)

Country that is so own to me
that I can feel your heart beating in me,
from creation you were meant
to be mine with a kind of natural bond.
Although you feel like a place of darkness,
your shadows against the sun is still cool,
with the wind and water splashing against me,
you still bring my love to meaning,
I see your stars glittering enchanting,
your plains lie stretched out in my heart,
you are still part of my life's story,
the place where my ancestors are buried,
I am still searching for my own small paradise,
a place that will be there for my children as well.

Gert Strydom

Courage

Even when the greatest ship
of her time
sank in a sea of ice,

even when man's
reach into outer space
exploded with his rocket ship
in a ball of orange flame,

still the human spirit
did arise to sail the sea again
and to set his mark on the moon.

Above all disasters, setbacks and impediments
courage towers to infinity.

Gert Strydom

Covered Nakedness (2)

(after Sheila Cussons)

There is a mask that I do wear
behind which I do hide nakedly
and the image
that I display to the world
does cover my fire
that burns so near to my soul
that the extinguishing of it
will destroy my own humanity.

[Reference: "Bedekte naak" (Covered nakedness) by Sheila Cussons.]

Gert Strydom

Covered Nakedness (3)

(after Sheila Cussons)

There is a mask that I do wear
behind which I do hide nakedly
and the image
that I display to the world
does cover my fire
that burns so near to my soul
that the extinguishing of it
will destroy my own humanity.

[Reference: "Bedekte naak" (Covered nakedness) by Sheila Cussons.]

Gert Strydom

Covid-19 Lockdown: Strubenvale Springs (Free Verse Sonnet)

With my mother of 86, half-cripple with me,
that waits in the long line outside Strubenvale Pick n Pay
an employee of Pick n Pay passes angry,
screams deafening with all her might:
"You are waiting here in vain if you are a pensioner!"
I wonder if her message is aimed at my mother?
At the entrance my mother gets a chair out of sympathy.
Quickly we get groceries and when we are finished I am relieved.
It's just a short journey to Strubenvale Pharmacy
but no one is let in without a mask.
There is own safety that goes with all the measures
and it's as if the people very slowly leave that pharmacy.
A Indian lady smiles friendly and brings my mother a mask
and I am happy when she eventually can enter to get her medicine.

[Poet's note: My mother walks with a walking stick. They were only letting in five persons at a time and the same measure was in place at the pharmacy.
Strubenvale Pick n Pay had another line at the other side of the entrance in another street for pensioners that draw pension directly from them, with cashiers especially for this mother's pension is paid directly into her bank account]

Gert Strydom

Crackling Words

I am the thunder
that crackles in your words
and make blue sparks,
when you write thoughts down.

I branch to wherever
your words go
and hit every place
where your letters go.

At times I bring new life
in your verses
with the rain
and sometimes I am the one
that unfolds heartache, repentance
and hold the abyss,
but it's I
that builds your words
and tell others
how you see life
and the world.

I constantly spark
new thoughts open
and cleave right through rock
to reveal truth and reality
and at times I light the way
where you walk
and at sometimes it's I
that brings the darkness.

Gert Strydom

Crépe Memories

Late Friday afternoon
you will open the cupboard
take out flour,
mix your pancake mixture,
put two pans on the gas-stove
with a bit oil in each,
mix cinnamon and sugar
to sprinkle in a plate
and on the pancakes,
turn open two flames
and bake crépes and throw them over
until there is pile for me and Hannes
and the whole house smell of pancakes
and later after a prayer
we will sit at the table and feast on crépes
of which the sugar melts in.

Gert Strydom

Criminal Activity (Droighneach)

At a time a man constantly contributed
when crime was a kind of supreme solution,
as money was resolved to redistributed
funnily their was not any kind of inclusion

in the plans as he was really reassigned,
while scans of prints made a hot headline,
powers were to be redesigned, recombined
while showers did them continually confine.

Gert Strydom

Crimson-Red Aloes Speck The Hillock

Crimson-red aloes speck the hillock,
standing out in bright patches
against the green vegetation
of the rock studded small kopje
but only a breeze blows
carrying the sweet scent of flowering proteas
with sugar-bushes full of the cone shaped
flowering heads
and bees whisk about, happy and free
to gather nectar for their honey
and the knee-high grass wave in the wind
and the sky is set in a perfect hue,
in a very dark pure blue
and the whole scene embraces me
as if like a kid I have returned to it.

Gert Strydom

Crocodile Hunter

(A Terzanelle for Steve Irwin)

You walked into my heart
a man dedicated to humans and animals alike
and of it I felt part

of every trip, every hike
as if you came out of Africa, but you fitted in anywhere
a man dedicated to humans and animals alike

and you antics with crocodiles and wild beasts was broadcasted everywhere,
the image of the man in kaki shorts stays with me
as if you came out of Africa, but you fitted in anywhere

making your Australia great, your spirit remains free
and you paid the cost of this destiny driven life
the image of the man in kaki shorts stays with me

and like your beloved dog, child and wife
I am smitten down by your death
and you paid the cost of this destiny driven life

and with every breath
you walked into my heart
I am smitten down by your death
and of it I felt part.

Gert Strydom

Crow

Early the morning dew shimmers
over the grass where over his eyes goes
where he is clinging to a branch
and his glance travels on and on

as if the entire world is his
and everything that can be prey on is spied upon
from where the sun is only colouring the horizon
and even a dot carries meaning.

When Cain killed Abel he was a witness
and came to his own element
while Abel's life did grow faint after a deadly blow
and over the animals fleeing in fear he was astounded

but was hungry with the first smell of blood
while the whole world around him did shudder
and his screeching call did quiver
while he wanted to tear and devour

when he did find a new source of food
and from that time he was a dark child
that wanders continually ready
on the wings of the wind.

Gert Strydom

Crowds Of Xhosas Gathered At The Pool

At the Gxara River in the Transkei
a pool between some trees and flowering plants
is linked with one of the most emotional
and painful stories in history.

At the pool a young medium named Nonqawuse
spoke with the ancestral spirits
while bathing and looked into the water
seeing their faces.

They promised to drive the white man away,
provided that the Xhosa nation
would destroy all their own cattle and crops.

The Xhosas were disturbed by news
of this revelation
and travelled from near and far
to speak to her
and her witchdoctor uncle Mhlakaza.

Crowds of Xhosas gathered at the pool
with its red flowering aloes
peering into the water,
with a lot claiming to see
the faces of their ancestors there.

Some people even claimed
to see whole armies of ancestors
eager for war against the white man
and only waiting on the Xhosa people
to follow their instructions.

Then the insane instructions was followed through
with cattle being slaughtered
and most of the crops being destroyed
and only the very small Ngqika
section of the tribe not adhering to it.

The majority of Xhosas

waited in vain on 18 February 1857
for the sun to rise blood red,
the land to be filled with fat cattle,
new crops to appear
and vast armies of spirits
to go out in battle
against the white man.

It was a tragic dawn
with the Xhosa nation facing starvation
and ironically the Xhosas survived only
through the white man
reaching out a hand of friendship
and feeding them
and by the compassion
of some neighbouring tribes
who had been oppressed by them before
and it's estimated
that some twenty five thousand people
did die from this tragedy.

Gert Strydom

Cruelly People Hanged My God On A Cross (Free Verse Sonnet)

Cruelly people hanged my God on a cross,
Pilate washed his hands as if innocent
from this deed and in sin humanity was caught,
at three pm it was dark night and all the animals were scared,
His mother cried was tied to this event,
for the liberty of humanity it did fit into God's plan,
where Jesus Christ did hang with the wages of sin of the world,
His disciples but John did flee and was scared.
Full of love, attentive, benevolent without sin or blame
my Lord God was murdered on a Friday afternoon,
as the Son of God the Roman soldier did recognize him,
where He brought all men to liberty in His Father's name,
Lucifer did laugh, did despise God and lost the war right there,
while God rescued humanity who in sin did not deserve it.

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Gert Strydom

Crush-Pen (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Ernst van Heerden)

There are also blood brothers in his hell
(more than he can count on his hands)
Opperman, the two Louws, Eybers and Spies,
Campbell, Butler, Plomer, Seroti and Livingstone
just to mention a few
that did write glorious verse lines
who wanted to pour words into the eternity,
but with time they did shoot away like stars
while his muse does remain silent, does drag him into infinity
he notices people laugh, celebrate and cry in sorrow
until the terror, the abyss tries to be victorious
and he alone does stand in the gateway at the breaking of day,
while the lights of the blood brothers do gleam once more,
indelible words as if from God, do reign supreme in poems.

[Reference: "Drukgang" (Crush-pen) by Ernst van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

Cry

(after N.P. van Wyk Louw)

Into loneliness
caught between the silences
of four walls
I did hang your paintings.
For a while I was captured
in our past,
but do now realise
that no light shines upon my hope
and do throw the hope, longing,
pain and even the heartache
into the darkness of the night
so that only the moon
and stars are witnesses
of that which at a time had been between us.

[Reference: "Skreeu" (Shout) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Crying Against The Wind

I

I saw boys growing up as
Christians,
learning about God,
being taught at school,
to respect
about discipline,
to stretch the mind
and the boys were young and innocent
and for us there were peace.
We slept with unlocked doors,
the police did their job
to the best of their ability,
but the world changed.

II

I saw the effects
of the terrorist bomb
in church street
that smote the innocent
people in the street
and young and old
men, women
scarred, mutilated, maimed,
and cut into bits and pieces
by shrapnel and the deadly
rain of flying glass.

I saw an academic hospital
filled in every hall,
and the few doctors
and paramedics and sisters and nurses
and accountants, clerks,
and office people
issuing disaster cards
and admitting the living.

III

I saw young boys forced to become
a part of a deadly war machine,
and they were barbered, drilled, cursed
and trained to be the best soldiers,
learning discipline,
the strength found in oneself,
about friendship
and suffering the consequences
of killing human beings.

I saw young men
playing Russian roulette
and at times
wishing to be dead
and I saw boys
becoming better persons
than they were
and starting to be
true believers
of the almighty One
and others turning
into the worst
kind of human beings
and losing all religion,
Integrity and decency
and the madness of hate
taking its toll

I saw boys going
through dense bush,
living in the field,
tracking and destroying deadly terrorists
as just another day's work,
driving armed vehicles
and battle tanks,
fighting against great odds
and winning every battle
and the war.

I saw war,

the destruction,
the desolation that it brings,
the suffering of the innocent,
the savage carnage
and dead enemies
in great numbers
and people with shot off
legs and arms.

I saw friends die,
shot to pieces,
toasted by prosperous projectiles,
smashed by mortars
and killed
in most of the ways that war brings
and politicians lying and deposing
each other
and the world changed.

IV

I saw religious fanatics
killing innocent people,
crashing planes into buildings,
getting the war
that they begged for,
dying the death
which they sought
and innocent bystanders
paying the toll
for their deeds
and the world changed.

V

I saw the borders being thrown open
to all of Africa,
criminals streaming in,
selling drugs, running prostitution,
lost two cars
to robbers that the insurance
did not pay

and my best friend
left the country
after a hijacking.

I saw children
smoking marijuana, doing crack cocaine,
injecting themselves with heroine
living like vagrants,
whoring around,
robbing from their parents,
braking into houses,
escaping from rehabilitation,
going to jail,
losing the reasons to live,
desperately trying to get the next fix
and dying from drugs and Aids.

VI

I saw reverse racism
that changed laws,
discrimination,
white people with degrees
and experience without work,
while untrained black people
brought every government department
but the taxman
almost to a standstill
and foreign black aliens from all over Africa
having greater rights
and electricity being cut
and the country was in darkness
and the people lived in poverty
and tatters
while they thought about what they had lost
and nobody was counting the cost
and the oppressed were crying in vain
against the wind
and waiting for the rain
that brings life back again.

Crystalline Poems As Breast-Images

(after A. G. Visser)

I A politician (crystalline)

He is a man that people do trust,
who only follow truth when he must.

II A theologian at a certain university (crystalline)

God does fill his own great intellect
but for Jesus he has no respect.

III The pastor (crystalline)

He jumps around to kill the fire,
for truth of problems do not aspire.

IV The elder (crystalline)

At church around him they do sit
but in the week he does not visit.

V A certain head-elder (crystalline)

He can hurt people in what they do,
but cannot walk one step in a shoe.

VI A certain doctor (crystalline)

He rather wants to be a friend,
than all the ill people really to mend.

VII A veteran soldier (crystalline)

To war by government he was sent
but no time with him they do spend.

[Reference: "Borsbeeldjies" (breast-images) by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Crystalline Poems For My Lovely

(for Annelize)

When you left me (Crystalline poem)

I was past broken when you left me,
but our true love was meant to be.



In my hart (Crystalline poem)

In my heart you do still remain
although my life has both joy and pain.



Your first photo (Crystalline poem)

Your first photo I still do see
really, not just in my memory.



Constantly I do long (Crystalline poem)

Constantly I where do long for you,
to my God I entrust you too.



In the depth of love (Crystalline poem)

In the depth of what love really is
you do bring me meaning and bliss.



All of the Cape (Crystalline poem)

The entire Cape does laugh in your eyes,
while deep in your heart our love lies.



Lovely you are (Crystalline poem)

Unnatural sweet you are for me
just like a real angel lovely.



You are flesh and blood (Crystalline poem)

You are flesh and blood but pretty
and far past picture perfect to me.



A true princess (Crystalline poem)

A true wealthy princess you are
and my true companion in life's war.



I am joyous (Crystalline poem)

"I do love you, " you do tell me
and in you I find tranquillity



In my thoughts (Crystalline poem)

In my thoughts you are with me each day
and it is not just a cliché

You phone (Crystalline poem)

You say that you do come on the phone

and no longer I am alone.



You are the one (Crystalline poem)

You are the ground in which I grow
the one that do life on me bestow.



You come and take me (Crystalline poem)

You come and take me by the hand
in this cruel annihilated fierce land.



Such deep love (Crystalline)

Such deep love nobody can explain
where through years of time it does remain.

Gert Strydom

Crystalline Poems To And About God

When I brought forth (Crystalline Poem)

When I brought forth words that were mighty
Your pure voice did sing right through me.



My God, let your words pierce through me (Crystalline Poem)

My God, let your words pierce through me
to bring all of the people back to Thee.



Even in the greatest darkness (Crystalline Poem)

Even in the greatest darkness
Your lovely great works I cannot miss.



Where in Your light (Crystalline Poem)

Where in Your light I try to stay
You do constantly straighten my way.



Above me (Crystalline Poem)

Above me all your stars shimmer
bright Your light in my life do glimmer



Where you Lord (Crystalline poem)

Where you Lord, do know my thoughts, know me,
I am caught by mere destiny.



God's love is endless (Crystalline Poem)

God's love is endless and it is great
even death does it not abate.



Holy you hanged (Crystalline Poem)

Holy you hanged on a cross
for every person that was loss

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Gert Strydom

Cuddly You Lay Against Me In A Deep Sleep

Cuddly you lay against me in a deep sleep
with curls falling over you lovely face
where for moments I admire your beauty
and my whole world goes back into balance
when you turn around and take my hand
and deep passion makes you intimately shaking
while far away in the distance a single sheep bleats.

Gert Strydom

Cul De Sac

At the parking
of the Ok-bazaar / Shoprite in Springs
a one-way street runs out
straight into a traffic light
that cuts a T
into two directions.

This morning the traffic light
is blocked
by a crowd of rioters
that comes from the right side,
from where I want to go.

The police block the road
to the left with a car
and some policemen walk along
with the uprising.

There's a foreman, instigator
or head man
walking in front
and he hops up and down
and shouts something to me
and he comes straight in my direction
and it looks as if the devil is in him
with a crowd
of revolting barbarians following him.

Nobody is going to drill me
with bags of rubbish
and tree branches
or throw pieces of glass
in front of my tyres
and the light is red
and the rioters are half mad
and my motorbike has a lot of power
and its boss cannot wait.

The policeman says stop

but can hardly
look out for himself
and what about me?

I drive past
going straight for the leader
and give a lot of gas,
my motorbike
can cut fine corners,
although it's past the back
of a police car.

Gert Strydom

Cycle (Couplets)

(in answer to Annette Snyman)

When the morning comes with fog grey
then you do turn my day around with the words you say.

When fiercely the sun burns in the afternoon's blue sky
then in the garden you take my hand and time does fly.

When the evening star and the moon hangs low in the early evening
then in the driveway you walk into my longing.

When at night drunken the neighbours do fight
then you do love me still with all of your might.

When the people at the back at the guesthouse do cause uproar
then in silence you do me adore.

When the fog disappears as the sun burns it from above
you are the one who do appear with tea and love.

[Reference: "Kring" (Circle) by Annette Snyman.]

Gert Strydom

Cycle (Free Verse Sonnet)

Slowly the summer is passing,
days become chillier and shorter
and sombre shines the silver-white moon,
while the sun is drawing its hot rays back.
leaves fall and become humus and compost,
while some of the birds do escape in their return-journeys
and stripped is every tree and bush,
where small branches creak while we walk through the wood.
The winter is vapour and thick fog
with chilliness eating through the skin,
everything is blotched out everywhere as if the sun is gone
while we do only know about the merciless winter,
until spring does arrive almost unexpectedly,
with flowers and buds that are blooming everywhere.

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Gert Strydom

Cynthia (English Sonnet)

At night while her emblem reigns, the sky is Cynthia's own domain,
yet she is on the hunt with her magic bow during the hours of the sun
where she kills animals that do humans devour, do the huntress remain,
do sneak through the woods on rainy days and twilight when it is dun,

sometimes she wants to give a mortal man as her companion immortality,
do search for a pure hearted man as if such a creature exists needless,
or do at times join valiant hunters when their great perils she does see
and at times appear to mortals who act against her followers heedless.

In days of spring and summer in tranquillity when everything is green
Cynthia does dance in the fields and at the glens among the flowers,
enjoys nature and goes on long walks and rules the night as its queen,
at times run through thundershowers but do never misuse her powers.

At a time people did in her elate and thought her to be a goddess great
but now she does on followers wait and for them do stand against fate.

[Poet's note: Cynthia the goddess of the moon and the hunt is also known as
Diana and as Artemis.]

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Gert Strydom

Dad [2]

(After S. J. Pretorius)

So little I do remember of you,
About how you did knot your blue tie,
how you walked to the shining black car
with school books in your hands
and somewhere your image disappears
but your voice still remains on tape reading poems
and causes the hairs on my arms to rise.

Somewhere in my existence
words suddenly became a reality
and if it was from heartache of losing you
or if falling in love for the first time did play a role
I cannot remember clearly
but I do wonder how my words
would come across to you if you could hear them?

[Reference: "Pa" (Dad) by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

Dad, Memories Do Fade

Dad, memories do fade
when I look at your photograph
and the time that is now far long ago,
I can now hardly go back to.

The small bits of memory
do not always want to unfold,
as if you are just segments in my thoughts.

Sometimes your strong voice
do again become clear in me
but the deep emptiness remains,
as if nothing can again fill it.

Still in a way
you keep talking to me,
as if you are still present,
are still right here with me,

as if in a moment
you will come through the door
but Dad, it is now forty-three years
that I am missing you,
as if I have lost you somewhere

and still I am waiting on the day
that your grave will break open
when the Father of fathers will come
to reach out His hand to you.

Gert Strydom

Dad, Sometimes When I Dream

Dad, sometimes when I dream
it is as if I remember your voice,
as if the hairs on my arms again rise
like when you read the poem
about the cannibal to me

finding me on the polished red porch
where my brother cornered me
with a open hosepipe
and I did not want to go into the house

as he would follow me in to it
and he and you and I,
everyone laughed
like naughty children

as if we would on a weekend
get into the shining black car,
drive to the Vaal River
to find a angling place near to Villiers

there next to the stream dig out earthworms
for bait, stringing corn
to a hook
and you would cast my line out very far

but much too early you turned into earth
and your spirit is resting, where you lie unaware
and I am still reaching out to you
as if I again want you to embrace me.

Gert Strydom

Dad, You Were A True Afrikaner In Your Heart

Dad, you were a true Afrikaner in your heart
and when your church trampled on the Afrikaner
you would probably have walked out
with those that they were sending to hell

not because you did not care for God
as before everything you served God,
but you knew that not only religion
or a church

takes a person to heaven,
but the relationship
that you cultivate,
that a person has with God

is the actual thing
that really matters.

Gert Strydom

Daffodils (Cavatina)

Somewhat solitary some flowers grew in
a little knot,
looking gay and they were ever changing,
I found a lot,
they did toss, did in the stormy wind reel
where other sorts rot,
they grew to a kind of sheer perfection,
glorious waving in each direction.

Gert Strydom

Daffodils In Winter (Cavatina)

Close to the waterside were daffodils,
hidden by trees,
some of their seeds might have been blown ashore
by the strong breeze,
but many more appeared suddenly
they did not freeze,
blossomed in the icy winter snow
and among the mossy stones they did glow.

Gert Strydom

Daily Birds And Insects Do Sing (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Daily birds and insects do sing
while the greatness of spring is happening
and at this time I do love you true,
even if destiny does our lives toss and fling.

Gert Strydom

Daily I Crucify Him

Daily I crucify Him while I dwell in sin,
while I stumble forth in life;
daily a new life for me He does begin
even when I fall down in strive

and from every sin, every iniquity
daily He sets me free.

Gert Strydom

Daily I Do Know That You Do Love Me (Un-Wreathed Octave)

Daily I do know that you do love me
as our feelings ought to be and it does show
as you do glow as if alight constantly
and without pretence even when tears do flow
you are mine, you are in every sense,
in innocence like sparkling pure wine
you constantly shine with great competence
with a kind of love that is hard to define.

Gert Strydom

Daily I Do Take Prayers And Wishes To Bed

(in answer and to Cheryl Love)

I wish I could just jump ahead,
turn pages in the book of hours
while unknown the future towers,
I want laughter and joy to spread.

Daily do take prayers and wishes to bed,
see the indication of spring and its showers,
the healing, birth and some strange powers
and all the sorrows of yesterday now are dead.

Like one that do follow the shining sun,
I know every person has a place under it,
Your words did with their own magic tell
that in life there is a place for joy and fun,
while we and others do change bit by bit
with friendship realise that everything is well.

[Poet's note: I am quoting my friend Cheryl Love's poem here to which this poem is a reply:

Cheryl Love
"a poem for you...."

"we sit and we share life's stories
each of us in our hour of need
this rainbow trickles tears
it brings sunshine it brings hope
to our lives, we forgive fears
we reckon that one day we will cope
but why should fears and horror cloud our shade
it does, the taxes were issued
and they were displayed
in the book of hours, which has powers
time is a healer, time will tell
minutes together with days
cast the magical spell
but you know and i know fear is an emotion

devoted to those who have ways
of creating and have a devotion
may your dreams heal,
may your memories fade
let the goodness be real
and destroy the horror of the shade
written by Cheryl for Gert
my poet friend."]

Gert Strydom

Daily I Do You More Adore

Daily I do you more adore
and daily things do change
from what they had been before
and even if at times it feels strange,
even if some other names I do call
forever you do remain my all in all.

Gert Strydom

Daily I See Bearded Men With Turbans

Daily I see bearded men with turbans
around their heads
dressed in white cloaks, women carrying
their prayer beads
in some colourful saris while in rags
a beggar pleads
and we are worlds apart from each other,
in their views and life some do not bother

and I am dressed in shoes, pants and shirt,
always wearing
one of several costly suits to church
have anything,,
take a collar and tie to business
where I fit in
but are disregarding the poor old tramp
are viewing him as just another scamp.

Gert Strydom

Daily Our Love Does Somehow Increase (Wreathed Octave)

Daily our love does somehow increase
with some gentle ease you charmingly smile
and a while feelings linger and do not cease
and I have peace as I travel mile by mile
while nothing can beguile the joy you bring
as love is happening and you become part of me
and I am free as the birds that happily sing
free from every sting as life is what it has to be.

Gert Strydom

Daily Our Love Grows Stronger (English Sonnet)

Daily our love grows stronger in me and you
as if to it there is no end,
as if constantly it becomes more true
and to each other we do not pretend

as the depth of it
grows more and more deeper still
and perfectly together we do fit
as we live by our own free will

and in your company time does fly
while in each other we are caught,
as each passing day rushes by
and our love is as it ought

as something known and true and a mystery,
as if previously we had a kind of history.

Gert Strydom

Daily The Sands Of Time To The End Do Run

Daily the sands of time to the end do run
as was destined, designed when the world begun,
lightning bolts flash down with the pouring rain
while we continually live in a world of pain
and we grow older as each day passes by
while out of our reach eternity does fly.

We live and love and reach to God above
or in rebellion some do constantly rove,
we struggle for what is right and pure light,
while others wander on ways of the night
while almost eternally the battle rages on
and in our lives the conflict is not done
between good and evil and truth and lie
until the very day whereupon we die.

Gert Strydom

Daily There Are Happenings

Daily there are happenings
and all of life is passing by
in a world filled with new things
with new wonders for the eyes

while I am big but feeling small
and when things are really great
in Your presence which are forever tall
in the world the You do constantly create

and even when life is feeling dim,
unselfishly more sacrifices You do make,
when my eyes with tears do swim
another step closer to You I do take

then I know the power of Your great love,
that no evil force can remove.

Gert Strydom

Daily You Are So Part Of Me

Daily you are so part of me,
as if you know every thought
and in the silences between us
there is a deep kind of understanding.

You are part of every breath,
are part of my life and soul,
are etched deep into every dream
are found even in melancholy and pain.

There is a hidden message in every moment,
in every moment that we look at each other
and you understand every action and word
long before they even are mine.

In the silences there are sweet messages,
that at times says much more than mere words
bringing a kind of joy to our passion and kisses,
and I am happy to have found you.

Gert Strydom

Daily You Do Kiss Me (English Sonnet)

Daily you do kiss me as if I am forgiven
from all the hurt that the day did bring
as your happiness reaches to high heaven
and outside the wind does comforting sing

and there is a sweet kind of gentle emotion
while constantly we do love each other
as if following God in devotion
but with a different love than a sister and brother

while you are mine and I am yours
we experience something great and almost divine
as true heartfelt feelings is ours
and the essence of greatness in your eyes does shine

while I wonder why I am blessed as this,
when pure, kind and true our love is.

Gert Strydom

Daily You Do Your Love Express (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Daily you do your love express
in every minute of wakefulness
and even when you are asleep
there is a sweet message in your quietness.

Gert Strydom

Daily You Protect

Daily You protect, You are our defence,
daily Your almighty hand is stretched out
as Your love surrounds us selflessly, Lord,
although at times we are covered by sin
still You draw the lines of our lives much wider
as You have paid the ultimate price,
and You are with us at every dangerous place
as we wait on You to come and fetch us,
You can stop all pain and darkness
and all of nature sings to Your glory.

Gert Strydom

Daleen,

(after Mark Akenside)

while fate and circumstance do us divide,
it's as if I am blind to destiny's decrees
where through life myriad things it tried
and my heart, soul and spirit you do please
where of my sincere love I want you to tell:
that no other woman does you excel.

Unsullied bright is your cheerful smile
where it comes from your heartfelt mien,
yet you are sharp witted all of the while
and something of the divine in you is seen,
where no other person like you I do know:
your love is selfless and not to what you owe.

Still at your prime you do have beauty's powers,
are at heart sincere and full of youthful cheer
and with you far too swiftly pass the hours,
while your feelings to me remain clear
and lovely you are to my heart and eye,
while in life day after day does pass by.

As lovers to each other we play our part
and to principle true we both do stay,
do daily yearn to be together at heart
but at times we are from each other away,
while beautiful you remain in spite of time:
in your heart love is always at its prime.

[Poet's note: "Amoret" by Mark Akenside.]

Gert Strydom

Damocles

I am contented with being the courtier
of great Dionysius,
ruler of Syracuse
and with my solitude
and the glory of God and king
hunger, war, poverty
and natural catastrophe
has avoided me

but when talking out of turn
of the joy, grandeur and luxury
that my Sire enjoys

he invited me as an honoured guest
to a great party
and a banquet table was set
with the best food
that any man could desire

and charming beautiful maids
were serving, as if I were the king
and something strange was happening.

My eye caught a light reflected
on the silver wine cup
and when I looked up
a piercing sharp sword
swayed on the slight breeze
hanging on a single horsehair
above my head
and then I knew dread.

Gert Strydom

Dare You Character?

Dare you character accompany me
into the unknown that lies beyond life,
to a place where no man truly knows
how it is going to be?

Dare you character accompany me
to a place where there is no awareness,
no feelings or thoughts
in the depths of death?

Dare you character accompany me
to a place where no one is really free
until that great trumpet of God does roar?

Dare you character accompany me
to a place where the whole world does change
from what it was before?

Dare you character come along forevermore
to the shining gates of heaven
or the burning portals of hell
in that last awakening?

Gert Strydom

Daring Jump

In the early morning while the sun
does climb with its first rays over the horizon
the night is still dark and streched out

and I breathe through a mask,
do notice that the flashing light
has changed from red to green
before through the opening
I do fall to below, to the earth.

In that moment I am part of the sky
with the wind buzzing almost deafening,
the earth at terminal velocity
becoming bigger and more distinct.

The moment does almost endless stretch
while adrenaline
does give lightning quick movement
and very near to the ground

the parachute does suddenly flap open
and it feels as if I am jerked
back into the sky
while my eyes are combing through the territory

for signs of enemy soldiers,
my reactions are ready
for the landing
that does follow within mere seconds

where the enemy base is so very close
eight hundred meters away
and my life, my whole existence does hang
on a very thin thread

and I am in the hand of the Lord God,
where I am certain of His omnipotence,
of the beauty of nature
and the value of life.

Gert Strydom

Darkness Rush On (Cavatina)

With the last fading of manmade light
darkness rush on,
with the silver-grey twilight sneaking in,
the sun is gone
and blue-white the evening star does shine,
while solid like stone
the shadows falls, everything turns to black,
as if the sun will never again be back.

Gert Strydom

Darling Of Mine

Darling of mine,
this morning I wanted
to put something in my words
to say that I feel that you do not
regard me as a human being
and how it looks at times,
that I as a man
stand alone without humanity
in our relationship.

At times it feels as if I
alone have to struggle
in life
and you say things and take decisions,
without granting me an option
while I stand central in it all
and the influence of it
has a direct impact on my life.

When at times you want to know
what I think,
I wonder if rebellion
and temper tantrums
are hiding beneath the surface
and what I really have to say
and how I can lay regard, respect
and love in your heart
but maybe life plays its game
while I am picking up the pieces
of our relationship and my life.

Gert Strydom

Darling, When You Were With Me

we walked through the hillocks,
searched for small gazelle
as if we would find them
while continually we were happy
and at times it felt
as if we could catch the golden sun.

Gert Strydom

David (In Answer To Johan Steyn)

When David felled Goliath
he stood there as a young man
putting his trust
in the almighty God.

As a soldier totally incompetent
he could not even walk
in Saul's armour,
did not even take along his own sword

but with a slingshot
he defied the giant champion of the Philistines
slinging a stone at a precise angle into the air
and with the giant's sword chopped off his head.

When David cut a piece from the cloak
of king Saul, it wasn't meant as a joke
but to show that the life of Saul
was in David's hands.

That David was attracted to women,
nobody can deny, the ancestor of Christ
Bathsheba is a witness of it
and his love for Jonathan

was no carnal thing,
they were friends, who were comrades,
nearer than brothers to each other
and many men

who went with each other through battles
against deadly enemies
know this type of thing
when you have to leave your life
in someone else's hands.

That the psalm poet David
was also a soldier
does not make him a mass murderer,

or do you want to fit

every man who once was a soldier
and now write poems
into this distorted picture?

So as if soldiers are not also Christians,
also serve God, also pray
cannot have a relationship
with Him?

Go and read what the Bible says
about people who add words,
or leave words out of it,
maybe it also pertains

to when you twist the Bible stories,
to fit to
your own impressions of life.

[Reference: Dawid (David) by Johan Steyn.]

Gert Strydom

Day After Day

Day after day and week after week
your love I do constantly seek
and whether you act wild
or very gentle and meek

and nothing can my love rearrange
and to some it may be strange
that I love you deeper still
as my feelings do not change

Gert Strydom

Day After Day [2]

For days he has found his way in the beaconed off world
during the early morning twilight
and he was confined and caged into a life,
almost mechanical in aloofness
all of the time he was tied, almost purposeless,
while to his best he did his task
until the shrill ringing of the five o'clock bell,
and early in the mornings he unlocked his door
in his great love of woman and child
and later he walked back street block after street block
to his wife's soft greeting, her friendly kiss,
as another gear in the city's machine,
where he experienced the city as just another shoe
until the setting sun touched the hillocks.

Gert Strydom

Day Of Days

Such a day occurs, begin
when the flowers shower bees
and butterflies with sweet nectar
drawing them in,
in a celebration to spring

when the spring rain falls
with the sun shining bright
reflecting its light on every raindrop
and flowers, trees and grass
jump in length, growing as if by magic

when the yellow gooseberries are in fruit,
when every fruit tree bares to its capacity
and more than all of this,

when you are with me,
smiling as if your face is alight,
filled with its own hot rays, in a radiance
almost as bright as the sun,

when the sky is cobalt blue, or a darker hue,
when your eyes tell me that you are true
and the signs of love are everywhere
around me, around us

as if God Himself is walking on earth,
again treading among mere men
and all men act as each other's brothers
and joy, happiness and sincerity
does blossom like the flowers.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak

Becoming wide awake at the first light
he lies motionless, watches her
in her tranquil sleep,
where she is right there,
but somewhere away from him.

He is far too scared to move,
scared to wake her up
before the set time
and then suddenly her eyes open,
she watches him,
draws him close to the heat of her body.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the darkness of the Springs central business district
where taxi-drivers do curse on each other
and do forthright shoot at the Brakpan busses,
where they do try and kill black foreigners
as if like this they will go back to Nigeria
and before daybreak do add some more dead people,
when the police and fire brigade sirens do cry
as if it is already the day of judgement,
where right through the night a helicopter hangs above everything
and cars in the morning-twilight and fog
full of angry zombies do string along and hoot
nobody does notice the red-day breaking in the east,
how beautiful the round the sun does rise right through the fog,
how the fog burns away to the bright cobalt blue.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak [2]

When he wakes up at first light
without a movement he looks at her
in her peaceful sleep
where she is right against him
but away in thoughts and existence.

He is much too scared to move,
scared that she might awake
before the right time
and then suddenly she opens her eyes
and he fills her gaze,
as she draws him to the heat of her body.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak [4]

At the end of night the morning star is still shining bright
and it's as if the breeze sighs in the trees

while last bit of darkness cannot last,
is hanging over the earth like a shroud
and outside a animal sneaks past
while birds are twittering quiet loud.

With gleaming eyes it peeps through a window
and while I make some coffee it jumps in,
climbs on the sideboard, becomes part of a shadow
and lies stretched out when the day does begin.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak Is A Glowing Bright Ball

Daybreak is a glowing bright ball
from which the fiery rays shine,
sometimes drops falling along with thunder,
with freshness embracing me when I go outside.

Early morning is a bright sun hanging in the heaven
when the colour of the bright blue
catches you with something full of mystery,
with the wind sometimes clinging to you with fingers.

Spring is flower upon flower
that is spread over fruit trees,
the beauty that astonishes you
when the garden of God stretch into the fields.

Summer is fruit that waits ripe and luring
when everything becomes adult,
sunny day upon sunny day
where the prettiest flowers are still flowering.

Autumn is coloured leaves that are everywhere,
the summer still lingering for the last time
and everything has a secret knowledge
that winter is coming, even every sunray

and nowhere I can find the words of a child,
while I am blinded by the glorious world from being young.

Gert Strydom

Daybreak, Springs

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

At first light the weavers frolic at my window
and the beauty of the new morning let me think of You,
the red-banded barbet and the speckled barbet come to call
as if they have got already their impressions of the morning.
Long before the voice of the muezzin and a Christian church-bell resound
I have become awake from the wonders that You do bring.
The inquisitive sparrows are jumping on the windowpane,
they twitter the twilight morning bright
and the beauty of the new morning let me think of You.

[Reference: "Dagbreek, Kaapstad" (Daybreak Cape Town) by Daniel Hugo.]

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Gert Strydom

Daydreams Of A Cat

To me a grass warbler is a small thing
that gambols around
and when the summer sun falls hot
shining high above me,
when I stretch out and bake in the sun, languidly,
when my thoughts run deep,
a dove or a mouse or a fish tastes wonderful,
as something that I cannot miss

Gert Strydom

Days And Nights Continually Go On A Wandering Track

Days and nights continually go on a wandering track,
without you I feel seriously wounded,
it's as if my whole being bleeds out bit by bit,
bit by bit trickles through to the ground

but when I found you, you are like an oasis in the wilderness,
like a place where I can stay forever,
where eternally there is water and rest,
where I find relief in a cruel world.

Gert Strydom

Days Are For Living

Days are for living, for crying
to be happy in
and far too quickly
they pass us, with years

churning away
and sometimes we try to linger in
laughter, fun and joy
and eventually everything is just a ploy

while we wait for the reckoning
and our bodies start to wither away
as if waiting on the final days
things start to become rundown
and the ambulance, the doctor
and the minister do their last thing.

Gert Strydom

Days Are Now Hotter Than They Were Before (Rondel Prime)

Days are now hotter than they were before
with many blooming flowers one can find
while the spring brings out what it has in store
in a time that is gentle, sweet and kind

while glory waits just outside the front door
and happiness is even in the slight wind.
Days are now hotter than they were before
with many blooming flowers one can find

and spring feels as it will last forevermore,
will it brings the most joyful times to mind,
when people in fun do each other adore
as if they can all unhappiness rescind.
Days are now hotter than they were before
with many blooming flowers one can find

Gert Strydom

De Profundis

Out of the dark depths
of my soul,
my love for you appears.

When it's dark
round me,
you are the one
that brings light to my life.

Somewhere in my depths
the seed was already sown
to love you,
before I even knew you.

At times pieces
just fits together
and enhances each other
and that how it is
with you and me.

[Reference: De Profundis 'Out of the depths']

Gert Strydom

Deadline

I see that I am living a dead life
and the daily life
leaves no impression on me,
and before I know I am turned into a stick,
already fossilized
and life passes me
while I do not get involved with anything.

Too many times
I had daily contact with death
and now I die from life
and every day do the same things,
the same work,
and are caught immovable like an idiot.

The same things
I write over and over
of Johnnie loosing Sally,
of love that charms,
or war that still resounds in me
and on our hands
the blood, the damned blood
and I feel at times as if the Lord doesn't hear.

I try to live right,
to respect others,
to honour the Lord
and my poems stay the same
words of somebody surviving
and I still am able to adore
and what the church prohibits feels so right and true
while life hits me back
past the beginning.

I still feel, weep and laugh
and sometimes sing in the shower
as if nothing
is wrong with life
and I keep dreaming,

set myself to win
and to stay alive
while the deadline
slowly comes nearer to me
where my heart will beat its last stroke
before it will stop eternally.

Gert Strydom

Deadly Still

Too white and bleak was your face,
too lifeless your countenance.
your intense blue eyes closed
with no pulse beating in your heart.

They crossed your hands over your breast.
Your hands could not touch me anymore,
could hold no poetry book or rose
and far too silent and still you did rest.

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Gert Strydom

Deadly Still (2)

(Written for Minette on 31 May 1990)

i

Too white and bleak was your face,
too lifeless your countenance,
your intense blue eyes closed
with no pulse beating in your heart.

They crossed your hands over your breast.
Your hands could not touch me anymore,
could hold no poetry book or rose
and far too silent and still you did rest.

ii

Forgive me that I did not know
how short our relationship would be,
that I did not do more
to show you how precious you are to me,

and my life without you
does stretch out further than a eternity,
that I do still live though days of sunshine,
do smell the rain and feel the wind,

where in darkness
you are unaware of all of these things.

Gert Strydom

Dear God (Rubliw)

Dear God,
this may seem odd:
I need You to assist
and I do know that You do exist,
at times walk up ahead to straighten things,
do take care of my belongings
but You are in the shadows
when I get blows
from fate.

Gert Strydom

Dear Lord

Dear Lord, even if my destruction is due
I still do come on my knees to you
and do beg for grace and mercy,
to make my life and my heart knew.

Gert Strydom

Dear Lord [2]

Sometimes it feels, it really looks
as if you are unaware of my existence,
maybe busy with more pressing things
than me a simple human being

yet in the waking morning, the first light of day
(and I have not got to pray
to be aware of this)
it's as if you are in the world around me,

not in a great serenity, but touching
even other smaller things
like bees and birds and blooming flowers,
sending rain showers at the appropriate time

and I do pray
please help me,
please guide and open the way
with each passing day.

[Reference: To The One Upstairs by Charles Simic.]

Gert Strydom

Dear Lord God

Omnipotent Father who are from evermore,
who knows the future as if it had happened before,
on whom the sands of time has no effect
let we pray to you with the respect
that belongs to a deity,
while you do set us from all life's perils free
and daily in this evil world as we do dwell
let us each other of a father's love tell.

Holy loving Son who did come to live upon this earth
astounded the universe was at your birth,
when you did begin your redemption plan
and the Prince of Peace became a mortal man
who paid with his life sin's cruel cost
and salvation came to all sinners that were lost.
Your kind of love that is selfless is hard to comprehend
where you do love past any obstruction right to the end.

Great Spirit who hovered over the dark unknown deep
with matchless power you do the future keep
when in the hearts of men you do speak with love
and do a work that no one can remove,
let us remember in how our lives we do live
that you do countless blessings give
and when you do make us of our sins aware
let us follow our conscience and of our evil deeds beware.

Great Trinity that came to be by ways unknown
your presence in this world is shown
by nature's beauty and the tender care
that is present everywhere
and when men do their own way go
may they of your presence know
and turn back to the righteous way
while they live in your loving care day by day.

Gert Strydom

Dear Lord, At Times Pain Does Fill My Mind (Rubliw)

Dear Lord,
at times pain does
fill my mind and my heart
when my relationships falter
and yet You are the very source of love
and now I do ask forgiveness
for those I have wronged
and for those I
did hurt.

Gert Strydom

Dear Lord, When I Do Pray (Rubliw)

Dear Lord,
when I do pray
maybe you do record.
I do not know the words to say
but do notice Your help in everything
and although life at times do sting
and times come as they may
I read Your word
and trust.

Gert Strydom

Dear Mary

When that baby boy was born
in a manger between the farm animals
and the Son of God
gave His first cry,
what did you think
sweet virgin lady?

When He spoke the first words
that you taught Him
and took the first steps
on wobbly legs
what words did you in joy say?

When He spoke out of the holy word
and in sincerity worshipped God
and as a teenager taught
educated Priests in the temple,
what thoughts came to your mind?

When John baptised Him
and the dove appeared
and God said
"this is My Son, "
were there tears
of love in your eyes?

When as a innocent man
He was tried,
crowned in thorns,
whipped, stripped
and nailed to a cross
was there hope
between the tears
in your eyes?

When the sun fled from the sky
and the earth protested by quaking
that man in inhumanity
had slain the creator

and had laid his hand on God
and even a heathen soldier knew
that the Son of God was dead,
what pain went through your heart?

Gert Strydom

Dear Sir Re: China Originating Viral Infectious Disease 2019 (Covid-19)

(in answer to Jay Basu)

A spreading death-bringing thing concerned you
on that fateful Sunday night where you did act right,
called a lock-down, did in government what you can do,
ordered medical personnel and the military it to fight.

To stop COVID-19 you sealed off the country,
did put the Disaster Management Act in place
where a National Emergency was a possibility
and calmly you did everyone in South Africa face

but real life is not like it is in pure mathematics
where everything can stop in a moment in time.
People, animals and insects are up to their own antics
and breaking the lock-down is probably a kind of crime

as death and infection do spread when you come too close.
Just now I saw a passing beggar in the street that wants to eat,
against being in one of your facilities that do control he chose,
I warned him about death and the Police on their supervising beat.

The neighbour and his contractor yesterday started their building job
and I warned them about neighbouring Brakpan being infected,
that they have got to stop or at a time one of them would dead drop,
to my surprise everything became quiet and my wishes were respected.

I know you do not want to spread fear in telling where the virus is
but the neighbour at the back does think that you are over-reacting
and in affecting lives are showing your power by doing this
but I have been looking carefully to the way that you are acting

have concluded that you are doing in the ways that is possible
your very best to retain South Africa and to save every life
and the deaths that COVID-19 brings to me is incredible,
I am living with two very old people, are missing my wife,

but daily sacrifice is now at the order of things for us all,
a friend reminded me that each doctor, nurse and paramedic
did not sign up for this but like soldiers they will fall
that they do not have Kevlar or some or other trick.

with which they can this pandemic properly face.

Sincerely yours

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[Reference: "LOCKDOWN POEM III" by Jay Basu.]

Gert Strydom

Dearer Than All Of Life (Old Germanic Ballade)

(in answer to Heinrich Heine)

Dearer than all of life you are to me,
your limbs, everyone, do with deep love caress
I love each part of your soft hot slender body,
the fine waves of each curling blonde tress,

I love the intimate passion in your eyes,
your soft tender red lips that to mine do rise

and through many years I have searched for you
where now you understand me through and through

where as equals we are right up to eternity
and you are much more than my kind and comprehend me

where there is something unsaid between us when we are together
a thing that remains in all seasons and in any kind of weather

where at heart you do for me truly care,
you are my part of heaven in a world that do me scare.

Dearer than all of life you are to me,
your limbs, everyone, do with deep love caress
I love each part of you soft hot slender body,
the fine waves of each curling blonde tress

your kindness, endearments and each kiss
when we are apart I do you at heart miss.

[Poet's note: "Ich liebe solche weisse Glieder"; "I love this white and slender body"; by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

Dearest One

Dearest one when all things are said,
when the last of life have left me,
then you will have only a memory
and I will be gone and you alone in your bed.

So act now in tranquil tenderness,
kiss me tonight in sweet bliss
and then when death comes in its harshness,
remember that love and life can be like this.

Gert Strydom

Death

I see the monster wake up with rage
and we feed
our enemies to it.

Bullets and bombs and guns
answer its call
and even some of us fall under its spell.

The monster blows fire
and havoc and shock everywhere
and some wounded beg for it to come.

The innocent suffer the most
and hope for it to pass by
and I hear woman and babies cry.

I do not die,
but that monster kills something
deep in me

and I will never be free
from the impact
that the monster's tracts leave.

Gert Strydom

Death [2]

To some people death comes serene
but I have seen it coming
with great fear and pain
as a unknown something
wiping clean life's scene
shattering the lives of those still living
again and again
and yet to some it comes silently as a sleep
while in its dark mysterious phantom some does weep
as still nearer and still nearer it does creep
as a end to things and to life
or a interlude to a new beginning
of that which lies unknown.

Gert Strydom

Death [3]

Maybe it has a list of names
with the addresses and locations
of people, that it searches for
people who with illness
are dwindling from life
but sometimes gets meddled up somehow

and casts its spell on people
in full health who are living
life to the brim
and not on a windy cold night
but on the golf course
under the hot bright sun
finds someone.

Gert Strydom

Death Bed

I wish I were there
to hold my father's hand
when the last power of life
went through him, when he struggled for words,
but couldn't talk
and every breath was like his last.

I now see myself sitting at his bed,
wiping the sweat from his head,
adjusting the bed more comfortable
but am I am already older than him
and when I was only three
and he died, I could not say:

that I am forever his child
and that I still love him defencelessly.

Gert Strydom

Death Coming To Earth Vexes Me

(in answer to Thomas Bailey Aldrich)

1

It bothers me not to think about years
before I was born on earth but why then
do I know that great darkness will come again,
that evil beset us from aliens from other spheres?

2

Death coming to earth vexes me with mortal tears,
while unseen the demon-brood walk among men,
do influence with knowledge beyond their ken
and this brings greater power to my fears.

3

Often I stand alone as if in an entrance facing this,
call on high against the demonic spell,
as I see devastation grow that they bestow,
where not a single person they want to miss
and the world is a mess and nothing is well
while stronger a pestilence does grow.

4

The only solution is to call on the Lord,
to utter His omnipotent righteous word,
for men that do not want to know Him at all,
who will surely without supernatural help fall,
to call up His angelic host to draw the sword,
to once again vanquish the demon horde.

[Poet's note: "I vex me not with brooding on the years" by Thomas Bailey Aldrich.]

Gert Strydom

Death Ended Everything

At a time off my feet you did me sweep
while your lovely smile touched my heart
as if on your pretty face a strange kind of art
had touched me, had entered me very deep.

There were times that we did laugh and weep,
were longing for a endless summer, never to part
where anything quite simple could our joy start,
we walked in the forest, climbed a mount steep

while there were stars glittering in your eyes
as if our lives were an unreal kind of fantasy,
as if our kind of bliss exceeded sheer ecstasy
where every day came as a kind of surprise.

There is more to life and living than chance,
death ended everything, ended our romance.

Gert Strydom

Death Shall Have No Dominion

Death shall have no dominion
even if demons do their thing
faith will buckler it,
shielding each penetrating blow.

Death shall have no dominion
when the almighty Lord comes,
then love will conquer all
and the chains gripping the body
and the soul will lie in pieces
and fall on the earth and sea.

United people will be
with loved ones even from
far ages past,
will dwell in sincerity
with their creator, Father and friend
and the spell will forever be broken
when life is set to what it was
and what it will be.

Gert Strydom

Death Shatters Lives

Death shatters lives, breaks relationships
and yet from being small
in the background
my father still lingers

with his arms stretched out
as if protecting,
reasoning with my better self
to retain integrity, to remain
the man of which
he set the example

and in my keenness to write,
my thoughts of God,
even my tastes in food
is somewhat determined
by the man that he was

but in his absence I have developed
a thing to cling,
to each and everything
that has meaning for me,
with the fear of lost
of family, animals and friends.

Gert Strydom

Death Wanted To Devour My Whole World

Death wanted to devour my whole world
when I still did find you in love
and even when destiny does severally hit me
I do still trust on God like a child.

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Gert Strydom

Deathbed

How surly it is where you still laugh,
when death waits as the ripe coming from life
that hurts, when the sun breaks on the last day,
when in vain you yearn; you grab on sheets, blankets
when cancer keeps growing,
when you bleed internally, while it's raining outside,
when nothing can stop the attack, can cut it away,
tears are flowing; here no thunderbolt will fall,
still you want to find the smell that sparks,
the spark that smells just like gunpowder,
it pains in your intestines but in this winter
you do not understand anything;
your throat burns, you want to hibernate;
you want to wander along, you are used up,
you dive into darkness reaching out further.

Gert Strydom

Decades Now Lie Between You And Me (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Decades now lie between you and me,
to my heart you do bring tranquillity
where a thousand miles keep us apart
but you are in my life and in my heart
where I trust in God for what shall be
but when you call on the phone
then I am no more alone
and in thoughts I remember of you a memory
to my heart you do bring tranquillity

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Gert Strydom

December

December lies nice and hot in my garden,
while the rays of the summer sun
shines endearing over my world.

The fragrances of flowers
rise in vapours all around the house
and everywhere,
there are the most beautiful colours
of unfolding flowers.

The green grass
jump almost knee high,
out of gladness to the summer rain.

In the big old Jacaranda tree
doves sit and peer at the wonderful world,
while they coo a joyful song.

The power of summer
is to be seen everywhere
and the day washes over me,
in the shadow
of the old pepper tree.

Gert Strydom

Deep In My Mind You Are Poised (English Sonnet)

In my mind you are poised for a while,
love to the depth of the heart open-eyed,
tender I meet your glance and see you smile
while you take another pace near to my side.

You are to me in all things the beginning,
you are the one who I love and love again,
and as we love it feels as if we are sinning,
as you do in my soul and heart remain

and now in this locked-down point in time
to save lives everything hangs in between,
it feels as if we both do to each other mime
in a situation where neither of us has been

but still you are to me the end of all things,
the one for who all the doves outside sings.

Gert Strydom

Deep In Prayer I Have Walked (Common Measure Octave)

Deep in prayer I have walked
while pouring rain came down,
with the strong southeaster blowing
you I called my own
about our love I have talked,
as mercies He has shown
to the Lord who is all knowing
while strong our love had grown.

Gert Strydom

Deep In The Bush (Crystalline)

Deep in the bush I heard a lion roar
I did its near presence deplore.

Gert Strydom

Deep In The Veldt

Deep in the veldt
there is peace from the bustle,
deep in the veldt
people do not always become disconcerted
with a depressing feeling;
here I can still feel near to God,
deep in the veldt.

Gert Strydom

Deep In Your Eyes

Deep in your eyes I saw another universe
a place of love, peace and rest
and I was aware of the depth of our love,
did know that I do not really deserve you.

I wanted to close my eyes against your gaze,
against the bright golden light that shines from your eyes
when you did bring healing for a life of pain
while you did stretch out great bliss in only a moment

and unsteady on my feet
I escaped from your hot arms,
did open my eyes wide
and our being together was wonderful and intense.

Gert Strydom

Deep Meaning

The words of being in love and love
did past us
while you were reading my poems

and sometimes I were caught
in everyday things
while you pushed your hair from your face

and our conversations
searched for deeper meaning,
discussed God
and where we fit into His plan

but still you were far past being enticing
and your skirt
at times folded around your legs
while some enrapturing sneaked into us both

and the deep meaning
that God is present in every thing,
when words at times are unnecessary
when love flowers lascivious, intimate and intense
became a reality to me.

Gert Strydom

Deeply Astounding Things (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

Wild and happy without any regret
are tears of joy,
that flows without any kind of despair,
without a ploy,
comes heartfelt but are indeed somewhat strange,
does not annoy
and does come flowing with each special thing,
when at times you do cry my dear darling.

As deeply astounding as the first love,
or body bliss
that is remembered after some time
a single long kiss
does convey a own intimate meaning
of what life is,
coming unexpected from your soft lips,
carries a true message along with hips.

[Reference: "Tears, Idle Tears" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.]

Gert Strydom

Deja Vu (Free Verse Sonnet)

There is something in your pupils when I look at you,
where your eyes are saying a thousand words,
when bright fresh like the morning you do look to me,
as if the most wonderful day in my life does begin
and when your perfume does hang around us,
when you are against me and do embrace me tightly,
when I catch your expression and your deportment right,
do notice you as a human and also as a beautiful woman
and do tell you about how you are turning my life around,
that like deja vu between us things does come,
where between the lines there is meaning
then you are happy, astonished and perplexed,
where the only happy place is for us to be together
and you do gaze open mouthed at me as you do also bare knowledge of this.

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Gert Strydom

Demolishing

A big building suddenly crushes down,
at first the explosion goes to the core,
half of the tumbling then is straight downward
before the whole demolishing begins.

Pushers, breakers, scrapers stand together
and some demolishing hammers sling mauling,
are shattering some concrete, glass and brick
try to bring order with their roaring thunder.

There is suddenly total silence
with only a creaking crane still swinging,
when the commander has to ascertain,
turns to his group of subordinates,
gives commands to do further judgement
to break down everything to only dust.

Gert Strydom

Departing Time Of The Swallows

When the hanepoot pergola
turns yellow, wither to brown,
with the leaves of it falling down
and the winds start to whirl
the swallows swish
into the blue sky in a turning flight
before they navigate away.

Gert Strydom

Design (Saraband)

I saw a big brown barn owl
only the fluttering of wings
without any sound or howl

falling right out of the black sky
quickly swooping up a grey mouse
while at great speed it passed by
nearer to the barn than the house

in the early dark morning light
it hovered at the right height,
it whooshed away in its flight.

What brought the owl on the right track,
in its struggle for existing
gave the mouse no time to flee back
if not design in each living thing?

Gert Strydom

Despair

I did long the most for your love
and almost all in my power I did
for something more than the sparkle in your eyes
as if everything in life just depends on you
but now in hopelessness you make me afraid
and I am full of pain and utterly distressed
when you act as if I come with a kind of inability
but still I yearn for you in the passing of each day
and I am still trapped in you,
you that is far more than just dear to me
and sometimes I wonder how you can love me
when at times I fear your harsh words and actions,
when you act like an angel of darkness
but still I do love you where you lie here next to me.

Gert Strydom

Destiny (Terzanelle)

Destiny sparks thundering through,
my life with an iron rod
and day after day I stand not knowing what to do

as if waiting for the presence of a god
to control
my life with an iron rod

and wherever I go wherever I stroll
destiny is still taking mastery
to control

as if the power that it wields, outreaches me
as if I am a slave with a curse
destiny is still taking mastery

of times in better and in worse
always pre-empting everything
as if I am a slave with a curse

and I am driven to wherever its whip rings cracking.
Destiny sparks thundering through,
always pre-empting everything
and day after day I stand not knowing what to do.

Gert Strydom

Destiny At Times Is Changed By Love

The way that life goes,
destiny at times
is changed by love
sometimes by lust
and at times
bring the change on by itself.

A poetess read the poems
of a poet at university
and his poems were alive
with something great
in the words,

while the editor saw her verses
in a negative way
and she was set
to meet him, to talk to him
at a party
which he attended with another girl.

Some call it love, others a thrill
but there she got him
under her spell
and they kissed
while they danced
in a sudden romance,
she left a mark on his neck
and he retained a ring from her ear.

Some called both lucky, happy
and great poets they were
but destiny dealt the cards,
brought separation by mental illness
and the world held him responsible
for not staying true

and in his poems
I see something of his soul
and wonder if in the same

circumstance set,
I wouldn't have acted
just as he did?

Gert Strydom

Destiny Demands That Now I Must Go (English Sonnet)

Destiny demands that now I must go,
that for a time we both have to part,
while fate and life wants it as so,
where still you are strong in my heart,

yet at a time to you return I will,
as the shadows follows the hour,
the bees do the hive with honey fill,
that they do get from each flower,

as all of the seasons do return
with a summer following spring,
at a time the sun do hotter burn
and the rain does its blessings bring:

while sincere love has permanence as essence,
that it does fill up full with its own presence.

Gert Strydom

Destruction

At a time men didn't hear
that utter destruction
and the end of their time
was near and for year after year
they laughed at Noah and his boat.

Water rising and falling from the sky
for forty days and nights without end.
Birds, animals and men
and even demons wept
and sobbed in great terror
for the end was near.

God tearing away his only Son
from his breast
and sending Him
to change from God to man.
He watched Him grow strong
and teach about humility, love
integrity and grace
even at his death
on the cruel cross.

The warnings are everywhere
that every thing is coming to an end
and every day the Creator
extends His hand
and gives more grace
and more grace is given
until justice demands the end.

Stars falling like rain showering
down through time and space,
the bright sun fading and departing
for a time,
the moon quivering and growing
more intense and changing
from white, to gold to red blood.

Men dying from famine, being destroyed
by disease spread by passion, declaring war
on each other
and living as if no God exists.

Envoi

On His throne the most holy One waits
robed in linen
girded with gold,
His body sparkling like precious stones,
lightning on His face,
His eyes flaming like firelight,
on His head the crown of the night,
on the hem of His robe
unutterable words
and around Him a wonderful light
that goes beyond purity, integrity, justice,
peace and love.

He waits and waits
until the time, the day, the hour
of His judgement comes.

[References: Genesis 6-7: 24, Matthew 24: 29-30, Luke 21: 25-27, Daniel 7: 9
10: 5, Revelation 1: 13-16]

Gert Strydom

Dew-Soft

(after Adam Small)

Soft like dew words and acts must lie in the depth of the heart
and in it sincere love must have an own kind of magic.
When the new morning comes we have to leave each other speechless
with that which we do and say.

[Reference:"Dit moet" (It has to)by Adam Small.]

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Gert Strydom

Dialogue

(after N.P. van Wyk Louw)

In a moment my humanity
wants to come to you
and now so suddenly,
let out and tell real things
which make other people numb
and does astonish them

and talk about painful never told things,
have a conversation about the matters
that lies deep in the heart,
speak about things that we might want different,
about things that other people would rather avoid

but when the moon outside rises snow-white,
when the doves at sunset still do coo,
when the smell of flowering jasmine is on the air,
then for moments I do feel stupid
while frequently you gazing loving at me.

Gert Strydom

Diary Journal 1 (Free Verse Sonnet)

Outside the doves flutter and coo for each other,
stormy clouds hang the end of autumn full
but I can find no sign of you
and all of my life is mixed up and mad
where now I do pray day after day for us,
the confession of mistakes are made by us both
where you still are deep in my heart and soul,
when we touch each other with bread and wine,
where love is much more than just a kind of camaraderie,
where we are destined to belong to each other
before our existence in the secrecy of God
and with you in my days my life do continue once more
when another fierce winter comes suddenly,
I am still over you and with you and our love dumbfounded.

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Gert Strydom

Diary Journal 2 (Free Verse Sonnet)

Tonight it's the missing-you-moments that I remember,
where the glare of your eyes and your laughter climb into my heart
and the round sun does set bloody red over the distant horizon
when I trust our lives and future to God,
outside a church-bell rings in the distance and I think of you,
on the street someone passes and it almost looks like a spectre
and above me the night is full of stars that gleam blue-white,
when for moments our love is in my mind
where I remember how easy and jolly your company is,
how many of our thoughts and ways are similar,
how wonderful it is when you sit next to me,
where I can read phrases with a mere glance from your eyes
but tonight I miss you severely and intensely
and in my life you are somewhere between the white and black.

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Gert Strydom

Diary Journal 3 (Free Verse Sonnet)

The own codes between us has long ago been determined
where you come bright into my colourless world,
do hold me speechless with your beauty and humanity
and noticeable change mere moments,
where you do support me as your darling and husband
and after too many things you turn my life around
but sometimes I am with that, which is love very stupid,
where I try to find some beauty in the pain
when my days without you do become so very lonely
but still your presence lingers in my thoughts,
where we both are bonded stronger than blood with blood,
when I pour all of my words, acts and life into you,
I take out the best of that, which is love in moments,
where every moment of being together does indemnify the pain.

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Gert Strydom

Diary Journal 4 (Free Verse Sonnet)

Will you believe that your laughter and smile do stay,
that it continually play like a movie in my mind,
where constantly I do get the previous images back,
where we did share life as husband and wife,
when your hand find mine and we walk through the streets,
look at the flowers of the neighbourhood everywhere around us,
with love and faith and in both of us a kind of hope
that the moment just around the corner and in each tomorrow looks better,
where cuttings become precious possessions for us both,
when geraniums and all kinds of flowers comes from them
and God do pour out His big mercy over our garden,
that it astonishes you and me and the whole neighbourhood,
you remain my soul mate as if a rite hangs over you and me,
of which the love does never come to an end.

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Gert Strydom

Diary-Page (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

My uncles could cut off the skins of apples, limes and oranges
paper-thin from every different peel
with only the inner part for me remaining
when I walked with them barefoot on their shoes
and I do remember the landing of butterflies soft like kisses,
where from their own will they did touch me
and at three years old the world was open for me,
with branches of trees in different shapes,
the walnut tree carried nuts to multiplication,
the collie-dog walked patiently around with me on her back
and later laid down flat on her stomach sighing,
how black people carried me on their backs without I having to ask them,
how the thunder with almost every rainstorm bashed down,
and my mother wanted the curtains in the house closed against it.

[Reference:"Dagboekblad" (Diary-page)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Dick King

On the back of old Somerset
Dick King did his best,
galloping with no time to rest
riding heroic through the sun and the wet,

ignoring murderous wild men, savages
who held their war feasts
and ferocious roaming beasts,
at night shadows and creeping images

but through hostile territory
he rode six hundred miles in ten days
to find British troops to set his kinsmen free,
with his gaze always

looking at the next horizon,
while at speed he travelled on.

Gert Strydom

Did His Hand Plant Every Scrub? (Limerick)

Did His hand plant every scrub, flower, plant and tree
and did He let the wild animals here roam free?
Everywhere, on every meadow and on all hills
there are industries, huge satanic mills.
What has become of humanity?

Gert Strydom

Dido's Farewell Of Aeneas (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Every big and small and intimate gesture,
even my own hankering, every glance has a thirst,
where still I do declare my sincere love to you
and noble kingly and almost holy is your nature
but it's as if righteous ideals are driving you
and through the years you have faced many dangers,
where I am coming to the loneliness from you and your body
and against the pain of separation I am at a loss
where you now have got to leave me,
I am dumbfounded in my best days
where on the shore I am standing alone,
my heart does remain with many painful questions
where at the ship Jupiter is waiting upon you
and red as my own blood the day breaks.

[Reference: "Dido se afskeid" (Dido's farewell) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Dim But Profound

Dim but profound in haziness lies
the greater world beyond the scope of eyes
and in every dream and every thought
we aim at what in our own imaging we ought

as children striving for the greater good
without our longings and yearnings being understood
we live and learn in many ways
in our handful of allotted days

to view that which for a time remains uncertain
until the moment of our life's last curtain
and yet somehow somewhere we find the magic of love,
stand at the edge of something that no one can remove

and like mere children we have fun
in the few days allotted to us under the sun.

Gert Strydom

Direction

When a pendant female voice tried to give direction,
so different from what the GPS wanted
I took the short cut straight to your heart,
the distance and direction was strange to it,
as it cannot determine where you and I lie
but this wanderer found a beacon in you,
did keep near to the beat of the heart
and found a way to your soul and spirit,
so different from what the GPS wanted.

Gert Strydom

Disillusionment

Outside the wild stormy wind blows
and it's full of sorrow as if it cannot find any comfort,
in this winter branches are stripped from trees,
and I am blinded, are not able to find hope;
too late I had to learn that love is cruel,
for this great pain there is no forgiveness.

With a kind of innocence I loved you
from the moment that our relationship started
but your treason comes as my greatest fear,
it sounds absurd that there can be pleasure in pain,
and every between us dies with your confession,
for this great pain there is no forgiveness.

Gert Strydom

Divine Destruction

I saw the divine creator God
who constructed the stars and space
and set planets in their place
reach out His mighty hand
against His earth,
make the bright moon tremble
go dark and disappear
and the end of earth was near.

The sky vibrated in shock,
forests, trees, flowers and plants
heard his dread command
birds, animals, wicked man
and demons shrieked,
growled in terror and wept
and even the Prince of darkness
was trembling on his knees.

I heard voices from near and far,
voices proclaiming that God is fair and just
and that the hour of his judgment is here.

He raised His hand against the sun
and it shuddered and became more intense
moved from its place in space
swallowing the earth into its fiery globe
and the old earth was destroyed
as if vaporized into naught
even the morning star, son of the dawn
could not repel that fiery hell.

Gert Strydom

Diving Board

A stairway wounds up to a springy height
where my body reaches high against the blue sky,
the pool's is small against my eye,
where I stand in contemplation

while gravity binds with balance
but with a exceeding kind of rocking
before highly sprung power has to sway
when I bounce up and down in movement

and suddenly become a projectile that launches
powerful from up high
with a planned, calculated arch
and I am cleaving the air in a single moment

and when I dry myself a bit later,
I want to aspire to for better attempt.

Gert Strydom

Divorce

Too suddenly our time has passed,
memories do constantly
cling to me,
the things that is intimate between us
does not want to end easily,

there is treason in each word,
with dividing the only thing on which we do agree,
secretive your paramour waits
at whom I stare hostilely
as if I feel like killing him.

Gert Strydom

Divorce II (Cavatina)

I am grieved at that what you did do,
amiss our love
have been trampled into the very mud,
as to remove
that which had close bonded the two of us;
I disapprove,
calling upon all that is still holy,
as you are treating me very lowly.

Gert Strydom

Divorce Iii

When something did happen to my darling,
when wire upon wire
she did remove her web
and it had been over another man

the pain did let me forget
of how special it had been
to be loved by her
and as if there had never been

something beautiful between us
I wanted to find a thousand reasons
that it's better
that she is out of my life.

Gert Strydom

Divorce Iv (Espinela)

Suddenly recalling the past,
as coming to life from within,
I dream of you against my skin,
feelings are in sheer contrast

but the summer days cannot last,
far too swift comes the early night
with flames dancing in the firelight,
I am lonely at the fireplace
while I remember your sweet face,
that disappears, are gone from sight.

Gert Strydom

Divorce V

When shattered our love
brought my world to pieces
from the fifteenth floor I looked to the sky above
saw below how the size of things with height decreases,

saw my wife embrace her lover,
thought of getting all things over

and my broken life and my fallen pride
rushed through my head,
with thoughts of suicide
and being dead

but somehow these thoughts were mad,
I did not think that she was really worth it
and although I was shattered and sad,
I walked away from the precipice bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

Do Not Tell Me [1]

Do not tell me in the finest detail
out of what love does exist
or go into the chemical properties of it
as I do not want it different
and when at night you lay spooned against me
I do not have to understand love better.
Do not tell me in the finest detail
out of what love does exist
or lay something on that which is between us
as every day goes on its course
and I let you do the things that you want to
while I want to spend my life with you.
Do not tell me in the finest detail
out of what love does exist

Gert Strydom

Do Not Accept

Do not accept life in a changed country
it's far better to linger in distant days,
to stuck to the old ways

where respect, dignity and integrity
did not blossom from
the barrel of a gun
when there was peace for everyone

and refuse to surrender
to robbers who invade
your home, you privacy,
to hijackers who take your car,
maybe your life,
to alien foreigners
who stream in from all over Africa.

[Reference: Do Not Accept by Yehuda Amichai.]

Gert Strydom

Do Not Lay Me Down In A Grave

Do not lay me down in a grave,
send me to the furnace
and scatter my ashes
on the wild wind
that never rests.

Let me spread
like the morning sunlight
and be free,
to appear everywhere
like a rainbow.

Do not lock me
to the cold earth,
for when I die
I am gone from this world
and from this place.

I am part of every word I wrote
and the person I am,
are reflected in all the things
that I did.

Gert Strydom

Do Not Spoil The Little That Is Left

(after Douglas Livingstone)

Leave the plovers to make their nests,
do not burn their piece of veldt to the ground,
the hadedah ibises to peck at the snails
even if those copper sheen birds do screech as if they do curse,
the yellow and the red weavers to build their nests
in any big old tree in the garden,
the doves to flutter down and coo at each other
even if they sing love songs through the night
the Indian minahs even if they act cocky
as if the whole world do to them belong,
the barbets and hoopoe to peck insects
do not the pastoral earth destroy or bother.

Let the razor-wire and the electric fences,
the sharp pointed palisades remain
while vicious guard dogs patrol every house
as if it is a military base or an own jail
where the inhabitants are locked in.
Build with bricks, concrete and steel
your own fortifications,
gather any firearm,
be it revolver, pistol, shotgun or hunting rifle
(if any is still in use after the new legislation)
to defend you when the time do come,
hire armed reaction from the security companies
with panic buttons and alarms
to keep out the marauders,
the savage robbers and killers
who do rape and torture innocent people to death,
start you own diesel or petrol power-generators,
use your cellular phone networks
to be able in life to remain.

Grant me my days in nature
to find tranquillity and peace
while I walk with God,
to experience the magic of every wild flower,

fruit, grass and tree where they are in abundance
do not spoil the little that is left.
Let the hedgehog, the baboon,
the pangolin, the caracal, the fox,
the jackal, the badger, the civet,
the genet, the mongoose, the suricate,
the rock rabbit, the duiker, the steenbok,
the grysbok, the suni, the klipspringer,
the reedbuck, the hare, the porcupine,
the squirrel, the spring hare
that are still living wild have a life
even if the baboons climb over the electrified wires
to rob the peach and apricot trees from all their fruit
as so little of these wild wanderers are left in peace
that soon all of them will be extinct.

Accord me to live again as in my boyhood days
far away from the concrete jungle and its tinned-pleasures
where life was easy and nature and its things were everywhere,
where toy oxen were made from clay
and it was as if all the days were without care.

[Reference: "The sleep of my Lions" by Douglas Livingstone.]

Gert Strydom

Do Not Tell Me [2]

Do not tell me
the properties of love
as I want it just like it is
and do not tell me the physiological aspects of it
as I do see the glance in your eyes,
do know how deep your feelings are
and know each kind of way that you look at me,
know the deepest meaning and secrets
and that you have a soft and beautiful heart,
can be cheeky and impudent
or at times can cry or laugh with joy
and only do fear God
and I have lost my heart to you
and will never regret it.

Gert Strydom

Do Not Tell Me About Your Love

Do not tell me about your love,
put the things between us in words
as loneliness surrounds me
and every time that you do not phone

or I cannot call, as I would like to
my heart, my voice is silenced
and I wonder where your joys lie,
what these things are saying, (or am I wasting my time)

loneliness only cuts deeper into me
as if the end of our love is starting again,
I am lost in the darkness surrounding me,
as if words fabricate everything between us

and still I am confused
as I know that there's love in your heart for me.

Gert Strydom

Do Not Tell Me About Your Love [2]

Do not tell me about your love,
when I cannot phone you when I want to,
when you put the things between us in words

or loneliness will only cut deeper into me
and I wonder where your joys lie
(let the end of our love never begin)

and every time that you do not phone
my heart feels stripped and cold.
Do not tell me about your love,

as sometimes I wonder if you are only pretending
that you want to share your time with me
and I wonder where your joys lie

why your peculiar behaviour do not bother you,
you rub me like emery
when you put the things between us in words.

Let me keep on pretending
as I know there's love in your heart
that you want to share your time with me

before I cancel that which is between us forever
or my heart, my voice will go silent.
Do not tell me about your love,

as for me there may only be heartache
when you come out with the real truth
as I know there's love in your heart

and when at times I want to hesitate
I may realize that I am just wasting my time
when you put the things between us in words,

I may be astonished
and if you really love me,
when you come out with the real truth

it may bless or wreck everything
and for your attention I will never beg.
Do not tell me about your love,
when you put the things between us in words

if you truly adore me
or loneliness will only cut deeper into me
and if you really love me,
let the end of our love never begin.

Gert Strydom

Do Remember (Rondeau)

Do remember my true love when I cannot stay,
when by destiny locked-down from you I am away,
when all of life changes from what we have planned
and then sincerely do trust me and try to understand
that in such a terrible time I can only hope and pray.

Everything, event and day is in God's almighty hand
and I know there will come another pest-free lovely day
where people will live in joy in the world and this land.
Do remember

when separate from me destiny takes you on your way,
where illness and death the virus do at every door lay,
that between you and me remains a bond and a band,
God does care and act as death do at the door stand,
do remember...

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Gert Strydom

Do You Believe In: Jesus Christ Or The Cosmic Christ?

Easter is a time where we celebrate
the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
who is God Himself who died for our sins,
where we celebrate His resurrection
from death, where we proclaim
that through no other name,
no other person, there is salvation
from the penalty of sin
which the Bible explicitly states as death,

but at this very time there is an attack
on the Godhood of Jesus Christ,
where Afrikaans and English churches
in South Africa, churches throughout
the entire world,
are starting to follow the teachings
that Jesus was but a mere human being.

Where it is argued that God the Father
is guilty of child abuse,
in sending His Son to pay the penalty
for our sins instead of letting us
pay the price for them,
where Jesus Christ who is God Himself,
came down to this earth
to sacrifice His own life for us.

Further it is argued that Jesus Christ
was not resurrected from the grave,
that His body was eaten by dogs,
and that His disciples and apostles
lied about Him appearing to them,

it is argued that Jesus Christ
did not ascend to His Father in heaven
and some of the things
clearly stated in the holy Bible
is being seen as only myth
and thus men are saying

that Jesus Christ was only a man.

This poem is no attack on any church,
but as a follower of Jesus Christ
I see it as my duty
to proclaim Him and a relationship
with Him as the only way to salvation.

Behind the scenes Jesus Christ
who is God and who is
the Son of God, is being debased
to only a son of the gods
and slowly but surely lowered
to the position of only a prophet,

while ecumenism is spreading
to take hands, to find
a universal compatible christ
for all religions world wide
(by uniting Christian
and non-Christian religions)
and the way is opened
for the cosmic christ to appear,
who his believers clearly state
to be another person from Jesus Christ.

According to the Holy Bible
there are only two forces
interacting in this world
and the one is from God
and the other is from Satan
and as a believer
in the holy Bible only
as the word of God,
I choose to follow Jesus Christ
and God leaves a free choice
for whomever you decide to believe in.

Gert Strydom

Dodoitsu Love Poems

When I was lost in your eyes
you softly touched my cheek,
we were away from this earth
beyond time and space.

*

Last night your tender sweet lips
were hot full of fire on mine
when the children walked in
surprising us there.

*

Beautiful times together
stays a sweet dear memory
that remains with our farewell,
with dividing miles.

*

Trapped in your intense heat
I saw a magical light
outside small tree branches moved,
while the rain fell down

Gert Strydom

Does The Lotus Shrink Away For Everyone?

(after A.G. Visser)

Early every evening after I see my neighbour driving away
an expensive car stops on the sidewalk,
there's an old legend that returns to me

when the sultan Mirza Khan goes on a pilgrimage
with many knights
on his way to Ispahan with his caravan

and he's just left when the neighbour's wife rushes past
without losing a moment.
Early every evening after I see my neighbour driving away

where in the darkness of night he leaves
to be involved with his commitments
with many knights,

while the winter wind cuts through me,
the gaze of the neighbour's wife chills the leaving car,
there's an old legend that returns to me

where in the palace Fatima made herself lovely
and the sultan had just left
to be involved with his commitments,

the neighbour's wife hurries and do not want to avoid her lover
and I read insubordination, pleasure and rebellion on her face,
early every evening after I see my neighbour driving away.

When a horseman appears as the emir of the Badewyn
Fatima is naked, young and slender
and the sultan had just left

and the neighbour is really dedicated
exemplary, friendly and he wears glasses,
there's an old legend that returns to me

where they meet each other and make love for hours

when the purple iris blooms in the cup of the holy lotus
and Fatima is naked, young and slender

and the neighbour is with other knights when his wife is wooed
while she is begging for other attention.

Early every evening after I see my neighbour driving away,
there's an old legend that returns to me:

Does the lotus shrink away for everyone, does it wither
when the sultan Mirza Khan goes on a pilgrimage
when the purple iris blooms in the cup of the holy lotus
on his way to Ispahan with his caravan?

[Reference: "Divan" by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Dome Of Pearl

One summer day we went
with me to Paarl mountain
which glistens white
in the rainy winter season
like a huge pearl

Your hair tied in a French plate
swished to and thro
were you walked
on the narrow track
up the slope in front of me.

I could see every muscle
moving of your delicate bottom
and embraced you from behind
while we stopped to catch some breathe.

Your sweat and perfume
was very alluring
and we were thirsty
and drank some Coke
before continuing the walk up

on that cream coloured
domed granite hill
looking somewhat like
ice cream without a cone
in huge dimensions.

We went right up to the white
height indicating beacon
with a deep abyss under us
and the wind rustling
through your fringe and my hair,
the sun burning down ferociously

and breathtaking the whole Franschoek Valley
stretched patched green, yellow and brown
with grape orchards up to Simonsberg

which lay somewhat flat in the distance
with clouds shrouding its peak
and your felt somewhat dizzy.

[Reference: Paarl meaning pearl.]

Gert Strydom

Done

(in answer to Thérèse Bartman)

With my coming home after work you do get a kiss,
while I made tea and you do smile and embrace me,
the dog barks outside and howls as if someone is coming
and with a greeting the adult children do walk past,

outside after the heat of the day it seems as if the seedlings are withering
and I stand for hours with the hose watering the garden
where you sit and read on the bench that I had made
and later do go from flower to flower like a bee or butterfly.

I do drive the birds away from the dog's bowl,
rub lice and flea repellent into its fur,
do lift her kennel on a pallet for the coming rain,
do notice lightning bolts falling and the wind driving stormy clouds along,

do spread out crumbs on the grass for the many hungry birds
while you invite your girlfriend that do visit in a group into the house
and some more tea and biscuits and soft-drink for the children you do demand,
while I am pouring cooking hot water in a pot on the gas-stove,

chopped onions do fry in another pot in a bit of oil
and in the passing you do remark that you feel like having salad as well
where I am preparing spaghetti bolognese and that it is smelling great
and at the gate you wave your girlfriends goodbye,

do go and sit at the large television that is mounted against the wall
where you are following "Days of our lives"; do witness how their lives
do look
and I bring you some more tea but your attention is far away
while I spread a new tablecloth over the table.

Later alone I wash and dry and stow the dishes
while you are busy with new mascara at the hair of an eye,
do make up your face again and ask me how it does look,
do ask me not to write some more poems about the abyss and about death

as they do bring you sorrow and make you feel depressed,

do fall asleep in my arms in front of the television
and like a child I carry you to the bed
as you had forgotten about our later appointment.

I do run hot water into the bath for you,
take out your sleeping clothes that you can just step into them,
do awaken you to take your bath,
do hear the wind outside hit with branches on the roof

and before I get into bed I do pray to God,
do thank Him for everything, for the children talk to Him about their destiny,
do thank Him for you and do everything in my life entrust to Him
and almost asleep you look at me from the bed.

[Reference: "Klaar" (finished) by Thérèse Bartman.]

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Gert Strydom

Doves Fly Past In Pairs

Doves fly from sunrise
until late afternoon past in pairs
and the whole day their singing resounds

and just before the rainstorm comes (out of season)
the air is full of swallows
sweeping up and down
catching insects.

starlings, sparrows and finches scream
as if the end of this autumn,
is already the beginning of spring

where they are eating blue-black berries
in evergreen trees
and it's as if nature
knows something secret about this winter.

The rays of the sun are now measured out much cooler
but the grass still has its green colour
and there are irises
which flowers out of season
from all the rain
and the giant sage bush
is covered with purple clusters
hanging in strings

and early in the mornings when I get up later
the black-collard barbet knocks me awake
asking screeching
when I am going to get up
and I look at him
where he endlessly are scolding me
and I wonder
why the birds
are suddenly so jolly?

or do they know
that the season

is at the edge of change
and that man with pollution
is causing irreparable damage?

Gert Strydom

Down A Inaccessible Cliff (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after C. M. van der Heever)

Were the scolding of the vultures resound
high above the ground
a boy dropped down a ravine
and up in the heaven the sun did shine
where a solution his father thought he had found:
he got hold of the strongest rope and tied it on a saddle and did send it down
and although weak the boy smiled as his father's bravery was renown
but still the vultures made their chilling sound
high above the ground.

The father's hands did bleed from the rope
almost too scared to look he did cope
and then there was a hellish cry when the rope did break
while the child fell violently and laid still where he did ache
and in despair the father looked down that slope
as it was clear that no rope or nothing would be able to rescue him
and the father did pray while the chance of escape was dim
while he entrusted the situation to God and in His salvation did hope,
almost too scared to look he did cope

Far down was the boy as a broken rag-doll caught in great pain
while a deadly silence did over the mountain remain
a single hands moved slowly as if reaching up and did fall
and where the farther looked down he looked small
both brave boy and brave father was now with fear almost insane
when the unsteady hand of the father lifted the rifle but he took aim perfectly
a tear flowed down the father's cheek while only his beloved son he did see
on target the shot ringed and the father cried again
while a deadly silence did over the mountain remain.

[Reference: "Waar ruwwe rotse" (|Where rough rocks) by C. M. van der Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Down At The Fen (Cavatina)

Down at the fen small red weavers twitter,
they do frolic,
are joyous fluttering from reed to reed
while mud do stick
to my boots, as it seems impassable
and soft and thick.
Reeds grow; weeping willows give their shadow,
in a world that I do not really know.

Gert Strydom

Down At The Marsh

Down at the marsh
weavers rock up and down,
down at the marsh
your lips are soft against mine
when a big dog barks far away
and your right knee has lost some skin
down at the marsh.

Gert Strydom

Downing A Mig-23

There were Cuban enemy Mig-23 fighter jets
high over me, leaving contrails,
while they moved pass at great speed.

Still the strafing and bombing
at the Calueque dam
was too insistent clear in my mind

and I ordered one of the Unita-soldiers
accompanying me,
to shoot one of those damned things down.

The stinger missile
with flame shot away,
trailing behind the fighter and following it.

I visualized it destroying the Mig-23

and I heard the explosion
from somewhere past eyesight,
away in the seamless blue sky there was only a glittering.

Gert Strydom

Downstream

The empty fields were
winter desolated and sleeping
until the next spring and their new awakening
while fog was creeping in

misting out the buildings
and only lines of red tiled roofs
was fused in long strings
with the rising sun

that was blotted out by grey clouds
that was whirling around
and in the river the boat floated on
with willows on the bank
standing like lonely sentries
in a blotted out world.

Gert Strydom

Dragonfly

(after D. J. Opperman)

I am in the air in a tingle dance
that does shoot over the surface of the water and do wait on a chance
to see myself in it
in reality are almost crude
with my soul, my spirit out of balance

as just a observation of my body
where I also want to be perfect.

[Reference: "Naaldekoker" (dragonfly) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Drawing

The child use pieces of crayon,
draws a giant tree dark brown
with grass green leaves and bloody red fruit
that hangs on the branches

there are weavers and doves in yellow and dark blue
that jump around in the branches and a white and black cat
half-way up the tree where the child
and a copper coloured dog stands in the shade.

There is a bright sun that hangs yellow-gold
in the dull blue sky and on the other side
the dark night and the moon
and he gives the picture to me,

says that I am also in it
but I do look past myself.

Gert Strydom

Dream Woman

I. At a time he dreamed about a woman

At a time he dreamed about a woman
and started longing after her
who at night stared at him
reaching out with her hands to him

but it's only in his dreams that he see her
and when he closes his eyes she is there.
At a time he dreamed about a woman
and started longing after her

then he went into the wide world
trusting his friends with his secret
who scoffed at him, sometimes heckled at him
and he really wanted to experience her love,
at a time he dreamed about a woman
and started longing after her.

II. There is a day that he meets her

There is a day that he meets her
looking unexpectedly into the depths of her eyes,
when they gaze at each other for the first time,
both fall into love with the first greeting

and her lips are soft and sweet beneath his
and she embraces him with each gesture.
There is a day that he meets her
looking unexpectedly into the depths of her eyes,

and his friends warn him against danger
but her eyes are black like soot
and he feels silly like an impertinent child
cannot stop his feelings,
there is a day that he meets her
looking unexpectedly into the depths of her eyes.

Dreams

I have heard that dreams
are good things
when you're lonely,
but dreams are not only
for the lonely.

Dreams brings meaning
from the depths of the mind
and express wishes, concerns
fears and worries
and sometimes
people meet face to face
with God in their dreams.

Gert Strydom

Dreams [2]

As dreams go
I am again sitting in the windowsill
of our flat on the fourteenth floor
and below people rush by, small
like crawling ants
going to pleasure spots, restaurants
some to the movies
in the early evening hours.

Music plays from that sound system
built into the wall in the lounge,
turned up so loud, that even
the people below in the street
can hear every sound and word
and it's alright as in dreams
you cannot disturb the neighbours
living above, beneath you and next door.

The sun dies somewhere over the sea
and twilight has its own romantic innocence
and just now, you will be rushing in
part of the pleasure of living
with a smile like a bright sun
enveloping your face

and there's a chilled bottle of JC Le Roux champagne
with two glasses next to me
and when I hear the front door open
I pop the cork and pour some in
and the breeze frizzles my short hair
and suddenly I am aware
that you are right there next to me
from the alluring smell of your perfume

and our lips meet in a tender kiss
that is full of bliss
and with shiny eyes you take a glass from me
and it's really okay and I know
that we are divorced,

but I am dreaming
and sometimes in reality
love doesn't fade

and above us the stars are full of magic
as if anything can happen
and we see one moving past
and I give you a passionate kiss

but suddenly sunshine falls on my face
and the new day makes my dream
crumble to naught
and I am back at home
in a city, a thousand miles away from you.

[Reference: Dreams by Lisa Zaran.]

Gert Strydom

Dreams For October Month

(for Annelize, after Etienne Van Heerden)

Darling with the prospect of huge disorder,
or even greater racial hatred and oppression,
even revolution or chaos that are going to burst loose
of people assailing each other because I do love you
or want to get a blade into me like Allesandro de Medici,
or want to castrate me like Peter Abelard
I do want to love you with passion and grow to love you even more

even if a church domination do come in revolt
and do speak out their holy self-righteous vengeance on me,
do ask God for the earth to swallow me,
even if people go to witchdoctors to curse me
and do send out tikoloshes and werewolves
or demons as black-warriors or harpies direct out of hell do appear
where nobody but you and I
can understand this love,
that love does come selfless and yet unconditional.

Darling, with the pain and chaos of Africa's bloody savannas,
where people do kill nations and predators do hunt others,
with the murders and death and torture on farms and in the cities,
with the robbery of a culture, language and everything that is precious
including property and heirlooms that are priceless,
with the robbery and hijacking of cars
and minibus taxi's that drive people off the road,
with the lost dreams of world journeys to distant places
and the decline of this country into a trash-heap
I do ask you to live with me.

Come stand at my side in the battle of love
as the blood is already flowing wherever I do go,
there is blood on the streets,
ignorance that do lead to hellish accidents,
when the power is cut off, when spanners do fall into nuclear power stations,
when trains do collide with each other and cars and busses,
when the jet engines of aircraft in flight do fall out of them
and lift your fist into the air and hold them high and scream

that we can also find a place in the sun
and be my place of tranquillity in a country where there is no peace,
until I pour everything that I am and myself into you
and this love does become eternal

[Reference: "Drome uit Oktober" (Dreams our of October)by Etienne
Van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

Drifting On The Sea Of Destiny (Villanelle)

With great pain my heart does rage on this night,
while it feels as if in my life there will never again be a happy day,
as if all hope and new tomorrows are slowly fading with the light

and done a thousand times are all the things that I might do right,
crushed like the shelling of eons and on the beach while children laugh and play.
With great pain my heart does rage on this night,

full of new horizons at a time the future was something bright
with hopes and dreams in a sea of faith on a tranquil milk-white bay;
as if all hope and new tomorrows are slowly fading with the light,

I see a swarm of doves in an alarmed fluttering turning flight
while like a paper caravel my life sails sluggishly away.
With great pain my heart does rage on this night,

while in the angry sea in the banks of fog nothing is in sight
just the rushing tidal wave and its oncoming spray,
as if all hope and new tomorrows are slowly fading with the light

while down God might be looking from his great height
and constantly countless prayers I do pray.
With great pain my heart does rage on this night,
as if all hope and new tomorrows are slowly fading with the light.

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Drip (Wreath Sonnet)

A pipe is pinned into the body
in a melody of drops from a sack
life is black, like an unknown rhapsody
soldiers embody a secret attack
turn back infection dropp by tiny drop
to stop pain, juices flow into the vein,
resistance turns life back to its top
tiny things hop to simply help restrain

fighting hard with the right antibiotics
doing some antics to claim victory
and transitory with some grand dynamics
the tactics work without any setback
you feel slack want to be in the tropics
with strange physics the illness is history.

Gert Strydom

Driving Past Van Reenens Pass

It's as if the dark grey sky
slowly folds up around the car.
The windscreen wipers
fights a loosing battle,
while the car's tyres
slides across the road.

I stop for a moment
and take photos,
of the winter snow landscape.

Outside it's freezing cold
and soaking wet
and I feel snowflakes,
falling softly against my cheek.

Everywhere a white cloak is spread
and over brown fields of grass,
the fuel station and houses
and as far as I can see
there's a white magic land.

It looks as if the road
runs to the horizon
into the whiteness
and the ice cold wind stings,
while I stand shivering.

The snow grinds under the tyres
and the car slips a little
when I drive away
and I feel like
staying in a lodge for a while.

.

Gert Strydom

Drought

Right through the veldt the grass are dried out yellow,
almost everything under the eye,
the sun burns trees and bushes,
whirlwinds blow red dust clouds high into the air

and it looks as if every bush and tree is stripped of leaves,
the sky is blue and open with all clouds missing
on farms cattle, bucks and sheep are bellowing and bleating
and farmers come to a confession

that all things comes from the hand of God, gather in towns
where they admit the dependence of man
where everything comes to a halt
and they pray to God for rain.

Even the most prominent people pray
while atheists sit in the bars
drinking tot after tot while moaning about the heat
and on the horizon lightning slams down white

while it's pressing hot clouds gather
before a enormous rainstorm erupts,
a thunderbolt falls on the porch of a bar
rain rattles on the zinc roof

the thirsty red dust flies into the air with big drops falling,
are filled overnight with knee high green grass
and the animals that are feeding in the fields
go plumb to the markets.

Gert Strydom

Drought [2]

Right across the veldt the grass is dried out
and it seems as if every bush and tree is stripped of leaves,
almost everything under the eye.

People know that all things come from God's hand, do gather in towns
do come to God in their despair
where they do claim man's dependence on God.

Whirling winds blow red dust clouds high,
the sky stays blue and all clouds are missing.
Right across the veldt the grass is dried out

when farmers ask for rain in God's name,
even the wealthiest people do pray
do come to God in their despair,

to elevate Him to the owner of their lives,
some people see the drought as a punishment,
almost everything under the eye.

When atheists do sit in bars,
it's stifling hot the sky is covered,
even the wealthiest people do pray

in the distance a rainbow does appear
and suddenly it does get a new meaning.
Right across the veldt the grass is dried out

when a tremendous rainstorm does fall,
the thirsty red dust does rise with the great drops.
It's stifling hot the sky is covered,

more water pours down than what the farmers do need,
water do flow further than in anyone's knowledge,
almost everything under the eye

is overnight knee high with green grass
as if a new spring has come
the thirsty red dust does rise with the great drops.

and wild birds do turn rejoicing in a circling flight
where they soar in a joyful event.
Right across the veldt the grass is dried out,
almost everything under the eye

are soaked with pouring rain,
people know that all things comes from God's hand do gather in towns
as if a new spring has come
where they do claim man's dependence on God.

Gert Strydom

Drug Dealers

In flashy cars they came,
merchants of a deadly thing
some delivering, some advertising
as if they had captured
the true essence of life

streaming in from all over
the continent, as news
of their prosperity went
to the ends of Africa

and unafraid of the law
controlled women on the street
always eager to meet
one more, trying to create
the ultimate gangster's paradise.

At clubs they danced, bedazzled little girls
and boys, coming with very clever ploys
even at schools everywhere were ensnaring
children to buy their wares

and some even were addicted
to their own poison
smoking, sniffing, taking
and injecting
the catalyst of death.

Under their disguises and lies
about eternal fun not even one
could hide
the filth of the moor
could really get the goblin
and the marsh and bush out of them
and the wicked merchantmen
made every city their haunted glen.

[Reference: Goblin market by Christina Rossetti.]

Drunk With The Bliss Of Your Kisses

Drunk with the bliss of your kisses
on a romantic summer evening,
rolling waves touch at our feet
while there is some tranquillity

as we walk along the long white beach,
I can taste the smell of salt on the air
while the sea continually breaks
in white spray over jutting rocks

one of your soft hands is in mine
with electricity in the touching
that is still lingering between us
before you step right into my arms

there is brightness to the moonlight,
far away the city sparkles like a crown
while your body, your humanity
slowly becomes part of mine.

Gert Strydom

Dry Lands

I have seen places shimmering
as if filled with a lakes of water,
but the desert sand was everywhere,

spreading out as far as the eye could see
and here and there plants grew
finding moisture on a endless dry plane

and to me that place
was praying, begging for rain.

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Duikers (Cavatina)

There paths go crooked through the veldt and bush,
they graze on grass,
cropping some of the leaves of smaller trees
before they pass,
at first sight of man plunge into cover;
hunters harass
them in attacking, native groups at night
with some big spotlights that are very bright.

Gert Strydom

Durban Road Bellville

(in answer to Pirow Bekker)

From above, from the fourteenth floor
you can at night look at the lights of the city
or even hide a very small dog in the apartment
and hear doves coo that do scatter the washing

and in the Cape winter we will be intense and intimate,
will be cosily organised against the winter-rain
only you and me and a small dog, later maybe a child
and you will like it my darling, the city is always busy.

[Reference: "Woonstel" (Apartment)by Pirow Bekker.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

During A Deadly Time And A Lock-Down In South Africa

With the Mandela ambassador's death
during a deadly time and a lock-down
as if all property and land it does bequeath,

the government says the land is to its rightful owners to be returned
as if it does all property in South Africa own, (1)
while trucks driven by foreigners are burned

where this government have not got a right to amend the constitution,
where no law but Roman-Catholic Natural law is by me known (1)
that in it brings from all property this kind of dispossession.

What kind of rights do I possess and what liberty
to life, to make a living, to own property in any place and town
where from racist Affirmative Action and BEE laws I am not free? (2)

Black robbers walk in and one do want kill my mother and me
to a early grave want to take us both down (3)
do steal two mobile phones, which were my property

and the police laugh outside the property, it's very funny,
their actions do the lawlessness in South Africa crown,
the Police Captain does childish-mischief in this see

and as in Zimbabwe dispossession of commercial farms will famine bring.
The idea that what a white person own does not to him belong is full-grown (1)
and this does affect life, living and almost every other thing,

while the constitution is overridden by state-control in this time of emergency
and government decides on what you can buy and away all liberties are thrown
as if its restrictions do only affect some and to others are meant to be

and in all of this with government's inabilities people live in great fear (4)
think that government do with them around clown,
that destruction and a time of death are very near.

[Poet's notes:

(1)The Papal Encyclical: "Rerum Novarum contains its view on natural law by Thomas Aquinas: "Goods of some are due to others by the natural law. There is no sin if the poor take the goods of their neighbours. In cases of need, all things are common property, for the need has made it common. Not only is such taking of another's property not a sin, it is not even crime. It is lawful for a man to succour his own need by means of another's Property by taking either openly or secretly, nor is this properly speaking, theft or robbery. It is not theft, properly speaking to take secretly and use another's property in a case of extreme need, because that which he takes for the support of his own life becomes his own property by reason of that need. In a case of a like need a man may also take secretly another's property to succour his neighbour's need." Summa Theologiae ii-ii th Article by Thomas Aquinas

(2)With Affirmative Action the right to employment is based upon the colour of is Black Economic Empowerment

(3)I will not write politically correct where there is oppression, injustice or any kind of evil.I have been reprimanded before by using colour where it comes to people.I am writing factually correct when I write and tell the absolute truth as it really had been three black men in the robbery.I am 56 years old, my mother 86 and her sister of the black men jerked the 92-year-old lady exact words to my mother by one of the other black men were: "White woman shut-up or I will smash your head until you are dead."His exact words to me were: "White-man I am going to kill you."For a full description of what happened during the robbery read my poem:

Robbery in Springs South Africa at 13h00 on 23 June 2020 (Sonnet sequence)

I
In Springs, South Africa, at Lloyd Street
just as I was busy posting my poetry
afraid I heard my mother scream for me,
did an eighteen-year-old black-man meet

with my 86 year old mother near his feet,
with his hand on her mouth I did him see,
the other hand with a pipe threateningly.
At the moment he was going her to beat

he screamed and I clenched my fist:

"shut up or I will smash your head, "
of an armed robbery I got the gist
he stopped and did hit me instead.
"I will kill you, " he did again insist
he did threaten to beat me dead.

II

He did threaten to beat me dead,
while he swiped with a iron-pipe
(that pipe was not filled with lead)
I blocked both times he did swipe,

turned and ran back to my study
found a cap-gun, a mere child's toy,
while time ticked as if in a eternity,
bluffing as a strategy I did employ.

They dropped the new television set,
with two mobile phones they ran away.
I do not know if the police will them get
and it turned out to be a hell of a bad day.

People say I am lucky to be still alive,
that they did not have a gun or a knife.

(4)"There is one type of fear more devastating in its impact than any other:

the systematic fear that arises when a state begins to collapse. Ethnic hatred is the result of the terror that arises when legitimate authority disintegrates."
Michael Ignatieff: Blood and Belonging - Croatia and Serbia.

Gert Strydom

During A Pestilence Called Covid-19

Outside like a caller of death I hear a hooting owl,
the neighbour's dogs howl at the moon their moans,
then at each other savagely threateningly growl,
over scrapes of meat and marrowbones.

While all of the world is ravaged by fate,
people deadly ill do in hospitals lie,
to recover from a virus do have to wait
and over numerous deaths others do cry.

In all of this I do so severally miss you
and it's as if time is ticking only bit by bit,
while the world, you and I have to see it through
and under a lock-down and curfew do rue it.

You are the very life and happiness to me
and of my sincere love you do truly know,
while we do live in a world full of misery
and in all of this you do miss me too.

Months ago I could not about such a futuristic life think
and at China not stopping the virus my anger raves,
as a love one has died and humanity is brought to the brink,
while the pestilence reoccur and strikes as if in waves.

I call upon God to break the Satanic-chains,
do not my life with you and my love for you regret,
although longing brings to the heart pains
and never will I be able to you to forget

but asleep I reach out to you at night
and this small bed feels like a berth,
while all of the world is full of fright,
as this thing has suddenly threatened the earth.

The news is full of needless death,
while the government does all in its power,
it's as if a person is scared to freely take a breath,
while unbeaten this monstrosity does tower.

Still you are in my soul, spirit and heart
past eternity and past the very end,
while thoughts of you do through my mind dart,
where you are my companions, my wife and my friend.

Gert Strydom

During A Power Failure (Limerick)

A being is introduced as the Lord of Darkness
and a stranger joins them and says: Let's not digress,
but you must be the general manager at Escom, the place
from where no electricity comes, it's a total disgrace
with the resulting lawlessness.

Gert Strydom

During Blissful Passion (Rondelet)

They enter in
a humid world without a sun,
they enter in,
during blissful passion and sin,
all the swimming had just begun,
in mommy's little box of fun
they enter in.

Gert Strydom

During Midday

You did visit me
during midday,
your hair was rusty brown in the sunshine,
your fine kerchief
gleamed bright like a golden crown,
your denim pants
and blouse did immediately catch my eye
and long I have yearned for this moment.

Gert Strydom

During Some Nights

During some nights perfect moments come,
where we feel that we truly belong,
stretched out against each other we lie
while a myriad of stars above us sparkle romantically.

Sometimes the moon casts its own golden spell
while we are in sweet bliss, while we know great happiness
and shadows draw abstract pictures on the wall
while it feels as if these moments cannot end.

Gert Strydom

During That Golden Spring [1]

We had a place in the garden
where the fairest lilies grows,
and there was one crimson rose
and of the garden hose you were the warden

always bright and sunny and never sadden
and at times I held you close
tickled with a feather on your ear and nose
and you became either gladden or totally madden

at times shrieking, whimpering
could claw, bite or scream
while that feather was circling and stirring
and in return you would rub ice cream
in my face, in any place during that golden spring,
but now it so long ago, like a far off dream.

Gert Strydom

During That Sunny Summer

During that sunny summer,
we had been obsessed
from the time that we had met
to spend time together
on the beach and in bed.

The summer's end had been prefigured,
as was the end
to that which had drawn you to me,
some memories remain
of sexual radiance, of almost endless bliss

but now there is only nothingness,
and a strange kind of pain...

Gert Strydom

During The Covid-19 Pandemic

I do want to ask for your patience in this time,
where continually I am praying for God's grace,
I only want to contribute to beauty in your life,

I pray that God do unlock His secrets to me,
as He still does hold all of humanity in His hand
and constantly I see new seedlings rising

but death through a pestilence keeps bothering me
and of you I do only remember the beautiful things.
I do want to ask for your patience in this time,

and outside weavers and sparrows do always twitter,
do continually bring the love of God to me,
as He still does hold all of humanity in His hand,

were more than precious you remain in my heart
and I pray for your protection against all evil things.
I only want to contribute to beauty in your life.

I know that spring will be coming full of surprises
and that the small miracles in my life
do continually bring the love of God to me,

but in the news I see the misbehaviour of people,
in news-reports about plundering and damage.
I do want to ask for your patience in this time,

as our love is something precious and also sublime.
I know that at a time the virus will disappear
and that the small miracles in my life

do carry His omnipotence and love over to me
and sometimes I do act brave.
I only want to contribute to beauty in your life.

I do see the sun shining each day bright full of promise,
it's as if I keep seeing God's presence.
I know that at a time the virus will disappear

and it's as if politicians recite empty words on television
but in all of this you are my darling and my wife.
I do want to ask for your patience in this time.
I only want to contribute to beauty in your life,

where you and I and many people do serve God.
I pray that God do unlock His secrets to me,
it's as if I keep seeing God's presence
and constantly I see new seedlings rising.

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Gert Strydom

During The Days Of Winter

geraniums, roses and snapdragons
are flowering
and even the begonias
which are sheltered on some shelves
make their flower cups
and there is an unexpected beauty
to our perennial garden
as if forever some flowers are blooming
while the hoopoe, some doves,
weavers and sparrows
are continually visiting
and there is laughter in your eyes
and a kind of expectation
while you plant new seedlings.

Gert Strydom

During The Last Days Of Winter

we have planted
white Iceberg roses,
blue, purple and yellow irises,
geraniums of the F3 hybrid
and all colours of gazanias
along the palisade of the front garden

and even grass-carnations, pansies,
and Sweet Williams are already flowering
and even a bush of yesterday-today-and-tomorrow
brings a kind of beauty to what life is.

Gert Strydom

During The Night I Am Travelling To You

During the night I am travelling to you,
to fold you in my arms
when the sun is rising
and to embrace you tightly,

to trust you with my secrets
that I cherish deep in my heart
and to take you to places
that is still strange to you,

to where real intimacy,
love and tranquillity are found.

Gert Strydom

During The South African Border / Bush War: Operation Hooper

With G-5 guns firing up to two hundred shells in support
and hitting approaching enemy targets form miles away
facing a enemy T55-tank it felt as if it was the Judgement Day,
the Ratel-90 had to halt to fire its gun, shook as it did report,

at speed we left, had to return to hit it again in another effort,
a hit on the right spot made it burst out in flames and sway,
we ran into a ZU23-2 AA-gun and three APCs, did them slay,
against two BTR-60PB armoured-cars the action was short.

While refuelling a Cuban Mig-23 was bombing nearby,
to our surprise a UNITA Stinger missile brought it down,
in pursuit of a Mig-23 we saw a Mirage high in the sky,
into battle again with bushes the terrain was overgrown,
running into two T62-MBTs, a Olifant MBT passed by,
it fired and fired again and we were saved by our own.

[Poet's note:The G-5 was a 155 mm howitzer Ratel-90 was an IFV (infantry fighting vehicle)(armoured-car)armed with a 90mm semi-automatic gun and two 7.62mm machine guns. It could run at 105 kilometres per hour (65mph)on the road and at 30 kilometres per hour (19 mph)off-road but still faster if its governor was broken..AA-gun here denotes an Anti-Aircraft Mirage was a South African fighter-bomber. The term MBT stands for Main Battle Tank. The Olifant MBT was a South African main battle tank.

"The results of the campaign up to April 1988 was 4765 killed on the Cuban / Fapla side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South African soldiers killed in action,3 SADF tanks destroyed and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost.A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down."(General)Jannie Geldenhuys. (1994) : At the front. Jonathan Ball Publishers. P240.

"In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 UNITA fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla brigade and mauled several others out of a

total Fapla force of some 18,000 engaged in the three-pronged offensive. Estimates of Fapla losses ranged upward of 4,000 killed and wounded. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officers played a central role in its execution.... Huge quantities of Soviet equipment were destroyed or fell into UNITA and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat... The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms and its strategy.... As of mid-November, the UNITA/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of FAPLA's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters." Crocker, Chester A. (1992)High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood. (Crocker was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Reagan Administration.)

"The South African force, under the command of Colonel Deon Ferreira, was tasked with carrying out three operations (1)Operation Modular - The aim of which was to halt and reverse the FAPLA / Cuban advance on the UNITA strongholds of Mavinga and Jamba, (2)Operation Hooper - The aim of which was to inflict maximum casualties on the retreating FAPLA / Cuban forces after they had been halted and (3)Operation Packer - The aim of which was to force the FAPLA / Cuban forces to retreat to the west of the Cuito River." Nortje, Piet (2003) .32 Battalion. Zebra Press.

John Turner claims that: "following their losses, the Cubans were convinced that further military confrontation with the SADF would not succeed." Turner, John W. (1998) . Continent Ablaze; The Insurgency Wars in Africa,1960 to the Present. Cassell Plc.

Comments made by a Soviet adviser to the Cubans in Angola: "The people's armed forces for the liberation of Angola have not been able either, even with the help of the Cubans, to decisively defeat the enemy and drive him out of the territory or the country." M. Ponomariov, Krasnaya Zvezda Magazine; 20 May 1988.

"According to the fashionable view, Pretoria agreed to withdraw from Angola and Namibia with its tail between its legs, a spent other words, sanctions and Fidel Castro won the is not the analysis that emerges from Castro's own version of the events in his speech to the Cuban Council of State on July 9, when it met to confirm the death sentence imposed on General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, chief of the Cuban mission in Angola from November 1987 to January this ad, it becomes clear that by the late 1987 Castro had concluded that the MPLA regime was an irredeemable military and economic basket case, whipped in

the field and four years behind in the trifling \$20m a year the Cubans claimed to be charging for their and Unita had effectively won." Simon Barber, 27 July 1989, Paratus, September 1989.]

Gert Strydom

During The Years That I Have Lived In South Africa

I have witnessed heroes and monsters
among both white and black men

I have seen men of integrity and spirit,
I have seen robbers and liars,
have witnessed the acts
of brutal selfish politicians,

have done my duty to my country
beyond the call of patriotism,
have served in the military when called upon,
have paid my taxes when due,

and like most other South African men
have been a mortal
caught up in turbulent times,
in a havoc of events

that threatened to destroy society,
that stripped away the way to earn a living
and although most people do not realise it
our country is on the brink of devastation,

with robberies, torture, killings and rape
going totally out of control,
with the police being either helpless,
or totally inadequate, not able to do their duty.

Gert Strydom

During These Days I Do Feel Far Past Happy(Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Pieter W. Grobbelaar)

During these days I do feel far past just happy
when I notice you with your pretty dress,
as you are past unique to me
when your eyes, your voice and laughter lures me
and do tell me that you do yearn for me,
as you are a exceptional woman
and day and night I am at your mercy
as I do very sincerely adore you
and I am broken in the longing
for the better days that have got to come
and for this happiness I am scared
where days and nights you leave me speechless
where I do really loose my heart and soul
while constantly you do captivate me.

[Reference: "Dwase dae"(Foolish days)by Pieter W. Grobbelaar.]

Gert Strydom

During This Time You Are Still Dear To Me (English Sonnet)

No one is to this deadly virus totally immune
but our hope and trust in God is still strong
and probably real flue will come in icy June
while our days in this horrid time runs along

but during this time you are still dear to me
although the days drag so very slowly by,
even if it's a time as no other will again be
on your loving and enchanting I remain high

and it's something to be alive and living
while death reaches almost everywhere
and it's the time people should be giving
the kind of fellowship and endearing care

to those that they do love like I do you,
as now the thing that love is, is really true.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

During War's Manmade Darkness (Cavatina) (In Answer To Dylan Thomas)

During war's manmade darkness, the havoc
envelops man;
tramples flower, bird and beast in breaking;
where life began
remains nothing than the shattering death;
no good thing can
come from the drive to conquer and possess,
while in evil man does downwards digress.

[Reference: "A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London" by Dylan Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Each And Every Weekday

Each and every weekday
grips with its own ferocity,
as if life was meant to be
made of days of labour.

Weekends can not come
to fast and in a flash
they pass us by,
as if time is pressed
to stay on a working day.

I want every day
to be a holiday
and work to turn into
a time to play.

Gert Strydom

Each Morning When The Night Is Swept Away (English Sonnet)

Each morning when the night is swept away
with extreme tenderness I find you next to me
and you bring something special to each day
to the way that it is supposed to be

and even when the evenings are cold
when the winter winds do constantly cry
your love and kindness I do behold
as there is something special between you and I

and even when the grave shade
of death comes unexpectedly
our relationship cannot fade
and you are a part of me

and nothing can remove
the depth and impact of our love.

Gert Strydom

Each Morning You Are A Different Woman

(After Herman de Coninck)

In your dresses, your jeans and bathing-costume
you look young, ten years younger than you are,
but when you are happy you are past pretty
and every morning you are another woman that are mine

that I almost commit adultery
by loving each one to the depths of love
and unpredictable is what I call you
where your humanity do exceed all expectations.

[Reference: "33-27" by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

Each Of Us Has Plans

Each of us has plans
and dreams and goals,
but fate takes its toll
and our lives are controlled
by our inabilities.

Still each one's potential
lies just below the surface
and success is just
around the corner.

There's always something wrong
or a crisis or something that breaks
or words and deeds
that embarrasses us
and still success is so near
that we can taste it.

Gert Strydom

Each One Of Us Is Unique

Each one of us is unique
and no person
is really the same,
but we copy others
and long for better and more
and try to be like others
who are successful and happy
and the example that we set
tells where our interests
really are.

There is one role model
that's perfect
in every way
and with my eyes
set on Him,
I will not falter
when life's biggest
challenges come.

[Reference: "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." John 13: 15.]

Gert Strydom

Eagerly I Want To Go With You

Eagerly I want to go with you that I do love
to the South coast, to Margate, to Uvongo
but before we can start our journey
there is floodwater that sweeps the beach away,
days continue with the sun in its orbit
and nothing still stays untouched
and so it's with my own conceit
where my body is already growing old
but love remains immortal in you
and to the march of time it has got no concern.

Gert Strydom

Eagle Dive

One bright summer day
while walking in the veldt
I heard an eagle cry

where it swirled high
up in the sky, far beyond,
turning in a little speck
against the bottomless blue.

It drifted on secret winds
hanging, gliding
as if meant to be part of the sky.

Suddenly with great speed
it came down, came down
with paws and claws
stretched out to kill

and in dimensions it grew larger,
almost larger than life
just missing me,

grabbing the hare
that I did not notice
where it was hiding
a few paces away from me

and sometimes still
the beauty, the raw power, its flattening shadow
falls over me, in thoughts.

Gert Strydom

Early Childhood□

(in answer to Richard Aldington)

The hurt, the loss of my father at a very early age
brought me to my knees and to God
and I started to love God from being very young,
did not understand to where my dad had left,
although I saw people bury his coffin
in the cemetery just beyond our house
and death of people and animals
to me was a painful kind of thing
that went far beyond any kind of comprehension

but I did believe that God was still caring
although I missed my father terribly,
believed with the same honest sincerity
that my mother did when she asked God
to provide, to take care of us
and she cared with a selfless kind of love.

When I was about seven our puppy got tick-bite fever
and on that winter afternoon it laid dying
right next to the fireplace
and made a moaning sound and was silent.
I covered it with a small blanket
and the puppy was already stiff
but I did not realize that it had died
and in front of that fireplace prayed
for the little dog to be healed.

That afternoon a miracle did happen
and that small dog came alive again,
crept out from under the blanket
and on wagging legs walked right up to me
to drink a bowl of milk
and it was pure proof to me
that a caring and loving God does exist.

[Reference: "Childhood" by Richard Aldington.]

Early Evening Moments (Gogyoshi)

The stars twinkle in the distance,
while the avocado-tree hits on the roof
with the August-winds blowing wild,
I hear the house creaking while it cools down
were at the television you sleep against me.

Gert Strydom

Early Evening When Dusk Was Falling

Early evening when dusk was falling,
my mother turned with fine fingers
through the pages of the black book
and she looked pretty and womanly
while she took our cares to the almighty Lord

and when I looked though closed eyes
it was as if a big shadow
was making the night still darker
where it was falling over the house and the whole yard,
where God was keeping watch in the night.

Early morning when it was still twilight,
I was already up, was trying to find my way
through the field near to the hillock,
to follow the white cat
to where she was hiding her new children

but could then find no sign
of God's presence
with only the weavers, sparrows and doves
that were singing their songs of joy,
before the sun white-hot blinded me.

Gert Strydom

Early I Viewed The Morning's New Birth (Cavatina)

Early I viewed the morning's new birth,
the eastern sky
was aflame while I walked on a path
that wounded by
a small copse, some hillocks and a field,
up birds did fly,
pheasants and guinea-fowl screeched protest
while in nature I was extremely blest.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Late Night

Early in the late night
your hand creeps hot and soft over my breast,
and I feel emotion and a deeper urge burn.
Early in the late night
your hand creeps when dreams of a distant beach
are dissipated by a deeper thirst,
Early in the late night
your hand creeps hot and soft over my breast,

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morn (Diminished Hexaverse)

Early in the morn
when you come laughing
with eyes that glitter,
with your lips gleaming
then everything changes,

with sudden joy
and I am glad,
a kiss blissful
unexpected,

sweet, fiery
finds my lips
when I see

beauty,
your eyes

gleam.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning

Early in the morning
I see her getting warm
in her small blanket,
while we drive to work.

Sometimes I wonder
about what she is thinking
and the cat eyes in the road shines
and I concentrate past the sharp oncoming lights.

Still it's nice to be together
in early dusky morning
and at times her hand rests
loving on my leg.

The wild bean café's coffee
is very nice and hot
and she buys a pie which I eat later.

Today goes slowly
and I wonder at what time,
she is going to leave work
and if she will get me in time?

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning (Roundel Prime)

On the carnations that are yellow, red and white
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew
and the garden draws attention as if it's new
while the flowers in it are for people a tranquil sight,

for the neighbour's cat, birds scream in their flight
and the day is hot open and sunny and bright.
On the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew,

mynahs scream like terrible things from the night
while from a safe distance, other birds do them view.
Children laugh and walk past with their bags hanging skew
and to live in this time and place is a sweet delight
and on the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew.

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Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning (Roundel Prime) =

On the carnations that are yellow, red and white
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Early In The Morning (Roundel Prime)(01)

On the carnations that are yellow, red and white
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew
and the garden draws attention as if it's new
while the flowers in it are for people a tranquil sight,

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Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning (Roundel Prime)(1)

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like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew,

mynahs scream like terrible things from the night
while from a safe distance, other birds do them view.
Children laugh and walk past with their bags hanging skew
and to live in this time and place is a sweet delight
and on the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew.

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Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning (Roundel Prime)(2)

On the carnations that are yellow, red and white
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew
and the garden draws attention as if it's new
while the flowers in it are for people a tranquil sight,

for the neighbour's cat, birds scream in their flight
and the day is hot open and sunny and bright.
On the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew,

mynahs scream like terrible things from the night
while from a safe distance, other birds do them view.
Children laugh and walk past with their bags hanging skew
and to live in this time and place is a sweet delight
and on the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew.

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Early In The Morning [1]

Early in the morning the summer sun
has burnt the night open,
glowing in the late afternoon
it has descended right across the country
but now that winter is coming,
suddenly the mind is jerked
when mornings are silver and dark
and afternoons becomes totally grey.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning Before Sunrise

Early in the morning before sunrise
the heavy fog hangs
almost dazing,
the bright streetlights
are almost extinguished
from their amber yellow light,

people that move
are much like ghosts
that do wander around outside,
and I notice cars
that does fetch other people,

and I am constrained
with what I do see,
in a part of my own garden
where now
no lights do shine,

and I am caught into my own life,
are cut off from the things outside
that does constantly surround me
and everywhere around me there is only darkness.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning The Sun Gleams White And Hot

Early in the morning the sun gleams white and hot,
in the veldt full of cosmos you turn around and around
and I pick white and pink flowers.

You stand astounded with arms full
while I press some more into your hands
and when they wilt you are extremely happy

and your laughter resounds on the wind
while I try to find some more flowers
and like this we walk up to dusk.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning To Each Other The Doves Do Sing (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Early in the morning to each other the doves do sing
and it feels as if something great is happening
on this glorious day,
on this new morning in spring.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning When The Sun Glances Through The Window

Early when the sun glances through the window
there are birds singing of joy,
while they wait that I feed them some seed,
it's as if the flowers are jumping higher,
when I catch the open sky's cobalt-blue,
the glory of the sun falling on my skin,
it's as if I can trust like a child,
everywhere I see small wonders without number,
when the prettiest flowers bloom in my garden.

Gert Strydom

Early In The Morning When The Sun Just Appears

Early in the morning
when the sun just appears over the hillocks,
when the guinea fowl call from the field,
then I see him
with his crooked walking stick chewing biltong
and the morning is dumb,
pure like an angel is his company;
before he disappears between the green maize stalks.

Gert Strydom

Early Morning

Flowers grow wild, full of drops of dew
when the sun comes loving over the hillocks
the silver white twilight stays as it lingers
when the sun is orange presents its most lovely colours
and there is beauty just where I look,
the work of the hands of the God of the universe.

When the sun peeks in brightly through the window
dots fall splashing over the floor,
outside the heaven is blue, the veldt is open
as if in this summer you can walk for miles
and there is beauty just where I look,
the work of the hands of the God of the universe.

Outside its suddenly bright shiny day
when you wait with a cup of coffee,
your curls catch my eye, glitter very fine
when you laugh happy, your face full of sunshine
and there is beauty just where I look,
the work of the hands of the God of the universe.

Gert Strydom

Early Morning Ride

Early in the morning
hawkers are standing next to the street
and they sell flowers, newspapers,
cigarettes and sweets.

At church square two doves are pairing
on uncle Paul's head,
while people walk to and fro
and some are in lines
to buy bus tickets

It's another thing when you are
stressed out
and are scared,
to be late at a new job.

a Bus stands with a closed door
making fumes,
while the driver is walking around inside
and already there are a large number of people
lining up in a queue.

a Pair of love stricken young people
are holding hands
and talk about the previous nights
party and drinks
that they enjoyed
and I try to see the route
to know where I have to get off.

School children tease each other
as far as we go
and time gets wings
and rushes by
and suddenly
I have to disembark.

Gert Strydom

Early Morning When The First Rays Fall

Early morning when the first soft rays fall,
when the awakening sun hangs blood red
this part of the great universe recall,
the awakening has been acquired

when the awakening sun hangs blood red
birds twitter with the jolly songs they sing,
the awakening has been acquired
as the good news of the morning they bring.

birds twitter with the jolly songs they sing
to and thro many insects and bees fly
as the good news of the morning they bring,
fluttering on flowers under the sky.

Early morning when the first soft rays fall,
this part of the great universe recall...

Gert Strydom

Early Morning When The First Rays Fall (Pantoum)

Early morning when the first rays fall,
when the sun hangs blood red
this part of the universe recall,
in moments of awakening that has been acquired.

When the sun hangs blood red,
birds twitter with the songs they sing
in moments of awakening that has been acquired
as the good news of the morning that they bring.

Birds twitter with the songs they sing,
to and thro insects and bees fly
as the good news of the morning that they bring,
with butterflies rocking on flowers under the blue sky.

To and thro insects and bees fly,
the buds of morning glories open to the sun,
with butterflies rocking on flowers under the blue sky,
ants in brigades begin their daily fun.

The buds of morning glories open to the sun
early morning when the first rays fall,
ants in brigades begin their daily fun
in moments of awakening that has been acquired

Gert Strydom

Early Morning: Pretoria

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
it is still twilight and the streetlights,
the lights of buildings,
here and there neon-lights
and the lights of cars and busses
gleam almost like in a mirror on the road
where last night's rain still does lie wet.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
the jacaranda-trees are full of blue-purple flowers
where in rows they do fill almost every street
of that big city
and you do smell their sweet fragrance
that does hold promises of new life.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
a few children do run laughing past
where others do walk peacefully
with backpacks full of books
that does hop up and down
here and there one carries a girl's school bag
where others do hold each other's hands,
a few full of mischief do smoke.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
rows of people do catch the busses to go to work
others do drive in lines upon lines of cars
and in Park street at the art museum
there are swarm upon swarm of doves that come land
to search for something to eat
when old gentlemen and old ladies do break bread
and spread the crumbs
while a barking dog does scatter a few.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
the construction-workers stand around a drum
out of which flames do shoot up
on a premises where buildings are being torn down
to warm their hands

while the foreman runs up and down like a madman
and gigantic steel monsters
do swing their arms to and thro
others do bite the earth with massive mouths
and spit their contents out on trucks

and people do go to the government buildings
that does swallow hundreds of friendly talking people
while the restaurants cannot cope
to serve breakfast and coffee.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
the prostitutes stand in Sunnyside
in Arcadia and even in the central business district
on the corners in short and exposing clothes
like mannequins in the shops with legs apart
where they do talk with each other
look big-eyed at men and do tempt the passers-by
and Nigerian men do stand here and there
and talk with each other
while they do conspire about the next crime.

Early in the morning in Pretoria in the summer
the minibus-taxis swallow the traffic,
push cars and busses literally off the streets
and it's as if in every street in the city
they want to be a horde that do fear
that they will not catch the next pedestrian
and they do hoot while the drivers
do hang out of windows,
do whistle and scream
as if the lot of them are demon-possessed.

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Early On A Winter Morning In Cape Town

Early on a winter morning in Cape Town
the rain is sieving down as it has done for days,
the sky is covered with grey clouds
and inside are you and I
cosily in a hot bed.

There are footsteps in the hallway
that sneaks to the room and two cold children
get into the bed with us
and when the big old clock strikes seven o'clock
its time to get up, to get ready
for work and school.

Gert Strydom

Early One Afternoon

Early one afternoon
I walked through the streets
of a small village
and it had to be in Italy
and was probably in Corona
or Tuscany.

a Baker with a white overcoat
and white hat on his head
rang on his bike's bell for me
and pedalled pass,
with an old green bike
at the Pizza Palour.

There were long white breads
and green wine bottles,
in the baskets of his bicycle
and he had a big bush
of red blue lavender flowers in one hand.

Across from me there were three small tables
with white table-covers,
at the Villa Toscana
and I could read some dishes
from the menu on the wall.

At the wall a young woman
with dark hair and an indigo dress
laughed sharp and bright,
while she waited
that a well built waitress
pour some more wine.

The image of the beautiful waitress
with black hair and deep dark eyes,
that bends forward
still stays with me.

In front of me at Le Art

there were a row of paintings,
depicting nudes to the finest detail
on painter's easels.

I walked nearer
and I could see rows of violet lavender bushes
against the ridge in the distance
and Villa's, that stand yellow gold
up on the hill
and looked impressive
against the deep blue sky.

When I got back to myself
I was at the fountain
in front of the mural
in our garden
and the golden Persian cat,
watched me from the top of the wall
with a woolly tail that curled down
and it looked with golden eyes at me.

[Reference: Tuscan mural by Mandi. See the painting at my webpage:

Gert Strydom

Early One Evening

The hot summer night
breezes in through the window
and in the distance
over the hills
I see thunder flashing blue-white.

Your fresh just showered smell
hangs sweet in the room
and your soft naked skin
lies hot and inviting,

I see your breasts move
with every breath that you take,
the air caresses your whole body
and there's something special
in the way that you look at me.

Gert Strydom

Early One Summer Morning

Early one summer morning
I took a couple of student friends
along to Clifton beach.

The storm of the previous few days
had blown away
and the sky was light blue
and the sea a much darker hue.

I and my two friends
walked on the still deserted beach
and there was an old life buoy
on which we couldn't decipher
the writing,
some half rotten timber
all evidence of that terrible storm

and one of them
picked up a new Rolex watch
with the gold shining
brighter than a wedding ring
with no indication
to whom it did belong

and that day stays with me
like a holiday on the French Riviera
or at Sandy Bay
and right around us
the most beautiful women
were bathing topless

with breasts of all shapes and sizes
catching the sun
and holiday was in the air
and we could have spent
that whole summer there.

Gert Strydom

Early Spring

Lord God, can we ask for your presence,
for a sign of your grace
and let your rain, sun and wind contribute

to the wonder of the coming summer
in the decoration of colours from your hand
and let grass, leaves and flowers now appear

and where it is rather dry,
hear my lament.
Lord God, can we ask for your presence,

for birds to whistle in tree branches,
singing songs about the growth that you bring
in the decoration of colours from your hand

that all flowers that this spring brings
becomes a sign, that you still guard us against evil
and let your rain, sun and wind contribute

to new life that appears,
let even my own conceit die, that my life
sing songs about the growth that you bring

and let me act to your will
and remove all inequity, all damage.
Lord God, can we ask for your presence,

that I always keep my eyes on you elevated high,
that the mistakes of my youth disappear
and remove my inequity, that my life

can become aimed to where you lead, bringing your love across
that I glitter like a light, a star in your Pleiades
let your rain, sun and wind contribute

that my life can shine bright for you,
and others can see your character in me,
that the mistakes of my youth disappear

that every word and deed from me represents your great love
to the whole of humanity, my children and wife.
Lord God, can we ask for your presence,
and let your rain, sun and wind contribute

that everyone can know what a wonderful God I serve,
to the wonder of the coming summer,
and others can see your character in me,
and let grass, leaves and flowers now appear.

[Reference: Vroeegherfs (Early Autumn) by NP van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Early Spring (Italian Sonnet)

While the light of day does cease,
still outside many trees are blossoming
in the serene beauty of this early spring
but nature at this twilight has some peace

before the time of danger does increase
when nightly predators take to their wing
there is activity in the smallest nocturnal thing,
that hunts and feed and breeds with ease

as life comes to greatness in large and small
as every living thing is in a way special
in this time of new birth and change
and it's as if the blessings of God fall on all
and even in things superficial
the entire world His hand does rearrange.

Gert Strydom

Early Summer

The year is full of the hot blue sky,
every spring flower has become fruit,
when the maturity of the summer appears
and gone is all the strife and pain.

There are joyful birds wherever I go,
giant oaks are decked in leaves in the lane
while the sun shines bright until the late afternoon
and gone is all the strife and pain.

When summer rain comes down fruitful,
days become illustrious,
while love shines on your face
and gone is all the strife and pain;

when God keeps my country in his palm,
when a time of neighbourly love unfolds,
when every thing that brings discord slowly disappears
and gone is all the strife and pain.

Gert Strydom

Early This Morning

Early this morning
when you waked me up
I experienced your tender smell
like a garden of fresh flowers blooming

and your hot soft body were clinging to mine
and your breath was fresh like apples
in a orchard

but your eyes my love, flamed
as if being on fire
and something indescribable were
between the two of us

and some people call it love
but I know
that it was much more.

Gert Strydom

Early Wnter

When later than usual
the sun sneaks out like a sniper,
then I do know that it is winter
while the iciness of the wind
pierces right through the bedding.

Gert Strydom

Earth (Refrain Stanza)

You are the source from where all things come
earth, you are our eternal great planet home,
one day I will be of you a part
when in you I lie in my flesh, bones and heart
or maybe before that time God will me in heaven welcome
if I do exist when He does appear
and in a time you will pass into fire and fear
when nothing more do of my verses and words become,
earth, you are our eternal great planet home,

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Earth's Cycle Of Love

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

In sweet serenity
the rain falls on the earth
while rivers from it is flowing to the sea
and time and again there is new birth

while down its drops splatter
as if coming by a kind of devotion,
causing small streams to chatter
in their tranquil emotion.

The scorching sun is forgiven
while this cycle continues forever
and vapour again rises up to the high heaven
to fall again flowing to the sea in a river

and all of this
is continued in a kind of divine bliss.

Gert Strydom

Earthly Existence

Stretched out is the veldt, free and wild
while time ticks of as if from infinity,
while like a god man looks at science
and reaches to self-destruction in mere audaciousness.

Gert Strydom

Easter Hymn (In Answer To A.E. Housman)

Where on that hill of Calvary ages ago you were slain
You died there to quench man's pain,
although still your bright light
shines down in every day and every dark night
some men still walk in sin
as they did by choice from the very begin.

Although the grave is empty and the stone rolled by
and You are the creator God, sitting in glory up high,
there You remember the savagery of man
the tears, agony and blood of your salvation plan,
the way you were crucified, the way you gave your life
and in sincerity still gives man a choice in this almost endless strive.

[Reference: Easter Hymn by A.E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Easter Song: 2011

Easter

when Christians come together
to celebrate Christ
rising from death,
giving donations to the church
and rather are gossiping,
bragging with their new cars
than to be interested
in the God of the universe.

Easter

when cars drive past
with people on holiday
Hansel, Gretchen, mom and dad
lay somewhere next to the road
either dead or maimed
or are gambolling at the sea.

Easter

on the trees autumn leaves are shining
in colours of yellow, brown and rusty-brown
and the sun is loosing its heat,
still the entire world is searching
for a redeemer who brings solutions
while crime, violence and pain
is circling out wider and wider.

[Reference: Paaslied: 1985 (Easter song: 1985) by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

Easter Weekend

(in answer to Lina Spies)

From my childhood I do remember Easter as:
hundreds of children that do play together and sing choruses
from churches right over the Transvaal (but strictly conservative) ,

where everybody came to camp out in tents and caravans
but luckily we did live in a house on the school's campus
and every family member and friend did come

to gather and together hold church at Sedaven,
how the best minister came to preach for the adults,
did remind of God's love and that He is coming soon,

how seriously pious the people did regard everything,
where the whole Easter weekend we were busy holding church
and did trust and believe every word of every minister and leader

until the time that my brother and I and my cousins were naughty,
did let out the air out of some of the wheels of cars at the Camp Meeting,
where the ministers and people in control was very upset

did promise if we do come and confess they would not call on the Police
and our conscience did compel us to do so
but the Police was called in to give us the hidings of our life.

[Reference:"Pinkster" (Pentecost)by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

Eastern Transvaal

Against the edge of the kopje a homestead is standing
with a pretty garden in contrast to the red-brown dust,
a place of rest grounded on the expertise of the farmer,
displaying his handiwork.

When thunder falls above on the top of the hillock
he sits at ease with a pipe in his mouth,
at his feet his darling pedigree dog lies
and they smell the fragrance of the rain that is showering down

while the eyes of the farmer wanders over the hillock
where aloes, sugar bushes and wild plums grow in abundance
next to the dense cornfield that stretches green into the distance,

the blessings from God showers down everywhere
and everything that farmer owns multiplies
as if the hand of God covers his life mightily.

[After Elisabeth Eybers/Reference: Wes-Transvaal (Western Transvaal) by
Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Eclipse

Looking like a divine sign
of Godly serenity
the shadow falling over me,
falling further and further

were turning the moon
copper red,
darkening the sky,
making stars visible near to it.

Dark goes the earth
as far as my eyes can see
while the moon hides the sun
turning black
in a full eclipse
and the sun's photosphere
hangs in a blue white hue
around it.

It was almost as if God Himself
was holding His hand
and now making an arc
to shield the earth
from a flaming star.

What great events
was now awaiting humanity
in a world, torn by wars,
suffering and human misery?

Gert Strydom

Eclipse [2]

Like a Godly sign
of tranquil illustrious sanctity
a shadow falls over me
and it's falling further and further

and the moon does colour
to copper-red,
the light becomes dark
and stars near to the eclipse
become visible in brought daylight.

There is darkness falling over the earth
as far as my eyes can see
while the moon does extinguish the sun
and the sun becomes black
in a full eclipse
and the sun has a photosphere
with a blue-white hue
that hangs around it.

It's almost as if God Himself
is holding out His hand
and now creates a shadow
to protect the earth
from a flaming star.

What great events
are now waiting upon this earth
that is torn by wars,
by disasters, suffering and human misery?

Gert Strydom

Eclipse Of The Moon (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Like wild wolves the dogs did howl
when the moon hanged bloody red in the sky,
the cats did hide themselves at places
and for something the pets were scared
but when that darkness did suddenly come
everything was almost like death silent,
a power station did fail and I was astonished
and did wonder about the will of God
as the light of the moon did disappear,
I could notice no stars in the darkness,
I could not get the power-generator going
and the battery and light of my mobile phone was weak,
I realised that the Second Coming of God was near,
was of my own sin aware in the darkness.

[Reference: "Maansverduistering" (Eclipse of the moon)by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

Eclipse Of The Sun (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after P. J. Philander)

Slowly and silently moves the patch of darkness,
do reduce the sun to only a sickle-bow
where the moon covers everything of the sun,
all of the sun is wiped out up high,
when a bleak and cold twilight and then darkness do come,
while bellowing the cows do return to their fold,
but the donkeys and sheep in all of this are silent
and only human are busy losing their way,
where even the light of God and Jesus is dark
as if a gigantic unearthly shadow is creeping nearer,
where it is working with occult knowledge in secret,
do sneak into the thoughts and expectations of man:
where man stops believing like a child in God,
while hope is shattered and also God and His omnipotence.

[Reference: "Sonsverduistering" (Eclipse of the sun) by P. J. Philander.]

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Edinburgh

I walk through your streets
determined to find the place of birth
of my great grand father,

do notice a place where eighteen thousand people
were murdered for their faith,
do find your history

covered with heroic deeds and intrigue,
do visit the St. Giles cathedral
do read the words
that the reformer John Knox
fearlessly did say to queen Mary

are caught by rain
in your streets,
and are astonished
by the castle
that does tower out above you

and although nowhere I can find the place
for which I am searching
something of you still does remain in me
when I do return to my own country.

Gert Strydom

Edmund Clerihew Bently (Clerihew)

Edmund Clerihew Bently
is suddenly from his writing free,
hears someone on the radio sing,
decides a whimsical poem is just the thing.

Gert Strydom

Ego

What man can walk past
the I and self
and go past proudness and self-esteem
when success and fame
kisses his feet?

Who can stay humble
when ego stands
central in it all
and you get the world
on a platter?

Even Lucifer made
without fault in his construct
wasn't bigger than his own I and me
and could not limit his proud
and wanted to be greater than the Lord.

Bend before me
he said to the man
that is God
and I will give
all these things
and majesty to Thee,
but only one
had enough love
to turn Himself from almighty Lord
to insignificant mortal man
and to give His life
for everyone.

Gert Strydom

Egyptian Geese

Copper brown Egyptian geese are in the marsh,
they call from the plumed reeds
and they leave flat tracks in the clay
when they walk past in a small group
and I hear them from far of on the porch
when the pond resound with their voices
just their at the old sunken sloop
where I notice the sun shining on the water,
how they suddenly fly up and spread
as they avoid a dog that is running loose.

Gert Strydom

Eheu Fugaces

Do I remind you Annelize, of our lost love,
of every card, every letter
bushes of roses that I gave almost without end
about the bonds that we made to a marriage;
our memories will last to the end of time
there are things that we cannot forget.

Minette, sometimes moments are matchless
your time was fragile like a rose
and now there's only a dream in which you are,
you are part of the eternal darkness;
our memories will last to the end of time
there are things that we cannot forget.

Riana, do you remember the summer moon
when we went on honeymoon to the hills
how joyous you loved me,
the bracelet with wild animals,
our memories will last to the end of time
there are things that we cannot forget.

Mandi, do you recall our conversations on the porch,
the twilight when the doves call each other,
the poems that we both did write and share;
we did love each other or did I only image it?
Our memories will last to the end of time
there are things that we cannot forget.

I'Envoi

Daleen, you are the only one
who selflessly does love me from the start,
it's as if our love lingers from the act of creation,
as if God Himself has determined our bond
and no other woman I can love more heartfelt
as you are the one that brings greatness to me

you do restore my humanity, to be whole again,
when continually you set my life to new meaning
and its you that I love eternally

who I know and understand like myself
and always you are in my shadow,
as the one that sometimes catches me like a net,
in times of big happiness and utter grieve
the one with whom I want to share all of my years.

Gert Strydom

Electric Wires

Even yards have electric fences,
to keep the robbers away
and even small kittens use their common senses
to learn to pass over very carefully or not to stray

and the first initial shock brings a precarious gait
that is hard earned experience
that learns them to wait,
when they creep pass, inch by tiny inch.

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Elegy For Love

Here rests on the bark
of this tree
scratched to remain,
two hearts interlinked
and filled with words in a token
of what once was love
and of oaths
made to each other.

Death did not kill it,
but relationships with others
and wild passion did.

Experiencing a string of other beautiful lovers,
with different bodies, sent, skin,
breasts, muscles and personalities were the in thing.

Gert Strydom

Elementary Thoughts

Humanly we leave words on paper,
while we try to determine the language
of Him who is the core of the Bible story.



We take things consisting out of flesh and blood,
that has got living energy, want to take the elements out,
while we search for the code of life in mortal material.



With our mental capacity we are valued equal
to animals that mutate
while the Bible teaches us about a creation story.



We think that we know the figure road of the universe,
compose theories that declare things in space
while amazed we do look at the great works of God.



Three dimensional we see things,
with length, breadth and depth in which things do fit,
while immaterial we do grope at the boundaries of love.

Gert Strydom

Eli Eli Lama Sabacthani

I

If I could go back in time to a hill
where a rough cross stands
and look at the scene
where the creator of the world perishes,
I would have understood
how it's to hang innocent for everybody's sins
and for a god to be captured
in human flesh.

II

If I could go back in time to a hill
where a rough cross stands
I would have known
how His exclamation of fear
"Eli Eli lama sabacthani"
really hits through flesh
and how it feels to be forsaken by God and man
and what it means
not to account those that persecuted him.

(Reference: Eli Eli lama sabacthani => My God, my God, why has though forsaken me?)

Gert Strydom

Elijah

There had been a man of God, a prophet,
that measured out God's will on the earth,
that for years did stop the rain from falling
when man did forget the omnipotent Lord God.

On mount Carmel he laughed at the prophets of Baal
that in vain was waiting upon their god,
water was poured out over the altar of God
and in front of the Israel Elijah prayed on that day

where fire came out of heaven,
did astonish king Ahab and the whole of Israel,
did the devour the offer of God before everyone
and then Elijah killed the prophets of Baal,

prayed for rain to come from the sea
where after he gave instructions to the king
to ride away before the rain could corner him,
did run out before the horses

but when Isabel did threaten him with death
(that queen who tended towards Asherah) ,
the man of God wanted to die under a broom-bush
where in the desert he was tired and thirsty,

where Elijah was scared to face the vengeance of Isabel
but God did send water and griddlecake with an angel
did tell Elijah to go to Horeb, the mountain of God,
to stand before God on that mountain.

A terrible gust of wind did crush rocks to gravel
but God was not in that wind.
Then an earthquake came and a devouring fire
and I Elijah could not find God in them

but God was in the soft whispering.

© Gert Strydom

Elizabeth Barret Browning

Why do the relationships and lives
of Elizabeth Barret Browning,
and Robert Browning in a way
remind me of Héloïse
and Peter Abélard?

Is it the wonderful verses
that they do write to each other
or do Edward Moulton Barret
remind me too much of Canon Fulbert
who did castrate Abélard?

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Elpenor

Where as a beautiful goddess
you do spread out your nets
from the portals of Hades
your paradise is disguised and protected
as a idyllic garden
but its only a terrible dirty pigsty
in the haze of hell.

Gert Strydom

Embodiment

We are caught in life
to a set time and place
from which there is
just sometimes escape,

from our beginning
we are like animals in a cage
and although the bars
are usually transparent

we are bounded still,
we are caught into our bodies,
are sometimes limited to a set class,
a set occupation and work,

we are limited to that which destiny does bring,
while continually time is running out,
while the years do circle out from us
until we do notice someone else

that has been decimated by life,
that still tries
to stand staggering,
tries to go on
with life at a time of destruction

and then we are reminded
at how much better our fate is,
that we are still
in the hands of God.

Gert Strydom

Emergency Prayer

Lord, from my childhood
You do hear my emergency prayer
and only in You I have got faith.
Whatever curse or punishment

comes upon my way;
there is nothing that is to terrible for You,
there is nothing, for which You do not have an answer,
there is no situation where Your love does not astonish.

Lord, when fate
folds with its might around me,
then I can still keep my sight on You,

like a small child I can hold Your hand,
with happiness cling to Your promises.

Gert Strydom

Emily Hobhouse

I

How suddenly you changed a moment
from what it was before
and you had a kind of talent
to change everything, improving it
and bit by bit
the pain and suffering was no more.

II

Tending with caring hands
you brought a kind of refuge
to women and children
in British concentration camps
during the Anglo-Boer war
even defying arrest and deportation.

Gert Strydom

Enchanting With Words

If I could write words
that could catch you somewhere
hanging enchanting around you

like in my dreams
you would walk nearer to me
drawing me close in a embrace

as if you would never let me go,
would not fear
the cost of knowing me

could change my seriousness
and could teach me to laugh again
or is this just another illusion
on which I am waiting aimless?

Gert Strydom

Enchantment

Nothing could stop the enchantment
when I read the first signs of love in your eyes,
when there was something fragile and brittle in you,
when your hand laid soft and warm in mine
and I at that moment could say no words
when I found a sudden bond
and were caught by the image of blood and flesh.

Gert Strydom

Enchantment (Nonet)

There was a kind of magic, catching
when I saw you on the first time,
a secret kind attraction
with my stomach fluttering,
my feet going lame,
your pure laughter
had caught me,
I was
dumb.

Gert Strydom

Encounter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

On my knees on the soft sand You do find me,
the sun draws a silver line up to the horizon,
I wonder how You do walk on the water as You could
and I pray, Lord Jesus, do not pass a sinner like me,
seagulls screech, fly up high, when a boat glides over the water,
with sails for a moment it's etched against the sun,
it's as if I hear Your voice and of life You are the source,
as if Your words through all the ages do go deep into my heart.
When my darling comes closer she has a halo,
as if You are touching every person on that beach,
Your love and tranquillity and joy shine deep in her eyes,
I again see the light dancing so bright over the waves,
You Lord, make mere days wonderful and holy
and for long moments we both look up into the sky.

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Gert Strydom

Encounter With A Rinkhals

It was lying on the ground
turned on its back
with its black-brown
body shining and mouth agape
and looked like dead
and I could see
yellow-white bands ringing
the top of its torso.

Still something in that lifeless
ring necked spitting cobra
scared the living daylight
out of me
and like a lightning bolt
the death-shamming snake
shot upright spreading its hood
and hissing loudly.

Luck was on my side
when that evil reptile
spat at my eyes
and its venomous spray
splattered my glasses.

One moment it looked dead
and the next
it was viciously alive
and struck out at me,
but missed me by a mile.

[Reference: "The Rinkhals also called the Ringhals or Ring-necked Spitting Cobra (Hemachatus haemachatus) is a venomous elapid found in parts of southern Africa. It is one of a group of cobras that has developed the ability to spit venom as a defence mechanism." Wikipedia.]

Gert Strydom

Endless God (Double Tetractys As A Cycle Or Mirror Image)

All
things are
fleeting and
evanescent,
only God is eternal, immortal

Immortal, eternal is God only,
evanescent
and fleeting
are things:
all.

Gert Strydom

Enemy Migs

At first we think
that they are Mirages
and know this time
the enemy is going to get
a nice hiding,
but the sound sounds enemy foreign
and when they dive down
we know that catastrophe is at hand.

Like huge eggs
bomb after bomb falls
and they disappear
in the direction
from where the sun rises.

Gert Strydom

Enemy Skirmish (Sonnet)

They come sneaking in the tambookie,
in the buffalo grass, past acacia trees
and linger for moments at the swampy marsh,
the birds suddenly get silent and even the insects,
when they relax, light cigarettes and smoke,
as they linger for long moments laughing
and I can smell the stinking sour of their sweat,
when my heart beats anxiously,
brown ibises fly up scolding,
impalas in a herd burst away
and they walk straight into our ambush
with AK-47 rifles hanging as without importance,
somewhere a long green snake rustles
and when my LMG comes alive I loose all of my fear.

[Reference: LMG = light machinegun.]

Gert Strydom

Enemy Tracks (Quatern)

There are many tracks on the ground,
enemies could be anywhere,
the spoor does the tracker astound,
he looks carefully here and there.

To me the tracks look all the same,
there are many tracks on the ground,
I do not know from where they came,
how enemies are to be found.

To the tracker it is renowned,
the way that it is set, its line
there are many tracks on the ground,
to me looking almost as mine.

We drink water under a tree
find a booby trap tightly bound
that almost is disposing me,
there are many tracks on the ground.

Gert Strydom

Engelbrecht Decides On An Assassination Attempt (In Answer To Johan Van Wyk)

Engelbrecht decides on an assassination attempt,
to peep through the sight of a .308 hunting rifle
at the new black President
and some of his best friends are sworn to silence.

With a violin-case in his hand
he visits the hotel
just beyond the Union Buildings;
about the wind direction and line of sight he has to be sure.

Through the telescopic sight he sees a whole crowd waiting
and he pushes a dum-dum round into the barrel,
open the window much wider
while he watches the scene beneath him.

One of his friends speaks far too much
and more information
are forced from him with shocking apparatus
while the secret police makes him talk.

When the security police enter the hotel
a shot somewhere above them is being fired
and they are surprised,
as the President has not yet arrived at the Union Buildings

and they find Engelbrecht with his head
blown from his body
with a note covered in blood
that tells them

to go to hell
and he says that he has departed to another country
where Afrikaners have got rights
and although he is standing guilty before the throne of God,
He will understand on the other side.

[Reference: 'Staatsgreep' (Coup d'etat) by Johan van Wyk.]

Gert Strydom

Enigmatic People (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

Reflected in glass with golden bubbles
distorted faces
stare at him, some looking quite grim and some old;
different places
they call home while to this place they do come,
girls with their graces
that are totally gone, smile, look, at him
before they do triple on, while his eyes swim.

He sits in a bar in Fourth Avenue
while twilight falls,
a soft hot hand covers his for a moment,
his thoughts do stall;
she is very beautiful, her eyes gleam,
and he feels tall
when they leave chatting and are full of lust
and they do know together sleep they must.

Taxis with sharp headlights pass them roaring
as they walk on,
they are comfortable with each other,
but love is gone
from both their lives and the intimate touch
just like set stone
helps them to fit in the puzzle of life
as they with other people leave and arrive.

In the morning their names are unknown, it's strange,
the air is stale
with the smell of cigarette butts, sex and wine
and totally male
he smiles at her as they make love again;
the taste of ale
is bitter in his mouth, her kisses sweet;
but they might never again like this meet.

No words hurt as they go their different ways,

past the white beach
he walks where the wind roars, gulls screech, flutter;
now out of reach
like a sweet kind of dream she is now gone
and each to each
they go to home, to work and they do play;
in their lives it's just another new day.

[Reference: 'inema of a Man' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

Ensnared (Cavatina)

(after Andrew Marvell)

Far too easily she captivates
with sheer beauty,
I could resist her if she was but fair,
in harmony
her great voice in song ensnares my mind,
tranquillity
is in each word and feeling at her sight,
like a slave I follow her day and night.

Gert Strydom

Envoys (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Lucas Malan)

What does a person know about the man that stands at the traffic light
in the hot sun away from the shadow of the trees in the lane
with a board in his hand on which he is begging for money and aid
and many think that he is too rotten to work and so his life does go on.
The religious zealots or the colporteur that knocks at the door is the one
that everywhere does dare his life against dogs that want to tear him apart,
do want to set a view of God to you or do want to sell religious books,
do sometimes want to warn the entire world about what is about to happen
and if Jesus Christ in person does come to have a friendly conversation,
shyly like a boy walks to the front door and do come and ask
for water and you see that He is carrying many miles
will you recognize Him and do your door swing open wide
or do you show Him away like all of the others
and shout:"get out of your own mess by yourself! "

[Reference:"Gesante" (Envoys) by Lucas Malan.]

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Gert Strydom

Epistle To Np Van Wyk Louw

I see the wise old man
pacing his study
with a hot fire raging in the fireplace,
where manuscripts lie disorderly,
in an order that only makes sense to him,

reading verses of other poets,
always searching for something
like a religious fanatic searches for truth,

helping other poets, like the great mentor
(that he still is after his demise)
writing exceptionally great poems,
believing that a poet
is someone like a prophet, a kind of saint
who searches both for truth
and expresses the abyss,

knowing that poetry is no struggle,
that the words, the structure to them
comes by itself as if given
like a communication
received from the gods

with the evangelistic advise
to rather examine
from which spirit
the inspiration comes.

[References: Epistle to Neruda by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Rondon eie werk
(Around own work) by NP Van Wyk Louw. P84-85. Tafelberg Publishers: 1970.]

Gert Strydom

Epitaph Of A Tyrant

Perfection he was after
but in his paintings,
there was none of it
just the lines of a third rate artist

and the human spirit, the minds
the heart of man
he knew better than most
and talked and talked
and when he spoke
he dazzled them

and when the corporal
suddenly outranked every general
as commander of them all
swift action did he take
to conquer the whole of Europe
to send a superior air force,
his battle tanks out in a quick strike
even to venture as far
as the depths of Russia

and he held every single Jewish person
accountable for all errors of the past,
killing most of them
including men, women, children and babies
thinking that he could build a empire
that could last and last
and the poetry he invented
was brute force, by the barrel of a gun
and any manner of death and then some
but as with all tyrants
his end did come
and with his own hand
he killed his dog, his wife and took his own life.

Gert Strydom

Epitaph On An Army Of Mercenaries (In Answer To A.E. Housman)

In the days that war was in heaven
when its halls was filled with dread,
Satan called holy beings to be heathen,
to wage war and in rebellion to spread.

There the uprising and terror was ended
while they led the human beings on earth astray,
what God created, these wanted suspended
to lead human beings to destruction and away.

[Reference: Epitaph on an army of mercenaries by A.E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Epithalamium

Noble friend, dear comrade
companion in times of love and hate
you are here to part,
you have arrived and the occasion cannot wait.
Blow the trumpets and let the organ ring,
let the birds in the heavens sing
of the love God gave in your heart
let all things be praising.

High in the bluest sky
the sun rides by,
blessed bridegroom your day has come
let joyous banners fly,
while before God and man you stand
with a fortunate lady at your hand.

When the evening star rises steep,
let its light bring you to bed, but not to sleep
let melodies resound from an orchestral band
while your bride with joy weep.
Let your union be a blessing, that you will never roam,
that daily her enchantment will lead you home
and let she be near, as her heart is yours to keep,
where ever you wander under the sky's dome.

Happy bridegroom the almighty God brings
all needed and timely things
love, adoration and passion
and great and good tidings.
Pour champagne from a frosted bottle and fill up
a shining and enchanted shared golden cup.

Now away from all noise and light
let this be a blessed charming night
where nothing disturb the two of you
and your stars shine high and bright.
Let your feelings be honourable and true,
that she can fall deeper in love with you
loving her tenderly and dearly

and may all blessings be yours as are due.
Do not fear any nightly harm,
while she lies at your charm
and let your sleep be safe and sound
as all is quiet without any alarm
while Godly angels guard with flaming sword,
prayers and every friendly good word
lies at your hearts, while you are bound
let serenity be yours to accord.

Gert Strydom

Errata

When she burnt me, sliced me with a knife
took some shots
with the pistol
through the bathroom door

I should have left, should have walked out
should have started a new life,
should have left her then

but love is a damned thing
which ignores errors
and I kept on loving
even when she cheated me
with another man.

Gert Strydom

Escape

Out of these memories I have escaped
while you have walked out of my life
and I do not think back to it,
the apartment door slamming close with force.

I am the stranger walking in the streets,
the man that stays single,
whose hair flaps wild in the wind
where cars drive past in the rain.

I am the one who stands blinded
at the shore
who finds no answers,
who life passes by

even when he addresses God;
all the lovely things between you and me have now been destroyed.

[Reference: Ontvlugting (Escape) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Et Memoria

Come and walk through my life today
while we remember our yesterdays,
a new day is unfolding for us

and leave an impression of you,
painted against the canvas of my thoughts
because every new tomorrow
is born from our yesterdays

and you stay part of me, even though
everything between us is past,
I see you in the sparkle of the sun,
the dew that are sparkling on leaves

and now I realize, that love
in every moment of remembering
starts new again

and how slowly I still stretch out moments
that is already past
as if it's always part of my humanity

but I am aware
that our relationship is far past being dead,
that tonight
you will find heat with someone else
as if I am only
part of a quenched flame.

[Reference: Et Memoria by Japie S. Strydom:

"Come walk tonight
 through my tomorrow,
 and page with me through my dreams,
draw your body here
 in my soft covered book,
since our today is born in yesterdays and tomorrows:

you are a flash of the sun,
the early morning dew;
summer dreams on a late afternoon,
an early spring morning–

tonight I know,
that the days of our lives (love?) ,
again,
starts in every remembrance:

how slowly I weaved you
and carried you down
– into the cocoon of yesterdays and tomorrows
in remembrance of drawn out longing
to the wool blanket of my conscience.

Tonight I know
that your feet
unaccustomed to the strangeness -
will separate from me coldly shy.” (My English translation.)]

4

Gert Strydom

Et Memoria [2]

Kom stap vanoggend deur my lewe
terwyl ons, ons gisters onthou,
'n nuwe dag voor ons oopvou

en laat 'n afdruk van jou
geskilder teen die seildoek van my gedagtes
want elke nuwe môre
word uit ons gisters gebore

en jy bly deel van my, al is
alles tussen ons nou verby,
sien ek jou in die glans van die son,
die dou wat blinkend op blare sit

en ek besef nou, dat liefde
in elke oomblik van onthou
weer van voor af begin

en hoe langsaam rek ek nog
oomblikke wat reeds verby is uit
asof dit altyd deel van my menswees is

maar ek is reeds daarvan bewus
dat dinge vêr by verby tussen ons is,
dat jy vanaand
hitte by iemand anders sal kry
asof ek, net nog
deel van 'n dooie vlam is.

[Verwysing: Et Memoria deur Japie S. Strydom:

"Kom stap vanaand
 deur my môre,
 en blaai saam deur my drome,
teken jou liggaam hier
 in my sagtebandboek aan,
want ons vandag is in gisters en more gebore:

jy is die ligflits van die son,
die môre-dag se dou;
'n laat middag in my somer-drome,
'n vroeë lente more –

Ek weet vanaand,
dat die dae van ons lewe (liefde?) ,
weer,
in elke nuwe onthou begin:

hoe langsaam het ek jou
in die dae van gister en môre
in onthou van lang-verlang –
toegespin en afgedra
na die wol kombers van my gewete.

Ek weet vanaand,
sal jou voete
ongewoond aan die vreemdheid –
my skaam-koud skei.”]

Et Memoria

Come and walk through my life today
while we remember our yesterdays,
a new day is unfolding for us

and leave an impression of you,
painted against the canvas of my thoughts
because every new tomorrow
is born from our yesterdays

and you stay part of me, even though
everything between us is past,
I see you in the sparkle of the sun,
the dew that are sparkling on leaves

and now I realize, that love
in every moment of remembering
starts new again

and how slowly I still stretch out moments
that is already past
as if it's always part of my humanity

but I am aware
that our relationship is far past being dead,
that tonight
you will find heat with someone else
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part of a quenched flame.

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"Come walk tonight
 through my tomorrow,
 and page with me through my dreams,
draw your body here
 in my soft covered book,
since our today is born in yesterdays and tomorrows:

you are a flash of the sun,
 the early morning dew;
 summer dreams on a late afternoon,
 an early spring morning-

tonight I know,
 that the days of our lives (love?) ,
 again,
starts in every remembrance:

how slowly I weaved you
and carried you down
- into the cocoon of yesterdays and tomorrows
 in remembrance of drawn out longing
to the wool blanket of my conscience.

Tonight I know
 that your feet
unaccustomed to the strangeness -
 will separate from me coldly shy." (My English translation.)]

Gert Strydom

Et Praeterea Nihil

All that I am asking you
is where,
I fit into your heart?

The world outside is washed clean
and lightings resound
while the rain falls roaring.

You are looking in your wardrobe
and are searching for something beautiful,
while you fit some clothes.

Outside it's dark
while the cloak of the night
is folding over everything.

and you show
one dress after the other to me
and ask how
you look in them?

I want to look deeper
than just this
and wonder what thoughts
are dancing in your deepest soul?
□

l'Envoi□

Tell me about your love
and show how much you love me
and when we embrace
I'll build my own small world
with only you and me in it
and further nothing.

[Reference: Et praeterea nihil=> And further nothing.]

Gert Strydom

Eternal (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

Again the wind will pass, as it did before
while it does sing
of some feelings that we both do have now,
in flocks flying
some birds will go and not a single thing
will be dying
as this moment have got something eternal,
while the bright sun rises epithermal

as if disaster, death, pain and sorrow
never was,
very long moments will still linger on,
blue-green like glass
the sea will always swell, rock to and thro;
the new green grass
will rise again in spring after the first rain;
while after life our feelings still do remain.

[Reference: 'An Eternity' by Archibald Macleish.]

Gert Strydom

Eternal Will Our Summer Be

Eternal will our summer be,
no wind, no hail, no rain
can take you away from me.

Your golden eyes,
your radiant smile
will last in my mind into eternity.

What ever life throws at me,
fades away and doesn't hurt
when you are on my side.

Gert Strydom

Eternity Finds To Us Its Own True Way (Strambotto Siciliano)

With the going of time everything great
falls to disrepair and then starts to decay,
as the effect of destiny cannot wait,
even when the sun welcomes a new day
for some old things it's already far too late,
some small pain is present even when we play
but when your golden eyes true love indicate
eternity finds to us its own true way.

Gert Strydom

Evanescence

Far too quickly life does past
and even meaning comes to a end
while loved ones disappear one after the other
without anyone being able to change anything of it
and it's as if pain does cut right through your body.
Far too quickly life does past

and even thoughts do not want to stay with you
and jolliness and youth are bound to time
while everything passes quickly
and totally alone life leaves everyone.

Gert Strydom

Even If

Even if your servants
are sent to visit and destroy
and with glowing red eyes
tries to squeeze the
breath of life
out of me.

Even if you appear
like the Angel of light
which you were
when you walked
among the glowing
treasures unknown and named
in this part of the universe.

Even if great and wealthy men
and secret societies
and people in the east
and tribal men in the bush
worship and follow you,
I know that you are just
a created being
and afraid of and powerless
against the Almighty One.

Even if your presence
and that of your host
and the shape that our world is in
and illness, rage, pestilence and war
proofs that you exist,
it's greater proof
that a loving holy God
gives the power to choose.

Gert Strydom

Even If A Thousand Miles Do Separate Us (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

I

Where this loneliness do linger with me,
you I do really want to see
and to greater and deeper love I will myself prepare
although a thousand miles divide us I do greatly care,
loneliness is a dark deep place from where no one can be free
but in my thoughts tonight you are right here,
and it's as if to me you are constantly near,
where I long with you constantly to be,
you I do really want to see.

II

In my heart our love do maintain
and longing do to us bring pain,
where the beauty of memory
do only bring wonderful things to you and me,
Its in thoughts and every urge and thing that we do gain
and I want to go back into your life,
do want to have you as my beloved wife.

[Reference: "Bede" (Prayer) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Even If Every Yesterday Wants To Fade

Even if every yesterday wants to fade
and I do not know what tomorrow holds
there still is something of our love
that constantly remains with me.

Gert Strydom

Even If I Am Smitten By The Stars

(in answer to W. H. Auden)

Even if by the stars I am smitten
and they do not know or care
if I am on my very way to hell
there is One right there
who do know me very well,
of His great love in His word is written

and by the small things in my life daily I can tell
that He does know when I do fail and when I do excel
and for my sinful love of Him there is no rejection
as the originator of the whole universe has affection

for a poor sinner just like me
as He does care for me daily
even when my world is turned upside down
He does still treat me like His very own.

[Reference: "The more loving one" by W. H. Auden.]

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Gert Strydom

Even If My Life Without You Comes To A Halt

(for M)

I

Even if my life without you comes to a halt,
even if I see your face in those of other women
I continue with the steps of each day,
while I have got to give you up.
Daisies are flowering; roses open in the garden,
the sun hangs yellow-gold in the cobalt sky;
and when each morning I go to town
I return again back home
and although this separation
makes me feel very much alone
and comes between us with distance
there is still the wind whose fingers play over me
and I am not connected to your humanity anymore
while I try to find my way into the wide world.
Sometimes I drive long distances
when my motorbikes comes to life under me.

II

When my motorbikes comes to life under me,
I am aware of the world around me
as when I left the house that we did share,
my hand was on the throttle
while streets, traffic lights and cars just glided past
and I had been so without even God in that event;
with a city, a whole world that came between you and me
as if there is no mercy and I had been punished
and had to jump to the way of destiny and your wishes
with trucks, cars and pickups on the highways
as if our love did not anymore speak to your heart
while everything moved on in our separation
and when I opened the throttle we finally took our farewell
when my world disappeared into the naught.

III

When my world disappeared into the naught,
when there was nothing that remained between us,
when far too many things had come between us,
when too many words, acts
broke our bond to pieces,
in pain that distorts,
until no oblivion comes and memories remain
with the meaning
that we still adore each other,
then I wonder
why you draw a world between us,
why you send me off to hell
and force us to live in different places
while your love still reaches out to me?

IV

While your love still reaches out to me,
I wonder how I can affect
that which was high and holy
here with words written in pain,
how I can force destiny to a standstill
and put something that was honourable and pure
on only a piece of paper,
when I rather want to throw my pen down?
Let me rather remember your bright eyes,
your hot lips that could tell me about your world,
that opened softly under mine,
how your body softly tilted
with the lights of the city in the distance,
when the leaves whirl in and out.

V

When the leaves whirl in and out
in the depths of your soul,

blow as against the windows,
wrecking the last days to dust,
when the first signs of winter come
and I am stripped from old dreams and every expectation
with signs of my disrepair all around,
when nothing remains of my passion and yearning
it is as if the last summer already fades,
as if I am destined to death,
as if never again something great will come,
as if I stand alone against life and the whole world
and still when love remains
the surprise is pass time, place and meaning.

VI

The surprise is pass time, place and meaning
with the shining glance in the eyes
or did you only pretend at times?
My darling, now a rainbow of tears
hang over your cheeks
as if the falling rain forces you to struggle
with the problems of the world,
as if the lightning bolts of life fall around us
and your eyes have caught somebody else,
in the mystery of your heart,
it is somebody else to whom you long
and the sky is covered with darkness,
its cold and the atmosphere somewhat chilly,
in the evenings it's so very silent.

VII

In the evenings it's so very silent
that I can hear my own breathing
as if in the night I loose time and meaning,
as if I do not want to go any further,
as if I do not want to waste time
on our past love,
and think over and over again
while you frolic somewhere else.
Days have a own way

with events occurring unplanned
and I wonder from where I get my poems
as the world lies open before me
and I do not want to let anything else vex my poetry,
even if my life without you comes to a halt.

Gert Strydom

Even If Our Days Feel Dangerous And Dark (Free Verse Sonnet)

Tonight above me gleams the first shiny star
where God is somewhere beyond eternity
and in longing you are too far away from me,
while you and I are locked-down in space and time
but I want you to know about my love
while more stars shine above me in the heaven,
I want you to know that nothing can measure the depth of it,
even if our days feel dangerous and dark
and where now we do exist away from each other,
I believe days of brightness will come again.
Even if it feels as if life goes on purposeless
and even if this virus is suddenly everywhere disguised
God do hold you and me and everything in His hand,
He brings His love and us in connection with each other.
© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Even If Predators Do Kill (Sestina)

Could I find you in every enchanting dream,
flowing through my life like a meandering stream
there would be a kind of bright tranquillity
while constantly you were bringing happiness to me
and everything would be gentle, clear and never dull
while life would be without rage, forever with your love full

but life in the very way that is, is of calamity and heartache full
as if we are only a part of a ominous scheme, hidden in a dream
while some people do act like gods, to other's pain and dignity dull
where they do not care about the pain, the tears that they cause to stream
and yet you do remain apart of all of this and very dear to me
as the maker of the emotional tone of our house, the giver of tranquility.

Maybe in a world of havoc and decay, it's madness to wish for tranquility,
to in moments of sheer anger and rage to envisage hearts that are with peace
full

but that is the way that I do view reality with a place in the sun for you and me
and this view is much more than just another mad kind of dream
or something that lets people to a non-existing utopia stream
that only makes sense to those that are adequately mind-boggled and dull.

Even if not every day is in summer or spring and outside it's overcast and dull,
even if the life does rage on in the cities, in the veldt nature is still full of
tranquility

where animals do roam free, while others do prowl, do drink at a stream,
do play, procreate and graze in their numerous herds to their full,
do act pure and softhearted as things are in a child's or your and my dream
and still predators do kill, do hunt the weak and this is terrible to me

but in a way life is what we do make of it and you are more than special to me
and where love is the world is a totally different place and it's never boringly dull,

as it gives opportunities for realization to come to the plans of those who do
dream,

even if jealousy do destroy the careers of people and do smash down tranquility,
even if the streets are with raging rioting abusive people dangerously full
the impact of a selfless kind of love do others touch and flow out like a stream

and there are heroes that stand up against the madness, do act against the
stream
who are the most important people to society and to you and me
and they are not of themselves and their own gains full
their wit is at the very edge never blunt or even dull
even if they do not envisage any kind of tranquility
they still act sincerely as if life is much more than just a dream.

It's time to live our lives to its full, to never know a moment that is dull,
even if you tears do at times stream, you are a godsend to me,
a person with tranquility, in life a woman of whom I do constantly dream.

Gert Strydom

Even If They Are Only Bringing Pain (Novelinee)

(after William Shakespeare)

With the sweet loveliness of a new spring
those eyes as bright as the breaking of morn,
those lips that intimate kisses do bring,
that our true love at a time did forsworn
are some things that mislead in the bright day,
bring them again, even if it's in vain;
if I may, I am asking you to stay,
let your kisses fall like a storm of rain,
even if they are only bringing pain.

[Reference: "Take, O take those lips away" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Even If This Summer Is Like None Before (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

Even if this summer is like none before,
with its dazzling flowers and fruits, even if none
other will ever be the same as this one
summers do not cease to exist and there will be one more

even is there is something to adore
and even preserving fruit, flowers, colours and tastes life goes on
and in winter nature lies asleep and quickly it is gone
with another great summer in store

and no one is truly bereft
when winter comes with its beauty
as if stuck in a cleft
when autumn, winter and spring appears with their own serenity.
nothing in a bottle can capture life, to have its essence left;
no human is apt in ability, to such profanity.

Gert Strydom

Even If You And Me Are Away From Each Other

Even if from each other we are totally alone
our love remains sincere are written in black on white,
the impact of our true love does continuously work

and it brings the two of us together,
it comforts and draws us to each other in times of sorrow.
Even if from each other we are totally alone

our love in a cruel world is unusual
and even if you and I are locked-down and apart
the impact of our true love does continuously work,

true to principle it touches powerfully and sincerely
and we are not tempted although we are provoked.
Even if from each other we are totally alone

to you I do remain well meaning
and you do stand against the world in my stead,
the impact of our true love does continuously work

and your humanity no one can generalise
as it does touch the body, soul, spirit and the heart.
Even if from each other we are totally alone,
the impact of our true love does continuously work.

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Gert Strydom

Even If Your Life Is Ravaged By Sin

Even if your life is ravaged by sin
and you do not know where you do fit in
God's love reaches out to the depths of the heart
and causes a new life to begin.

Gert Strydom

Even In Moments When Everything Is Out Of Control

Even in moments when everything is out of control
You are the one that makes my life again whole
and I am always aware that You are very close
in my life You do constantly play a leading role.

Gert Strydom

Even In Times Of Great Woe (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Even in times of great woe
when time moves far to slow
when havoc is present on earth
of Your presence I do know

Gert Strydom

Even The Romantic Twilight Is Lost To Us

Even the romantic twilight is lost to us,
we do not anymore wander hand in hand
as we once did, constantly from me
your face now is hid, as if there is something

that will betray your feelings, maybe guilt
that is caught in your glance, something
that I battle to decipher, maybe a hidden thing
while I see the sun dropp right into the sea.

Happy moments I still do remember,
as if love has left so unexpected suddenly
and while you are here with me
it feels as if you are very far away

and I remember how you did cling to me,
with your body wrapped right around mine,
your intimate breath blowing against my cheek,
your skin clinging to mine as if we were one

but that is another chapter in another book,
a time and place that is very long gone
and now your image in my memory recedes
is swept away by the falling twilight.

Gert Strydom

Even The Smallest Wild Flower (In Answer To Bonaventure Hinwood)

Even the smallest wild flower
that grows untended from the bare earth
catches Your eye, carries Your care
of sun and rain
and in the growth of it
You bless it with Your loving care.

The smallest bird that sit in a nest
somewhere in branches
and make the first twittering sounds
You know about and have got meaning for You

and God You who is everywhere and knows all things
see the urge in my heart
and in this dark night
I also ask for a bit of light,
and pray that Your blessings
will fall on my people and me as well.

[Reference: Variase op 'n tema uit "Alles" van Sheila Cussons (Variation on a theme about "all" of Sheila Cussons) by Bonaventure Hinwood.]

Gert Strydom

Even Though

Even though a new government
is in place,
in Soweto, Alexandra and Mamelodi
there are still hungry children
playing in the streets.

Even though BEE and opportunity
knocks on every black mans door,
hungered out dogs
still prowl the streets
and gangs of criminals
do not have respect
for any law at all
and steal and kill
and society in a way
is much worst than it was before.

Even though black politicians rule
the Filemons, the Thabo's and most
other black men
still do the jobs
that they did before
and most of those
that now work for the government
do not know
how to work at all.

Even though mister Nelson Mandela is free
and in Dar es-Salaam
a statue of a black man
breaks its chains
and freedom is proclaimed
to be everywhere in this country,
freedom does not really matter
when a nation still lives in poverty
and corruption makes some people
more free than others
know how to be.

Even Though It's Dark Around Me

Dearly beloved, I send you the sun
as a messenger
to pass my love
and nothing else I can really ask:

and when it raises red,
know of my love
as if it starts every day knew

and when it throws
golden rays over you
and sit white-hot in the sky,

know that you are in my thoughts
right through the day
as if you are part of me

and when it goes down at dusk,
know that I am still
loving you
even though it's dark around me.

Gert Strydom

Even When Darkness Is Around Me

My whole world is sometimes in a jumble
and when things want to fall apart
I do not really comprehend
how everything fits together
but then I do remember the small things
that You are doing daily for me
and that You constantly keep bringing answers,
even when darkness is around me.

Gert Strydom

Even When I Do Not Comprehend

Sometimes I am bothered
that there are pain, heartache and disappointment in life,
that my best plans at times do dwindle away
and I search for deeper meaning
while its difficult to see any kind of light
and its as my time is measured off
in days of which I do not deserve the outcome
and it's as if a dark power restrains everything
but then I do realize that You do still remain in control
and whatever may come
I have to struggle on in life on Your side
and then events and things keep astounding me
where You do walk on the road ahead
bringing deliverance even when I do not comprehend.

Gert Strydom

Even When My Body Is Broken And I Am In Pain

Even when my body is broken and I am in pain
and when it feels as if all hope is in vain,
when around me it seems as the eternal night
then God's love do my still sustain
to reach out to the new tomorrow,
to a future that shines with new light,
to a place without any sorrow,
like a small seedling sprouting after the rain.

Gert Strydom

Even When The Logic

Even when the logic
of how destiny does work
at times are inexplicable
and a person does not comprehend

why life, why God
does change things, people and times,
does allow destruction
then nothing can destroy His selfless love.

Gert Strydom

Evening Conversation

Never has a peaceful silence been between us,
intimate body language
has never said so many things
with the beautiful curve
of your breasts surging
while the night stretches into darkness,
with your two eyes shining like burning objects
and do anew create new desires in me
and it feels as if this time can last eternally,
as if everything just did come
to this moment, this single hour
as the peak of existence, the peak between life and death
while in passion are catching a mere moment
to which your moans and cries does hang.

Gert Strydom

Evening, Psychiatric Hospital

The last cars of the visitors
drive out through the gate
and one does stop at the gate guard
to ask for directions
and in the administrative building
some lights are burning
as if that place does still do business
after office hours.

A Small road twist past the cafeteria
and lead to one of the wards
and here and there
some of the last doctors that were doing rounds
leave the premises with cars
that comes like search lights
past different wards

and a while later one of the pastoral councillors
walk into the cool night air with a family
that had been his last visitors

and inside sisters patrol and every now and then
they gather cheerful around cups of tea or coffee
and look into the wards
to make certain that the patients are doing fine.

Gert Strydom

Every Animal And The Lion And The Lamb

For the parrot in its cage
the open spaces,
of the jungle remain
and unfolds in its mind.

Though if it escapes
here in the city
it would fly aimlessly,
among the buildings
and not know
where to find food and shelter.

At the zoo lions are camped in
and are placed together,
and fed by human beings.

Away is the field
and game that graze
and and a pan,
or river to get water from.

For the lamb there's a camp
to graze in
and feed from a human
and to remain
a farmers' property.

Every animal and the lion and the lamb
and all of us wait
for the child,
that leads animals to freedom
and for the world
to get righteousness.

[Reference=> 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them' (Isaiah 11: 6) .]

Every Day I Find Something New

Every day I find something new
in what people do or say
and every now and then
the world does ring
with something that is exciting

and sometimes your kiss
and your touch is just a touch and a kiss
but at other times its much more
than just a time of bliss
and at times means far too much
in the way that life is.

Gert Strydom

Every Dove

Every dove that flutters down from its flight
brings me back to times with you,
to the days together in the hot summer sun,
to all the moments that we wanted to and could
and at night I dream of you lying at my back,
you do remain constantly in the beautiful memories
where I am entrusting you to God
and constantly I see doves in the sky,
which brings me back to times with you.

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Gert Strydom

Every Morning Her Windows Are Washed Clean

Every morning her windows are washed clean
and they reflect the garden
in bright pieces of glass
and even the clouds disappearing in the distance.
Gardenia, jasmine and pomegranate
reflect the colours, the beauty
of her lovely face
and every sunny day
you will find her with fingers in the ground
when she prays for the first spring rain to come
as she is a nature child
and around her lawns of green grass dazzle.
She has caught a small world in her hands
and a straw-hat against the sun hangs low against her eyes.

Gert Strydom

Every Morning When The Day Begins

Every morning when the day begins
the sun rises beautifully red,
but at first I see the twilight
when the sun throws out its first rays gloriously.

Every morning I want to unburden my heart to You,
and I am asking that You make me aware
about the way that my life is going,
to help me make time and place for You in it.

Gert Strydom

Every Night When Darkness Comes

I

Every night when darkness comes,
when we say prayers together
then I know that your bright light
never fails,

that you daily determine
the destiny of every one
who bend down to you, that stars spray like sparks
going to unknown places

and that you the sun of righteousness
will come at your set time
with bright rays, that you will come down
past all mortality,
that all earthly troubles and worries will disappear;
how do you Lord, let the pain be gone?

II

How do you Lord, let the pain be gone,
two animal children I have lost shortly after each other
and when in the mornings I look outside
there are only two left.

How do you tell others that do not really comprehend
of the bond that a person has,
of the love coming from the heart of a animal,
about the moments of unmentioned pleasure

and now that I am without a wife or children
the remaining two still serves me faithfully,
there is a tight bond
and I pray for you to hold your hand over them

and if you want to take them as well;
I am lost on this world.

III

I am lost on this world,
in the unknown world that waits tomorrow on me,
when my strength begins to wane
before the dark night,

but when the new light appears,
the sun still rises in a new day
(when the sun again shines in all of its glory over me)
in the unknown things waiting on me,

my known yesterdays are included
in bright days, that in late afternoons declines,
it is as if everything that came before is included
in memories and even when lightning bolts fall around me

I find your presence continually,
when shadows fall over me.

IV

When shadows fall over me,
when the world almost decadent
roughly falls into my universe
and shadows sometimes permanently

try to sabotage my best efforts
and everything in my will rises up
I feel pushed away, blunted and used;
but still I remember you

from whom all light comes
and are waiting on a new day,
although I am knocked down and am astonished,
although it continually looks to me like night

you never really leave me isolated,
even when in my dreams I scream and wonder.

V

Even when in my dreams I scream and wonder
why every morning folds around me,
almost endlessly without you,
as if life is destroying me,

trying to get me down
without me being able to keep the pain away,
as if no fatherly hand is helping me,
I still stand astonished

when I see the works of God
in small things around me
where its power without bonds
even unfolds in my own writings

I know that He constantly draws me nearer,
even when the scribes gather.

VI

Even when the scribes gathered,
to send me to hell,
they still wanted to draw near to you with a last prayer
on that determined dark hour.

To confirm that they are accomplishing your will,
as if to say, so says the Lord,
they stood in a circle,
that white plastered men.

At that time I was wondering about people,
who have the audacity to put them in your place
if that Sanhedrin
really did carry out your wishes

or are they the whole time walking in darkness,
do they not know what is written on the ground?

VII

Do they not know what is written on the ground?
Lord I thank you for sharpening me in my growth
even when so-called holy people come with a sentence
that interferes with my vocation.

Although sometimes I feel the pain penetrating
as if it's cutting to the bone,
I know that you only mean things to be well for me,
that you and your angels are continually at my side

but ask that you protect me
against the darkness, the evil
that in hordes gathers around me,
that you do not wait

that you keep me on the right way, even when I go astray;
every night when darkness comes.

Gert Strydom

Every Poem

Every poem stands
on its own legs
and although
it displays something
of the poet's soul,
in reality the poet
stands totally free
from it.

Every word and rhyme
and every verse
is totally independent
from who and what
the poet is
and is nothing more
than a verbal painting
of feelings, life, reflections
or any thing
that the poet wants
to express.

Gert Strydom

Every Pretty And Wonderful Intonation

Every pretty and wonderful intonation
and every gesture I want to keep in my memory,
the hue and glance in your eyes, how you do smile,
the pure bright sound of your laughter,
but no words can tell about how I see you
where mere moments between us do become holy,
when you do make a grey world wonderful for me,
where our love do continue to unfold wonderfully
and every gesture I want to keep in my memory.

Gert Strydom

Every Second Day

Every second day
the woman living next door
comes to complain,
professedly to ask for advice

about her husband
that left
with a hussy

and from involvement
with this thing
I keep myself,
not that I am scared
for it to happen
with me as well,
but in her grief
I cannot partake

and sometimes she tells
about antics
with other lovers
and about making love
to them
and this is where I excuse myself quickly

and so it happens
that time passes quickly
and one day the husband is back
and the two of them
sit next door on the porch
in love with each other.

Gert Strydom

Every Small Event (Free Verse Sonnet)

I have already found that each small event
do carry meaning and is a part of the huge puzzle
and although things with time do pass
they again later come alive in words,
that every moment has intensity,
that you have also got to look at the smaller signs
of what words do really say,
to get a clear picture of them
and love, joy, happiness and sorrow
are some things that that people do easily forget
but always do remain carrying the scars
and do know of the depth and impact of them
where people do constantly differ
in their intentions, convictions and their will.

Gert Strydom

Every Spring (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Every spring after the rain
new life comes again
when seeds are sprouting
and even the smallest petals of grain.

Gert Strydom

Every Spring After The Rain (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Every spring after the rain
new life comes again
when seeds are sprouting
and even the smallest petals of grain.

Gert Strydom

Every Year It's Like This When The Summer Comes

This morning there are sparrows, a coucal and weavers
that gathers on the few maize cobs near to the fig trees
and a plover acts as if its wing is broken,
tries to attract the cat away from its nest

and the ginger Persian cat sneaks nearer,
treads carefully between each blade of grass and stick,
tries to catch the bird with the apparent broken wing
and I see that some of the grapes are already ripening.

Every year it's like this when the summer comes
with fruit seamed onto the branches
and flower after flower which astounds me
with their beauty and colour

while the sun hangs high and white
in the cobalt-blue sky
and the days linger
as if they can last eternally.

Gert Strydom

Everyone Of Us Do Know

Everyone of us do know
that alone
as we do come into life
we do leave it,

that although you are healthy
destiny can strike
at any moment,

that a human can find an eternal bond
with no other human being
and that with God
does the answers lie,

but still we do try to live
as is there is no end to us,
as if our days do stretch into eternity,
while time does constantly measure our life off,
are already drawing lines
through the calendar of our lives.

Gert Strydom

Everyone Wants A Home

Everyone wants a home,
a place of rest and tranquillity,
to lay down a tired body in the evening,
where there is only peace and love,
everyone searches for somewhere to come back to,
for a place in the whole universe,
as a small piece of property
where no shadows fall.

Everyone searches for a piece of sun
that always burns in the blue sky
and if we could
for the hand of a darling
and far too quickly our days pass
until all things at a time ends.

Gert Strydom

Everyone Wants To Be Free

Everyone wants to be free,
from debt and duty
and responsibility,
but I want to be free
from the daily existence
with the chill
of being foreign
among people in the city.

I long for a better place,
where the night is missing
and everything is perfect
and totally right
and where I can be untroubled
with my Creator.

Gert Strydom

Everyone Wants To Be Free[2]

Everyone wants to be free
of injustice and indignity,
but I just want to be me.

Take me away
from the madding crowd,
where the city
kills my humanity.

Let me see
the beauty of the world
that God has made
in every flower and every tree
and let me find a place
where He can talk to me.

Gert Strydom

Everything Between Us Is Black

A black sleep near to death
surrounds me and everything between you and me,
while police patrol cars
with flashing lights and sirens
are parking outside the yard
and you are at your lover's house.

They are here to lock handcuffs around my wrists,
send by the lies that you trumpet forth
and when I only allow one policeman
to come into the yard
while your white policeman lover with the others
have to wait outside the yard
the lot of them are raging mad
as I threaten
to take legal action against them

and that one black policeman
finds your drugged out child
where he is sleeping,
learn from him
that they have come in vain
and that you are making asses of them and me,
he searches through the house
and I send the whole lot of them to hell
where they can go and crawl back in

and there's death
like a deep dark grave,
where at a time
I had love for you

and my memory fades, about our gloomy story
of which now nothing remains
but for the realization
that your departure was my actual salvation
and between us everything is black,
all meaning has been wiped out eternally.

[Reference: Un grand sommeil noir... by Paul Verlaine.]

Gert Strydom

Everything Else Did Cease (Berryian Poem)

In the sheer darkness, of a moonless night
in each other, we blended did not bother
to switch on, to find any source of light
our sighs, our moans we did not smother
all of our thoughts, our deeds were focused on delight.

Our love, our existence had a kind of blurring design
as if every strive, all the things that we held to life
in as single moment, we could find and refine
as if every passion, every kind of drive
were no longer separate, no longer only yours and mine.

We were living out, our endless dreams
love we did portray, in everything we did say
life was somehow not, as it usually seems
while we did kiss, romance and play
with our fantasies, moans and happy screams

while we searched, yearned for quick release
in a sheer moment, acted and did pretend
were searching happiness, some kind of peace
a kind of tranquility, serenity without an end
as if caught in each other, everything else did cease.

Gert Strydom

Everything Is Going To Be Wet

Every day rain falls down
from the overcast grey sky
and lightning bolts
flash blue white
like the fingers
of the gods
caressing the earth
while the leaves of autumn
cover every tree
in auburn, yellow and brown.

Green leaves on the stems
of big pink hollyhocks
here and there
dip up and down
when hit by drops of rain
as if suddenly coming alive

and it's going to be
a wet winter
and probably
not all that chilly
with rain falling
out of season.

The grass is green
and everything but trees
are growing
as if it's still spring.

and flowers bloom
on geraniums, roses, hollyhocks,
lilies, irises and petunias
in colours ranging
from white, orange, yellow,
violet to red and blue
and without covering
everything is going
to be wet.

Gert Strydom

Everything Is In God's Perfect Plan

Early you phone and say: "hello my darling husband, "
your words is like a butterfly that flutters,
outside a spider is creating a web
and suddenly I see an insect that struggles.

It's the missing and longing that does torture me,
It's as if the lock-down do ban us from each other
and in my thoughts are your hair that curl.
Early you phone and say: "hello my darling husband, "

outside drops of water drip in a watering-bucket,
some birds call and one sounds like a quail
and everything is in God's perfect plan.
Your words is like a butterfly that flutters

but my cousin and I are cut from the same cloth,
he is a blood brother although we do not have the same surname.
His son is dead and what do I say while his world is falling apart?
Outside a spider is creating a web,

men who do joyfully man a rubbish-truck,
grab rubbish-bins and drag them rattling,
the neighbour is on his roof with an artisan
and suddenly I see an insect that struggles.

but it's as if life past us do whirl,
where destiny do not go along as we do plan,
that his sun is dead painfully whirl through my head
and in this time happiness comes only now and then.

Gert Strydom

Everything Is Like An End-Time Scene (Free Verse Sonnet)

Outside no children play as they always do in the street,
there are far too little cars driving up and down in it
and with the corona-virus time passes far too slowly,
Everything is like an end-time scene almost left behind
but still I hear the neighbours talking loudly and clearly
and there is far too much distance between you and me,
when the impact of this thing cuts too deeply into a person
and the evil does not come from anger or even hatred
but the inability to stop something deadly,
the inability to look out for the interests of others,
the inability to warn in time on black and white
where now it has a hellish impact on humanity
but still I do adore you and love you in all of this
and I know that I cannot obstruct the good work that you do.

[Poet's note:My wife manages the Springs "Meals on Wheels" and do deliver food to elderly and poor people from the time of level five of the lock-down as she has been doing in normal times.(Level five of the lock-down is the highest level of lock-down.)]

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Gert Strydom

Everything Is Still Written In My Own Remembering

At Carp's dam near old Boschoek I will never again catch bream
as over that good man's life the sun has long ago set

but the joy and pleasure are pinned down in memories of my childhood days
of people who share everything with others and truly know God

and still the cries of baboons echo there far away over the sugar-bush hillocks,
in memory at dusk I still do take my brother by his hand,

while I get the smell of a pot of crumbly-porridge from the Von Hörsten's small
fire,
and it's as if the beautiful woof of those almost forgotten days still do remain,

when I hear the cooing of doves when falcons turn high up in the blue,
and I smell lightning and rain as the wind blows after every thunderstorm.

The days of tears, pain, laughter and great happiness
leaves on the pages of my heart a eternal impression

and although the alfalfa and maize fields are now full of weeds and grass,
with the horses, Frisian cows and donkeys those fields always are my thoughts

and even though everything that at a time had been a farm is scorched under
the sun,
I remain fascinated with those childhood days right through my life,

and I feel the hot red-brown sand and the cool morning dew,
as everything is still written in my own remembering.

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Gert Strydom

Everything Now Seems So Fleetingly (English Sonnet)

For you I waited my whole life through.
You and I have got something special, girl,
and I want to love you in everything I do.
while life far too swiftly past us do whirl

while everything now seems so fleetingly
and it's much more than just another thrill
where you are much more than life to me.
With the virus life do survival into us drill

and restrictions seems like a part of life
as if all liberty has been lost somehow
but I do still intensely love you, my wife,
do of the pain of being apart truly know,

daily pray for God's protection to remain,
as we live in a world of heartache and pain.

Gert Strydom

Everywhere I Searched For The Words

Everywhere I searched for the words
to express the depth of my true love to you
and nowhere could I find it in a book,
I could not even say the right words,
I could not express how much I wanted you here,
I could not give depth to feelings of dearness,
I could not even lay my soul bare at your feet,
still you were in my deepest thoughts,
in days and nights that I was missing you;
you are in my joy and sadness.

Gert Strydom

Everywhere I Searched For The Words [1]

Everywhere I searched for the words
to express the depth of my true love to you
and nowhere could I find it in a book,
I could not even say the right words,
I could not express how much I wanted you here,
I could not give depth to feelings of dearness,
I could not even lay my soul bare at your feet,
still you were in my deepest thoughts,
in days and nights that I was missing you;
you are in my joy and sadness.

Gert Strydom

Everywhere In The Garden Flowers Grow In Bright Colours

Everywhere in the garden flowers grow in bright colours
and in this small paradise the last winter wind blows,
when the air is filled with the smell of jasmine and gardenia
and with each other we are without talking somewhat familiar
when the other world of work and worries is reduced,
when we hear doves sing their songs of love,
when the sun like a red ball returns to its resting place,
when sparrows watch us from tree branches
and the evening star and the darkness comes suddenly
but still we are smitten with each other,
with something intimate in each moment
when the moon hangs red brown
and the I find in you a resting place for my heart,
some joy and happiness in a world full of pain and sorrow.

Gert Strydom

Evil

When I look over my shoulder
you are there, but you hide away
and rooted in my flesh
is the thing about I and me
and over all to be myself
and in the depths of my soul
ego is built in

In every good word and deed
evil is whispering
that never ceases
to appear
and with the good
it stays part of me
and throws its own shadow.

Gert Strydom

Executive

(after John Betjeman)

I am a young urban professional wearing a tweed suit
or a Daniel Hechter blazer with polished gold cufflinks,
for the highest position in the company I am in pursuit
and know what even the cleaners in the company thinks

have slept with everything that wears high heels
even the CEO's latest wife to climb the body corporate
and I do drive a brand new blue BMW as my firm's wheels
are at work before the rising sun and stay till very late,

daily I do visit the gym to keep my body in perfect trim
are on the golf course continually practicing my swing
and I am athletic, attentive, powerful and slim
do with the ladies of competitors have an occasional fling

just to find out what the opposition do plan
to be able to be on the ball all of the time
as I am the company's go to fixed it all man
that saves millions and even the smallest dime

and what I do is manage the things the CEO wants to hear
between the meetings that I do set as the company secretary
and I look for the figures that even the financial director do fear
do smile a welcome smile and nod my head involuntary

but back at home I am a different person,
do act as the best husband, the greatest dad,
do limitless love my daughter and son
and although I am wealthy there is much more to add

to set the things that makes life simple in place
and at church I do contribute and contribute
but do not buy any kind of grace
as nothing I do irresolute

and I am always in the right crowd and clique,
nobody do me criticise

as I do know every leeway and trick
have paved my way to the top and to paradise

[Reference: "Executive" by John Betjeman.]

Gert Strydom

Expectation (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

It's as if now I do measure off each day to you,
where jubilant my heart beats with an intense power
and yet love is more than I am yearning for,
where I know about you and our sincere love
and here I am prepared and also unprepared,
while that which is between us is fragile like a butterfly's wing beat
and yet there is a kind of wonder in the waiting,
where you are in my thought and I cannot forget you.
In my silent time of severe impatience
it's as if I do not really exist without you,
as if everything want to fade away day by day
and between us our love remains sometimes unfulfilled,
where days past into weeks
until unexpectedly our time does come.

[Reference:"Verwagting" (Expectation)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Experiences At Church

In the city I witnessed some men
going to church trying to follow God
with a true passion, a true commitment
to finding a blessing
and weary old ladies, children
and some men were bringing offerings
of money, action and time

and some just went there to express
how by wealth they have been blessed
gathering in cliques in little groups and circles,
discussing business, pleasure
and inconsequential things that are of interest to them

and I have witnessed other people,
who saw no need for churches
or for the services rendered by them,
any other than as places for
grand weddings

or to serve God or any higher being
as if they in the image of God
had become gods
and the whole wide world
belonged to them to exploit
and even other people
have got to serve them
and now that the church
to which they did at a time belong
had lost its power
with which it governed the country
from religion they were totally free.

Even if other people were gathering
for self serving reasons
I went to church
to get some kind of blessing
from the presence of the One
from whom all love comes.

Gert Strydom

Experiences During War

I

When this evening comes between us
and outside the rainstorm fall pattering,
with thunder reporting like cannon shot
let tranquillity find us then

and let us go away from the world in this holy hour
with joy and peace and endless longing
and let the suffering and pain disappear,
let us then take the best out of this short time

and let our lives come past the turning-point
while the war for others goes on
and even if we are wordless
let our bodies meet in flesh and blood,
let we find some internal joy
before we have to greet each other again.

II

Before we have to greet each other again,
when the alarm clock reaches eleven o'clock,
I know that this might be the last time together
while I have got to go to Waterkloof military airfield.

In the distance lightning bolts come down exploding,
when you drop me at the gates to parachute into enemy territory,
to go back to Angola,
in a region where the enemy swarms about like a nest of wasps.

Scouts have to do target acquisition for howitzer guns,
for the heavy artillery that shoot over many miles,
in the distance the aircraft waits with its bat shape
and some fear is in my stomach while the gate guard calls an officer.

Later I breathe through a mask, with equipment strapped to me,
here one feels rather like a machine than a human being.

III

Here one feels rather like a machine than a human being
when day after day you are with the same people,
have to do the same duties,
cursing your live

on the border at times,
while you receive parcels that you do not expect or deserve,
while the relationship with your girlfriend changes to a big maybe
and then you want to be somewhere, just somewhere different

from here, when everything fades to nothing,
with life dragging past day by day
and even when we go into action,
it's as if I am especially daring my life
and every day I pull a line through the calendar,
every day I count off the days to go back home.

IV

Every day I count off the days to go back home,
while with Casspirs and Ratels the border is protected
and days just go on and on,
while resistance is changed to submissiveness

and somewhere at a ovambo village
where farm goats walk around loose,
I see sparks spatter out of a campfire
while our armoured vehicles drive nearer

with machineguns and cannons aimed threatening,
we are searching for enemies that plant landmines,
while the lives of people are disrupted
and somewhere chickens are crowing at the back of the huts

while tired and stiff we climb down,
when a soldier is killed and drifts in a nearby stream.

V

When a soldier is killed and drifts in a nearby stream,
his eyes could see no butterflies,
not even look up to God, whom he tried to serve,
he couldn't stretch a hand out of his powerless body,

he will never write another word to his darling
and this killing he did not deserve,
was maybe at the wrong place,
a target to enemy soldiers,

he is not aware about things around him,
or where righteousness, truth and the search for light lies,
he was forced to be a soldier by laws,
forced to make an offering without any meaning to it,
he would have wanted things differently,
in the darkness he had lost his way far too early.

VI

In the darkness he had lost his way far too early,
although he is already a man and still unfulfilled,
he is waiting on the helicopter to come and pick them up
and he is now full of impatience.

In front of him soldiers string out on patrol,
through the dry country-side where the bushes leave scratches,
as they are going to where the sidetrack joins the main road,
while sweat flows in tracks over his face,

when he suddenly and unexpectedly triggers a landmine,
his life disappears in moments on a spot of blood,
when the explosion full of shrapnel goes off without mercy,
there are sand and the smell of blood everywhere around him

and all his hope, his future and life disappears beneath a cloud of thunder;
when the hammer and sickle appears with a big red star.

VII

When the hammer and sickle appears with a big red star,
and from the east the bear growls with great power,

when fingers of enemy terrorists and soldiers are twisted
around the triggers of rifles, some did experienced pain

others were happy as if a new sun were shining on them,
the armoured wagon beneath me had filled the enemy with fear,
where I was forced to fight for survival,
in walls of steel before civilization did disappear

but although we had won the war,
the hell later came to its full maturity,
for others an earthly heaven waited, while calamity was with us
and the blood and sacrifices
now count nothing and I am astonished,
when this evening comes between us.

Gert Strydom

Experiences With God

I

You make all things new

I realized when I watched the Southern Cross tonight,
that like always holds something magical for me,
maybe I was so carried off in the daily dispute

of my own grey existence that I absolutely
did not notice that You, hold fold Your hand over us,
that Your beacons burn bright and are never growing faint.
Even if situations is how acute

and Moscow, Rome, Washington and Pretoria
are all places where Your light is falling upon
where people are created in Your image,
where people rejoice, are jubilant, cry and complain,
and with innumerable people
You are present as the almighty God.

II

You are present as the almighty God,
but nobody else was on my side
when I realised my destruction,
nobody was near to me,

everyone was as a stranger not dear to me
and when I went out in the new morning
you were a man, a woman or a child
until I stood before the heavenly Father

and not blinded anymore
I saw the pain, heartache and loneliness of other people,
when I saw that everyone is God's child,
that everyone have to be brothers of each other

and then I myself became insignificant in my own eyes,
moved by the almighty God.

III

Moved by the almighty God
where water run like rivers
overwhelming to my mind,
the clouds again opened

with a rainbows catching the eye,
even when thunder is bashing down continually,
coming from the darkest clouds
God's promises keeps standing.

On a planet were things are stripped unto the core,
are breaking down and decaying by own actions,
man brought the darkness upon himself,
in rebellion against the God of the universe

and at times I stand shivering
when I want to live without Your light.

IV

When I want to live without Your light,
when it does not penetrate to the depths of my soul
as if my existence is just circling out aimlessly
and between it all I somewhere loose my balance

with the outcome almost to eternity staying far off,
when I cannot jump off the highest cliffs,
I hear the wind howling monotonous in my ears,
it is if I want to yield before the onslaught

but my life is anchored like a fortress on You as the rock;
it is as if this separation do not penetrate to You,
I see waves breaking, thunder striking out in blue tongues,
with waves continually colliding with me
and to eternity I stay before You as just another single individual;
when the bad weather in the afternoons stirs up.

V

When the bad weather in the afternoons stirs up,
with mornings being cobalt blue,
then I know how much I miss you
and when thunder breaks forth in the late afternoon

it's like the hand of God that He is protruding,
I become aware of His presence,
as if I can touch Him
and thus being able to ask the wishes of my heart

and just before the rain bashes down pattering
I want to know how long it is still going to be
before I am going to see you again
and mightily His answer comes in numerous lightning bolts
that crackles down in with blue-white fire
while He is asking me to trust while I behold His work.

VI

While He is asking me to trust while I behold His work,
when with humility I bring my hands together,
holding you with love against me
and we want to press upon Him in the infinity,

in suffering and pain everything passes with speed,
but He remains in our thoughts with the world in the circle of His fingers
as if we are like a fortress, against that which rages against us
with you, my darling in my embrace

there's a small universe suddenly forming
coming to reality between two separate people
as if passion, knowledge and ingenuity
with love binds lives, against all that is assaulting
and there a flower rises perfectly out of the naught,
where together we can venture into the infinity.

VII

Where together we can venture into the infinity
with the greatest master of mathematics and science
who is astounding us the whole time with his omnipotence

and there are images that His thoughts form and realize,

divide into rivers, lakes and oceans

with planets spreading like a skeletons, open and uncovered

while He only is giving commands

water masses recede, are pushed away

with continent upon continent appearing,

with a sun hanging in the sky

and He spreads His hands

and suddenly countless animals appear,

Your love, stays unending and without any substitute,

You make all things new.

Gert Strydom

Extradited

When leaves blow around
in the cold winter wind,
he does sit on the bench in the park
dressed in his summer clothes.

His beard grows wildly,
his hair is long,
uncombed and grey
and there is despair and melancholy
that shows in his bright eyes.

His wife died in a motorcar accident,
by the Aurora mine fiasco
where he did work without pay
and by affirmative action
he is out of work,
did loose his house,
did loose all of his possessions

and from everything
he just do possess the clothes on his body
and around him
there are doves that he does hear

as if God still through nature
at times do talk with him,
but in the late afternoon
unexpectedly rain does fall

and he trembles,
without a place to find shelter,
are extradited,
blinded by the rain
while destiny
does devour him bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

Facets (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Vincent van der Westhuizen)

You are in the fall the wind's whirling-dance
a gypsy-woman's disquiet and her click-clack,
the bright hot summer-sun's golden glare,
the peaceful images on a lake's surface,
you are the meeting of the sun and moon,
that mythological apocryphal find each other,
when serene they do come and go at dawn and dusk,
the soft stirring through each oak of the wind,
you are the flame that rages deep in the blood,
a deep conversation of man and woman with God,
the morning-sun's rose-red glare
and of all women on earth by you I am infatuated,
while with you and God I do discover eternity
and this earth you make a heavenly place.

[Reference:"Fasette" (Facets)by Vincent van der Westhuizen.]

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Gert Strydom

Factory Workers (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

They do appear laughing and joking,
some do hurry to places where brothels do their thing,
while with forced overtime the sun dies
and lines are cut in young faces and tiredness is in their eyes
from factories and hot buildings and labour that do sting,
others go to poverty and a young wife and child
while the country seems lawless and wild,
some pray to God to take care of everything,
some do hurry to places where brothels do their thing.

[Reference: "Die fabriekwerkers"(The factory workers)by C. M. van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Faded Into Bliss

Last night you were with me
and the big old dog
could not lie still
and she turned
every now and then.

Her nails rubbed
against the wood floor,
but while you were lying against me
my senses was filled by you
and my flu
was somewhere in the background.

For a long time I laid against you
and saw you sleep
and everything about me,
faded into bliss.

Gert Strydom

Fairy Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Ingrid Jonker)

The fairy-princess whose little lamp does shine
did last night give her heart to me,
she kissed me for hours which was great fun
and together we did forge strong bonds.
The moon did look at everything big-eyed from above,
it had been yellow but later glittering white
and we did in love embrace each other,
in front of the stars that fill the night like grains of hail.
The grandpa owl was hidden in a tree
while two doves did shyly peep at us
and with melancholy the evening breeze did cry for a mate
while we did dance at the chorus of the frogs and crickets
and the mother-night did draw her cloak over everything,
did cover us from head to toe.

[Reference: "Kabouterliefde" (Elvin-love) by Ingrid Jonker.]

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Gert Strydom

Fairy Of The Night (Rosarian Sonnet)

I saw her running through the hay sheaves
with her bare feet treading in the soft leaves
with dancing feet and blue shining eyes
passing some stacks of hay on far off farms
with a bunch of white flowers in her arms.

From the forest I saw her keenly peep,
while my open eyes drew heavy with sleep
in passing she softly made little sighs,
whispering she told me to have sweet dreams
accompanied by the sound of near streams,

while the wind bristled gently through the boughs,
before fading to sleep I was aware
of her eyes sparkling caring from her brows
and of her lovely shining golden hair.

Gert Strydom

Fairy Tales

As a child I did think:
when I am grown up
I will change the world,
will easily change the things that are wrong

and the fairy tales of bewitched women,
about parents that do not care,
the cruel wolf
will then disappear.

I will give catapults, pellet-guns
and bicycles to children,
will teach them to love nature
so that they will know wild flowers and fruit

but growing up came too quickly
with the government
calling me up to the defence force,
where a rifle was pressed into my hands
and I was sent to dangerous places

where the enemy did bring destruction about
with AK-47's,
RPG-7 rocket grenades
and landmines,
did aim at me to kill

and my children were rebellious,
did shoot at the weavers in the garden,
did break the forks of their bicycles
by driving up and down sidewalks,

did play rugby at the sought after school
in the best teams,
but did right there
buy drugs from the drug-peddlers,
did leave the school at times

and the world did change as if it was losing its head,

did become much worse than the previous fairy tales
with black robbers that are robbing, torturing,
raping and murdering everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Fairy Tales [2]

How great were the intentions
of the writers of children's stories at times
where in their storytelling of the struggle
between light and darkness
righteousness does always win

and the people in Hansen and Gretchen,
little red riding hood
and even Cinderella at the end
are happy to eternity,
but in reality

there rages a struggle
where demons do try to measure power with God,
where the monster, the ogre, the fiend,
the witch, the dragon and the wolf
do never forget their thirst for blood

where there are children that grow up on the street,
without having a own home
where they can lie their heads down
with food that are prepared tasty

and sometimes there are people
that does murder others cruelly,
that does rape women and children,
rob just whatever they can find
and do constantly return with more envoys from hell,

of this world's dreadfulness there is seldom written
and children do believe that soldiers, the police are heroes,
are not truly aware of the blood on their hands.

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Gert Strydom

Fairy-Tale Of The Ground Of My Fathers (Which Is No Fairy-Tale)

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

In dark South Africa many farms came into existence,
and my ancestor chose one single farm for him
while the natives did plunder, rob and kill,
did labour for many years and the harvests did amaze
while the natives danced around their fires,
did murder some of my ancestors at Blaaukrans.
The Lord God did witness everything silently
and now for dispossession the government sees its chance
where commercial farmers do feed the whole country
and hordes do lie and lurk in the darkness,
where thousands want to come and take everything,
while powerful politicians command armies in secret,
want to bring famine and ineptness,
do still sing their enchanting songs of murder and killing,
already have stripped me of an occupation and of my cars
and do twist and distort the truth with their lies.

[Reference: "Sprokie van die spikkelkoei" (Tale of the speckled cow) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Fairy-Tales

Long ago there was an older brother
to whom the younger brother did listen,
an uncle that could buy gifts
but life did take its wide turns
now slyly gossip and whispering is done at the church
with young children looking scared at me.

At a time I did love a girl
and she did love me back
but decades lie in between
with years of getting hurt.

At a time I was somewhat wealthy,
did laugh at life
and now a church does try to punish me
where years needlessly I am waiting to find a work

where people and a country does make my career undone,
where others do rob my cars one after the other
and no one can promise me the sun moon and stars,
where constantly I am told not to become bitter

and now I do write poems full of fables,
or fairy-princesses and knights,
others that do tell the sore truth
and unfortunately this poem is no fairy-tale.

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Gert Strydom

Fake

Today I float through the sky
falling right through
to the ground with wind in my eye
tumbling down the dark blue hue

and while the wind sings
its own melody
without any wings
the earth rushes nearer to me

until I draw the string
and the parachute opens slamming
and like on a seesaw I swing
with the sun warming

my whole body, the earth rushing
nearer embracing, just before the landing.

Gert Strydom

Falling In Sin (Cavatina)

After rebelling, against the Creator,
falling in sin,
Lucifer and his evil companions
did enter in
our world to devastate and destroy;
from the begin
their deception brought only death and pain,
and to this day like this it does remain.

Gert Strydom

Falling Into Oblivion

We were only eighteen
and just matriculated
when the call up papers came
and we went to the army
by troop train.

The die was cast
and our lives
changed all to fast
from that first military train ride.

We were paid very little
and trained at basic camp
and trained again
and sent to war.

Some of us died
and some survived
and was changed
by what happened there,
but today
that time and place
and all of that
are falling into oblivion
as if the sacrifices made
was all in vain.

Gert Strydom

False Bay (Collins Sestet)

(after Matthew Arnold)

Tonight over the sea there are small lights,
Cape Town against Table Mountain lying bright
where it is flat against the evening sky
and in the distance a liner passes by
while the surging spray breaks over False Bay,
forevermore on Africa waves toss and play.

The stream of life did into the sea go
with joy, grace and hope in its ebb and flow
but debris, broken pieces are washed ashore
with pollution caught in the breaking roar
while the surging spray breaks over False Bay,
forevermore on Africa waves toss and play.

Stars sparkle and the light wind furls through your hair
while on the beach we are the only pair
and you swear to be true eternally,
a bright beacon in the darkness we see
while the surging spray breaks over False Bay,
forevermore on Africa waves toss and play.

[Reference: "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold.]

Gert Strydom

False Security

I remember the party as small children we had
where my brother and I were like chinamen clad
playing ring a ring a rosy with boys and girls
and how in long dresses they made many twirls

how Melanie did play hopscotch with me
and afterwards in the hillocks we roamed free,
were cops and robbers, cowboys and crooks
played hideaway in the crannies and nooks

but at twilight it was time to go
and back to home my brother walked quite slowly
until we went through the little reed covered spring
and with the wind whispering it got exciting

when he jelled in alarm as I bolted off to home
as if a ghost did there ominously roam.

Gert Strydom

Fancy's Knell (Parody)

(with apologies to A.E. Housman)

When sailors were home from the harbour
every Thom, Dick and Harry
a man would call the friend in his favour
and both would send for thee.
And in little animal like prances
across the meadow no one could wait
to jive with envious glances
whenever you played for Harry and his mate.

Tom, Dick and Harry had frolicking little pleasures
and with ladies content they were
to visit them without proper measures
even the old to dare
and you so intensely playing
that every second woman would weep
while the light of youth was decaying
and with no one you would sleep.

No one took your fancy,
not even glamorous girls with skins in tan,
not even big bosomed Nancy
or slender little Fan;
and to whatever girl would lift her glances
you stayed totally mute,
while everybody at the dances
were humming with your flute.

Your days as a man between the women was numbered
and you did not meet anyone at the surf
and nowhere between them slumbered
even in smooth green miles of turf,
even in grass and clover
you like the sun at night would fade
wishing to get a conversation over
to hide in the lofty shade.

While women on you advances

you lift your flute to play:
come ladies learn the dances
and let you all be away.
Tomorrow you will be witty
and away you will be
pretty and dirty
but it will not be from me.

[Reference: XLI Fancy's knell by A.E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

Far Away

I am jealous on the friends,
colleagues and children
that is daily with you
and even your two dogs
that holds you company
in the afternoons and evenings.

I am jealous on the beach
where in summer
you lay and tan
and on the bed
where both your sheets
have got you tightly against them.

It is quite a thing
to be without money
and more than a thousand kilometre away
and to love.

Gert Strydom

Far Away 2 (Sonnet)

Far away in the hinterland
deep past the jungle of a African forest,
past the desert's red-brown sand
there are places where the animals rest

that is untouched uncharted unseen,
where no human being has ever been
where life goes on, as it was on an ancient plain
where since the first aeons nature does remain

as it came to be, where all living things roam free
from the grasp, from the hands of humanity
and yet in boardrooms, in secret societies people plot
to invade that property which no one has got

while they cause wars to rage on and on
until all people adjacent to it is forever gone.

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Gert Strydom

Far Away In The Blue (Triolet)

As far away as the blue
where the sun touches the hillocks
lies the things that was once true,
as far away as the blue
lays memories of me and you,
where things are like they had been, like the rocks,
as far away as the blue
where the sun touches the hillocks.

Gert Strydom

Far In The Distance A Church Bell Rings

Far in the distance a church bell rings
while the early Sunday morning is lingering
and the moments between you and me stretch out
with the bliss that no words do know
when you cover my body and face with kisses
and the world fades away, stops for moments
even the thoughts that constantly remain in the mind
when we know the depth of true love
when you are fragile, brittle
and far past wonderful.

Gert Strydom

Far More Pretty Than The Flowers Hanging On The Branches

Far more pretty than the flowers hanging on the branches,
more glamorous than the sun in the blue sky,
much closer than the birds in their flight
you come into my life by your own will,

you bring comfort to the daily longing
and constantly return from work.

Far more pretty than the flowers hanging on the branches,
more glamorous than the sun in the blue sky,

the depth of our love sometimes scares me;
for getting hurt these feelings are sometimes renowned
but our love makes my humanity lustrous
and constantly you are
far more pretty than the flowers hanging on the branches,
more glamorous than the sun in the blue sky.

Gert Strydom

Far Out In The Wilderness (Terzanelle)

Far out in the wilderness
I have come upon a thrush
far from its nest, singing in happiness

where knee high grass brush,
where grass is bristling
I have come upon a thrush

While some weeds do sting
where it with joy does sing
where grass is bristling

in a sound that is sweet and clearly does ring
with a blessing that is serene and profound
where it with joy does sing

in the most beautiful sound
as if it's praising the creator
with a blessing that is serene and profound

I heard the little great orator
far out in the wilderness
as if it's praising the creator
far from its nest, singing in happiness.

Gert Strydom

Far Over The City

Far over the city I saw the lightning bolt flashing,
instantaneous energy that remains on the inner eye
before the branching of it was suddenly withering
where it disappeared from the dark night sky

and after that thunderclap silence reigned
in the deserted streets, as if everything living was lost
as if the storm had it's forming resigned
until another blazing bolt was tossed.

Gert Strydom

Far Past Forgetting (Free Verse Sonnet)

Far past forgetting there is a land
where the rock rabbits wait at their observation posts,
where you can find the tracks of duiker on the sand
and hear a babbler laugh high up in a tree
and when in the dark nigh the moon hangs high
you can hear the crying of the jackals
and the whole world is silver-white
with the eyes of a owl gleaming golden
when the warthog do destroy the cornfield,
while the guinea fowl and pheasants do walk and scrub everywhere,
then there is a rat's frightened cry
while the baboons go and steal peaches in a troop
but now all that is left is the memories of my childhood days,
of days under the sun with the sky bluer than the bluest hue.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Far Too Little I Know

I

Far too little I know about the things that lie between us,
I see the sea drawing back and rushing in,
I know too little to tell you about my love,
see your tracks disappearing over a sand dune.

I know too little to talk about a secret,
how one day can be so very special,
filled with life changing meaning,
about the things that I read in your eyes

but that that you really love me,
I know before the sea wipes our tracks away
when I kiss you and get you giggling,
while we give new steps into life

when you became the meaning in my small universe;
if you were the light falling through the window on me.

II

If you were the light falling through the window on me,
a star shining at night against the sky,
I would have been able to admire you, in days without end
but now thunder flashes down

whiter than daylight into my life
becoming part of my life,
to again jump to somewhere else
as if single moments are everything

and far too short was the time that you could stay,
with almost endless cheerfulness that you could bring
in this tough world as part of me,
where my heart could sing songs of joy

and far too little time I had invested in you,
how should I have known that I would make an oath with you?

III

How should I have know that I would make a oath with you
before I met you,
have a concept of such intimate feelings,
as with which you are part of my whole world?

How must I have know the meaning
of faith, love and hope
and about professing of true love
before our lives started together

on ways that I could not expect
and could learn to love
past events, years and times reaching to maybe,
that you are part of everything in me?

I want to love you as in days long past,
in the winter of my life.

IV

In the winter of my life
when all the trees around me stand skeleton,
with stripped branches shivering in the wind,
with sometimes a thunder bashing down

I sometimes remember the look in your sea-green eyes
where colours so secretly come together,
even when my body bend like branches, bended by age
as if in my thoughts they are looking forever at me,

it's as if a new spring just have got to come,
as if your arms surround my neck,
with you flowering anew
as a angel of light

it's sometimes as is you are with me,
when the morning starts with its first rays.

V

When the morning starts with its first rays,
with the sky changing from twilight grey to blue,
hang with the moon still hanging white
I am caught like a lizard

that prays to the sun,
where it's rising white hot,
where I sit before your photograph
that shows every bit of your beauty,

but the nights and months past
while every day you look back
from that photograph
and I wonder if you still do love me?

and I think certainly, you are just as pretty,
when the sun throws its last rays over the trees.

VI

When the sun throws its last rays over the trees,
drawing shadows out long
before it reaches out
with long orange red rays

and the streetlights suddenly are awakening
give eyes to poles, becoming orange yellow
then I know
that you are somewhere else and just as pretty,

that you are laughing somewhere else,
caring after your children, doing your duties,
stretching yourself out for the night,
after kissing your children goodnight

and I am really longing while I am waiting,
I miss the way that you laugh in pleasure.

VII

I miss the way that you laugh in pleasure,
how you cry for a beautiful movie,
even expecting something good out of poor things,
how on a dark rainy night you shelter against me,

the way that you look at me,
the feelings that you bring to me,
as if you're green eyes shines like the sea,
with every word going into my depths

but time takes an own road
and destiny is without mercy,
where at a time we both had to go different directions
and still try to jump over horizons with words

and maybe I have to court you again anew,
far too little I know about the things that lie between us.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Little We Know (Enclosed Triplets) (In Answer To John Keats)

I

Not all kinds of things can be explained
by mere science or by some philosophy
and so the essence of life has remained

without its knowledge ever been gained
a very great kind of strange mystery
in that it does exist unrestrained,

when couples from pleasure have not abstained,
as in love some small cells brings a child to be
while after death life cannot be maintained

or knowledge of its wellspring be retained
while its source seems divine, something Godly;
not all kinds of things can be explained.

II

While some mysteries still has a haven
in their own undisturbed happenings
while human science still measures uneven;

if texture, colour and waves in heaven
of a rainbow is in the knowledge of things
the impact, the magic of it is not given,

even when men are despotic or craven,
on faith like butterflies, angels have wings,
as does remain the lore of the raven,

even the devil has hoofs that are cloven,
some stories have got some imaginings
while some mysteries still has a haven.

III

People might think I am on the loony side
but not all discoveries have been made
and to real faith some powers remain wide,

a man may have a tender hearted bride
as true love's mysteries do not just fade
while all their guests do them well wishes bide,

when hidden facts appear from where they hide,
new kinds of things may appear from the shade,
with knowledge man wants to rule and divide,

in life by limited resources we decide
the way of things and do others persuade
and to real faith some powers remain wide.

IV

Yet still far too little we do know
even of ourselves and of our earth,
about the way that everything does go,

we experience the sun's early glow
while we learn and adapt from our very birth
are caught by the wonder of drops of snow,

yearn for something more beyond the shadow,
for a Supreme Being that knows our true worth
in life's daily continuous ebb and flow

and in rebellion we suffer blow by blow,
while to existence there is no rebirth,
yet still far too little we do know.

[Reference: 'Lamia' by John Keats.]

Gert Strydom

Far Too Long (Villanelle)

Although I had been hurt severely by love,
far too long I had been searching for you.
Far too long through this world I did rove,

but never did I want to remove
even a single moment even if we did argue.
Although I had been hurt severely by love,

now our love, our commitment does prove
its own value even if painful things you do.
Far too long through this world I did rove,

even if I sometimes do disapprove
still together we do continue.
although I had been hurt severely by love,

you do remain the one, who fits my life like a glove,
with whom happiness I want to pursue.
Far too long through this world I did rove,

before together we did move
and when I met you all of my wildest dreams came true,
although I had been hurt severely by love;
far too long through this world I did rove...

Gert Strydom

Far Too Long I Have Wandered In The Darkness

Far too long I have wandered in the darkness
were blinded against Your cobalt-blue sky
and now a promise radiates out of the spring,
suddenly all of life is coming back.

Oh Lord, let I become holy in You
and forgive all of the mistakes of my youth
while Your healing pours down with the rain,
and free me from each iniquity,
make Your decrees my greatest joy.

Lord, make Your decrees my greatest joy,
before the first leaves of my life fall,
help me to live again, to be happy
even when the worst thunderbolts fall all around me,
help me to only notice Your love
to find refreshment, pure happiness,
teach me to constantly faithfully serve You,
to live with the trust of a child
before the years of old age do devour me.

Bring Your living rain to my existence
before the years of old age are able to devour me,
change the destroying stormy wind,
lead me to a companion, to the one,
who can understand me, the one who can bring happiness,
help me to find my way again,
and my poems to honour You,
help me before I die from discontent,
Lord, take notice of my life that is wandering.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Lovely You Are (Strambotto Siciliano)

Far too lovely you are, in mortality
bound to life, as woman in the fullest sense,
yet under the burden of death's finality,
still love blooms with a power that is intense
even when in its fullest strength mere destiny
makes human effort to some incompetence,
in this late summer of our lives we are free
from every dark stark lifeless consequence.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Aspens Are Now Felled (Cavatina)

(after William Cowper and Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Far too many aspens are now felled,
gone is the shade
while the wind blows and its searching in vain
the colonnade
where it once played its own happy song;
it is man made
the destruction that came, the great havoc
that down many rows of great trees did knock.

[References: "The Poplar-Field" by William Cowper and "Binsey Poplars" by Gerard Manley Hopkins.]

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Enemies Were Confined (Catena Rondo)

Far too many enemies were confined in
battle tanks, armoured cars shot out
and in the roar I could not hear myself shout;
far too many enemies were confined in

battle tanks, armoured cars shot out,
far too many enemies were confined in
the endless din, in walls of steel and tin;
battle tanks, armoured cars shot out.

Far too many enemies were confined in
battle tanks, armoured cars shot out
and in the roar I could not hear myself shout;
far too many enemies were confined in.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Midnights

Far too many midnights I have know
that I have been on my own
and from the time that you have gone,
I have been the lonely one.

Yet there is some security in this
although this kind of life is without bliss,
and at times I crave for you,
for something to brake the emptiness.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Places Are Now Bereft (Roundelay)

Far too many places are now bereft
of marches and streams, that was not left;
robbed of their wilderness, even the hills,
where man constructs and builds as he wills.

Iron electric pylons like naked scarecrows
are almost everywhere that one goes
with smoke, pollutants and technology's ills;
where man constructs and builds as he wills.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Tears

Far too many tears
were shed,
fell in the solitary years
as if they had been bled.

Loneliness encompassed me
and I knew that from loving you
I would never be free
and was wondering if my feelings were being true,

while even every sunny day
was turned into being blue,
as if my life had been swept away
by a stormy tide that was bursting through

while from me you were gone
and in life I only soldiered on.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Times

(For R)

Far too many times you tried to take suicide,
had drawn our bedroom's curtains close, tried to hide
and I rushed with you to the hospital time and again
but about your illness, in me you did not want to confide.

Eventually you caused me to loose my job,
brought my life to a full-stop,
even tried to have me innocently arrested
on the day that you left to your illicit lover, the cop.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Times [2]

(after Christina Rossetti)

in great love I gave my heart to you
and the next thing that you did do
was to find it and me unworthy
while to you throughout I was true

(oh my dear, oh my dear)

and yet in your eyes I was weak,
even my verses and way that I do speak
and with indifferent eyes you looked at me
while integrity and your love I did seek,

(oh my dear, in my returned heart was fear)

that you do not really me understand,
that powerless I do constantly before you stand
and I wondered what you do want me to be
while my life, my character you scanned

(just the low pitch, not my words you did hear)

and too many a time you broke my heart,
even told me to leave that you do want to part
as if continually you wanted to be from me free
and I did set myself on my poetry, on my kind of art,

(and I wondered if I did get your message clear)

but then I took my heart to my Lord God to scan
to measure me in my integrity and as and as a man
and all my possibilities he did see
even gave me to my words a design and a great plan

(oh my God, oh my Lord you are constantly near)

while in some poems of your love and power I do sing
and with your help I can do almost anything

(even in my iniquity you do find me worthy)
and all that I am and the little that I have I do bring.

[Reference: "Twice" by Christina Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

Far Too Many Times I Have Baked In Hot Armour (Fay Slimm Form)

Too many times I have baked hot in
armour,
drove in long army convoys on the way
to hell,
had to attend in-training as a game,
before
war erupted deadly into slaughter,
where faces
of citizens numb in shock, innocent
looked,
at how war destroys everything, without
arms or
a leg, while they lived on through it
in pain,
without hope, still trying hard to exist
planting
maize, chasing scared bucks to a kraal while we
burst through,
at speed, firing at fleeing enemy
chasing,
in hot-pursuit operations of just
killing.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Much I Do Miss You

Far too much I miss you and far too much
is the longing
as if my whole life and everything
do depend upon you.
How I am and what I can become
looses importance
when you are away and loneliness does come
and with your love I am still astounded.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Much In Love I Was With Her (Sonnet Corona / Crown Of Sonnets)

(for A)

I

Far too much in love I was with her
but probably she did not really love me,
while she became involved with another,
and I became her liability.

Crying I could hardly see
and although the parting was shattering
from her fighting rages I was finally free
and being alone at times was overwhelming

the parting is much better still
as she tried to stain my integrity
and at times did not have goodwill,
tried to hide from any responsibility,

destiny knew better about the things that ought to be,
my love, like an illness almost destroyed me.

II

My love, like an illness almost destroyed me
and on the balcony of the fifteenth floor
I was robbed from sense and sensibility
wavering to jump and land in a bundle of gore

but something spoke to my heart spoke to my soul
and I knew that all fair reasoning had left me
turned me into a animal, somewhat like a ghoul
and immediately I saw this as inadequacy

dealing with the situation of love lost
and step away from the beyond
spared myself the ultimate cost

of going on in death's bond:

seeing that you like a devil besieged me,
I stepped away and from you I was free.

III

I stepped away and from you I was free,
but I still wonder how you could take
gifts, flowers and poems from me
and in my back could at times rake

your nails and with subtlety
sometimes look me in the eye,
while sleeping around and being dirty
while slowly causing our love to die?

Was it the looks that your beauty had drawn?
that made you slip and ride the tide
or was their promise in each new dawn,
until truth rocked me like a landslide:

while I thought that our love was strong,
what you did to me was terribly wrong.

IV

What you did to me was terribly wrong
giving pain, more pain and joy and pain
as you carried on behind my back, went along,
but what did you really gain?

I wonder why you still at times call me
to tell me that you miss little things
and act sometimes sincerely
as if there are no endings or beginnings

and this was not really my making
and I have pain while you still laugh in glee
as you had made your choices in this undertaking,

destiny had forced me along, as things are to be;

like the withering, as time disposes
the dark red bunches of roses.

V

The dark red bunches of roses
grow among thorn upon thorn
and so it's with women clad in sheer hoses
and a gentle, humble one is still to be born.

Even if for love you do the right deed
it is sometimes filled with a canker,
even if to every caution you do heed
when you do further proceed.

Venus has led many men to disaster
into servant, follower
has stripped the good master
from all his power:

as witnessed by the scars that I bear,
from services to one not true but fair.

VI

From services to one not true but fair
at times sudden disaster sprouted,
as she undressed, let down her long hair
and in intimacy screamed and shouted.

It is a thing to be loved
but then quite another
to from a heart be removed
and then when I truly loved her

even the hairs on her arms did rise
when I reached out to embrace
my loving her was not wise

as she acted at times in disgrace

and now that time speeds faster than it did before,
I wish to have half my life back once more.

VII

I wish to have half my life back once more,
to live daily to what destiny brings
and now I do deplore
not having love's blessings

and it was painful when I went on my way,
to be deceived as she acted secretly
and was interested to kiss and play
with a friend very intimately

but life goes on with seasons and years,
and it brings joys, heartaches, pleasure and pain,
sometimes hours, days and months of tears
but with her I never want a relationship again

and to my death we will never again be together;
far too much in love I was with her

Gert Strydom

Far Too Often Into My Dreams You Have Dwelled (Requiescat)

Too often in my dreams you have dwelled,
but tonight, in the bright silver moonlight
from me I want you to be expelled,
although I do miss you, I pray tonight

while the red sun is dying in the west
that peace and tranquillity will be yours,
in all love I am asking that you rest
in this world, in all of the darkest hours

and when our God a His time comes again
that He will raise you in righteousness,
the clouds are milling and I can smell rain
but there is just silence and darkness

while the hours pass and tiredness finds me,
in sleep there is some kind of sanctuary.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly Each Yesterday Fades (Cavatina Sequence)

(after William Shakespeare)

Far too quickly each yesterday fades,
ephemeral
each new tomorrow sweeps past day to day;
a funeral
of new beginnings in recorded time,
in general
like a shadow following waning light,
becoming part of the eventual night.

All life is at the whim of destiny,
were the dice falls
life and death begins and ends as it wills;
men large and small
are actors on a universal stage,
beyond recall
are every happy, sad yesterday
while continually on and on we play.

Oblivion swallows all of our old tales,
as to the rim
the candle of every single life
goes very dim
while nothing is as it had been before,
at mere chance's whim
nothing of significance is left
and of all our substance we are bereft.

[Reference: 'Tomorrow and tomorrow' Macbeth, Act V, Scene 5 by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly Life Passes By (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

while on this world am I
and to this very day I do not know
to what end time does constantly fly.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly Relationships Are Over (Stave Stanza Sestets)

Far too quickly relationships are over,
and people move on to the next lover,
do not stick with the one, whom they adore,
want the quick-fix, to find something more,
think that in maturity they are growing
they do not care where their lives are going

In my own past, time moved much too fast,
and I want a relationship that will last
had enough turbulence for a lifetime
and now that I am passing my own prime
in some of my friends the years are showing,
they do not care where their lives are going.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly The Days Do Pass (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

My love my darling, is pure and true
and I want to dedicate my life to you
far too quickly the days do pass,
today and tomorrow is not as yesterday was,
insignificant is the things we do
but for our love I do not follow a horoscope
but do leave it in God's hand with great hope
while the challenges of destiny I do pursue
and I want to dedicate my life to you.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly The Years Together Had Gone (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

Far too quickly the years together had gone
and now destiny had forced her to be alone.
She had loved her husband without constraint
but on this planet life was feeble and faint
and now she was left as the only one,
far too quickly the years together had gone

Far too quickly the years together had gone
and after death life still keeps moving on
but the memories of her husband stayed true
while the pain somehow she could subdue
but some days felt extremely hard like stone,
far too quickly the years together had gone.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Quickly Time Rushes On (Persian /Rubiyat Quatrain)

Far too quickly time rushes on
and the happy days of youth are gone
and the company of your love does disappear
and you are the only lonely one

Gert Strydom

Far Too Transitory Daily Life Is (Cavatina)

Far too transitory daily life is,
in nothingness
we try to find some kind of real meaning;
with willingness
to change, to love and then to really live;
in lastingness
we try to outwit even oblivion
but our own lives do not go on and on.

Gert Strydom

Far Too Vulnerable In The Dark Night

I who with my own strong defences
did fall in love with you,
was far too vulnerable in the dark night
when you were with me
and every morning, every new day
suddenly did happen
while we were experiencing something much deeper
and love was joining us both to each other.

Gert Strydom

Farewell Conversation

To you I tried to write a long poem
but did become deeper engaged in sadness
and later did draw lines through the words,
and I did cry and wrote no verses to you
as to me it was a task that I could not do.
To you I tried to write a long poem

but you did not want to be in love with me
and I am only blinded by the great pain
and now nothing really does matter.
but to you I tried to write a long poem.

Gert Strydom

Farm-Boy (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Bernard Odendaal)

At the stream next to the marsh weavers fly up and down,
frolic the morning yellow and red and twitter-sing,
my dog keeps running up and down in the grass-veldt,
every broken-winged plover remains an unreachable thing
and long-tailed widow birds slap their wings where they hang,
the beautiful new pellet air rifle is only for hunting pheasants
where in the stream I catch breams and carps
on another glorious sunny hot day
lemon- and turtle-doves flutter down everywhere around me,
my catapult can cause any dove to drop out of the sky
and for every stone that sings away my heart hurts
but suddenly in the distance I hear the dull bang of a .22 rifle,
in the hillocks near to me there are baboons that scold,
in a while Eben, Lanz or Gardiël will tell me about that shot.

[Reference: "Jangroentjie" (Johnny-green) by Bernard Odendaal.]

Gert Strydom

Farmer's Market

Bundles of vestibules lay tables full,
anything from pumpkins
to green watermelons,
even milk are ladled out in buckets
as people while about in numbers,
biltong is weighed off
and even dogs are being sold.

Gert Strydom

Farming

In the harsh reality, of the fierceness of the land
the farmer walks over furrows of ploughed sand,
in the distance calves bellow, his eyes look at the blue,
if a rain cloud is appearing somewhere
but the sun scorches like an ach-enemy.

There are lumps of sand clinging together,
his crops are spread over a distance
when a light breeze only just touches the stubbles,
in the harsh reality.

This piece of ground, this farm has a strong bond with him,
he walks to a tractor with a flat tire,
see the sun growing faint in the west,
pray for rain, while he trusts in God
on the blessings from His almighty hand,
in the harsh reality.

Gert Strydom

Father

Even though You have lain
Your plans for me
and at times events happen
that I do not understand,
Father I ask thee
to give the trust,
hope, faith and love
to my heart
to be faithful to Thee
and to love others unconditionally.

Gert Strydom

Father I Know That My Life

Father I know that my life
is measured out by Thee
and Thy will holds
the very best for me.

Yet I chase after greatness
and try to be a man
of integrity
and in every thing that I do
I am set to please Thee.

Father teach me
to be more like Thee
and to love without question
in sincerity.

Gert Strydom

Fatherland

I am no longer
from you,
because you have
discarded me.

When I was a boy
you forced me,
to go to war.

I knew blood, sweat and tears
and you killed
my very soul.

Fatherland, still I could not
cut myself from you
and did your bidding,
without calculating the cost.

Now that I am a man,
I am lost
and you do not
see me as your own.

Foreigners are closer
to your heart
than I will ever be
and my brothers,
call other countries
their own.

When will you treat me
with dignity and merit
and when,
will you set me free?

When will you
stop crucifying me
and let me have,
a life of my own?

Gert Strydom

Fatherland [2]

(after Mongane Wally Serote)

At a time I did call you fatherland
and there are other countries
from where my ancestors came
that does not even know me
or that I do exist
and like onto a father
I have been bound to you by birth
with no choice of where to see the first light

but as I had no choice to be born in you
my life, career, language and history
came from you and is part of you
and you do throb in my heartbeat.

You did force me into military service
and I was forced to defend your borders
and as a eighteen year old boy
was forced into situations and places
where mere boys were destroyed
and did fall down from living
into a suffering death
or had been burned alive
after the explosion of projectiles
and I have offered my very soul
to keep you safe and sound,
but what were you doing to me, fatherland?

Fatherland, you did chase away
my brothers and sisters
and other far-away countries
they now call home

and although I am well-educated and experienced
you have banished me from work
and you have reserved jobs
for your other children
whom you do regard with more love than me

and you do treat me
as if I do not have a right to make a living.

The criminals in you frighten me, fatherland.
Corrupt officials make me despondent
and I have been robbed of two cars
and see other people begging
on the corners of the streets
with boards tied around their necks

and some of my brothers have drank poison,
have hung themselves up in trees
in the very town where I do live
and I have become
but a throw-away child of you
and at a time you saw me
as your own
but now you have got contempt for me

and others from foreign countries
are treated by you as people
and still I do exist
as a child born onto your very earth.

[Referece: "Alexandra" by Mongane Wally Serote.]

Gert Strydom

Faust

"In the past twenty-four years my magical power has grown while I had researched, delved into the depths of the unknown what some people call the occult has been giving power to me but now here on this last day I am on my own.

With my Moses-staff full of its own magic
I am guarded against lightning, witchery and every trick
but could not find something to hold time in check
and from the movement of time inadequate is even this stick

but today in just a short time my time will be running out
and even where to my cause I have been devout
an end will come to me when the clock strikes at midnight.
You must simply help me! " He suddenly does shout.

Impatiently he walks, stops and again moves along.
I look at him and he is young and strong,
seems full of knowledge, knows about things that are going on.
He says softly to me: "I do for freedom long..."

And I the religious man, not a monk, but one who believe in the power of Christ
he on this last day has invited as an honoured guest and on my presence he did
insist
to bring him back to the one true Lord God and to his power of protection
where on this very day he Faust, is the protagonist.

He looks at me with eyes ice cold that can chill a man right to the bone,
continues his speech: "You my friend are the one
who has to help me, my knowledge (everything) will be worthless
and all that I have done will in a single moment be undone."

I do protest. "My learned doctor, by this time you do surely know
that only the Lord God this power you need can bestow
but you will have to turn your life around as it is on very troubling ground"
and suddenly a light, maybe a recollection does in his eyes glow.

"What do you ask from me? Speak frankly, " he does say.
"That Jesus Christ is the omnipotent Lord God and He is the only way.
You will have to confess and ask forgiveness for every iniquity.

You will have to give your whole life to him now and forever on every day."

Faust coughs as if he has swallowed something and cannot get rid of it.

In anger does slam his fist in his hand and do again do it hit.

"You do not understand. You are asking me to forsake and loose everything...

This power and knowledge I have built up bit by painful bit."

"I, Faust, have bargained with Lucifer, with that highest Devil

to grant me power and unknown skill to do whatever I will

and he granted me twenty-four years which will run out at midnight."

The thought of it lets him look somewhat white and almost ill.

Together we have a feast at the fireplace where he boasts about sin,

where his two midnight-black female cats do join in

and somehow he has got an idea of how to take the prince of darkness on something that by himself will make him, Faust to win.

He says: 'this is Melisandra and the other one is Nekrosa, who do me aid, "

he lifts his Moses-staff and in a moment it flashes and changes are made.

Astoundingly the cats do become two lovely, pretty, witty smiling women.

They have raven black hair, green eyes and do want me to persuade

but there is nothing that I can do and I do feel at danger here in this room,

as if it has become a lightening-rod for some unknown kind of doom

and somehow they do understand that I myself cannot really help them

while both do cling to a piece of jewellery, which they say, is a magic heirloom.

Faust rises and walks to the middle of the room and draws on the floor with chalk

a huge pentagram with a circle around it and to find candles away he does walk.

A black candle is placed in each corner and a large one in the middle,

flicking his fingers they are lit before he does strange things talk.

In his hand is opened a worn down book with Solomon's seal on it

and also the curse of Asreal, which does it, somehow fit

when he starts muttering a magic kind of formulary

and as a token do on both of his hands spit.

A portal in the middle of that pentagram circle begins to pulse and shine

with a very bright blue light that keeps brightening as if it's to somewhere divine.

Faust and the two women do all greet me and then everything does flash

and suddenly unexpected I am back in the comfort of the hermit cave that is

mine.

I know and sense that to God he could not and did not go
and to where Faust and his companions went no one do really know
while I wonder if he will ever change his strange ways to the cross
and wonder what he did on himself bestow?

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Gert Strydom

Female Spider

Her web gleams like the spokes of a bicycle,
she weaves her own pattern out of her soul
as a decagon that she keeps rolling out,
out of her inner silver shiny pivot
and in the wind lightly the wires tremble
until a insect of moth struggle therein
and she destroys it with her deadly jaws.

Gert Strydom

Field Of Maize

Maybe you do remember a field of maize
that stretches into the distance
where your father did take you by the hand
and at times did draw his fingers through your hair
where the memories do remain
in the thoughts of a child
from the cares of the world free
with hair blown into strings by the wind
but constantly you do live in a world of glass, steel and concrete
and forgotten are the days in the bright summer sun
but in our garden there is a flower
that looks like corn
where it comes out of the earth
and later does dazzle with amaryllis flowers.

Gert Strydom

Filemon

Early in the morning
before the first coffee cups are set
and the first brew is made
Filemon arrives.

At a time I see him
riding a big black bicycle
and how he struggles
to get all the parcels
to the post office.

Later he drives a blue-grey station wagon
from which he carries a load of parcels
and never there's a difference of a cent
on the money that he banks
and even when he's doing his work
to the best of his ability,
a decision is made
that he must stay a messenger
and have to drive people and parcels around.

Gert Strydom

Fill Me With The Strength To Resist (English Sonnet)

My Lord, do protect me against those
who do treat me without any humanity,
that in automation dragoons me to oppose
the very things that do set all humans free,

that wants to mill me into only a small thing
that is turning as another cog in the machine,
where life in its inhumanity do sting and sting
and do chop off all resistance like a guillotine

where each human heart and soul has love as its goal,
while poetic creativity do only the absolute truth see
while You are the one that do make me again whole
to act, walk and talk in all situations in human dignity

while a regime's automation do me faceless make,
do my life, my career and existence away take.

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Gert Strydom

Finding God

In different places
in the city the Holy Ghost
is being sold and people clap hands
and some are pushed
down on the ground and sing songs
over and over again
and others sell Him
with great respect and all with sincerity.

Somehow I just want to be
in a field, at a open space,
or on a hill,
or next to the ocean
and experience the presence
of the Lord.

Gert Strydom

Finding God In A Relationship

By experience it is learned God do exist,
that He is more than mere words in a holy book
and although some people may insist
that He is in reality not there,
does not exist anywhere,
by each thing we did undertook,
in a relationship it becomes clear
that He is truly near
listening in sympathy,
setting the way to be free
from the labyrinth that we weave,
when we find reality to what we do believe.

Gert Strydom

Finding Your God

After your father's demise
you didn't have a god
but you had to find one
or you're writing of children's stories
in the nether world of Toeka
(a place far away and long gone)
would come undone.

So we went to caves
to view Bushmen paintings
drove through Namaqualand
visiting quiver trees
to get a pincushion-type quiver
to fit your hunting arrows in
with which you wanted to hunt your god down
past Gifberg with its white poisonous daisies

right through the cruel sea
where only here and there
some clumps of hardy trees
grows defiantly against the Namib Desert
and carrying on through a raging sandstorm
with its suffocating warm wind

and you thought that we
would surely find him at God's finger
near Asab, where you believed
supernatural powers prevail
and the pillar of rock
with the narrow neck
pointing up into the heavens
just looked like erosion to me.

Further on near the Kuiseb River
you believed the canyon to be ablaze
as if your god was walking there
but still he was nowhere

and at Okaukuejo we went to the magic forest

of Moringa ovalifolia trees
and you were certain that now
we were drawing near
as these trees looked
as if they were flung out of paradise
landing upside down
where they were still growing

and at the Etosha pan
we saw a large herd of Oryx
drinking water
and couldn't understand
how they lived in the desert
and you were sure
that your god
was sustaining them somehow
but still no other signs
of your god was seen

and we drove back to the Kalahari desert
where near the Orange river
we found a stretch of white sand
about nine kilometres long
right there in the normal red desert

and I went up a dune at the southern face
and while I walked
it made a strange sound
and it roared when I sailed down
and you were awe struck
at the voice of your god

and in the desert
with the roaring sand
you heard his voice
when you walked there

and I had to lock it
in preserved-fruit bottles
with lids welded together
and a tiny hole drilled through
and filled one jar with that white sand

and when sealed air tight
it looked like a huge egg timer

but its singing roared
into a humming sound
and your were sure
that your god
was captured and found
and from now on
you could hear his voice
whenever you wanted to.

Gert Strydom

Fingers

I see your fingers
touching tenderly,
reaching out in love
and with great care

plucking at strings and chords
strumming with great skill
and sometimes setting fire
to a tune on your guitar

floating over the piano keys
touching here and there
like a butterfly drifting in the air

tapping keys on the computer keyboard
writing poetry, sometimes songs
singing them along

brushing strokes on a canvass or board
mixing colours to the exact hue
painting images from your head

spreading emotions from the depth of you
magically giving life
dancing along with a rhythm of their own.

Gert Strydom

Fire Or Ice

Some say the world will end
when the Lord comes
and earth is speeding that way
to find its last day.

Whether by flames from God
or in a ice age
as some scientists say
where the planet will weather away,

ultra religious man doesn't care
and choose suicide to go to paradise
with his finger
on the trigger of the missile
which might end it all
with a big bang.

[Explanation: Missile = nuclear \ biological\ chemical threat.]

Gert Strydom

Fire Trial

The university's classes close
because the hell of a mountain above Somerset West
is burning.

There's a alarm ringing without end
to warn everybody to get a beating thing,
while some flee and drive away to Somerset West.

Pine plantations on the slopes
have tongues of orange flames
spreading as if going through bushes of turpentine.

The fire brigade is too small
to fight alone against the fire
and to spray with wagons, just halfway up the mountain.

Male students are equipped with petrol driven saws,
loaded on tractors with trailers and four track vehicles
that crawls up the slopes.

Everywhere there are trees falling
and are sawn down and dragged away,
before they can tumble down burning.

While a helicopter in the air
watches every thing
and everybody pray
for the wind to die down.

It's a terrible thing to see fire jump
from branch to branch, tree to tree
and spread from east to west.

To see it become
like a big orange see of flames,
that crackling devours every thing that it touches.

It is much better when the last flames are dead
and you come half scorched and utterly tired

down from the mountain
and know that you helped to stop the fire.

[Reference: Helderberg mountain.]

Gert Strydom

First Blossoms

So unexpectedly the beauty caught me,
the first blossoms suddenly bursting out snow white,
covering the whole almond tree
and a week ago the branches were still stripped,
with the winter wind cutting through it.

Today I feel devoured by the winter wind,
I am tied by my powerlessness, blinded by destiny
and I am wondering when and where
I will find You secretly working in my life?

I find signs that a new summer is on its way,
I am astounded by nature
while the beauty comes suddenly
and for Your Godly working as a human I am stupid,

see in nature spring suddenly coming all around me,
Your flowers blooming in their cups,
everything around me is suddenly clean and fresh
and everything You regard as Your property.

Gert Strydom

First Love

Dawn is coming near
and you now live,
far away in a distant place.

Still there's something
of the magic left
and at times dreams
reach out to you,
as it was
when love was new
and had an own vitality.

At a time you were mine
and I were yours
and every thought
and every breath,
of that time
remains only in memory.

Gert Strydom

First Observation

Maybe your buoyant smile
first caught my eye,
made me linger for a while,
while other people walked by

while the wind tugged at the fringe of your skirt
you watched me with something like tenderness
with my dark red tie flapping against my shirt
and for a moment in your eyes there were kindness

I had seen you many times before, without really noticing you
as people passing each other on a holy day
at a church sometimes do
but on that day my eyes did stray

and before this the emptiness could have killed
but with you my whole day was filled.

Gert Strydom

First Rain

The past winter had come
with black ripe
and had turned the green grass,
even the flowers into dead,
yellow withered things

but now in this early spring,
rain was showering the earth
with thousands of kisses,

bringing back life
and the sweet smell
drifted up from the wet sand
as if something great
had come forth
out of the creator's hand

and later a rainbow
with brilliant colours
stretched from horizon to horizon
against the dark black clouds

while in the distance
lightning bolts were crashing down
one after another

and in my imagination
I could already see
tender shoots sprouting.

Gert Strydom

First Rendezvous (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Fanie Olivier)

My old blue motorbike roars up the hill
when I bring my heart and a pumpkin as presents,
where I am driving to you and have to stop at a traffic light.
My heart sings to you, princess, songs of praise,
the sun burns down and it's lovely summer weather,
I pass a farm and Impala Platinum,
the blue iron horse cuts through the traffic
and you, princess, are far past wonderful to me,
the summer-wind sings and buzzes and everything is touched by the sun,
while my heart, soul and spirit races with the motorbike
and the revolutions of the Honda CZ900F climb when it roars
where I, princess, also do arrive with Turkish Delight.
In my backpack is a poem that you say is a love poem
in which I tell you that I have been missing you my whole life.

[Reference: "eerste aand" (first evening) by Fanie Olivier.]

Gert Strydom

First Visitors To Adam And Eve

Christina thought that the lamb
and the dove
were sent to Adam and Eve
as preachers from God above
as tokens of His love
when they had to leave
the Garden of Eden
and was driven out
by angels with flaming swords

but I think sweet Eve had words
with the angels first and displaying
her well rounded behind
covered by deer skin
and looking so innocent
and yet luring
with her well rounded breasts
that the angels wondered what was sin
and where did truth and lie
mingle in?

Maybe a dog was the first
to find its master
after that great disaster
and wagging its tale
came running
as if nothing that humans did
made any difference
to the relationship
that it held with them.

Maybe beautiful Eve
saw a butterfly landing
on a flower near her
and then was touched
by its soft wings
caressing her, before it fluttered
away on the wind

and still I have to agree
that God held His hand over them
promising to send His Son
and the lamb and the dove
were only signs
of His everlasting love and grace
for the human race.

[Reference: Bird or Beast? By Christina Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

First Voyage

On the bobbing small boat
where wave after wave does wash over it
there is continual instability
where it is facing a stormy wind that makes it rock,
is almost rhythmically strong
and lightning bolts do bash down fiercely and unbounded wild
with swishing waves
followed by rain that falls so fiercely that people are coughing,
that the planks do tremble with every wave,
do almost snap while mauling waves do continually strike
with tons of water that continually smack
before the sail is raised
where the first sailors do face the wild ocean
and set their backs to the mainland.

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Gert Strydom

First(Free Verse Sonnet)

(After Anyte)

He is still in my first memories,
the man that folds me into his arms
who I do not want to let go
but with his death comes the mourning,
the going away that a child does not understand,
do not know how death and life does go on
as he is gone and had disappeared out of my life
where I stand at the open grave with a multitude.
He is still in my first memories,
the man who from instinct I did trust with everything
and he is missing did go into death
where I do only cling to mere moments of him
but darkness does come for everything that does exist
and empty my years go on without him.

[Reference:"Erato" by the Greek poetess Anyte 300 BC.]

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Gert Strydom

Fishing

They dropped the sails of their boats
near the shore of the Sea of Galilee
at early morning-light
and were heavy-eyed and tired
having worked in vain
all night long
and washed the nets
while the sun rose hot
in the blue cloudless sky.

From the distance a crowd
came nearer following
a holy man and listening to him
and he climbed into one of the boats,
asked Simon to sail
a little bit off shore
and sat teaching the people
from the boat.

The fishermen stopped working
and started listening
to the beautiful things that he said
and yet there he was still
just a man to them
and maybe a great prophet.

He instructed Simon
to sail into deep water
and to set the nets
for a catch.

Shaking his head
Simon explained that they
had worked all night long
without catching anything
but something about this holy man
made them obey.

When they brought the nets up

there were too many fish
for the nets to hold
and they beckoned their partners
in the other boat to help
and filled both boats
past their capacity

and suddenly Simon knew
that the Son of God
was sailing with him
and fell on his knees crying out:
'Go away from me, Lord;
I am a sinful man! '

And the fishermen were astounded
at the large catch that they had taken
and Jesus said that henceforth
they would be catching men
and they shored their boats,
leaving everything
to follow Him.

[Reference: Luke 5: 1-11.]

Gert Strydom

Fishing (Novelinee)

To sit next to the big river brings peace
throwing a rod over the tranquil way
in a kind of the heart's sheer release
into the same pool up to close of day.
To live a life of utter joy we must,
when the river catches the rays of morn
to experience nature until dusk,
to be there when the bright new day is born;
it's great to just catch time at dusk and dawn.

Gert Strydom

Fishing At Hartebeespoort Dam

It was at Hartebeespoort dam,
that I was fishing for Carp,
with maize bombs,
some dips and floaters
when I saw a man
put a small roasted chicken
on huge hooks
and casting a thick line in
using a reel and rod
suitable for sea fishing.

I must admit that he
had downed a six-pack or two
and he said
that he was trying to catch catfish
and I knew that some crickets,
earthworms or even normal bait would do

but he said that divers
checking the dam wall
had seen catfish the size
of great white sharks
and were scared of them
as they were very vicious fish
that usually kept to the depths

and I silently went on fishing,
changing bait, casting in
and caught a couple of blue kurper,
three decent carps
and a yellow-fish
that leapt out of the water
while it tried to escape.

I was totally amazed
when the angler
with the chicken on the huge hooks
got a bite, smacked the rod,
hooked something

that with a mighty force
started running with his line
and tried to pull him
rod and all
right into the depths
of that big dam
and a couple of men
had to hold him,
as they were struggling
against an enormous thing.

Gert Strydom

Fishing Boats

In the late afternoon
fishing boats come out of the waves
and like ministers
tiller men stand behind white pulpits.

Boats jump
over the last waves to the quay
and are drawn with cables
onto trailers,

before pickups and cars
drive into the parking lot
pulling motorboats.

There are red roman, snook
and cod
and fresh fish are everywhere in the boats.

Gert Strydom

Fishing For Carp

Fishing for carp, probably kurper or yellow-fish
with the woman leaving to prepare sausage
frying it near to the car on a Cadac frying pan,
(you know how it is)

with a six-pack cooling in the river
and then a sound, a movement making you shiver
when on your right a banded spitting cobra appears
and girly is ready with the food, ready to deliver

a tray full of goodies that she made with loving care
and you wish for her to be anywhere
but right there, but luckily she notices the snake
freezes behind you somewhere

and the ringhals till now with eyes brown and unaware
only half awake senses something testing the air
with forked tongue and rears up ready to strike or spit
and this is it, you have had your share of luck, but still you dare

and using the rod in your hands you slam with all your might,
you slam to your right
striking the spitting hissing thing and it is flying
and it misses sweetie by a mile and luckily it is the last sight

that you have of it, while she screams in fright
and curses the day, morning sun and night
as a rattled girl sometimes does
and you assure her that every thing is well, is all right

and then unexpectedly you have a bite,
the policeman jumps and you are in for a fight
while the mother of all fishes
struggles to be free and you smite

the other rod, hooking it well and good
and the rites of fishing is well understood
and girly is handy with the catching net,
smiles in a better mood.

Gert Strydom

Fishing For Carp (Hybridanelle)

Fishing for carp, with a six-pack cooling in the river
and the ringhals till now with eyes brown and unaware
something makes a sound, a movement making you shiver

when on your right a banded spitting cobra appears
with the woman leaving to prepare sausage
when it immediately rears

and girly is ready with the food, ready to deliver
and it gives her a great scare.
Fishing for carp, with a six-pack cooling in the river

and in your mind you are crunching gears
and you wish for her to be anywhere, but right there,
with the woman leaving to prepare sausage

and you are angry at the old deceiver
while she brings a tray full of goodies with loving care,
something makes a sound, a movement making you shiver

luckily she freezes behind you somewhere
and the snake only half alert senses something testing the air
and you wish for her to be anywhere, but right there,

and a nearby tree looks like a quiver
and you are looking for a kind of snare.
Fishing for carp, with a six-pack cooling in the river

and this is now a dangerous affair
and using the rod in your hands you slam with all your might,
and the snake only half alert senses something testing the air

slamming down on the snake like with golf driver
and this is it, you have had your share of luck, but still you dare,
something makes a sound, a movement making you shiver

she screams in fright, while you slam to your right
with your rod whistling
and using the rod in your hands you slam with all your might,

and the water shines like silver
and you cuddle her and there's a smile that you share.
Fishing for carp, with a six-pack cooling in the river
something makes a sound, a movement making you shiver

and you think: not again that spitting thing with its deadly sting,
when on your right a banded spitting cobra appears,
with your rod whistling
when it immediately rears.

Gert Strydom

Fishing For Snoek (Un-Wreath Sonnet)

Somewhat slightly the shore, the lights ebb away
waves toss and play while the moon shines brightly
in darkness nightly the stars glitter over Table Bay
and the wind is blown only somewhat lightly.
Without mistake the boat furrows, up and down
holding its own spreads some foam in its wake,
in I take the vastness of great Cape Town,
God we trust; the sea lies flat as a lake
and its night, the swells are easier on us
like some dust hangs the early grey twilight,
it's a sight deck-boards filled like a bus
and thus lines sing into the last of night
the boat is bright green with apparatus
going into action up to daylight.

Gert Strydom

Fishing On A Small Lake

You had just left me
and I had relocated from Bellville
near Cape Town
to Centurion at Pretoria
and had travelled by airplane
and there was storm damage
to the roads
and I was still waiting
on my removal to arrive

and apart from going to work
I had a lot of time on my hands
and thoughts in my mind,
since I have lost
the only fish that really mattered
and I didn't really know how.

My rods and reels and fishing tackle
from when I was a boy
was at my mother's
where I now lived,
and the lake on the other side
of Centurion mall
caught my eye,
while I drove
over the bridge.

On the weekend
loneliness really caught up with me
and my mother
helped me prepare the bait
like she did
when I was a child.

It was nothing fancy,
just custard powder, baking meal
and honey
or baking meal and curry
or a fresh white bread and honey

that I used that summer.

At the lake some black kids
were selling tins with earthworms
to anglers,
but I wasn't interested
as catfish goes for earthworms as well
and I wanted to catch blue kurper
or carp or maybe yellow-fish.

It was at about eleven o'clock
and some of the other anglers
had already being fishing
since six
and didn't have luck,
but assured me
that the lake had
big kurper, carp and catfish.

They were very well equipped
with radio controlled bait boats
to take their lines in
and all kinds of modern gizmos.

I settled under a tree
next to the small red hanging bridge
with which visitors crossed the lake
and used two rods
and equipped two hooks on each line.

alternating between the custard
and the curry baits
and thought that I would have
some time to reflect on live,
but I didn't even get time to wait.

Almost as soon as the sinker
struck the water
I had a bite,
and were catching two fish
at a time.

The biggest kurpers
that I have ever caught
were filling the keep net,
along with some rather large carp.

I came for solitude
and got everything but it
and was too busy
enjoying the experience
to notice
the three or four families
with children
who gathered on the bridge
to watch me.

Some of the other anglers
came over for a chat,
all of them believing
that I was using
some special secret
kind of bait.

I had brought more than enough bait
and gave them some
and that day all of them caught fish
and a little while later
to my astonishment
one even caught a huge catfish.

It wasn't long before
I had friends right round that lake,
anglers brought me cider,
beer and whiskey,

and an angler
and his beautiful daughter
moved their lines
to right next to mine
and they roasted
chops and sausage
on a Cadac gas frying pan

and I got chops, sausage
and putu porridge
and many more bites
than I had bargained for.

Gert Strydom

Five Ballades With A Prologue

(after W.E.G. Louw)

Prologue: The child of God

From the creation,
long before the time of Plato and Aristotle
the word of God was the child's criterion
while he ruled over everything.

When darkness rose right across the earth
others came in rebellion
wanted to show the God of creation
that they do not regard Him
and did not want to believe him

that destruction will follow upon their deeds,
that rain will fall in a terrible flood
that flooding will come as a result
from the hand of the God of the universe.

The child constructed a ship
went into its shelter with his wife,
children and animals
believing that the hand of the Almighty God
was sheltering
while the others in destruction
begged and cried for mercy.

The child walked through the palace of Pharaoh
could not convert his mother Hatshepsut
to the Almighty God,
saw whips lashing on the backs of his brothers
wanted to stop the lashing
on of one of them.

Right through the sea the child led his people
with crushing water closing on Pharaoh's army,
right through the desert
his eyes were set on the Promised Land

while he trusted God.

When God Himself came to this earth,
taught people about love,
the child followed Him,
he baptised people and converted them

until on a Friday
on which the curtain ripped right through,
with God innocently hanging on a cross
while evil people mocked, cursed
and scolded Him in arbitrariness
when He was paying for the destiny of man,
was triumphant against the snake.

Peter, Paul, Thomas, John and other apostles
witnessed about Jesus,
went to the Jews and the wide world,
talking with crowds of strange people
about the life of Jesus,
standing before kings and princes

and some of them were persecuted,
tortured and mocked
and other children of God
were thrown to lions in arenas,
for some death was their destiny
and the soldiers of Rome
was deployed against them.

Still the child of God spread
the testimony of Jesus
to bring others to salvation,
to reconcile them with God
just where he could, he canvassed people
going through the world
as the champion of God

until the dark time of the Middle Ages came,
with the church and state being one
and it was persecuting him
and still the light of God was in him

while soldiers of Papal Rome was pursuing him

and the child did escape to the new world,
flowered there
settling in America
and on the Southern tip of Africa
and he lived as if in the hand of God
with the blessing coming from Him.

I. Another gospel: Communism

Deceitful, cruel and focused on himself
man doomed millions to their death,
believing that the perfect man
in due time would by evolution
come into existence.

While the end justified the means,
nobody was safe against its onslaught.

The false doctrine
wanted to strip those that have,
of their possessions
with the goal of giving everything to everybody,
but some got everything and others nothing.

While the end justified the means,
nobody was safe against its onslaught.

Armed forces, revolution and terrorism
spread almost right across the world,
nuclear weapons were set against each other
to try and bind man at all costs to the state.

While the end justified the means,
nobody was safe against its onslaught.

In Hungary people wanted to be free
and died for freedom,
until the Berlin wall fell
and things started to change in the USSR.

While the end justified the means,
nobody was safe against its onslaught.

But in China, Cuba and on other places
the fortress still stands strong
where the state controls everything
even what you believe, how you live your life.

While the end justified the means
nobody is safe against its onslaught.

II. Quick treachery

In the dark there were being tinkered
while lies were being told to the whole wide world
while in Washington, Peking, Moscow,
London and even Tel Aviv
deliberations were done secretly.

Who is earning dollars,
while bombs are falling like rain,
with guns that are shooting almost endlessly?

In the dark plans were being hatched
and in Afghanistan and Iraq allegedly
soldiers were looking for weapons of mass destruction
while seizing oil reserves.

Who is earning dollars,
while bombs are falling like rain,
with guns that are shooting almost endlessly?

Innocent men, women and children were killed
and foreign soldiers invaded their country
to allegedly bring peace
and treasures were seized.

Who is earning dollars,
while bombs are falling like rain,
with guns that are shooting almost endlessly?

III. Focus on the common man

It is said that every game
have got two sides
and so the bones of fortune
or the dice is thrown
where one wins and the other loses.

In this way people live while they deceive each other,
have relationships with each other's wives
and tell lies and more lies.

Envious they look at each other's property,
are competing for a job, to make a living
while people tread on one another
walking into the gambling house, the whorehouse.

In this way people live while they deceive each other,
have relationships with each other's wives
and tell lies and more lies.

The fellow man that you have got to help,
is starving on the street, is despised
while he loses his wife, his children, his car and job
and everyone is only focusing on the self.

In this way people live while they deceive each other,
have relationships with each other's wives
and tell lies and more lies.

IV. Another new gospel: Theosophy

That occultism is the new in thing,
slowly but surely
is usurping Christianity as part of it,
anyone will hardly believe.

That man is a god, part of God and again reincarnates,
is becoming slowly but surely a new confession.

Jesus Christ is expelled as creator,
sacrifice of atonement, God
and saviour and another God
is written into His name,
the creator is doomed as Satan
and the snake is exalted
as the eternal light bearer.

That man is a god, part of God and again reincarnates,
is becoming slowly but surely a new confession.

Call it new age teachings, Gnosticism, Cabalism
the teachings of Alice A. Bailey (channeling Djwal Khul) ,
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Annie Besant
with human rights as a basis,
is supplanting the commandments of God.

That man is a god, part of God and again reincarnates,
is becoming slowly but surely a new confession.

Even in some protestant churches
séances are being held
and spiritualism is sneaking in slowly but surely
where man is looking for signs and wonders.

That man is a god, part of God and again reincarnates,
is becoming slowly but surely a new confession.

People are seen as complex, with a lower and higher nature
where the mind, spirit and soul is polluted by the body,
is cleansed when it returns to the divine
and purification takes place by reincarnation.

That man is a god, part of God and again reincarnates,
is becoming slowly but surely a new confession.

V. Focus on Southern Africa

We think that the murders on farmers,
the hijackings, robberies and rape

is the consequence of lawlessness
but what if it becomes legal by legislation?

By the natural law as set out by Thomas Aquinas
in his Summa Theologiae that affirms Fascism,
or is it only ethnic hatred that is coming to the fore?

This says that possessions like farms,
houses, cars and even tools
are seen as only in title the owners property
but that the community have the right to the use of it
above the owner and may take it by force.

By the natural law as set out by Thomas Aquinas
in his Summa Theologiae is affirmed in Fascism,
or is it only ethnic hatred that is coming to the fore?

[References: Sewe Ballades met 'n Proloog (Seven ballades with a prologue) by W.E.G. Louw. "Goods of some are due to others by the natural law. There is no sin if the poor take the goods of their neighbours. In cases of need, all things are common property, for the need has made it common. Not only is such taking of another's property not a sin, it is not even crime. It is lawful for a man to succour his own need by means of another's property by taking either openly or secretly, nor is this properly speaking, theft or robbery. It is not theft, properly speaking to take secretly and use another's property in a case of extreme need, because that which he takes for the support of his own life becomes his own property by reason of that need. In a case of a like need a man may also take secretly another's property to succour his neighbour's need." Summa Theologiae ii-ii 7th Article by Thomas Aquinas. "There is one type of fear more devastating in its impact than any other: the systematic fear that arises when a state begins to collapse. Ethnic hatred is the result of the terror that arises when legitimate authority disintegrates." Michael Ignatieff: Blood and Belonging – Croatia and Serbia.]

Gert Strydom

Flames

"I see flames coming out of a Ratel IFV
and how smoke vapours rises from it,
while it's shot out
where it's captured by a minefield.

Bleeding and burning comrades die
and their names and faces,
are burnt into my mind.

Even if I rise my eyes
to the heaven
I still cannot understand
till this day,
why some had to pay
such an expensive price
and precisely what their lives bought.

It's something to die in honour,
but another thing to life
in a country

Gert Strydom

Flaming Havoc

When two small boys did experiment with fire
setting the veldt alight and while trying to kill it
with a rake and a spade only would spread it further
to waste the hillocks,
almost burn down three houses
almost an entire maize field

and that an ordinary match for lighting candles,
if the power fails,
for lighting the gas stove
could cause such havoc
and misused the dragon roared in the wind,
leaping from tree to tree
and when caned one boy
took to the hillocks,
was almost trapped
but escaped when God send rain
to me remains a tiny miracle.

Gert Strydom

Flamingos In The Early Morning

As if catching the early pink rays of the sun
to retain it until the day of death on their bodies
and also the shining black of the night on their wings
lined up thin as gnats in the brightening east
the flamingos do file up while they burrow and fidget
in the shallow water in a glorious beautiful moment
as if they are catching the echo of the morning
while flaming the day does change to being brighter still.

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Gert Strydom

Flaring Up A Candle Burns

Flaring up a candle burns, does draw lines
when you do awake,
there are patterns and dark forms
that it draws on the walls,
your eyes glitter; there is suddenly a smile
that touches me
while you do lie lithe and soft against me
and eternally I could be without movement, just like this.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Flash Lightning Comes The Reproduction Out Of The Machine (Free Verse Sonnet)

Flash lightning comes the reproduction out of the machine,
even better than the memory of my own thoughts
where I see a photograph and a letter from you
and it brings mere moments back to me.
The memory has a whole city's neon lights
that gleam far away in the darkness,
in a restaurant's window our own faces
while in a chilly evening you get out of the car.
The electronic messenger has you
almost like a tinned kind of momentary-goddess
where I can look at another photo
but your words sneak-sneak into my life
and when you do suddenly knock on the front door
in reality my heart wants to stop.

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Gert Strydom

Flashback

In the week's long nights when I dream of you,
the rays of the moon fall
as if your pretty fingers lovingly do fold around me.
Only you and me can understand
how lonely and forsaken every weekday is,
but when your beautiful smile radiate
it's as if I am reading something intimate and deep in your eyes,
are lost right there in your humanity.
Pondering I wonder about love
but in all of this you do remain,
it's as if life are drawing us to each other,
to constantly be together,
as if every splendid moment is something eternal,
are caught in memory
in the secrecy of our love,
as if days continue to unfold,
do over and over begin with an adventure,
as if only now, this moment,
with you and me right through life
does exist in every bit of laughter and in each tear.

Gert Strydom

Flashbacks

I

Her older brother brings
violets from the marsh to her
when she is seven years old
with her hair shining like gold

and she pours him some tea
that he gets on the small doll table
that he had made for her
from wood cuttings

and he reads October month's poem
on her birthday,
that makes her smile
like a small angel.

II

When her mother hits her
with a black shoe
she is on her brother Pieter's back
who carries her out of the danger

while blows rain down on them
and she kicks and shouts
while he flees with her
and he is only groaning softly.

III

The first day on their way to school
they ride two-two on Rondeberg
and Rodjer and she's a bit scared
but her big brother Frans

will with his gentleness
conjure everything right
if somebody dares to do something

and she is unhindered.

IV

Her older sister Lenie
in the afternoons tells
about the things that she reads
in bits and pieces

like a beautiful sequel
but she has to try her best
not to forget about the porridge
that is burning and are without salt.

V

In the old house
she runs around her father
where he stands talking
and farts loudly

one fart after another
and he scolds her
but asks half amused
is she now have become a motorbike?

VI

Her brother Frans
is always the silent one
who knows and counts the sheep
and when her young ox blows up

she wants him to pierce it with a knife,
but he leads the animal to the shadow
and they pray
and before twilight it is already better.

VII

On the day that Frans had to shoot
his own black mare

because of the animal's suffering
the wind howled monotonous.

His older brother Pieter
only wounded the suffering animal
and he cried
when he lifted the .303 Martini Henri rifle himself,
but his shot was deadly accurate.

VIII

She and her brother Koos
sit against the wall
while the sun is setting
with red stripes against the clouds

and her mother and their aunt Krissie
are both at the gate with the horse cart
and the two children argue
and he says that their dad is there.

Maybe he wanted to comfort his small sister
or perhaps he did not believe
that their father had died
at the end of the day.

Gert Strydom

Flash-Storm (Couplets)

The day was humid and very warm
which brought a sudden flash-storm,

from cobalt blue the sky turned gunmetal-grey
the twisting wind swept an entire acreage away

blinding blue-white filaments filled that iron-grey sky
and the farmer thought on that day that he might die,

while a entire crop of maize next to the barn was thrown,
from a nearby sloping ridge mud streamed down

as much water as in the Vaal-dam poured on the farm
but not a person or animal it did harm.

The insurers said that it was an act of God
and no one thought this statement odd

as if He send his army of mighty angels to ravage a crop
and all over the place they did trees whirl and drop,

for God that farmer had no kind word to spare
although through life He did for him care

and the farmer cursed without end
after living through this dangerous event,

at a time some thought his faith to be strong
but he did not realise that everything does to God belong,

that life on this planet called earth is a kind of test,
filled with heartache, pain, happiness and joy at its best

and what a person is and have is only a gift and grace
while he cursed God openly to His face.

© Gert Strydom

Flaunting Like A Red Spark

that flames up suddenly
and draws a fiery line
a red weaver hangs where it frolics twittering,
stretching out its wings
before once again it falls to the earth
and out of its mouth
it sings a song of glory unto God
which rises right through the noise of the city.

Gert Strydom

Fleeting

How fleeting the long weekend
spent with you was
and sometimes it feels
as if life rushes by
in transitory brief moments
and that there is no way
to make precious moments last.

Motorcycling out of a brewing sieving storm
the one moment
you were rubbing my hands hot
while we embraced
and we shared
a really great cup of coffee
and the next
we have to kiss goodbye again
and it is past.

If I could make days and nights stretch
into eternity
I would be wishing
to live through the days we had,
to see you cry
about a movie of a faithful dog,
to wipe your tears,
to cuddle and to kiss
and have you forever near.

Gert Strydom

Fleetingly It Hanged In Beauty

Fleetingly it hanged in beauty
and flowered in that summer,
a deep-red rose caught on a thorny branch,
in loveliness, as beauty only comes once

and time and again I was astounded by you;
no elements, drought, rain or sun
could disguise your splendour
and you flowered glorious like only a rose can.

There are thorns that had left marks on my fingers;
I still see that rose, looking somewhat different than before,
but glorious and delicate

and I wonder about your fleeting brightening
if it brings love or pain?

Gert Strydom

Flickering The Flame Of A Candle Burns

Flickering the flame of a candle burns
drawing lines when you awake,
there are patterns and dark forms
that it makes on the walls,
your eyes gleam,
there is suddenly a smile that touches me,
you are supple and soft against me
and forever I could lie like this without any movement.

Gert Strydom

Flight

When the buildings
of Johannesburg's metropolis
do disappear in the distance
while the Boeing is catching speed,

the sun is busy setting
and everywhere there are lights
that burns below in the twilight

and in the distance the sun
is not any bigger than my thumb
where it is hanging over the clouds

and somewhere it does reflect on a big dam
with its pretty orange colour
and it reminds me of times

where at the Vaal Dam as children we were fishing,
how our lines did hang in the water
while everything was silent and tranquil
and that social event fades away
into the adult world.

Gert Strydom

Flight To Reality

The jet turns over the ocean
and a lonely gull,
flies past the wing.

Picturistic Cape Town is fading
while we fly,
through a sapphire blue sky.

Inland a summer thunderstorm
hangs heavy with dark black clouds,
like the feeling in my heart.

Death comes at its own time and place
and when I depart from the plane
it's like walking into
another sad world,
where I would never see
my grandmother's smile again.

Gert Strydom

Flippie Comes And Lies With Me

Flippie comes and lies with me
and she wants to know,
why you are staying away
for so long
and her dog eyes
watches me.

Kyla swings her big tail
and is very glad to see me,
but goes away to wait for you
for she hopes
to see you before the night.

Jeanie lays at the gate
and watches the street into the dark,
to see if you come
and she moans
when I call her to come in.

Slowly the day's pass
while we wait on you
and I wonder if they
are treating you well
and the tea is nice,
but I drink it alone
and I know well
that our time on this earth
is just borrowed.

Gert Strydom

Flooding After The Last Summer Rains

Flooding after the last summer rains
the river overreaches its banks
flushing through, shattering rural settlements
where squatters live in shantytowns

sweeping away dilapidated zinc plate shack-shelters,
women, children, some pets and chickens and goats
and everything goes drifting down like boats
tumbling, twisting and battered but vibrant

in the power of the flood, filled with energy
while death and destruction
is reining supreme
and uneducated, native man
is shocked, in great fear
and stays living at the water's edge.

Gert Strydom

Flower In A Garden

A boy on a bicycle
passes by
and whistles and waves,
but without looking at him
or twisting in his direction
the blonde girl
sprays water on her roses.

Two boys walk past
and call her name
and without looking up,
she shears a lavender bush
and sweat runs
into her eyes.

a Motor biker blows
his noisy cycle's horn
and without leaving her work,
she keeps on shearing plants.

The girl works until dusk
and while the sun's
last rays fall,
she is happy in her garden
and when the evening star
hangs in the sky
she is thrilled
with the blooming flowers,
of which the scent
hangs in the air.

Gert Strydom

Flower Of My Heart

You hair hangs curling
like flower shoots
in auburn strings
past your shoulders.

You smile very cute
and there's something unknown,
secret cutting through all reason
into my soul.

To me you are more precious,
more beautiful than any other flower
that burst open in glory

Words become unfit
and totally unnecessary between us
when your tongue twists around mine.

Gert Strydom

Flowering (Ae Freslighe)

Flowering trees stand shaking
as in their branches birds play,
in the morn I am waking
to a sunny kind of day.

It is during times of spring
in nature, I want to stay
to see the flowers rising
before the sun sneaks away.

The blooming does love display;
in this time there is something
that takes all your cares away
when all blossoms are flowering.

Gert Strydom

Flowers Of Mercy

In the field they are scattered
pink, white and brown-red
and emerge by them self
as if by mercy

and shoot up between blades of grass
and weeds
and the brittle heads
looks almost plastic fine

and still there's nothing artificial
where the flowers stand in the veldt
with only the rain and sun
going over them.

Your love I also found
so unplanted,
which by its own accord
grows into my depths
and through hard times
still stays with me.

Other flowers
want to bloom around me
and I try and cut old feelings
down short,
as you are the flower
of flowers to me
and I just want to grow
deeper into your soul.

Gert Strydom

Fluttering In A Strong Breeze (Swannet)

Fluttering in a strong breeze, the Union Jack,
rising on ridge after rock ridge.
They saw Boers, as peasants that eat porridge,
while British soldiers came under attack,

carted women and children by force,
to concentration camps, places of killing,
exterminating a quarter of a nation;
they buried them, in bone and skull.

The atrocities after a hundred years
the inhumanity comes fresh to mind, still lives on
the actions of these deeds are never gone
and the impact, the loss, the pain and tears.

Fluttering in a strong breeze, the Union Jack,
while British soldiers came under attack.

[Poet's note: This poem is written in remembrance of the twenty thousand (some figures are as high as thirty five thousand) innocent white Afrikaner women and children that died in British concentration camps, after their farms were scorched by the British in the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa, which includes a great grandmother of mine. For a clear picture of these atrocities read my epic poem "Through the eyes of a field coronet" which is based on the eyewitness account of field coronet JJ Potgieter.]

Gert Strydom

Flying At Night

The sticks are strapped in
and there's a slight chill,
in the early morning air.

Black tiger stripes,
are painted over our faces
and we are waiting for takeoff.

It's much colder when the plane rises
and flies low to avoid enemy radar
and enemy Mig fighters.

There's a yellow moon hanging low
and some stars pass,
with bright twinkling eyes.

The plane gains altitude,
before the light starts flashing
and the end of the flight draws near.

Commands are given
and something hard is in my stomach
and I hear air rushing at the open door.

I get my turn to jump and I'm free
and it's like falling away into oblivion,
but the ground is rushing towards me.

Gert Strydom

Flying Fish

As they pierce the bright blue gleaming water
I have seen them leap and play
in a immeasurable ocean
glistening on a hot summer day

and mysterious like flying arrows
they fly over breaking sea swells,
plunging down into the depths again
into a world of sea-weeds and shells.

Gert Strydom

Focus On Springs

Eventually the mine closed,
where people worked for months
without a salary, the last of them leave the grounds,
and there's a strong suspicion

that the new black owners took the profit into their own pockets,
refining the gold somewhere else outside of the company,
causing the company deliberately to break apart
and it is as if nobody can stop or want to stop this felony.

With stubble on their faces men stand in the streets
guarding cars in the hot sun
and they talk Afrikaans, it's as if the blood clots in their veins
while life and all income stops for them,

where some even live in boxes on the street,
trying to find shelter in the open space behind a church.

[Reference: Sonnet – Uit Malvern (Sonnet – From Malvern) by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

For A Long Time

For a long time
I have been wondering
about the meaning of words,
about situations where actions intervene,

about love that lasts forever
and lovers that come and go,
about life and death
where destiny takes control

and still I do not know
the reasons why
things do happen,

but then I do realise
that I am only seeing life
and the picture of it
at very close range,

that whatever does happen,
wherever life does go
my omnipotent Lord and God
is still totally in control.

Gert Strydom

For A Time Now I Have Dreamt About You (Sonnet)

For a time now I have dreamt about you,
about you the very beautiful girl
and the passion that burns between us
is so great and so good it must be sin

I am thinking about you in everything that I do
and it's as if my world is turned upside down in a whirl
but between us there is something greater than just trust
that I cannot express in words that are running thin

I know that to me you do remain true
and although at times the whole world does swirl
have you as my darling wife I must
as you were created for me from the very begin.

You are the one that is turning my life around
and I am so terribly happy that you I have found.

Gert Strydom

For A While The Autumn Sun Hovered

For a while the autumn sun
hovered like a fire ball
in the night sky
and the last
of summer's heat
was still here.

Like leaves on a huge tree
the stars appeared on by one
filling the night sky

and amber lights started to glow
in the street and the evening's serenity
unfolded like a big blanket
spreading out with the night.

Crickets started to shriek
and frogs started croaking
and a bright yellow moon
lit up the sky
and this night
there is only you and I
and its wonderful to be together.

Gert Strydom

For A While The Autumn Sun Hovered [1]

For a while the autumn sun
hovered like a fire ball
in the night sky
and the last
of summer's heat
was still here.

Like leaves on a huge tree
the stars appeared on by one
filling the night sky

and amber lights started to glow
in the street and the evening's serenity
unfolded like a big blanket
spreading out with the night.

Crickets started to shriek
and frogs started croaking
and a bright yellow moon
lit up the sky
and this night
there is only you and I
and its wonderful to be together.

Gert Strydom

For Days Long The Rain Falls

For days long the rain falls,
not like flying bullets
somewhere in the Middle East
or bombs from American war planes

dropping down on who knows whom,
killing children, women and men,
or like missiles from war ships
or projectiles fired from tanks.

God sends his blessings on everyone,
opens the clouds and let His rain pour down
and the thirsty earth rejoices before it's gone,
plants, insects and birds let their joy be known

and man is only interested in power of his own
and while tears pour down looks with a nasty frown.

Gert Strydom

For Far Too Long I Have Searched For You

For far too long I have searched for you
and when I saw you the first time
there was the sudden recognition
as if I had found a part of myself in you,
as if for ages you have been my companion

and still I know that you are lovely,
that your presence, your voice,
continually draws people nearer
and it's as if I constantly keep remembering you,
as if you are perfect and I know that I am right with this.

Gert Strydom

For Four Days We Had To Live Without Electricity

For four days in the Lodeyko suburb of Springs,
a town in the ANC ran Ekurhuleni metropolitan,
we were without any electricity
that drove my aunt, my mother and I
to a primitive kind of existence
and I found it extremely strange
for the power to be switched on at
exactly twelve o'clock, at midday.

For one or other reason in Lodeyko
the tap water is of such a quality
that a person has to cook it
in order not to get ill from it,
where in the Petersfield ext 1 suburb
there is fountain quality drinking water
and on an open fire we had to prepare
\our drinking water.

It is terrible not to be able to bath or shower,
not to have hot running water,
not to be able to shave
or be able to prepare a hot meal
without going to the primitive measure
of lighting a open fire
and to wonder when
will the power again be switched on
when the power has been pre-paid.

There is a term power-shedding that
the state-controlled power company ESCOM uses
when it simply switches the power off
and nowadays this has been happening randomly
but this incident has got nothing to do
with any kind of power-shedding

People from the municipality said
that it was from power cables been stolen
but near to the Petersfield ext 1 suburb
a power-sub-station did blow up and burn down.

Previously after a break-in at a power-sub-station in Springs
power cables were stolen
and it did after that also blow up
and in a fire burn to the ground
but the thieves knew how to assail
all of the safety measures
and after been warned
that the power station would malfunction
still the municipality continued to run it
without making repairs to it
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Gert Strydom

For Hours Long

When I was but a small boy
and lived day by day
on the farm

when the maize were all ready harvested
the stems were cut off
and we had to feed the threshing-machine
where it stood whining above
the feed pit

and that green John Deere thing
ate everything that we fed it
slicing it down to pieces and bits

and while the sun went high
we unloaded the trailer
time and time again
and felt the work
reaching into tired
arms, legs and backs

and sometimes had to jump
down into that pit
on top of the threshed hay
and tread it in
to make way for some more

and that heartless machine
demanded despotically
until the pit was filled
and when it died down
I was deaf from its churning sound
for hours long.

Gert Strydom

For Lina Spies

Sometimes you let me think
of a small girl
whose eyes are full of the shining stars,
sometimes I find

a sensible mature woman
who spreads her words free and full of spirit
and comely pours a glass of wine
you let me laugh, cry and make me happy

and your trust in the Lord
is true and solid like a rock
as if you are always looking up into His eyes
and time after time
it's as if your verses fit into my mind,
as if things sometimes look the same to us both.

Gert Strydom

For Moments You Stand Motionless (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Herman Gorter)

For moments you stand silent before me
and I want to tell you about the depth of my love
but do not know how to put it in the right words,
how to find something that will last for us eternally,
my thoughts are free from the correct words
and all of my words do suddenly dry up when I do phone you,
where we do live somewhere between heaven and hell
and still the thing that is love somehow we do get right.
Your eyes, nose, mouth and face is wonderfully beautiful
but transparent like water becomes whatever I do say,
where I do not know what my love can bring to you
and everything circles out as if I do drop a stone in the water
with the effect that sometimes I wonder what does lie in words
and my sincere love continually does jump forward.

[Reference:"Gij staat zoo heel, heel stil" (You stand so totally, totally still)by Herman Gorter.]

Gert Strydom

For My Brother (In Answer To Breyten Breytenbach)

For my brother
that actually doesn't know me anymore
I write this poem

and I know that the road
that I walked till here
was at times
greatly by the choices
that I have made.

Still, we stay one in loyalty,
one in blood and family relationship,
one when destiny closes its fingers
and maybe one in being lost
although we both
face different directions
and sometimes we search for a brother
at places where he's not.

I sometimes walk alone on a dark way
and continually search for a star, a new sun
and who know what is waiting there?

Still, I am writing these words
to return to you,
to walk along through your valleys
to places where the sun hangs bright
where the sky is blue past the horizon
and let it always go better
than just well with you.

[Reference: vir my broer, in hierdie koue wêreld by Breyten Breytenbach.]

Gert Strydom

For My Darling, With New Year

At night when the darkness folds around me
and I do hold you tightly
I hear a swarm of mosquitoes flying away
and in dreams I do meet you again.

You are the one that I do love
as if from the beginning
you have been destined for me
and I do wish every beautiful thing
with joy that is braided into your days,

that the days that do come
will have love, bravery and peace
far past the days of old age
as everything that is lovely
I want to say to you.

Gert Strydom

For My Darling, With New Year (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

At night when the darkness folds around me
I do miss you and only beautiful memories do remain
about how our lives at a time had been together
and in dreams I do meet you again.

You are the one that I do love from the beginning,
you have been destined for me
and I do wish every beautiful thing
with joy that is braided into your days,

that the days that do come will have love, bravery
and peace far past the days of old age
as everything that is lovely
I want to say to you

that a year of jubilee will come for you and me,
together we will pass the new horizons.

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Gert Strydom

For My Love

(after G. A. Watermeyer)

While everything around me does fall apart,
you alone remain my fortress and my castle

and in the depth of my own sorrow,
you do appear out of the naught as my support,

you are the one in whose consolation I do hide,
while the winds of destruction howl around me,

you understand and know my pain,
you are the one where all of it does disappear,

you are my fortress under the merciless sun,
the one where I do hide in a world of concrete.

[Reference: "Vir my vrou" (For my wife) by G. A. Watermeyer.]

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Gert Strydom

For My Love In South Africa

When the whole Africa did burn,
while Ak-47's and RPG rockets for life and death
did measure out the law right over the continent of Africa,
when cunning and the will to have
brought people to the southern point,
I dreamt of you,
wondered how it is to lie spooned,
to love someone who do not want to know the news,
who are able to love in times of happiness and distress
and now I love you past the gist of my mind.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

For My Persian Cat In Autumn

Curled up he lays in the last bit of summer sun
that falls in the autumn,
he sometimes scale the chestnut tree
of which the stripped branches
grabs at the dull blue sky
to stretch himself out on the roof of the garage,
where he continually licks at his ginger coat

and when unexpectedly a thunderstorm arises
he lies on the porch curled up in a bundle,
looking at the falling drops
until a bolt of lightning falls on the paving in front of him,
where he looks startled at the bang
and with big golden eyes
that almost draws close does call.

Gert Strydom

For Now And For Always

Will it last this romantic fantasy of shadow and light?
The crimson-red rising moon hangs low where we do walk
through this lovers-lane that it is making tonight.
You are right against me while of lasting love we talk.

Is it magic or a strange kind of reality
when your arms slip around my head,
when you do passionately kiss me
am I alive, in heaven or dead?

As if God on us does His blessing endow
when you promise to be my wife
your whole face does glow,
and this is a day in my and your life.

Gert Strydom

For The Last Time The Night Stretched Out Her Cloak

as she did shake out the stars
to make them cover the whole heaven
and everywhere they were blue and white.

No star did lead any wise men
but when the morning star did appear at last
the baby boy was born
and his people saw him

while the lights burned in the large city
and manmade power
came sparking from tube-lights
when the boy was there in all of his beauty

and his people rejoiced, cried from pure joy,
while sirens screamed far off
and he rested in the arms of his mother
as a newcomer in this age.

Gert Strydom

For The One That I Love

It's your voice
that I hear in the evening-wind,
you become reality in my dreams,
bringing ecstasy to my soul and body

and you know me throughout,
even in the dark places
that I keep secret
there are times when I find you there

when you sometimes sneak past reason
into my blood, my genes and thoughts
becoming the source of all my longing,
with your smile, your voice, falling on me as sunshine

and there is meaning that I find with you,
something magical that binds us together.

Gert Strydom

For Those Who Fear My Verses And Do Fear Me Through Them

(in answer to Breyten Breytenbach)

It's as if all words and maybe all things do lead back
to the Angel in the oven,
the Godly-son that brought salvations from the fire
who is the light to the unearthly darkness,
and when I do close my eyes it cannot lock out
His pure light from my heart and soul and thoughts
as He does not threaten even if we are menacing
and the rain that comes from His hand
brings new life and food
although sometimes thunders do roar about us
and even at times do strike us.

The pale, sunless ill people
He did not bring to that place or state
and in hospitals in Paris and worldwide
even here in dilapidated South African places
like the Far East Rand Hospital
He and His angels are still present,
to bring healing through the hands of others
to forswear the darkness and evil
and like this every one of us becomes His messengers and angels
like those three angels in the oven.

My eyes are open for your messages and to all messages
was but where my dad was in my thoughts buried on a wet rainy day
I do not want to be buried but rather to be turned to ashes
on a sunny spring or summer day
with my ashes blowing away in the wind,
to become a part of everything that does exist
of the water, the air and the earth
but also of that which do bring pain
as life is a complex thing
in which good and evil, joy and pain do exist
and from all of this
I myself cannot stand separate

as I am trying to bring truth and righteousness
to a world that is quickly losing its discourse,
do tell about heartache, pain and misery
but also about the things that do make life great and wonderful,
try to jump out with my poems as with a Moses-staff
and like this I do want to go into my death.

Wingless I am not yet an angel
and maybe so full of darkness in the eyes of some people
never ever be one
and the feathered friends that do visit me
is but the sparrow, the wild-doves the hoopoe,
the black-collared barbet, the Indian minahs
and yellow and red weavers
and the yellow barbet with its checked wings
but with my being gone they will not even miss me
and just with the care my trees and flowers in my garden
will know that I am not present
but the Godly-son is thoroughly aware of every condition of my life and death
and those who fear my verses and do fear me through them
will be happy that they will not read a further dead word
but on a day the Godly-son will come
to awake me in another condition but still in the I and me
on His great judgement and salvation day.

[References: "bedreiging van die siekes" (threatening of those that are ill) by Breyten Breytenbach.]

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Gert Strydom

For Too Long I Am Waiting (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

For too long I am waiting
caught in a anthill,
that people call an apartment,
where everyone lives for himself
as if the others do not exist
and music bleats right through the night,
people of another race shamelessly
cavort, whore and drink.

For too long criminals stare at me on the street,
Zimbabweans, Tanzanians and people
from right across Africa sniggers
as if my music system, DVD player and TV
in the lounge belongs to them
and hit with lashing tongues
in French and Portuguese
which here is totally foreign
and I have got to look if an AK-47
is pointing at me
when I drive with my car from the garage.

For too long I receive foolish electronic mails
and SMS's on my computer and cellular phone
from a certain political party,
as if these people in a way
have an interest in my jobless situation
while in parliament
they do not oppose affirmative action
and my last cents left my purse.

I despise the rubbish
on the front papers of newspapers
and do not want to know
how the president's seventh wife looks like
while my whole country
is falling to pieces bit by bit
and the Afrikaner is systematically mauled

with poverty waiting
and like a total idiot
is totally unaware of it
until catastrophe hits him.

Knights swear at others on the road
and have relationships with each other's wives
while they live only for the here and now
and Philistines from right across Africa
surge in millions
and overnight become citizens
with greater and better rights
and to nowhere else
they are going to drive me out
even if they write abusive names
and who now what
in graffiti writing
while every morning, afternoon and night
I lift my eyes to the almighty God.

[Reference: Psalm 150 (b) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

For Years I Am Hiding Under The Wing

For years I am hiding under the wing
of God who daily protects me
and sometimes I feel safe when I doze away,
I had even been involved in His work
and every weekend I visit His church
but still I cannot forget
that death goes on its own way,
where it measures out the life of every human being.

Gert Strydom

For Years I Did Not Know You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Gilbert Gibson)

For years I did not know you,
was aware that a time must come
as determined by probability
that someone would really leave me dumbfounded.
Like differential and integral mathematics
parts of you were in my brain
but without the pieces of the puzzle fitting
and now I know you on black and white,
it's different from a rainbow, from which I know the spectrum,
the wonder of you is indefinite,
almost like the morning's red after the darkness
when your being glows with a noble fervour,
where you view me as if given to you
by the Lord God who we both do serve.

[Reference:"vorlesungen über thermodynamik" by Gilbert Gibson.]

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Gert Strydom

For You

Early morning I will pick up the most beautiful seashells,
before the sand-plovers and tourists come
and like a child as if they are treasures
I will give hands full to you

and you I will take with the first daybreak
down to the beach
and together we will walk long stretches
where the water just meet our feet

and we will have long conversations
about the things
that we should have said years ago
and I will tell you how you fit into my life.

Gert Strydom

For You [2]

(for Annelize, after Daniel Hugo)

I have lost you, my love
with decades of years now between us.
Although our love does feel still active in my heart

no wish, enchantment or any letter
can turn time around to the days of summer sun
and yet you do linger in my heart and although I am wrong

I do see you sometimes in the far off distance
while I do err in the lovely remembering
but nothing does destroy true love.

[Reference: "Maalstrik" (times / grinding trap) by Daniel Hugo.]

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Gert Strydom

For You I Have Got A Kind Of Thirst

For you I have got constantly a kind of thirst,
something that longs for fulfilment
and when your soft lips find mine
I feel your heart beating and I feel bold and great,
and it's as if that moment can linger forever,
when you leave my whole being shaking.

Gert Strydom

For You I Have Got A Kind Of Thirst [1]

For you I have got constantly a kind of thirst,
something that longs for fulfilment
and when your soft lips find mine
I feel your heart beating and I feel bold and great,
and it's as if that moment can linger forever,
when you leave my whole being shaking.

Gert Strydom

For You That Do Bless Me In My Body, Soul And Spirit

For You that do bless me in my body, soul and spirit,
I think that Your omnipotence do cover all of my ways
as Your selfless love does range everywhere
and everything that I have and are, are only borrowed to me.

I do thank You:
for a face and body that my wife finds attractive,
for all interjections that do make me fully human,
for a voice and words that do touch others
and I look at You with the trust of a child

but more I thank You for the love in her heart
and that she does still love me in times of happiness and sorrow.

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Gert Strydom

For You That I Do Love

I will even forgo important things,
want to stop the pain and destruction
that life brings
and hold you tight against my breast
and try and inspire you
with words deep out of my heart.

Gert Strydom

Forced Song (Parody)

(with apology to Koos A. Kombuis)

Like a tart
in hungry weeks,
I yearn to reel
– with a flowering girl-

with pornography
in children's libraries
my members and I
are stinking rotten

like my god Hitler
that lives with me in Soweto,
like honourable gentlemen
visiting a in ghetto

heavy and bulky,
I am writing in a hurry
even when I bump my head
just as it pleases me.

[Reference: Kwang-gesang (Kwang hymn) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Forced To Meet An Enemy In A Rifle's Sight (In Answer To Keith Douglas)

Forced to meet an enemy in a rifle's sight
a unknown man appears, scratches his head,
he lights a cigarette, draws on it until it glows,
looks at a photo in a way that only his wife knows
his attention moves somewhere up ahead,
to some ibises in their screeching flight

the crosshairs move to his heart bit by bit
while mechanically I test the wind,
thoughts of his family life now means nothing
while on the trigger my finger is pressing,
and no escape can a mortal man find
against full metal jacket bullets that accurately hit.

I'Envoi

Far too familiar is death's smell,
when every soldier is more machine, than man,
far too familiar are the sounds of bullets whining,
the sight of bodies lying lifeless,
as putrid rotting human flesh, heartless,
the horrors of war are undermining
the essence of being human,
as soldiers live afterwards in a daily kind of hell.

[Reference: "Now in my dial of death appears" by Keith Douglas.]

Gert Strydom

Foreigners Did Come In Illegally

(in answer to I. L. de Villiers)

Foreigners did come from Zimbabwe, Malawi,
from right across Africa illegally
and some do talk Portuguese and others French
but overnight they are suddenly citizens
that do belong here and rather by their skin colour
have to get a job, as they are true South Africans.

We Afrikaners that were born here,
do not any longer look at political leaders,
to the men that do lead in the churches
as murder and rape and plundering
do happen everywhere and we did loose our country,
our cars and other property
and now our eyes are only focussed on God
for His salvation which will come at a time.

[Reference: "Huisies, Distrik Ses" (Small houses, District Six) by I. L. de Villiers.]

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Gert Strydom

Forever

The bright blue
folds open through the room's window
and I see rows of purple morning glories
that shoots in domes up to the wall.

□

There are purple irises
that keeps butterflies busy
and bees turn around the roses
and I can hear
them passing outside

and the soft sweet smell of jasmine
mixes with lavender
on the fresh morning breeze

and the ginger golden Persian cat
stretches himself out long
on the wall
of the fish pond
where he lies
looking at the world.

Somewhere Sussa
(the big black dog)
talks grumbling with herself
and I hear Flippie
passing carefully
on her small paws
in the corridor

and we are safe
in our fortress
and your hand lies
soft and spoiling over me
and I hear your breathing evenly
and while you sleep next to me
and I could stay forever like this.

Forever (Cavatina Sequence)

Forever in and out the waves roll on,
poplars quiver
as the breeze time and again rushes through them,
the small river
is slowly flowing twisting to the sea
birds deliver
worms, seed and fruit chirping to new hatchlings,
cheerful they sing and fly and slap their wings.

It feels as if all the time in the world
we still have got
when you give me a small token as a
forget-me-not;
time suddenly gets wings and I love you
more than a lot;
the sun rises and again it does descend
while all of life feels as it has no end.

Gert Strydom

Forever I Am Caught By You

I miss you more
than you could know
and the nights here
Is already becoming winter
and it would have been nice
to have you lying against me.

My breath makes vapour
against the windows
as if I am alone
in my own world
and still my bed
is empty without you.

Sometimes at night
it feels as if your heat
is against me
and I can still
feel your smell hanging in the air,
as forever
I am caught by you.

Gert Strydom

Forever I Know That You Will Be True (Italian Sonnet)

With you life feels like its running to eternity
and each day with you I want to be just like this
and I know you in times of heartache and bliss
where you are far more than just dear to me

and however our days are going to be,
even if we do argue make up and kiss
when you are away I do you truly miss.
In this life you are my living sanctuary,

the one, who with everything I do trust,
do know in days of happiness and pain
and there is something special to loving you,
even if to circumstance we have to adjust,
you are with me in both sunshine and rain,
in all the things that you do say and do.

Gert Strydom

Forever Young

I saw boys driving away to war
in a Ratel-90 armoured car
and they were well trained,
ready for action
and called up for military service
against their will.

Two smiled and a few
waved goodbye
and there was dirt
in my eyes,
when my armoured car
caught speed.

Enemy battle tanks were everywhere
and we fought right through the night
and with first light
an armoured car was stuck
in a mine field
and they were hoping for the best
but the worst was there
and shot out they paid the cost.

Although the enemy
paid a much higher price
and lost,
it's like yesterday that they
waved goodbye
and sacrificed in vain
their lives for people
that does not honour them
and remain forever young.

Gert Strydom

Forever: If You Are Gratified

If you are gratified
to be with me, at my side,
have the same feelings in your heart
and from me do not want to part

then I take an holy oath and swear
to love you until my bones lie bare
to make with you sweet memories
even if like Abélard and Heloïse

you are torn away from me,
part of you forever I will be
in every cell, in every breath
past life and death

and then we will be one
even when everything else is gone.

Gert Strydom

Forgive Me

Forgive me, my Lord, as I am a man of sin
although I do not know all of them and their effect,
even if your own decree has been spoken against me.
Help me to a new clean life of integrity to begin,
to treat other people with respect
forgive my self-conceit and help me to be
a man that by your power do overcome and win,
touch my heart, my soul and my intellect
help me daily to Your straight way to see.

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Gert Strydom

Forgive Me God

(after Solomon Ibn Gabirol)

Forgive me God and set me free from punishment,
forgive my sins that are so numerous.
Remember me, for the sake of Your love
and even where Your decree has been set,
forgive and see my longing for You.
Wash away my sins as human frailty,
and lead me back to Your company.

[Reference: 'His Illness' by Solomon Ibn Gabirol.]

Gert Strydom

Forthright I Want To Love You

Forthright I want to love you
and I want to hold you dearer,
tell my deepest things to you
and where feelings begin
without words expose my heart
and never fabricate anything
but still make promises
and pray you deeper into my life.

Gert Strydom

Forthright I Want To Love You [1]

and I want to hold you dearer,
tell my deepest things to you
and where feelings begin
without words expose my heart
and never fabricate anything
but still make promises
and pray you deeper into my life.

Gert Strydom

Fortress

Like a huge dragon
of which the back reaches into the clouds
they lay in front of our fathers
in their great trek

where with their women and children,
horses, ox-wagons, cattle
and sheep
they did have to go over the peaks.

The fortress could not stop the British
as they did come through the passes,
did shoot their way open with cannon and bomb
while a hand full of Boer tried to stop them.

To this day it gives shelter to the Sothos
where the Drakensberg Mountains do sling into their country
where with their ponies they ride on the ledges.

Yet in those peaks
I did find a kind of tranquillity,
it was as if the bright blue sky
and golden sun were binding there

as if I found the presence of God
in the mountains,
as if I could raise my eyes
and God was standing near to me.

[Poet's note: The Afrikaans name Drakensberg literary means dragons
mountains.]

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Gert Strydom

Four Prayers During The Yearly Seasons In The Highveld

I. Spring begins

Spring begins in green almond leaves,
in blossoms appearing snow white in a cobalt blue sky
where the sun sits brilliant white, glowing more intense than golden chandeliers,
where flowers appear and bridge the skeleton of every tree

while rain now pours down regularly,
sieves down in every bush and in the lane
with yellow and pink blossoms
appearing daily, puffing out.

Lord, let these times become a tribute
and what was once dead and winnowed
now become joyous, as a hymn of praise to You,
let fruit appear from the blessing that You are showering,
let my weak youth now overflow splendid, intact
in a life grounded on You, let Your light shine through my branches.

[Reference: Vroegherfs (Four prayers during the yearly seasons in the Boland:
Early autumn) by N.P. van Wyk Louw]

II. In this graceful spring

In this graceful spring
a glorious sun is shining so exuberant and happy
that I am straying, caught and astonished by Your world
where branches daily get new flowers:

flowers are spreading prettily on almond trees
peaches, apricots and plums are in full flowering
in colours of yellow, pink and snow white
and insects, bees and birds arrive in a wonder world.

where joy now jubilant without pain
is fulfilled in every flower, in my words

appear as Your biggest blessing
while You let glory come down from Your heavens,
that the whole of humanity, knows of growth and maturity,
insects, birds and the whole world shout out Your glory.

[Reference: Uit hierdie ligte herfs (Four prayers during the yearly seasons in the Boland: Out of this light autumn) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

III. Now the earth is glowing days long

Now the earth is glowing days long,
in the bright light that shines from a cloudless sky
and the last trees are still flowering
before spring disappears with the onslaught of summer.

Everything is still jubilant with flower upon flower
that uninterrupted find secret power,
in full growth devolving to tasty fruit
binding joy, energy and taste

in a harvest serving the Creator Himself,
gloriously taking us to a magnificent experience
where we admire the magic power of His works
and realize how glorious, overwhelming summer is:

that what once could flower
now turn into the best fruit, with branches full everywhere.

[Reference: Four prayers during the yearly seasons in the Boland Winter by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

IV. Summer rain

Serenity fell overnight like rain
on the dry meadows of my existence
and uninterrupted and once unobserved the blessings appeared
from Your hand between the thunders that were falling around me.

The whole wide world is soaked where Your waters go

when my adult life suddenly bloomed,
are standing before new splendid horizons,
and dumbfounded I come to the knowledge of Your faithful love.

Here where I am overwhelmed by Your grace
I presume that You lead all paths to growth,
as Your power, life, light convenes in sympathy
where each life at a time comes to fullness

and even insignificant creature are regarded by You
with Your love that shower on sinners as I.

[Reference: Eerste sneeu (Four prayers during the yearly seasons in the Boland:
First snow) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Four Walls Against The Wind And Weather

(after G.A. Watermeyer)

Four walls against the wind and the weather,
four wall to avert the glaring sun,

with a bright lantern burning against the wall
until the hour of midnight,

a blonde wife with green-brown eyes
to keep this place sociable

and when the lightning falls blue-white,
when the rains falls for fourteen days without an end

the fields have turned to green,
are overwhelming in the season

and we thank the almighty Lord
for peach trees that are budding.

Gert Strydom

Four Walls Against The Wind And Weather [1]

Four walls against the wind and the weather,
four wall to avert the glaring sun,

with a bright lantern burning against the wall
until the hour of midnight,

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and when the lightning falls blue-white,
when the rains falls for fourteen days without an end

the fields have turned to green,
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and we thank the almighty Lord
for peach trees that are budding.

Gert Strydom

Four Young Men (A Reply To Ted Hughes)

The old brown and white photograph
of my grandfather and his brothers
fading somewhat after more than a century
show four young men
with sincerity and patriotism
written all over their faces,
dressed in captured kaki war uniforms
belted across their hips
with farmer's hats on their heads
and bandoliers crossed over their chests,
and captured bayoneted
Martini Henri rifles in their hands

and I know the big old teak tree
where they stand
and one looks at his cocky best, one sharp and aware,
one earnest and sincere and all three of them
almost exactly like some cousins of mine
with the middle one closing his eyes slightly
against the bright light
with a fringe protruding from under the hat
and he could have been me
and the similarity is very striking

and at only sixteen, seventeen, eighteen and nineteen
as brothers on horses they rode to war,
and alive they all came back, thread thin
from being without food in the veldt,
with missing skin from their hands
blisters turning into open wounds
from shooting with white hot gun barrels
at forces of outnumbering large
British enemy soldiers
all marksmen, snipers and hunters
but mere farm boys.

[Note: The photograph is of my grandfather Danie Brand and his brothers. Six young men by Ted Hughes.]

Francis And Clare

Still I wonder
what went through the thoughts
of Francis of Assisi
where he was between
his twelve disciples
as he met Clare.

There are things
incomprehensible to some
like when people choose
to life in poverty
to help others
and without a life partner
take life on bravely
and only are dedicated to God.

Gert Strydom

Frangipanis

With bright arms spreading grabbing
the two frangipanis embrace each other,
reach with their fingers to the sun
in a age old gesture
and sometimes they look wild and disorderly
before their flowers burst out in light turquoise
and the wind spread their fragrance,
then they display flowers new and fresh,
while yellow weavers sing happily in their branches
and bees buzz past their flowers.

Gert Strydom

Free (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after A. G. Visser)

From Europe You brought our ancestors to this country
and did settle us here and did lead us further north to the equator
where in this dark Africa a person will everywhere find our bloody-trail
but we were always in the protection of Your mighty hand,
as You have planted our people that as truly religious humans that did follow You
and in times of great distress and danger You were near,
from You come our urge and will to exist as in freedom,
whish is more than an emotion but an ideal in the mind
and always your protection and presence was wonderful,
as for us there is no other living place and no other fatherland
where You have protected us through many wars and oppression,
even when a world power did destroy our farms, houses, yards and towns by fire
where we do settle and are in search of a place in the sun in times of danger
and now I do beg do notice us in times of oppression do restore us again.

[Reference:"Vry" deur A. G. Visser.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Freedom (In Answer To A.G. Visser)

Lord, You have formed our nation,
out of various nations You have built the Afrikaner nation
and led them miraculously to here.

The command comes from You
to get a own freedom,
that urge resides in You
and then our people trekked north
with some up to the equator,

defying barbarian, beast and every other danger
and at the onslaught at Blood River You became involved,
even when the British tried to force us into a kingdom
we later got our freedom, but now:

we are trampled; some of our people are scattered worldwide
and the urge to be free comes out of Your hand, almighty Lord.

[Reference: Vry! (Free!) by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Freedom (In Answer To Willem Fransman (Junior))

The old man walks his long way to freedom,
or so says his book
and everywhere there is only hatred, resentment and tons of regret
there is a freedom that I am still searching for in my life

and in a house that is barred like a prison I have got to hide,
I have got to wait on armed reaction and not the police,
when freedom fighters wants to spend time in my life;
coming for their historically qualified enrichment

while the country about me falls to disrepair, becomes third worldly
when I and my family and friends are not free
and there is something terribly wrong with this freedom
while the new freedom comes to the meaning:

of robbery, rape, murder and torture
as things that this new freedom brings.

Gert Strydom

Freedom (Pleiades)

For some life is at their will,
fantastic full of great joy;
for others there are things as
fear restraining their own lives,
faint pressure by government,
formal acts that does shatter
from what life really should be.

Gert Strydom

Freedom Park

Build your monument to a war
that you have lost at Cuito Cuanavale
and try to deceive the world
about your victory

which was rather your huge loss
and hail Russians and Cubans as your heroes
and we who have paid the cost
knows where victory really laid

and that no bugle ever played its last farewell
to the enemy we sent to hell
and although no one mourns our dead
most of us live on instead.

We do not need to be on any
honour wall
or to be associated
with your heroes
who mowed down people
praying in a church
and set off bombs in the street.

We never lost any battle
nor a war
and our honour is in the lives
of every man, women and child
who in a way are still free.

[Reference: "The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down." Jannie Geldenhuys. 1994. At the front. P240. Johanathan Ball Publishers.]

Freedom[2]

The great world is bright
and can be
a wonderful place to live in
and true love rather gives
than tries to receive
and I want you to be free,
to spent time and energy
on the things that you love
and to gain new knowledge
and have a really great life.

Gert Strydom

Freya As The Stupid Blonde(Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Susan Smith)

In ancient time I did ride on my golden-haired pig-bear
or my golden war-chariot did cut the way short
where the predator cats that were dragging it did roar ominously
but as a blue-eyed blonde you will nowadays notice me
when I climb out of a Mercedes, BMW or Audi and my clothes do perfectly fit
and my teeth and broad smile full of confidence do glisten white,
when I walk with a golden girdle, a T-shirt two numbers too small,
are in genuine leather gladiator sandals, a mini-skirt with a waterline cut,
I am ready for action with my apparent innocence when I throw my hair back,
where big-eyed I systematically deploy my well thought through strategies,
do hold life and death in my fine hands with their shiny nails,
as my lips are ready for war, are bloody red
when in nakedness I do disarm and occupy
when men think that they do adore and love me intimately.

[Reference:"Dom blonde" (Stupid blonde)by Susan Smith.]

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Gert Strydom

Friday Night At The Marders Hotel

A man presses the bell
at the reception
of the Marders hotel,
and is waiting for service.

In the bar there's a ruckus
sounding like fighting,
curses streaming out
and a scream or two
sounding like pain.

Some girls and men play pool,
some sit at stools at the bar,
one or two plays darts
others sit at a table with cards

and the rest of the hotel is shoeless,
with silence walking the corridors,
here and there a couple
walks to a room
completely at their leisure
for an hour of intimate pleasure.

Gert Strydom

Fried Lamb-Chops

I sit in a restaurant do order lamb-chops and chips
where the waitress do walk away with bouncing buttocks,
do talk to another waitress and again do secretively catch my eye,
the noise of the many voices of that multitude
that come and eats at this eating-place,
their laughter and a baby screaming blue murder
for moments do usurp my thoughts.

A Mega-Coffee is served with the meal,
the pretty waitress does smile at me,
it's as if her smile
and the blouse of which the buttons are open
do say much more than her words,
headlines on the newspapers that she does bring
do want to jump from the front-page into my brain
about tornados, tsunamis and earthquakes
and it does appear as if the world is bursting out of her seams,
do want to shake human existence
like a dog does with water from its back,
reports of battle-tanks that gnash through the streets of other countries,
terrorist that rape people and do annihilate whole nations,
of farmers that are robbed tortured and killed
do let me think that the world is coming to its end.

The lamb-chops and chips do taste divine,
the waitress is young, pretty and seductive
as if in a mere moment we can get life-long happiness
and even this thought is tinned
as if a relationship and passion
can be put into a tinned can
and although certainly she do make love with men
there is innocence to her
and the cross on her neck says that she does know Jesus.

The lights in the restaurant becomes dim
while on a small stage
a woman sings sad ballads,
as if her heart is breaking with each word
and on the table a lamp burns,

she gets a chance to rest
and the lights do remain like this.

The waitress is given a break
and comes and sit right next to me
with her short skirt that does slide up her pretty legs
and it's a sure thing that she is trying to court me,
do want to give me more intimate attention,
where I do order for her just what she wants to eat and drink
and she walks to the restrooms to powder her nose
but before I do eat the last piece of lamb-chop

I do wonder about that lamb whose meat I am enjoying,
what did that poor animal know of life?

Did he also feel the sun,
jumped around from pure joy,
did he look at the butterflies and bees,
to his heart's content eat of the grass?

The waitress does return,
do sit much closer to me
with eyes full of promises
and I am astonished to find her hand in mine.

I tell her about growing up on a farm
and when we were children
how my mother, my brother Japie and I
and uncle Frank and aunty Leen and our cousin Francois
did go and visit uncle Pieter on his farm
where our cousins Danie and Frikkie do live.

How on that farm
we had to slaughter a sheep one morning,
how without any consternation it did lie peaceful
while for of peace without any consternation
while death did come to that animal.

How Francois who was town-bred did cry and shout:
"You killers! You hellish killers! "
How later we did skin it
and that meat was prepared for a meal

of which Francois did also feast
as if killing was forgotten.

She was also raised on a farm
but was protect too much to her liking
from the wild cruel world
and the evil, the pleasures and dangers of it
but now she does want to experience everything
as if she is searching for something
that can bring more meaning to her life.

With our conversation her one hand
did under the table start to creep up my thigh
while she clings to my strong hand
with her other hand,
do play with a finger with the lines
and sits in a way that one of her breasts is uncovered
which to my astonishment is without a brassiere
and the shadows bring magic to it
as it's secretive
where it does peep at me with a beautiful large nipple,
where it does resemble a young rose bud
and her legs are spread and open
with the very short skirt
that does glide higher and higher up.

Her blue eyes are a sea of emotions
with the shadows and light
that sometimes makes them brighter
and at times do draw lines over her face
in which very easily I can get lost
and her lips are open and inviting
very near to my face
and on the a lamp does burn
so very romantically
as if this is a meeting place for lovers.

In my thoughts I do see that lamb again
and it does remind me about the Lamb of all lambs
whose flesh did hang and whose blood did flow
and who did die for my and her sins,
for the sins of the whole world

did perish on a cross,
how the curtain of the temple
did tear open
and the lamb did escape to safety,

about the earth that did become dark,
about the thunder that were bashing down,
how there had been a large earthquake
and even the dead did rise,

how selfless His love was
that even those that murdered him He did forgive
and did not want to hold them accountable
and that the heathen Roman soldier
did see Him for who he really was
as the Son of the omnipotent Lord God
and that He did rise by Himself
while the Father and Holy Spirit
was also involved in this wonderful act
but that every one of us was involved in His death
as inherent we are sinful
and for this reason we are the hellish murderers
of the sinless Son of God
who is God.

I smell her perfume and her own smell
that tells me that she is very randy
and her lips are open as if they can give a thousand kisses
while I do tell her all of these things
and she says that she does know this very well
do love Jesus and I see that she is sincere.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Frolicking Grains Of Dust Are Blown Away

Frolicking grains of dust are blown away,
are spreading everywhere,
blown away lies violets
in the marsh and veldt
and all kinds of birds
swish on their wings up and down
when the wind runs past skipping.

Gert Strydom

From A Broken Relationship To Friendship

I do not know how
she is able to turn
a broken relationship into friendship,
as if shattered dreams

has some pleasantries laid into them
and with this thing
I am ill at ease,
especially when she asks me

to write to her
and in the same breathe
tells me not to be personal
in what I write

and even this kind of comment
leaves some pain
and maybe I will refrain
from contacting her at all again.

Gert Strydom

From A Confined Perspective

I am eager to agree
with the great poet Lina Spies
that what we know, we comprehend and say about God
comes from a human perspective

of which the range is confined
and all things on this planet is God's property
the sparrows, dogs, cats loved by me
also belongs to Him

and in His created paradise everything was perfect,
maybe on the new earth
things will also be like that
and let believe who wants to

that the heaven is only for people,
I choose to disagree.

Ps. I do not say this out of a dogmatic perspective
but God himself turns love into meaning.

[Reference: Kritiek (Cryticism) by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

From A Life Of Iniquity

From a life of iniquity the Lord has called me
and although Satan wants to make me but a pauper
I am a child of the everlasting king
and His praises I will shout out and sing.
Even if at times I do feel despair,
as if my whole world is falling apart
in His wisdom He controls every affair
and He still does live within my heart,
He does every day take the greatest care
while He walks ahead of my life's way.

Gert Strydom

From A Photo I Tried To Draw Your Face (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

From a photo I tried to draw your lovely smiling face
I was scared that in my memories you are without a trace
but it was disastrous whenever it I tried to draw
as I can only note word down with flaw upon flaw
where to me your countenance is full of grace,
to me you do have the greatest kind of beauty
where in you the most wonderful woman I do see
and daily with your kindness you do me amaze
I was scared that in my memories you are without a trace.

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Gert Strydom

From A World Of Darkness

From a world of darkness
the people have seen a great light,
a light that shatters the night,
so bright that it exposes everything
as if they are bare in nakedness
and in excitement the crowds of people sing
while they watch the doors of prisons opening.

Freedom from oppression,
freedom from dispossession
freedom from pain, from anger and heartache
freedom from persecution and fear
is in everyone's mind,
with the opportunity to be kind
while through the clouds a new day breaks
and the in His glory the Lord of Lords appear
while His salvation draws near.

Gert Strydom

From Abelard To Heloise

I want much more
than mixed joy and pain
and no comfort
or just memories
are enough for me

and although I am lonely
I am still searching for meaning
and I want to feel you lie beneath me,
hear you call out my name
but we are torn away from each other
and now I have got to press my love
into a few words in a verse.

Gert Strydom

From Adam

From Adam man is surrounded by dust
and each one of us returns to the ground
as if there is a secret crumbling in each cell
we play half blindfolded

until the last sunrise
and so man's time is counted in insignificance.
From Adam man is surrounded by dust
and each one returns to the ground

while the days come and go much too fast,
we do discover love and are wounded
and time makes us whole and healthy again
and like this is the story of each human being.
From Adam man is surrounded by dust
and each one of us returns to the ground

Gert Strydom

From Another Life And Time

Even if I could send a dog out
to try and find you, hunt you down
as stated in another poet's verses

even if that hound
could do irreparable damage
to the man that love you now

and panting bring back as a token,
your panties, stockings
or carry your brassiere in its mouth

you will still remain lost to me,
will still be involved
with somebody else intimately

and someone else will experience
the pleasure that you give,
will hear your cries and sighs,
will comprehend the look in your eyes
and I will remain
a lost love, an old flame
from another life and time.

[Reference: A Dog After Love by Yehuda Amichai.]

Gert Strydom

From Before Time

From before the beginning of time
You did already measure me out,
did determine my humanity and character.
You did know
when I would fall and stand up again
and if I do forget
Your love and sacrifices
I ask that You bring me back to You again.

Gert Strydom

From Birth (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

From my birth to now
I took life on how it is:
there are all kinds of things that I look at
and do view people, tribes and culture in their meaning,
where the Zulu-impi do dance around a fire,
the tikoloshe comes deadly with its attacks,
where people do shelter against the darkness
and constantly in all of this I remain speechless
where I do put into words all things that are unique and mythological,
do write about the absolute truth of history,
try to stop the forces of the darkness, of the hell,
do tell about heroic deeds, the abyss and oppression,
but more than this I do come back to God
and as the only solution and the core I do see Him.

[Reference:"Pantograaf" (Pantograph)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

From Birth My Father Taught Me

From birth my father taught me to trust in God,
to distinguish between both good and bad,
doubts to remove and to hunt for what is good,
to be far greater than what is in the human cell
and to hold on to truth, past life and death
but passion for poetry was on his very breath.

Gert Strydom

From Break Of Day To Evening (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

From break of day to evening
I hear the joyful caroling
of doves, the twittering of sparrows
as they do sing a happy ode to spring.

Gert Strydom

From Day That We First Met

I had the notion that on the journey of life
you would accompany me
but then destiny came with its own strive
where it shook our tranquillity
while you were my friend and my wife
as if the end of this I did see
but again at my doorstep you did arrive
as together we ought to be.

Gert Strydom

From Eternity (Cavatina)

From eternity you were destined
to be with me
and together we have some happy days,
from fear are free
but when from each other we are apart
I am lonely
and I miss you much more than I can tell,
as forever I am under your spell.

Gert Strydom

From Gordon's Bay Harbour

From Gordon's bay harbour
we took a boat
along the coast
of False Bay
and your fingers
knotted through mine
while we sailed
into the ocean.

The launch went up and down
the waves of a calm sea
although a light breeze
was blowing, throwing
drops of spray
into our faces.

Your cheeks were glowing
and your eyes
had the look of adventure
and anticipation
and we took several photographs
of the scenic mountains,
the beaches and shore.

We stopped sailing
at a island of rock
protruding from the waves
that was covered with seals,
which they called Cape sea lions.

The stench of seal dung
and rotting fish
hang heavy in the air
and the boat was rolling to and fro
as well as up and down
and you and some
of the other passengers
got really seasick
and very nauseous.

I took some more photos
trying to ignore the stench
and photographed seals,
waves braking over the rocks,
and everything
but the sea around us.

Those seals had their eyes open
unlike us
for predators like sharks
and shrieking as a saw
going through a board
while more got on those rocks
and sharks started to circle
that island and the boat

and we also felt
like something in the food chain
and were relieved
when the boat's engine
started again
at the first try.

Gert Strydom

From High Up On Chapman's Peak

(for Minette)

From high up on Chapman's Peak I see the ocean
to where it disappears in the distance against the blue sky
where shining it stretches out almost endless,
with the white sun burning brightly above us
I hear your joyful laughter
and have the idea that maybe you will kiss me
in the nights that are without number,
that falls adoring on us both
where like mere children we make secret plans
while big-eyed you are watching me carefully,
I do remember Hangklip where the shadow
stretched out long from both of us,
and we entered the shade with a few steps
but you are now far away from remembering.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

From King Menelaus Of Sparta To Helen Of Troy

I reproach you that you drive me to war
that you set the lives of thousands of soldiers
into havoc and danger
that you regard passion higher than love,
higher than each life in Troy,
that your beauty burns with a noble fire
which devours everything,
that you draw it like a weapon
and do not regard
the calamity, destruction and misery
which your deeds bring.

Gert Strydom

From My Childhood Days

From my childhood days I do remember
how the duikers in the hillocks
did turn their heads and big-eyed
did prick up their ears
and run away before my footfall,
the whole lot together
into a own direction

where the rock rabbits did scuttle away
in all directions
as if I want to catch one of them
or maybe everyone,

how the coots did call from the reeds at the marsh
and the black widow birds with their long tails
did fly luring over the reeds
and how the plovers did dive down on me
as if they were bombers
and then did drop from the air
and with a so-called broken wings
trying to lead me away from their nests

and the sun in the late afternoons
that did glow red over the hillocks
as if it wanted to hide
just on the other side.

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Gert Strydom

From My First Glance Of You (Cavatina)

From my first glance of you, when we did meet,
love did begin
and now its presence is so very great
it feels as sin
when you draw near to me, it's clear to me
that I can win
nothing more and it's like no other thing
when love grows selfless without questioning.

Gert Strydom

From My Mother I Got Love That Is Endless

From my mother I got love that is endless,
that comes selflessly in silent sacrifice
and some people see this as insignificant
but Dad far too early was missing in death
and of him I sometime just have knowledge;
.his qualities come as a suggestion.

From mother
Discipline and zeal comes to meaning,
her steadfastness is a strange thing
in a world where people do not keep themselves in check.
I know what love is, in the forgiveness
of mother.

Gert Strydom

From Normality Into Something Great (Refrain Stanza)

From normality into something great you did my life turn
where with your sweet kisses my whole body did burn
and I never knew that love could such true bliss possess
saw you so lovely almost divine in your sun-dress
thought that nothing could such joy overturn
where to my life you brought happiness and hope
filled every day to its greatest kind of scope
in my body my heart did around and around churn
where with your sweet kisses my whole body did burn.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

From Oblivion

I did come into this world
as if a cancer does slowly, slowly eat away the remembering
and about the memories of my childhood days
there are but few things
that I can make concrete and bright
but sometimes I do remember the voice of my dad,
how full of love he had been
and how my childish hand fitted neatly
into his bigger coarse hand,
until on a day he did disappear into the earth,

about a broom that I did push against my head
and did fall with it and how that groove did cut into my hairline,
how I did make my face
blackier than the night with shoe-polish,

about the Portuguese people that called me bambino
and how they did give me Marie biscuits and all kinds of olives
but yet the great longing do remain
as in a way I can twist time
just for moments back.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

From Pools Of Blood

From pools of blood bushes, trees
and aloes grow in the veldt
where British soldiers
fired on my countrymen
and some bayoneted them.

Concentration camps where twenty thousand
women and children died without dignity
at the hand of foreigners,
who claimed to be fellow Christians
are now covered with grass
and that past are being blotted out
as if the misery, the indignity,
the mass murder
never happened
and great Queen Victoria
is still dignified

and still I hold Great Britain responsible
for the murder of my great grand mother,
for the destruction
of my great grand father's farm,
for the seizure
of my other great grand father's property,
for sending him to St. Helena
as a prisoner of war,
for invading my country
for making profit from the minerals
and the quarter Scotsman in me
together with my three quarters Afrikaner parts
forever wants to be free
from the enslavement
which that foreign nation brought.

[Note: My own great grandmother died in a British concentration camp and my great grandfather was sent by the British to St. Helena as a prisoner of war and as a result of this, my grandfather(Gert Strydom) grew up in a orphanage.]

From Sad Experience I Do Know (English Ballade)

(after Dorothy Parker)

Love causes far more pain
than mere sticks and stones
and when from your life she is gone
her memories and sometimes spite remains

Choir:

From sad experience I do know
that there might not be a more painful woe
than a female's scorn, her anger and hate
and be very careful before it's too late.

If you do not truly love her, then be aware
as with her you do really dare
as a female is a really dangerous pet
that does not have the ability to forget.

Even if your love is past and through
you are still trapped in a kind of fix,
she will throw at you more harmful things than bricks,
she will ransom you to what she thinks is due.

[Reference: "Ballade of the unfortunate man" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

From Severe Sorrow He Almost Went Mad

(after Robert Ranke Graves)

From severe sorrow he almost went mad
when he suddenly saw some strange things
in nature and the universe
and maybe it came from too much sorrow;

he noticed small things like falling leaves,
the smallest white flower slowly opening,
the first tiny whistle of a small bird,
thunder hitting far in the distance

even rocks glistening with black metal,
he even saw wings of birds fluttering,
the movement of every small snake,
but between life and death he could not reach

and he could not look at his buried wife
or living go to that other kingdom.

Gert Strydom

From The Beginning Of Time

When I look at the Milky Way
it's as if from the beginning of time
I do long for you through all the ages
as if I now have you after a big struggle
as if fragments of the past
are still following us, are constantly affirming you,
as if you are coming to me after many prayers
as a carrier of love and light
and you are so startling familiar
as if I do not know you from only today
and I am afraid that something can violate this moment,
while I am caught in your sunshine laughter;
between shadow and light there is a fine line
and we are linked right there.

Gert Strydom

From The Blue Sky Falls A Small Dragonfly (Novelinee)

From the blue sky falls a small dragonfly
at our feet are a myriad of flowers
to which some busy bees passes us by,
in the distance high an oak towers
while the silence gives words to our love
that comes with an unknown secret power,
as if nothing, can ever it remove
while lingering is that passionate hour
slender like a special kind of flower.

Gert Strydom

From The Days Of Yonder

From the days of yonder
you did prepare our garden beautifully
and like a English teagarden
planted several flowers together
that they can spread
their magical fragrances and colours throughout any season

and now that summer is coming

and God lets His rain pour down
our garden has become a piece of paradise.

Gert Strydom

From The Depth Of My Heart (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

From the depth of my heart I do you truly know,
the people that do you slander I want to smother,
that as a person you do move me like no other,
that with you God did His goodwill on me bestow

when you came to me in a life full of woe
while people did me severally bother,
I do long for the two of us to be together
and for you my heart do with passion glow

together with you I do want to live well
and although at a time there had been tears
through decades I do you adore,
to you daily of my love I will tell
I want to be with you through the years
as I love you much more than before.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

From The First Moment

From the first moment
you were beautiful to me
and something in the first look
and the spirit and soul in your eyes
that burn like golden suns,
showed a angel
and also totally a woman.

When you came up to me
for a moment
I felt unworthy
and you were and you were modest
and even a little shy
and when I looked
in serenity at you
you touched something of my soul
as if destiny and God
had already planted you deep in my heart.

Gert Strydom

From The First Moment (1)(Free Verse Sonnet)

From the first moment you did love me mother,
where you looking in my eyes is in my first memories,
where I see you as my first source of love
and your sacrifices through the years remain with me.
Maybe God does take care that a person does get the right mother,
where from my childhood you did entrust me to Him
and to me you are the most worthy mother and woman,
where old age is now cutting you down in your years
but your words and deeds remain ringing in heaven,
where true you do live day by day near to God,
I wish I could have your mercy and patience with other people,
where through my sorrows I do think about your prayers,
do strife for your sincere selfless love in life
and with this I want to thank you for a lifetime.

Gert Strydom

From The First Moment (Free Verse Sonnet)

From the first moment you did love me mother,
where you looking in my eyes is in my first memories,
where I see you as my first source of love
and your sacrifices through the years remain with me.
Maybe God does take care that a person does get the right mother,
where from my childhood you did entrust me to Him
and to me you are the most worthy mother and woman,
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but your words and deeds remain ringing in heaven,
where true you do live day by day near to God,
I wish I could have your mercy and patience with other people,
where through my sorrows I do think about your prayers,
do strife for your sincere selfless love in life
and with this I want to thank you for a lifetime.

Gert Strydom

From The First Moment That I Saw You

From the first moment that I saw you,
you are constantly in my thoughts,
while your image lingers with me
as if you stick to my soul like burr-weed,
or like a virus from which I cannot be escape,
are bounded to me spirit to spirit,
leaving a impression in all my body and senses
as if it had been divinely destined to be so.
From the first time that I loved you
I am caught in my humanity
while I know that without you my life is meaningless
and no other woman I even want to be aware of;
without you in my life I am lost
and all of my days are meaningless.

Gert Strydom

From The Holy Fire That Should Never Die (Rondine)

From the holy fire that should never die
men were sent to sabotage, maim and kill
to poison, plant landmines with a deadly skill
until flaming rockets fell out of the sky,
rising up did burning wood and ashes fly
that made the glowing embers move and spill
from the holy fire.

Armed soldiers were not just driving by,
armoured cars came roaring over the hill,
screaming death until everything was still
burnt out did the last old white embers lie,
from the holy fire.

Gert Strydom

From The Moment (Strambotto Toscano)

From the moment when time, this world did begin,
together the two of us must then have been,
in my heart, spirit and soul you jumped in
from the moment when this world had first light seen
together we were in a world full of sin
and for each other we must have been quite keen
from that far distant first awakening spring
God had to us an unbreakable love bring.

Gert Strydom

From The Moment When Life Found Substance

(after Solomon Ibn Gabirol)

From the moment when life
found substance in me
when cells of my mother and father combined
You have formed me in a special way,
You have loved me past that which I comprehend
and have known me in the way that I am,
have led me; have been there in every longing and care
and in the years of my rebellion, in every iniquity and sin
Your love has reached out, have known me
and all of my weaknesses and faults
are clear to Your gaze
and I have got to confess
that which brings parting,
every weakness and sin
of which You know all the reasons,
as you have loved me from the very begin.

[Reference: "Before I was Born" by Solomon Ibn Gabirol.]

Gert Strydom

From The Stars (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

From the stars I cannot events of the future pluck
or find any answers in this kind of mere astronomy
that does indicate any kind of fate or kind of luck
yet above me they do hold a serene kind of quality

but about my feelings and love for you I can tell,
while thunder, wind and rain as sings do indicate,
where day upon day I do constantly wish you well
where I belief God does provide more than just fate.

From my senses about you understanding I derive
while the stars give direction to me and is God's art
where in His omnipotence in space He lets them thrive
but you and your wishes here on earth I do take to heart

even if at times it does my own life in the way it is invert
and to the feeble science of astrology no one will me convert.

[Reference:"Sonnet 14 Not from the stars I do my judgement pluck"
by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

From The Time That Every Day Had Begun (Strambotto Toscano)

From the time that every day had begun
life has got a struggle, an ageless kind of plea,
and from the awakening of the white hot sun,
even creatures in the unbounded sea
was threatened as they were having some fun
yet from all of these things our true love stands free
as it sparkles like a star during the darkest night,
forever shines bright with its own kind of light.

Gert Strydom

From The Very Creation (English Sonnet)

From the very creation as a answer to all men
God was present on each day
sheltering us against each omen
while moving in His secret way

and now in this age He is present still
and unseen He does His works perform
and with a unknown mysterious skill
He constantly shelters against destiny's storm

and whatever road we do take,
even if we do head to a life of dread,
His miracles He does make
as He constantly walks ahead

and in our greatest incompetence
still merciful is His love and providence.

Gert Strydom

From The Very First Glance (English Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

I do love you in days of sun and rain,
do recall your bright and beautiful smile
and know you in both pleasure and pain
but I have not been with you for a while.

You do make my heart, soul and spirit sing
and to me you are perfect, sweet and fair,
in my memory remains your glance giving
and the locks and colour of your blonde hair.

In you I did a great companion find,
from the very first glances my love begun
and now constantly you are in my mind,
to me you do remain the only one,

who know me completely in my life,
who are my dear friend and lovely wife.

Gert Strydom

From This City I Want To Escape (Free Verse Quatern)

From this city I want to flee,
to find a place of some solace,
not again I want to return,
where city lights sometimes blind people.

I still think about how it was,
from this city I want to flee,
I cannot fit in this anthill,
a bridge to escape, I must find.

The city makes me uneasy,
I want to wander on the beach,
from this city I want to flee,
I want to vanish by bus or train.

Now I splash in a city stream,
at times are in the open air,
about freedom I can just dream,
from this city I want to flee.

Gert Strydom

From This Frenzy I Have Escaped

From this frenzy I have escaped
where buildings tower into the air
and people swarm like ants
chasing the big farce

Were happiness just lies behind the glitter
and nobody can ever have enough
and every thing is superficial
if you really tell the truth.

I tore myself away
from the city that vexes the soul
and everyone plays a role
constantly chased by the preference of others.

Away from the darkness
where no feelings are left for others
and the inaccessible light falls on concrete
and peace only comes in a coffin.

¶ Envoi

From this frenzy I have escaped
back to the rural places
of my youth
and I went back to the open air

where the blue almost folds around me,
far away from the place that harass people
I found peace
and new power to hold on to.

Gert Strydom

From This World You And I Have Escaped

(for Daleen)

From this virus destroyed world you and I have escaped,
with Noddy that on my heels are jogging
and we are back to another time and existence
where exuberant he barks for everything that moves,
in a place where every beautiful thing exists eternally,
we walk through beaches and streets and pick flowers,
just where we want to we go and you throw your arms around me,
I pick golf-ball sized wild-plums and push them into your hands,
we are at every beautiful place where we have been,
where old memories can become real again,
where everything fits perfectly into God's master plan
and no law, army or police do lock-down people,
where eternally as mine you are with me and happy
and people do not miss each other to pieces months long.

Gert Strydom

From Where

From where does life
spring?

If not from God,
from where
did that that first energy
find the way,
to construct
a living thing?

Gert Strydom

Fruit Of The Flesh

Past the perspective I will find the old footpath
that leads directly to your heart, soul and body
to experience the blossoms of your lips in the spring,
to feel the sun of your eyes burn into me,
will eat the soft fullness of your breasts like golden cantaloupes
will pluck the dark sweet grapes of your nipples,
will experience the spraying rain of your pleasure like a tangerine
and I will strip us both of all heartache and sorrow,
will eternally love you alone that we can become satisfied.

Gert Strydom

Fulfilment

(after S. J. Pretorius)

When naked two people do melt together
then love becomes an absolute reality
when thoughts, dreams come
as a type of concrete sensuality
when eternity crumbles to mere time
when the essence of life comes new
then pleasure is changed into happiness
and its as if something precious suddenly flowers,
when even death and time are astonished in a mere moment.

[Reference: "Vervulling" (Fulfilment by S. J. Pretorius.)]

Gert Strydom

Full Moon

How silver white you hang tonight
with the wide world
basking in your magical rays
where shadows at popular trees
draw out very long
and it's as if the singing of the beetles
down at the dam
in this night cuts through all things
but it's as if
I cannot find peace anymore
in these simple things.

Gert Strydom

Full Moon [1]

I see the moon in a puddle of water
where it reflects silver-white,
it hangs above the branches of the pepper tree
while a bright white star does jump

and I think of our promises to each other,
of your heart that you gave to me
when the sun, moon and stars were almost tangible
along with the heat of your body.

When another star does fall
and the moon does become much larger
its almost as if I can touch it,
can put it on a necklace

and I wonder if it holds a secret kind of power,
if it can make our love deeper and more intense
if I could hold it against my heart
and I wonder what the stars do forecast tonight?

Gert Strydom

Full Of Innocence Was Your Lovely Face (Sicilian Sonnet)

Today I prayed to God to answer a prayer,
I prayed against them that work underhand,
that every word you would really understand,
asked God in your day to really take care,

sunlight fell in through the window's square
as I took my blue inked pen in my hand,
saw the silver glow of the wedding band,
remembered the nuances of your fair hair,

today remembered your face more or less,
could not see the aspects of its true grace
remembered again every curly blonde tress
and full of innocence was your lovely face
where it did your true heart sweetly express
of love for me and for God a dwelling-place.

Gert Strydom

Funerals

Too many times nowadays
I have to go to church
to attend a funeral
as if life
is coming to an end.

There are few things
that cuts through me
like death
and like every
other person
I would rather live eternally.

To see a coffin disappearing
in a hole in the ground
makes you frequently realize
how final
this farewell is.

Gert Strydom

Funerals [2]

Too many times nowadays
I have to go to church
to attend a funeral
as if life
is coming to an end.

There are few things
that cuts through me
like death
and like every
other person
I would rather live eternally.

To see a coffin disappearing
in a hole in the ground
makes you frequently realize
how final
this farewell is.

Gert Strydom

Further He Lies Silent

When with his long fur coat
he comes and lies on my lap
and look at me with golden eyes
with black pupils,
his front paws tread softly
while he makes a nest for himself.

There's a purr sound
coming from his throat
and further he lies silent
while my fingers
stroke his head
and woolly ginger stomach
and two paws
gather my hand at times
like only my serval can

[Reference: Ginger persian cat here referred to as a serval.]

Gert Strydom

Fused Are We

Fused are we in thoughts, body and soul
even if the earth rocks about on the judgement day,
nothing can rip this love, these feelings away
while you are making me better, are making me whole;
this love is totally perfect and selfless
as the very essence of God it does possess.

Gert Strydom

Fusillade

The heaven is bright blue
where Afrikaner guards look at the victim
while they lead him to the abattoir
an Afrikaner man that fiercely keeps direction.

The look in his eye is sturdy while he accepts his lot,
his eyes penetrates them that stare at him,
as if he knows that he has to pay a price
proclaimed by a British official

that has betrayed his Afrikaner soul,
who is turning his own sails to the best wind
and the eyes of Jopie Fourie close for himself,
his country and his brothers who are slaughtering him.

Blindfolded he sees darkness
but knows that his life is set right
before the creator God
and that moment gets new meaning

draws out for a eternity,
somewhere a shrill whistle blows,
rifles are lifted surely
and when the shots rang out
a Boer boy falls
and the smoke of gunpowder hangs heavy in the air.

[References: The firing squad of Jopie Fourie on command of Jan Smuts.
Fusillade by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

Garden In My Inner Square

I planted a vegetable garden
in the inner square opposite a mural
and next to it there are flowers that only in the morning hour
spread their cups and spiral up against every side,
where it finds a holding place and grow hillock on hillock
over every thing with purple flowers that only last a short time.

I planted a vegetable garden
in the inner square opposite a mural,
where mountains tooth out blue in the background
and field after field of purple lavender bushes stand at the front
and there's a shop owner sending his servants on bicycles around
and at the bottom in fruitful red sand
a vegetable garden was planted by me.

Gert Strydom

Gay The Hot Summer Does Begin (Italian Sonnet)

Gay the hot sunny summer day does begin
where yesterday was filled with rain and pain
and in the past it and its hardships do remain
where today and in the future you do enter in

and this love is so great that it does feel like sin
where I cannot wait to see you once again
where you are near even in my days of rain
where against hardship we both dare to win

outside the weaver chatters while it builds a nest,
the turtledoves flutter down while they coo,
the black-collard barbet does call for its mate
and with you in my life I am truly blest
where our love is always constant and true
and it's a hell of a thing to live separate.

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Gert Strydom

General Cat (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Etienne van Heerden)

In the piece of veldt across the road
where at a time were lion cages he lives,
where antelope do constantly graze around him,
out of the range of the people that do hate him,
that views him as a wild cat and do talk surly with him
where he is well fed on field mice and many doves,
at night do lead all of the cats on hunting expeditions
but constantly he yearns for an own mate
and right through the day lays streched out in the hot embrace of the sun,
like a leopard or serval only apparently languid
and when the night comes he is the front general
that treks through the storm-drains with his army
do angrily growl at each suricate, mongoose, mouse and feathered thing
when he and his army go and get them out of their nests.

[Reference: "Opstoker" (Instigator) by Etienne van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

General Christiaan De Wet

(After A.G. Visser)

From out of the naught
a Boer commando comes riding,
hitting the British enemy quickly and bravely

before galloping away
and before the British can recover
they attack again at another place

being master marksmen, great horsemen
riding through the valleys of hillocks
using guerrilla tactics

with a brilliant strategic leader
general Christiaan de Wet
riding at the head of them

teaching the British soldiers, their officers and generals
lesson after lesson
and a ransom is put on general de Wet's head,

soldiers are sent to capture or kill him
and with his faithful horse
no one is able to touch him and free he stays instead

and one freezing night, one of the Boer sentries
brings him a citizen who wants to join the fighting
and the hero of a hundred battles

turns bleak and his bright eyes goes dim and before him
is a child that has escaped from a concentration camp
who want to join for the sake of freedom

and the war drags on and on with the British
decimating the farms, killing livestock,
burning houses even towns down

driving more women and children

into concentration camps
and to their deaths

and at the end of the war
Christiaan de Wet, the Commandant General
is the President of the Orange Free State

for only one day and has to sign
the treaty of the Peace of Vereeniging
and the war is shattering and it's a bitter, bitter thing.

[Reference: Die jongste burger (the youngest citizen) by A.G. 's note: This poem is written in remembrance of the twenty thousand (some figures are as high as thirty five thousand) innocent white Afrikaner women and children that died in British concentration camps, after their farms were scorched by the British in the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa, which includes a great grandmother of mine. For a clear picture of these atrocities read my epic poem "Through the eyes of a field coronet" which is based on the eyewitness account of field coronet JJ Potgieter.]

Gert Strydom

General Christiaan De Wet At Doornberg

(after David Naude)

In the dust lay de Wet's son;
he prayed to God, further did not say a word,
traitors came under a white flag,
spied for the British before the battle;
it was very sad to see
while a brave man served his country.

On his hands was his own son's blood
but he still gave courage to his men
causing the British and traitors to loose,
driving them back over the Zant River
winning more fame in the world's eyes
while a brave man served his country.

The British had fled past Winburg
to avoid general de Wet's commando,
some of the traitors were very scared
when the Boer commando captured them;
in de Wet's eyes God was still providing,
while a brave man served his country.

[Reference: 'Die slag van Doornberg' ('The battle at Doornberg' by David Naude.)]

Gert Strydom

General Piet Cronje At Magersfontein (Cavatina Sequence)

I

"Hush citizens, it's the old general, "
some young boys say
"Morning men, " I reply looking at them,
seeing the day
breaking over the hillocks in the east,
still far away
in force the enemy is gathering,
in trenches our citizens are waiting.

It is cold and still dark with lightning falling,
the rain pours down,
our own positions are camouflaged
and overgrown,
on an unexpected wing they do come,
somewhat unknown,
seven times general Wauchope is hit,
as snipers most my men are fighting fit.

Against the railway track I wait with men,
this exact place
is where the enemy break through must come,
and in God's grace
my small flying commando will crush them
as we do race
forward a hundred paces to start shooting,
bravely not worrying about anything.

II

With that first great British defeat I could
not establish
the number of their dead, or their wounded,
to replenish
our forces would have been the sensible thing,
as to finish

the war once and for all, but commando
after commando then did homeward go.

As a flashpoint with forty thousand troops
Methuen attacks,
after three months of heavy bombardment
I say draw back,
all of my weary citizens do not
great courage lack
but only the brave four thousand of us,
some seventy five thousand cannot crush.

Our situation is very precarious,
many women
and children have joined us from some farms,
most of the men
are without any horses and do walk,
my abdomen
has a wound from an exploding British shell,
constant British bombardments make life hell.

Gert Strydom

Genesis (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to Ina Rousseau)

I

On the first day he brought light out of the nought,
laws were already cast between order and disorder, as it ought,
on the second day he did divide water above and below,
on the third day the earth did not without water glow,
on the fourth day into being the sun, moon and stars he brought,
on the fifth day animals, fish and birds did appear
and on the sixth day man was made in His image and to Him dear,
on the seventh day He did rest and man had His special company sought,
laws were already cast between order and disorder, as it ought,

II

everything was perfect around Him in the sky, water and on the land
when the whole creation and man came from His hand
but with free will He created man as a living being,
with love touched both Adam and his wife Eve, touched everything
and astounded man did his world and place understand,
had to rule and bring children into life to be happy,
everywhere birds sang in joy and were free
and everything was utterly wholesome and grand,
when the whole creation and man came from His hand.

[Verwysing: "Genesis" by deur Ina Rousseau.]

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Gert Strydom

Gentling A Wildcat

The yellowish-red of the caracal
blended like natural camouflage
into the yellow-brown winter grass
and when it moved its head,
the pointed ears with tufts
of black hair caught my eye.

Eighteen kilograms of hate
and pent up rage
hissed and growled at me
and white teeth
was biting death
out of the air.

Far too weak to move from
a hunter's shot
and caked
with blood oozing
from its lungs
a paw clawed the air.

No birds and small mammals
or any lesser antelope
were to fall
to its claws and teeth again
and as life faded away
with the setting sun,
I saw hate glaring
out of yellow eyes.

Some faculty of mine
let me stretch out my hand
to stroke the soft head
between the pointed ears
and something changed
inside that deadly cat
and for the last moment,
it was at peace
and to this day

I can swear
it sounded
like a kitten being stroked
as life ebbed away.

[Reference: "Gentling a Wildcat" by Douglas Livingstone.]

Gert Strydom

Gently The Sun Oozes

Gently the sun oozes through the big old tree
where we both linger for moments in the shade,
around us the garden is bright like a painting,
blades of grass are knee high in the veldt
across the road where plovers are calling each other
and glowing white the moon hangs in the blue sky;
it's as if I am dreaming as you do really love me
and unexpectedly you squeeze my hand and I get a kiss.

Gert Strydom

Ghost From The War

A military base close to the border
that divides our country from that of the enemy,
a tent through which the wild wind
at gale force strength blows red sand,
pressed into a war by politicians
who decide about the destiny of men.

A trench where enemy soldiers,
women and children lie shot dead,
ripped apart by hand grenades
and mortar bombs
and from the outside
it looks like patriotism, national interest
for which you do service
but on the inside you are caught
by destiny
where other people like gods
take decisions that have an impact on you.

Dead are the innocent,
bystanders, a young man
who hasn't even come to age
and there are flames
that burns right through the thorn bushes,
where a Ratel armoured car is burning
and I wonder about the presence of God,
about the lot of man
and the thorn bush burns, the whole veldt
is in flames.

Being lost makes me sober
while I try hard to forget
of the havoc that I know,
how war ravages, destroys, tramples
and how easily people die, especially those
that doesn't really deserve it
and everybody are settled into
just another number and name.

[Reference: Ghosts from the call by Japie S Strydom:

" a fortress,
a trench,
a tent,
an institution

for the mentally insane;

Big syllables on the outside in large characters type:

GET EVERYTHING HERE IN HUGE QUANTITIES

From the outside

a shadow that falls without end

from the inside a prison.

Being bound,

lost,

day long working, trying to remember,

remembering to withdraw,

to spend time, by writing meaningless sentences

wondered, though about:

mother,

our home,

brother

no Father.

a command,

a decree,

An invitation to recognize,

identification of:

a soldier

a man,

a boy,

still somewhat a child,

killed.

Killed between the branches

of a burning umbrella-thorn bush

almost like Moses with God,

but burnt right out of his boots

almost not stopped burning

with white phosphor that doesn't want to die

I saw again today:

In the thick bush

man

– returned to earth

in the stomach blood of a boy

mixed with sand.” (My English translation.)]

Gert Strydom

Ghosts Of All The Past Mornings (Elfin Stanza Sonnet)

This day brings very sweet tranquillity
ghosts of other days, of some past morning
are present during this bright day in spring,
outside there is a kind of dignity

insects are buzzing up and down, are free
some are fluttering on a fragile wing,
you are dressed exceedingly lovely
while thousands of small birds do outside sing,

but this sunshine envelops everything
there is happiness in all that I see,

I have lived in times of real fighting
and have survived while you did love me,
our lives at times have been quite exciting
and every single day I see your beauty.

Gert Strydom

Gi Jane

The moment when I saw you, when your eyes gleamed
there was suddenly a roaring in my blood
and you did walk right into my heart
when eternity did flutter greet us both,
and you smiled without any kind of hesitation.
We were outside Luhathla head quarters
when I jumped out of a Ratel armoured car,
full of military formality,
you were pretty that afternoon just after four.

Gert Strydom

Gi Jane Iii

You were convinced that the work of God
is present in all natural things
and for you His love was real and true
as a secret kind of process with knowledge.
At a time I saw you under the stars
your lips were soft, your body hot
when breathless you held me tight
and years later I am somewhat poor
without your love.

Gert Strydom

Gideon Scheepers

There's a Boer commandant
that proofs himself at Magersfontein
and help to beat the British there
and at Paardeberg on horseback,
rides right through them
and they cannot touch him.

When his commando
enters the Cape Colony
rail tracts are blown away
and British trains stand and wait
and there are many Cape Boers
that joins him
to fight against
the overwhelming British might.

The British give guns
to the black population
and send them to farmsteads
to murder women and children
and to rape
and to Gideon Scheepers it's more than enough
and it hits him like a hammer blow
and every black man
that his commando catches carrying a firearm
is hanged.

Then it happens
that the British find Gideon Scheepers
lying ill in the field
and they execute him
and somewhere in the field
he is pushed into an unmarked grave
and even today
nobody knows where
Gideon Scheepers lies.

[References: The rank of Commandant is equivalent to that of Lieutenant-Colonel. The heroic story of Gideon Scheepers during the second Anglo-Boer

war.]

Gert Strydom

Gideon Scheepers (Terzanelle)

To form a cairn, I write these words about a remarkable man,
commandant Gideon Scheepers, executed in gross neglect
who was seen by the British as a rebel and partisan

and they treated him without any decency or respect
when in the veldt they captured an ill man as a prisoner of war.
Commandant Gideon Scheepers, executed in gross neglect

proofed himself at the battle of Magersfontein before
gathering more men, blowing away train tracks,
when in the veldt they captured an ill man as a prisoner of war

who acted against armed blacks
who stopped them from pillaging farms, raping, killing and looting,
gathering more men, blowing away train tracks,

the British executed him, with a firing squad shooting
a brave man, who acted fearless
who stopped them from pillaging farms, raping, killing and looting

and they buried him in an unmarked grave, rather careless.
To form a cairn I write these words about a remarkable man,
a brave man, who acted fearless
who was seen by the British as a rebel and partisan.

[References: The rank of Commandant is equivalent to that of Lieutenant Colonel. The heroic story of Gideon Scheepers during the second Anglo-Boer war, who was captured while being ill in the veldt as a normal combatant, but treated like a rebel and shot by the British, who buried him in a unmarked hole in the ground.]

Gert Strydom

Gigantic It Does Fly

Gigantic it does fly past my head,
if it's a humblebee I do not know but it is a bee
that hangs on the purple-blue flowers of the big sage-bush
on a hot spring afternoon to get some of the nectar,

to quench its great thirst and it's pedantic
and tonight when I do kiss you in the bedroom,
when the juice of your lips do fulfil me
then you bring fulfilment to my earthly lust.

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Gert Strydom

Girl

At the Union buildings, in Pretoria
the sun was setting
and that winter night was freezing
at the begging of dusk

and I took some photographs
of the buildings lighting up
of the city's winking eyes awakening

and the wind was cutting right through
my leather jacket
and down below
an old black lady
was collecting
her framed photographs
which she was selling to tourists

when almost unseen a coloured girl
in a bright blue flimsy dress
stepped out and approached her.

The first stars
were only beginning to shine
and it was surprising to me
to see the old lady
giving money to the girl
who was dressed in summer clothes

and the wind brought the sound of their voices
right up to me
and I heard the old lady instructing her
to buy a bread and a carton of milk,
not to sleep in the gardens
beneath the stars
as danger was lurking in the city
with criminals ready to rob and rape
and from that scene
I can still not escape.

Girl (Sonnet)

(For Annelize, in answer to N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Maybe it's with the impression of a young man
that I do think back of you with your lips that do shine,
that I want to jerk the things of the past from oblivion
as time and again you do climb back into my heart.
You were to me the most beautiful girl with light
that burned into the soul that sparkled in your eyes
and as a virgin your love was sincere and intense
where we did exist before God and His omnipotence
and where nowadays I do stand in the dark and black waters
I do forget all of the sorrow and do believe and do hope
that we are hardwired into each other
that we are destined to walk through life together
and even in my days of oppression and pain
you do stay in my unconsciousness shining like a bright light.

[Reference: "Jy was 'n kind" (You were a child) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Girl Of Loveliness

Girl of loveliness,
lass that destiny brings to my life,
miraculously innocent and mature,
blushing and shy at times,
aglow with passion
like a enkindled flame
you mean more
than every thing
in the world to me.

Girl of sincerity
accompany me on my voyage
and let me guide thee
like a tiller that sets the way
and let us together
find time to play,
work and pray

Gert Strydom

Girl On The Street

On one cloudy night you came
while it felt as all the world
was rushing by
and cars were driving
up and down in the street.

You're pretty face
was wet from the rain
and you were sheltering
next to a lighted display windowpane.

Some innocence was in your eyes,
but it was clear that you
had experienced life
and a shared cigarette was enough
to bring you close to me.

You kissed me without any reason
and your desire was burning,
on your hot soft lips
and you smiled
and hugged me for a moment.

I smelled your perfume
and your soft hair
brushed my face
and you were sweet and hot,
and a car stopped
and you had simply left.

Gert Strydom

Girl With The Long Blonde Hair

Girl with the long blonde hair,
you wiped a lost tear
out of your eye
when the jet
made the skyline of Los Angeles
fade away in the distance
and giant buildings
disappeared into naught.

So I wondered if you know
how a green country
with plains
and open spaces of the Karoo looks
and have you looked
at wild game grazing,
or will nature
be strange to you?

I couldn't wait
to be back in my own country
and your opinions about apartheid,
knowing something
but without comprehension,
for a while
pinched me sore
and it was evident
that you didn't really understand
and also that my country
are slowly but surely
falling to pieces.

I told you something
about my people,
about a country
where the sun always shine
and that I also
just want a place there
and the break
with your boyfriend in Iraq

had split your heart
in two
and we talked for a long time
and suddenly you comprehended
that Afrikaners are just like
any other people
and you were already half in love
when we had to part,
but it was apparent
that we are living
in two different worlds.

Gert Strydom

Girls

Girls do hold all of spring and summer
in their embraces,
do have the summer-sun in their smiles
do have the softness of snow in their hearts
and at times every mature woman becomes like this.

Gert Strydom

Girls That We Do Not Discuss

One day at the hotel 224,
a beautiful girl crossed
the street to talk to me
and her words "how's it"
still stays with me.

You can find girls on street corners
and you can find girls
who stay away from the streets,
and live in palaces
and act without any concern
to morality

When I see a beautiful woman
driving past in a slk,
I wonder from where
her money comes.

a Young girl
that sits in a buss shed
in Wessels Street
and enjoys an ice-cream
and throws an inviting look
still watches me.

When you are newly divorced
and get better treatment
from a girl of passions
than from a head doctor
you are surely
not free from sin and remorse.

Still I know that these girls
are humans, like any other person
and at times go to church
and sometimes pray for themselves
and they also have feelings
of pain and are glad at times
and live secret lives.

Gert Strydom

Give Big Power

If like Roy Campbell
I could let thunder
flame red out of my words

and with truth
striking like a cobra
could paralyse the guilty ones

no baboon would have to salute
the rising moon
or Shaka would not have to rise
from the dead,
as my words would show direction
with magical power of their own.

Let every thing that I write
not only struck the mark,
but be the conscience
of this country
and stay behind
as a part of me

and let the ones that read my poems
be swept along
into a own world

and give big power
to the words that I leave behind,
that with time
my words become exceptional.

{References: Far be the bookish muses! and To a pet cobra by Roy Campbell.}

Gert Strydom

Give Me The Good News

Old song stays with me
that says, "give me the good news"
and I wonder
what the news will be today
and what I am going to read in the papers.

The banner headlines are
"teenage sword killer in jail,
taxi driver guilty,
Caster gender shock results
and Transnet still off the rail."

I wonder where our old world
is going too,
while I stand in front of the offices
of the Pretoria News.

It like other events
has changed the truth
and the record that was broken,
are now without importance
and we are in a country
where nobody,
is sure of his life.

The Wimpy is already open
and I walk there,
to buy a Mega coffee
and a young girl smiles at me
while she is also getting a coffee.

Outside there's
a bright orange sun
that is hanging
under a few loose clouds
and the Jacarandas are starting to flower
with the first blooms
that is coming out blue.

It's Friday and the weekend
lies around the corner
and the summer
wants to burst out everywhere
and I wonder why
I want better news
when it's already
going great with me.

Gert Strydom

Give Me The Power

Give me the power,
the will and insight dear Lord, to know
that I can measure no friend to Your faithfulness
and the sneaky underhanded deceit
that people did do to me
let me forget it and their somewhat friendship.

Let me as human being be sincere and true to You
and all of my friends
but above all of these things please continue to be
the best friend to me
and where I do stand
in the midst of the most terrible time of my life
let me daily without any conceit
find new courage out of Your word,

where I am blind in the well of ignorance,
help me that I can see the truth
and have insight into knowledge,
let the light of your truth dedicate me to Your service
and do bring me unto what life is really about
into a greater meaning of it,

to only discover the depth of it
and without the constraints of my own will
to give it to others with selfless love
and let me realize that You do cover
the sins of every one of us with Your blood.

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Gert Strydom

Give My Life Back To Me

(after Hetty van Waalwijk)

Give everything back to me:
also the love that is so deep in your heart
where eternally you do remain my wife,
do love me past the trials of destiny.
Give everything back to me:
my dad that had been an Afrikaans teacher,
the days of young-manhood that the army did rob,
my BMW and Jetta that still are stolen
and also my mother's car that I had borrowed,
my ELG twelve bore shotgun, my Colt.45 pistol
now at the warehouse of the registrar of arms,
the pellet air guns that still lie at the police,
(or maybe right there disappeared into the naught)
and also my whole open world
with green maize-fields under the bright blue sky,
my own innocence, my faith and hope
and my accountant-career that lies in pieces,
my name that a church-fellowship are still drawing to tatters,
also the wild sparrows, doves and barbet
that finds friendship with me
and also my Persian ginger-cat with its flat nose,
my Jack Russell that jumps up against me
and everywhere follows me like a child,
my chilli-bushes onto which the chillies did hang like red bells,
my peach-tree that could bare sugar-sweet red-cheeked peaches,
my bushes full of gooseberries,
all of my many books that fill shelve upon shelve,
the clothes that fill wardrobes,
all of the people that had at a time been my friends
and my farther that reads Afrikaans poem after poem,
about 'I will stand up, ' where a young-man
again does find his own farther back,
where only to the time of my third birthday
I knew my own farther.

[Reference: 'Poesje' (Cat) by Hetty van Waalwijk.]

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Gert Strydom

Give The Command For Your War

Never in the time that I exist
did You declared human secrets
like now to me, things intertwined so deep,
given to me with illustrious meaning

enable me to become aware of the true facts
of mighty people threatening me and my nation
and there are pain and sorrow everywhere
give the command for Your war, as I have to reveal Your will.

Everyone wants a bit of happiness, an own little place
and now the smudging clouds are rolling away like fog
and without any fear You want me to go
with big and sincere pity

to them that are the enemies of me and my nation,
in spite of resistance, to go to them
to warn them, to spell your sentence out,
give the command for Your war, as I have to reveal Your will.

Lord these people do not fear You,
they are caught up in modern knowledge,
believe that You do not exist, are only a myth
but now I will put it straightforward with all inherent meaning:

I have irrefutable prescience that destruction waits
and this is not something that I allege
and the coming disaster is unknown in world history
give the command for Your war, as I have to reveal Your will.

l'Envoi

Lord God, if these oppressors do not come to repentance,
then let Your judgement fall, if they do not pray to You.
Almighty Lord, loosen Your winds to destroy,
give the command for Your war, as I have to reveal Your will.

Gert Strydom

Give To Her The Lovely Desires Of Her Heart (Refrain Stanza)

Give to her the lovely desires of her heart
even when destiny does our plans thwart.
May Your blessings accompany her where she does go,
at the crossroads may she about the right way know
and let us never be from each other apart,
help us to comprehend what life really is
in a world full of heartache, worry, happiness and bliss
and teach us to all over again start
even when destiny does our plans thwart.

Gert Strydom

Glad To Be Living

Every morning the rays
of the new day wakes me
and I rise,
a man who's free from boredom
and glad to be living
in this age and time.

I do not need
an oil well or a gold mine
or even diamonds
in my back yard,
or the things that money brings.

Just to be living
is a precious thing
and to have a sweetheart,
that loves me for who I am
turns every day
into something exciting.

To be able to pay the bills
and to earn enough to take care of her
and treat her at times
may sound mediocre,
but to me
it makes life worth living.

Gert Strydom

Glancing Straight

(in answer to Douglas Livingstone)

Somewhere I have seen her with slender arms
that is easy to embrace with,
somewhere she is
with thin wrists
and although another woman has
gentle and soft hands as hers,
with fingers long and slim
with no engagement or marriage ring
for certain I do know
no kind of distress or sorrow
when I meet her at office buildings,
apartment blocks and at the shops.
There are enticing curves in an evening dress
that is braided into the word hello,
while the passenger-door of my car
has its eyes closed and shut
when both of her legs do swing out to the pavement.

[Reference: "Eyes Closed Against the Sun" by Douglas Livingstone.]

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Gert Strydom

Glorious Had That Blessed Bright Morning Been (English Sonnet)

At the very braking of the new orange-red day
the sun sneaked over the hillocks into the sky,
birds were twittering, chirping some did play,
that scene was full of tranquillity on the eye.

The morning was filled with God's alchemy
in that serene blue without a cloud in sight,
all of a sudden unexpected you came to me
and that greeting was such a blessed delight

where I did of the intimacy of our love know,
while outside the sun did bright white shine,
you did your kisses and bliss upon me bestow
and for some fleeting moments you were mine

glorious had that blessed bright morning been
when I my true love in her beauty had seen.

Gert Strydom

Glory

Will I with you find content
in small little things
at times in happy imaginings
or must discontent

find a way into our lives until they are spent?
There are butterflies, bees and birds on small little wings
the calls of doves, of plovers, of even sparrows in the evenings
and fireflies that are sometimes present

and in all these things there is some beauty
a kind of natural grace
that changes life from what it was before
while they flutter, are roaming free
in open space upon open space
are displaying glory forevermore

[Reference: "The Glory" by Edward Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Glory Be To God

Glory be to God for beautiful things,
for all joy and love that live brings,
for skies on fire when the day dies,

for being part of the human race,
instead of being in another perfect place,
for giving man the capacity of own choice
than being just a creature searching for Your grace.

Glory be to God who comprehends
where men's minds ends
and controls circumstances set

and when I do not understand
are of things are unaware
please do not stop Your loving care.

Gert Strydom

Glory Be To God [2]

Glory be to God
for all things bright and beautiful,
the lights everyone;
the rising and the setting sun,
the moon and all the stars

small flowers and huge trees,
the birds in the sky's canopy
and everything that I can see
and that He made me free
to chose my own company.

Gert Strydom

Glory To God

Glory to God, some early birds does sing
while in winter the icy snow does glow,
in summers the sun rise hot and lovely
while there is some pleasure in everything,
and with tranquillity the waters do flow
while all of nature then feels somewhat free

All things over time then begins to change
as if joy, is found everywhere with glee
and in this we do God's presence know
although nothing is out of place or strange
as then all things has beauty.

Gert Strydom

Glowing I Lie Against Your Body

(in answer to T.T. Cloete)

When lips, tongues and mouths feast on each other,
when arms surround each other in an embrace,
when blood bubbles and we do have just one thought
and when we both with a insatiable hunger
experience something much greater than just lust,

when to become a part of each other,
becomes overwhelming with a own power,
when nipples on breasts do harden, when breasts pulse,
when long legs open wide,

when we do melt together, sigh and whimper
then we do bind in something much greater than just sex.

[Reference: "uiteindelik nag" (Finally night) by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

Goblin In The Marsh

A Goblin staggers out of the marsh
and he is dirty and full of mud
and stinking he pasts
and walk in the fog
that rises from the water.

There are marsh gasses
that everywhere hangs rotting
and a lightning bolt
hitting to surface
Let's balls of flame explode
blue, orange and red-blue
behind him
and he laughs half mad
while he walks away
through the mud.

Sniffing he searches
for waterweed, fester, bubonic plague,
arsenic and a snake's
foaming poison
with the head of a rat
on a green body
and he waddles while he walks
and appears here and there
like a shadow.

Gert Strydom

God And Man

Although God may be known,
apart from the way we do
in worlds, planets unknown
even if we do not mean to,

we judge Him as we find Him in our own
but He knows us from our design, the plan,
knows everything that is thrown
in to a mere body, mind and soul, into man

but more intimately He knows every thought,
sees every single deed
whether good or bad, sought or unsought
and if we live to a creed or however we proceed

but who can tell me why we are born
into a world that is torn apart, into a place of scorn?

Gert Strydom

God And Man (2)

I

In inexplicable ways God does think and act
out of the realm of mortal science and human design
and do in vain human interpretation attract
while His brilliant intellect and skill do never resign

II

to perform His unexplainable wonders everywhere
and in his judgement and scanning man do err
do not notice His deeds while they are right here,
do in laboratories their theories in test-tubes stir

III

while unfathomable with His great art and skill
God of His presence everywhere do leave the signs
and nothing, no power or science usurps His sovereign will
or are fit to stand against His perfect designs.

IV

He walks upon the sea, ascends beyond the sky
talks to the elements of wind and wave and storm
while in His hands their essence does lie
and all things at His bidding do His will perform

V

and yet by His love and great selfless grace
He did clothe Himself in the feeble essence of a man,
did not judge on merit of nationality or race
or by pestilence and illness people ban

VI

but gave freely to those in great need,
acted utterly sinless and with common sense
came to help everyone at His own speed,
relied as fully human and God on his Father's providence

VII

and His children who have a relationship with Him
He does never abandon or forsake

even when destiny at Lucifer's whim
do all their possession and their lives take

VIII

as He is not constrained by time, by death or anything
and at the right moment His wonders and science do appear
even if with half-truths the demons do some twisting
His presence and His care is always near

IX

and yet to convert everyone His Spirit still lingers on this earth
while people do still of his mercies and great love tell
while angels protect all humans from the day of birth
and His servants do try and rescue humanity from the forces of hell

X

but at the moment that suits Him best
on the great day of His judgement He will come
and every man will be put to the ultimate test:
will be judged for destruction fit or to go home.

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Gert Strydom

God And Man (Double Tetractys)

All
things are
fleeting and
evanescent,
only God is eternal, immortal

while he visits us who merely mortal
like gods live rich,
arrogant,
selfish,
spoilt.

Gert Strydom

God As A Human (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to S. J. Pretorius)

In the hearts of people in a crowd
where the traffic continually do stream forth
Your principals remain and that which is love through the years,
it is part of the reality and not a dream
and in our world nothing can darken Your love.
Now thousands of years later Your sacrifice do remain in our time,
where You as a human did walk on roads of dust,
did bind man with love to eternity.
Your longing remains to still come to man,
while Your Holy Spirit does reach out to hearts and minds
and here in this world people are still caught in their own sin
but nothing and no one can evade Your selfless love,
where Your blood as a offering on the painful cross
does not make us temporary but eternally at home.

[Reference: "Mens" (Man) by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

God Does Capture The Essence Of Man (Rubiyat Sonnet)

In ancient settlements which went to waste to sand and stone
where every living animal and man had been turned to bare bone,
in the shadows at night while the moon rise and the star shine
are drawn the outlines as if into infinity those places are not gone

as if the essence of those places still do prevail and is not lost
but then apart from all of this God with his angels in the host
do take a record of every act and conversation
and some do hurt Him and some He does cherish most

but he also do note down to exact specification
the talents, the abilities and disposition,
the essence, the character of each human that follows him
to with love at His time to restore to a higher form as a depiction

of the perfect being that a person can become
when God does take us to our eternal home.

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Gert Strydom

God Does Not Forsake Us Here On This Earth (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

That every human that exist do have a impact on others
are involved in life in love, pain and happiness
do come into affect by being here
where God does not forsake us on this earth,
do take notes about our character and the humans traits that we have
to again rise us when He comes to reckon off with the world
where there is mutual love between Him and man
and every living thing and human does mean something to Him
but we cannot escape into a vacuum of nothing
as our whole existence does bring us back to the Creator
where what we say and do have got a impact on others and on Him
and that a higher loving being does exist is no fallacy,
still lest that Jesus Christ did hang on the cross for the entire world
and that He does replace our sins with His own righteousness.

[Reference: "XXXIX Is die lamp wat doodgeblaas word anders"
(XXXIX Is the blown out lamp different)by M. M. Walters.]

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Gert Strydom

God Full Of Mercy

God in whom there is mercy,
to me it's utterly clear
that a merciless daemon
rules over this world
and wants to envelop everything
in the darkness where it dwells

where men rise against each other,
despises one another
and act as if savagery,
the animal of evolution is loose

and yet at times
I see the great works of Your hands,
see how you intervene
with greater love
than I am able to comprehend
and to me it's utterly clear
that your energy, your time
your love is never spent
and that always
something remains
to shower out
as yet more blessings.

[Reference: God Full Of Mercy by Yehuda Amichai.]

Gert Strydom

God Gives Us Life (Cavatina)

God gives us life and what we do with it
is up to us,
we can turn it into a wretched thing
and obvious
live some shattered lives or it can be
quite prodigious
while in love, hope and trust we go along,
living as we must life can be a song.

Gert Strydom

God Have Pity (Roundel)

In the winter wind, death is at the window,
to the homeless its is very unkind
while its blowing blizzards of snow.
In the winter wind

it gathers whatever it can freezing find;
God have pity on them whom it blows,
even on animals that man has left behind,

when no humanity does somewhere glow,
when no bonds does men to each other bind
and unheard tears do only freezing flow
in the winter wind.

Gert Strydom

God Is The Only Shepherd To Me (In Answer To L.R.)

Not Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki,
or Jacob Zuma is a shepherd to me
and to them I do not bow my knee
as they are not godly
and their policies and laws rob me,
leave me needy and make me want,

robbing me of my university education,
robbing me of my experience,
depriving me from work,
leaving my people to be killed in cities,
to be murdered on farms
leading me to destruction

and I do not fear the evil
that is unleashed against me,
I do not fear to be without a job,
even a temporary one
I do not resist paying income taxes
to a corrupt government
of which the departments
do not function properly

even if people try to threaten me,
even when my property and two of my cars
have been stolen,
and the South African Police
are too inadequate to find them back
and I am driven into poverty
as the Sheppard in heaven feeds me, supports me
and with His mighty hand shields me.

Gert Strydom

God Knows

(in answer to John Clare)

Who I am, even if my friends do not, God knows
even when in sin I am lost
are in my own woes,
the Lord God of the heavenly host
do witness my pain and my throes,
even when in life from a career I am tossed

into a world with its rampant busy noise
and nothing comes to any of my dreams
while even my love is lost and I have no joys,
where sunken is all of my plans and my esteems,
where even my friends are only acquaintances at best
and never do I have any quiet or rest,

right next to me through the turmoil God does trod
knows of every time that without consolation I did wept,
my creator does constantly walk with me as my God
did guard me when in peace I had slept:
as He and his angels are near wherever I do lie
with His finger on the pulse of life and on the vaulted sky.

[Reference: "I am - yet what I am none cares or knows" by John Clare.]

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Gert Strydom

God Knows Exactly (Italian Sonnet)

God knows exactly what brings
us pain, fear, happiness and bliss
and He is present in a time like this,
He is aware of all kinds of things.

About him each bird daily sings
and not a single thing He does miss,
loss and pain He does not dismiss,
knows when destiny a deadly thing flings

and in deadly situations He is still in control,
He knows all the answers to every situation,
do self-sacrificing act with the greatest grace,
He makes broken people again to be whole
do dismiss every false kind of accusation
and His love do me constantly amaze

Gert Strydom

God Of Dignity

God of dignity
help me plot the path
in the darkness of life's destiny
and let me forever be free
from all the things
that keeps me from Thee.

While the waters
gather around me ominously,
show me how to trust
and know that everything
obeys Thou commands
and even the waves,
wind and rain
of the storms that befall me,
falls silent at Thy voice.

God of dignity
help me trust in Thee
like a little child
without any doubt or disregard,
even when
deliverance looks unlikely.

Gert Strydom

God Of Our Fathers

With their eyes set on the distance
our fathers
trekked into their promised land
as children of the God
of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

After the murders on Piet Retief and his men
our fathers made a holy covenant
with the almighty God
to rescue them in their laager at Blood River
against a very big army
of about twenty thousand Zulus.

With their victory
they did not go forth
to wipe out every single Zulu,
rather with the Bible in the hand
they wanted to teach
other people about God.

When the Xhosas slaughtered
almost all their livestock,
were burning their own harvests
believing the medium Nonqawuse
that ancestral spirits
will rise to wipe out the white man

and thousands of them
were dying from starvation
our fathers reached out their hands
and in neighbourly love gave food to those people,
doing what they could
to try and save them.

When droughts, illness of the livestock,
locusts were ravaging, even when the British Empire
came to take the mineral treasures,
were burning down farms and towns,
were murdering women and children

in concentration camps

our fathers went on their knees,
placing their destiny in the hands
of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
knowing that his shadow was falling over them,
that He keeps account
was folding His Godly hand over them

l'Envoi

and now that thousands of farmers
are being killed on their farms
are being tortured, murdered and robbed
Afrikaners with qualifications
and experience, even artisans
are unemployed on the street,
people in cities
are hijacked, robbed and raped

I am praying to the God
of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
to keep His hand over us,
to draws His laager
around the lives and property
of everyone that comes to Him,
to free us from this oppression.

Gert Strydom

God Supreme (Cavatina Sequence)

Your domain stretches from heaven to earth,
the universe
carries the signs of your own supreme will,
nothing perverse
is ever present in Your holy court,
respectful, terse,
mighty beings act in Your great presence,
as to all of life You are the essence;

intimately You do know each being,
notices mere man,
records and comprehends each word and deed
in a lifespan
and your grace and love reaches out boundless,
while you do plan
an end to all that is painful and impure,
in a kingdom that will endlessly endure.

Gert Strydom

God The Artist

There is greater art in the colour of the sky,
in the canvas with which the night covers herself,
in the sun that rises in time each morning
and daily I am astounded
when flowers and trees put on their cloaks,
even memories sweep me back all the time

to thundershowers that brilliantly burst loose,
to waterfalls that spray their streams,
than what you can find in a human masterpiece
and sometimes man is somewhat blinded
as if he can avoid the God of the universe
but continually His art stays gloriously fresh.

Gert Strydom

God The Creator

There is deeper mathematic, greater science
in the composition of the universe,
in how things function in it
while mere man now days claim
that God did not create
and things do not fall to disrepair
but still man tries to understand God
as if man does not at a time perish
and can mightily stay on existing,
do know the laws and makeup of even God,
but in everything that exists
God has penned His will down,
He knows the orbits of all things
as He has created everything.

Gert Strydom

God The Saviour

There is greater love in that God perished innocently
that He who is almighty lowered Himself
to the image of a mere man
that He did permit earthly beings to curse Him,
even to challenge God in all of His power
to have eternal life in reconciliation

than the love that mere man knows
between husband and wife, parent and child,
than what man knows of being selfless,
as God did not forget His own creatures
and came back to those who were lost,
to win the war between good and evil.

Gert Strydom

God's Glance Penetrates All Things

God's glance penetrates all things
And that what my mask hides,
I cannot keep from Him,
not even make it invisible and small

and the things behind my camouflage,
the walls that I build for others
and even my self reverence
are in His sight

but His love is something that never fades
and his pardon stays true.

Gert Strydom

Going Home

When I was a student
I came through the rain,
with storms whipping the Cape
right through the Karoo
into Gauteng
flooding rivers
and blocking mountain passes
with land slides.

Avoiding fallen rocks and creeping
at sixty kilometres an hour
on the N1 till Worcester
on a road
that had only one lane open,
I passed the police
who were closing the freeway.

For fifteen hundred kilometres
the road was soaking wet
and my BMW's four headlights glared
at any other vehicle that I met

and the ABS-brakes,
the six-cylinder engine
and power steering
did their fare share
to keep me on the road.

Every now and then
I had to stop to get fuel,
checked the oil,
checked the air pressure,
visited the washing room
and Coca Cola kept me awake
right through a soaking night
while I was on my way home
to sunny Pretoria.

I came to the house

in a early dawn,
was greeted by the dog
crying from joy
and wagging its tail,

got a huge plate
of sausage, putu porridge
with tomato gravy
and fried eggs
and coffee from my mother,
went to bed
and slept as if I were dead
right into the next day.

Gert Strydom

Going To Church

I was called up to a military camp
and we were in tents in Parrow
and I was seconded to a special unit
on our way to De Brug
from where we would go to Luhatla
and from there to war in Angola

and although we were guarded
by marines
some guys at night sneaked
through the patrols
and I could have accompanied them
if I wished,
but they visited paid girls.

Time after time I had requested
to be transferred to a unit in Pretoria
where I lived,
but my letters came back
stamped request denied.

I asked to go to church
instead of attending prayer parade,
and my request was granted
and I got pass for the day
on condition to get a lift
and I called a doctor
friend of mine.

He fetched me with his Alfa Guiletta
and we went to Tygerberg church
where I was a member when we
were still married.

One of the girls
was very friendly
and was blonde, quite lovely
with a awesome smile
and a short black mini skirt

and she came to sit
right next to me
and I still remember
her long legs.

That day almost came
to a halt for me
when you walked in
with your husband
to have your
newborn son blessed in
and I couldn't take my eyes
away from the pair of you
and saw your parents
and even his.

You were more beautiful
than I had remembered
but looked quite nervous
and the baby looked great
and at first I was quite angry,
at life, at your happiness
but seeing you there
did something to me.

The service was better
than most
and the blonde
invited me to the flat
that she shared
with her sister
where we had lunch
and she was really nice
and my spirits were high
and I was ready to fight
any war after this.

Gert Strydom

Going To Church (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

In the portal people were gathering
while inside I heard some rejoicing sing,
the church was packed with some holy men
while tiny children smiled up at me,
mothers had a kind of sweet serenity,
I got looks from some unmarried women,
going to church was a very special thing.

Gert Strydom

Going To Tuscany

Just outside the window
at the fountain
a place in Tuscany
runs into violet hills
of lavender
against the outer wall
and sweet lavender perfume
drifts into the room.

In the corridor
between the bedrooms
and your studio
paintings of scenes
in Tuscany
shows where your heart
wants to go.

On the bed next to me
twin peaks with delicate
red brown nipples
rise inviting
with their own
perfume drawing me closer
to fields of your lavender.

To some they could be
big South African rondavels
shading against the African sun,

but more likely they
are pale white villas
set high above your sea
where beyond auburn bushes
is as secret hidden pond.

Streets meander up and down
soft and firm
arms and legs
while Tuscany rises

in the middle of me

and a hot welcome breezes
like the Tuscan wind
against my hand
and I feel passionate rain
between your legs
and I see daylight and stars
in your eyes

and your lashes
open and close
like table-clothes
jerked by a storm
coming in from the sea
in great old Tuscany

and I drive my Tuscany into you,
into a street of wondrous delicacies
and we go to Tuscany
where fields of lavender grow

and I know that it is like heaven
but somewhere here on earth
and Tuscany reflects in your eyes
and I hear it in your sighs
and Tuscany is right here.

Gert Strydom

Golden Ginger Persian Cat (Terzanelle)

You walk right up to me
with your striped tail in the air,
a hunter to the nth degree

with golden ginger hair,
you become a machine with claws and slim curves,
with your striped tail in the air

at the ready with nerves
at a razor's edge,
you become a machine with claws and slim curves,

suddenly with electricity, sneaking up to the hedge
staring intently, ready to strike
at a razor's edge,

waiting patiently like a shrike
with poise
staring intently, ready to strike

loosing interest and without any noise
you walk right up to me
with poise,
a hunter to the nth degree.

Gert Strydom

Golgotha

I see them hitting in the nails
when He was estranged from God,
when they mocked Him and pain went through His body
when He gave His life and there was no mercy for Him

estranged He hanged as a human being and as the Godly One;
He blessed others when love still burned in His eyes
while at a distance His mother and other women were crying,
they cried when darkness appeared and lightning bolts fell everywhere

with nails through His hands, on His head a crown of thorns
with them that mock and one that betrayed him with a kiss;
without rest He was betrayed for pieces of silver,
but still His face is pure and I am aware of the greatest love.

Gert Strydom

Golgotha [2]

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Gert Strydom

Good News

When I was a child
I went with thousands of people,
to listen to a great preacher
and today his words still stand:

"Good news
I have good news.
The good news is,
that God loves you."

"He has a plan for your life
and there's a purpose for living.
Don't give up.
Don't let the headlines
threaten you."

"God is still sovereign.
He's still on the throne
and those that follow and serve Him
has a future,
brighter than tomorrow."

*

Still I keep my eyes on Him
and although my world staggers around me
and at times I do not know
where to find light
in the darkness,
I know that He is still near.

The years pass so quickly
that life is almost
like a dream
and sometimes I do not know
why things happen,
but still I trust
in the almighty God
and that His light will come in time

and I wait on His plan
to unfold for me.

[Reference: Billy Graham.]

Gert Strydom

Goodbye Now To The Bush

Goodbye now to the bush
and patrols that go on
almost endlessly,

ration packs that never really differ,
the sun rising over unknown places,
death and hardship on unknown faces,

bullets flying past
and rocket propelled grenades exploding,
the stark mad bark of the LMG,

but I wonder how long
this piece will last.

[Reference: LMG => Light machinegun.]

Gert Strydom

Goodbye To Purple Covered Jacaranda Trees

Goodbye to purple covered Jacaranda trees
which line the streets
and the great laagered fort on the hill
telling stories of times past,

the university on the knoll
next to which I once lived
waving with buildings and towers
sending its greetings into the sky

while I drive away fast
and the motorbike's wheels sings whispering
do not look back

and its engine howls its cry against the wind
weeping instead of me
while I drive away from the city
that I love and where I cannot stay.

The bike flashes on in a blur
passing trucks and cars
racing on the highway
as if searching for the sun

and my heart is lost
and pain rips through me
with the parting from you
while I drive away
and I cannot understand
the seasons of the heart

and it is goodbye
to you too.

Gert Strydom

Gracious Lord, When At Night I Lie Awake

Gracious Lord, when at night I lie awake
my body tingles all over, all nerves are erect,
I long to her in each and every breath I take,
her image, her face, her hair, her neck
stays with me while my whole being aches
and I wonder what kind of sin these thoughts makes.

Gert Strydom

Gradually You Grow Into My Life

Gradually you grow into my life,
you reconnoitre my body, soul and spirit
as if you are suddenly starting a new journey,
taking to the road without any fear
and on the way you become part of me
as my own wonderful wife
and before long
I am madly in love with you,
when hours suddenly escape in your presence,
when the morning comes far too suddenly after the night,
when continually I miss you when we are apart,
when small things suddenly do amaze me,
when together we take on weeks, months and years
when as the most lovely woman you are beside me.

Gert Strydom

Graduate (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

In three years or four, holy beliefs are slain,
He did not make
either man or the earth, Charles Darwin's
theory does take
centre stage at great universities,
nonsense do rake
as mere myth the Bible into the ground,
learned men sound to themselves profound;

like gods they toss and play with all their students,
as memories
of God and His great things they cause to dwindle;
flowers and bees
as lust become simple chemical yearning,
they teach duties,
to be like gods in self actualization;
they destroy God and his creation

while magic things like the force of life
stays beyond science,
while man is bound to facts and to his own
experience,
cannot measure to an almighty being;
with patience
God and His character of love remains,
mere man struggle on in his life of pains

while still is lingering the truths of youth,
love is beyond
the bounds of man's mere own observations,
the simple bond
to survive on earth, bound by time and space,
does correspond
with a higher intelligent being
whose selfless power sustains everything.

[Reference: "Baccalaureate" by Archibald Macleish.]

Gert Strydom

Grandma

When you died
it was as if I lost,
my whole family.

All other relations,
but my mother
and brother faded
away into oblivion,
at your grave, Grandmamma.

Maybe it was that you
was the only one of them,
that really cared for me
and that they valued things
above and beyond integrity.

At times destiny strikes the clock
and death takes her own,
but I was far away at University
and although our relationship
was great and special
there was no last goodbye.

Every one but I,
got a last blessing from you
and still I wonder
what your last words
would have been.

At times I wonder
if you would smile,
at the mistakes that I make
and at times
be proud to know my name.

Gert Strydom

Grandma Lenie Brand

As one of the pioneers in the Vryburg district
she lived with her husband Danie Brand
(a second cousin of late President Jan Brand
of the Orange Free State Republic)
on the farm Welgemeen.

When her husband passed away in 1938
grandma Lenie
took over the farming
and if work is a gift

she was really blessed in it
as she wielded a pickaxe
digging holes along with her sons
and the labourers

putting up fences, herded cattle
and still at fifty-six
milked cows,
if the workers did not turn up.

Today you would not expect this
of a fine woman,
who was really religious
farming by herself

in the years
just before the Second World War
and she was one of the esteemed
farmers in the Vryburg district

and she bought a Willis motorcar
and later a model t-Ford,
with which the family travelled to Vryburg
to do they're shopping.

Grandma Lenie was known
for her philanthropy
and her willingness to help,

lived as if every day
was a deed of love,

was quite strict,
but also really fair
and still I remember
how she looked at me with shining eyes.

Gert Strydom

Grandpa Danie Brand

When at sixteen
he had to survive in the field
many times he was hungry

he was delivered to the sun,
the wind and rain
and at times were half frozen,

but he took shots at Englishmen
(who burned their farm to the ground)
past when his gun barrel
were glowing white-hot
and burnt blisters on his hands
and those blisters
became open wounds
as he kept firing

and as a child
I saw those scars
and he was a man
who served God
and gave his tithe
and took good care of his workers,
but he could not tolerate an Englishman.

Still there's something of him in me
to stand against
the oppression of my people
until it ends.

[Reference: Second Anglo-Boer war.]

Gert Strydom

Grandpa Danie Brand [2]

After taking part
as a youngster of sixteen
in the second Anglo-Boer war
where he had to spend nights in the open veldt

fired so much on the British
that his hands were full of blisters
from the rifle
of which the barrel got white hot

he married Lenie Swanepoel in 1918,
was really in love with her
and from 1926 he farmed on the farm Welgemeen
near to Steekdoorns in the Vryburg district

where he himself build his own homestead
from Josef's stone and put up fences
and turned the wild veldt
into a viable farm.

Grandpa Danie did not have time
to sit on the porch,
as it goes with farming,
work took his attention constantly

and before early morning light
he was already in the fields
or at the dairy busy with the cows
but was held in high esteem by the labourers
although he was strict.

On a day grandpa Danie
visited another farmer
to buy Afrikaner cattle from him
and while they walked into the lounge
of the other farmer's house

he lit his pipe
whereupon the other farmer said to him:

"Mister Brand, I do not allow anybody
to smoke in my house"
and it was a big embarrassment to him,

so much so that while he was riding home on his horse,
busy driving the cattle with his workers
he stopped at a big rock
that rose into the air

and knocked his pipe against it
causing it to break in two pieces
and it was also the last time
that grandpa Danie did smoke.

When he got appendicitis
and his appendix erupted
grandma Lenie took great care of him
nursing him back to health

but he continually got pain
when he ate maize
and his brother Frans
who lived in Johannesburg

convinced him
to have a appendectomy
whereupon dressed in his black coat
grandpa Danie left for the hospital in Vryburg

and at the hospital
grandpa Danie got inflammation
and died from the operation wound
that got septic,
in a time before antibiotics
was discovered.

Gert Strydom

Grave Desecration

I will go to my father
where his grave is in the hillocks
and when I get to his grave
I will rise my eyes into the blue

and my eyes will look at the unfathomable
while the world depart from me
and there I will find God
while the day appears

and for moments I will
be in companionship with my Lord
as if He is with me in the graveyard
and see how roots tear the grave apart

and shadows will already draw lines
stretch out long from the hillocks
while twilight is creeping closer
and I will advance

right up to
the office of the caretaker
and he will have to explain
why I am finding a tree
on my mother's resting place.

Gert Strydom

Graveyard

How painful and uncomfortable
it is to stand at an open grave
and I stay astonished,
about how strange it is
at an open grave.

It's as if the words of the pastor
at times brings bigger heartache
and people struggle to get peace
with the close concurrence
between love, sorrow and mourning

The idea of mortality
which meets immortality there,
the last goodbye and greeting
leaves you empty.

Gert Strydom

Graveyard [2]

(after Jean Pierre Rawie)

In a whirlpool of emotions
I stand at the grave,
half full of grief with the tender remembering
of things that went wrong,
somewhat ashamed that things had not been different
and the strangeness is startling,

I am astonished by other persons
for whom tears come so easily,
about how meaningless life is,
about how death touches caring,
about how the final farewell
drives love to its limit.

[Reference: "Kerkhof" (Graveyard) by the Dutch poet Jean Pierre Rawie.]

Gert Strydom

Graveyard In The City

The caretaker did not spare the work
and everywhere there are flower beds
that comfort with bright colours
the lawns are neat and cut to perfection
and the granite of each tomb glitters
that the sun falls shining on them,
that people walk around
as if they are maybe in a park
but the idyllic peace
every now and then shattered
when rows of cars draw near,
when coroners carry
a deceased person to the grave,
when crying people want to come to peace.

Gert Strydom

Great Darkness Came Amit The Sunny Blaze (Cavatina)

Great darkness came amit the sunny blaze
of that high noon,
light the first work of creation was gone
and far too soon
suddenly death came to the Son of God;
companion boon
of mere men He had been, in some weakness
He did come in righteousness to bless.

[Poet's note: Weakness is here expressed as God coming in the frail human form.]

Gert Strydom

Grey

Dull grey the winter drags on,
so slowly
as if never there will be an end to it.

In the mornings it's biting cold
with black frost that destroys where it falls
and sometimes there are clouds of fog
that tries to blot out places, things and times.

Early in the mornings the dogs howl in melancholy
where they lie on their beds
on the porch under a roof
since they are prohibited from the house,
both cats sneak slowly into the room
not welcome any more in the whole house
and the rascal bird with its red head
and green body
knocks on the big window
as if it's playing the tick-tock game,

the grass stays dead yellow
and stick onto shoes
and everywhere are treaded in
and most of the flowers in the garden
has already died
and now has only the colour of death,
although I am still faithfully
spraying water onto them

and it is as if I am now also losing faith,
not knowing anymore if there's a God
who cares about me, as if other things
constantly keeps Him busy
so that He never shows up for me

while my love relationship sink into nothing,
while I out of heart keep on looking for a job
and another man's wife
tries to make eyes at me

and I see evil flowering everywhere around me
where I stand in the middle,
between good and evil
and about me the grey land stretches out wide.

Gert Strydom

Grey Falcon

(in answer to WEG Louw and Ellen Botha)

White is the sunlight
where it is turning in the early morning,
flying much higher than any starling or crow
and is gliding in balance on the wind

beneath the dew glistens, over the dunes some tracks lead
and the grey falcon is free and not lost,
turns continually around and around
are singing astounded over the beauty

and its as if it is sad,
are missing its mate in the entire sky
while it keeps turning
keep calling in search of meaning.

[References: Vaalvalk (Grey hawk) by WEG Louw, Vaalvalkie (Small grey hawk)
by Ellen Botha.]

Gert Strydom

Grey Falcon [2]

(in answer to WEG Louw)

White is the sunlight
where it turns in the early morning
much higher than any starling or crow
in equilibrium on the streams of the wind

beneath the dew glistens,
over the dunes tracks walk away
and the grey falcon is free and not lost
does constantly turn around and around
while it sings astonished over the beauty

and it's as if it is sad
does miss its mate in all of the sky
while it keeps turning in its flight
does constantly call in search of meaning.

[Reference: "Vaalvalk" (Grey hawk) by WEG Louw]

Gert Strydom

Grey Land Traveller

One day in summer
when the freeway is open,
I will take the Honda
and turn the accelerator open
until the revolution counter
touches the red.

One day I will see
what my motorbike is able to do
when I drive from here to Cape Town
with all the power that it has
and see how the speed needle
goes past the last mark.

One day I will feel
it roaring under me
and cut lightning fast
past cars, pickups and lorries
and speed will make
that it seems
as if I am coming out of the road itself
and I will be like a spectre.

One day I will really know
how much power my motorbike has
and will be part of the wind,
the sun and freedom
and the road will belong to me
and I to the road.

One day time will stop for me
and I might never reach the Cape
and will drive into the grey land
and maybe you
will read about me in the newspapers
and a motorbike
that lies in pieces for a distance of kilometres.

Grieve England

Grieve, England, and hang your head
in utter shame,
as the tale of your inhumanity
rings to this very day.

Grieve about your fallen brave, England,
for no glory did your heroes bring
back from the battlefields of South Africa,
where they killed children
who did not want to betray
the whereabouts of their fathers.

What glory shines
in pillage and rape
and how does lament ring,
with the utter destruction
of farmsteads of a nation?

Grieve about the soulless slaughter, England,
of most of a nation's women
and children in your cruel concentration camps,
where you fed glass mixed with meal
and let thousands of the innocent die of pestilence.

Cry, England, and hang your head
in utter shame,
as the tale of your inhumanity
rings forever more.

[Reference: => To the Anglo-Boer war where thousands of innocent woman and children died in British concentration camps.]

Gert Strydom

Gross Stupidity

It was at a time
where you had
to wear a uniform to school,
had to cut your hair
to a predetermined length

and got caned
if you were naughty,
failed a test,
or sometimes
to let the teacher
enforce his will.

If you complained at home
about getting a hiding at school,
you would probably
get another there too
if you deserved it,
but if you were right,
were punished unfairly
or without a real cause

it was seen in a different light
and a teacher
or whoever the punisher was
would have to face
your father in a fight
and could easily
be hit into hospital.

School regulations stipulated
that you couldn't receive
more than six whippings on a day,
but at Estcourt high school
on my first day
at the new school
in standard nine (now grade eleven)
I received twelve.

We were lining up
to go to the hall
and a prefect told me
to cut my hair
which were just a bit
longer than how
they wanted it.

I said that I would
and while we were walking
to the entrance of the hall
I was told the same thing
over and over again.

On the eighth time
I told the English prefect
in Afrikaans
not to catch the pip
which was a Afrikaans adage
for do not catch a fit.

He told me to repeat
what I had said,
which I did
and thought
that I was cursing him
and took me
to the Headboy
who was English.

Where I had to repeat
myself again
and I did
as believed in telling
the truth.

The head boy took me
to the principal,
(Mister Robert Smith) ,
who thought
that I was saying
something like

go and play
with your member.

He called in the
vice-principal
(another Englishman) ,
a man with a red beard,
who was convinced
that I was cursing,
who shoved my head
under a table
and whipped me six times.

When I explained what it meant
they didn't believe me
and called in a teacher
who taught Afrikaans
and the principal gave me
another six whippings
for being insubordinate
and wanted to expel me
if I didn't have my hair cut
on by the next day.

I didn't tell my stepfather
(who wasn't a dad to me) ,
but even he
would have sorted
the headmaster
and vice-principal out
and it would have been
the Anglo-Boer war
all over again.

At the time I thought
that I was grossly stupid,
but thinking back
the headmaster and vice-principal
was probably more so.

Gert Strydom

Ground Zero

At a time I was forced
to go to ground zero
and there nobody
wanted to be a hero,
but some without choice
let the training take command
and did really brave things.

In war it's a place,
where bullets fly
and the battle rages
at its worst
and bombs explode
and the living is worst
than dead.

The deafening noise
of the toys of war
at places still clatter on,
but reality leaves
people wounded, crushed and destroyed.

I wonder if it was the place,
where my soul was lost
and emptiness filled my heart
and the meaning
of life was gone?

Gert Strydom

Grounded Pilot

With eyes drawn into thin lines
against the bright light of the sky
he watches fighter jets
becoming airborne,
leaving earth with billowing engines,
red flaming tails.

The wings on his chest are now fading
just as the experience of becoming one
with the sky, drifting on the wind
like the knowledge of flying
which is also fading with time.

Every time a fighter goes thundering
up into the sky
he feels the exhilaration, relives the moment
where man becomes a flying thing
and there's longing shining
in pale blue eyes.

Gert Strydom

Growing Old

I know people who think
that it's a blessing
to grow old
and become like a child again,
but I think that it's a terrible thing.

To be frail
and not to be able
to walk properly,
to whet your pants
and your bed
to be out of control of your bowels
and to act

as if you do not care
what others think, is really scaring.

Gert Strydom

Guinea Fowl Hunt (Free Verse Sonnet)

We are at Seven Oaks, the neighbour's farm,
when one of the Von Hörsten boys wound a guinea fowl,
where it falls from the sky and lightning quick does run away
where from the pickup truck he does shoot with a .22 rifle
where we follow that wounded animal as very young boys,
like hunting dogs where it flees screaming
and I learn how fast a guinea fowl can run
where over the ploughed field it does run in the direction of the stream
and short on its bloody trail we chase it up and down
before somewhere in the thicket of the hillock it does disappear
and loyal we follow the bloody trail
as no one can leave a animal to suffer
and we are ready to again run our lungs out
when we find it dead from loss of blood under an umbrella-thorn bush.

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Gert Strydom

Guinevere On Her Dying Bed (English Sonnet)

(in answer to Dorothy Parker)

To king Arthur I was wedded until his death
and I loved him then sincere as I love him now
where I swear it as true upon my dying breath
where he did only good things on me bestow,

in all the ages Arthur as a true king do remain,
no nobler man but only God treaded the earth
and for my breaking of the vow there is pain
as no other like Arthur walked upon the earth,

yet my feelings for Sir Lancelot is another thing,
there was no braver and fearsome knight than he,
it's the thing of which poets through the ages sing
of how love is defined in how its construct is to be:

I loved both Lancelot and Arthur to my very best,
thus I swear as you are laying me to eternal rest.

[Reference: "Guinevere at her fireside" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Gunpowder And Romance

Tired of crawling along in congested traffic in my car
on any one of the two the Pretoria-Johannesburg freeways
or having to take the old road
today I experiment by taking the Gautrain
which is a rapid transit railway
linking the airport and has got nine other stations
between Pretoria and Johannesburg.

At the Gautrain Pretoria station
adjacent to the main Pretoria train station
the passengers have the new excitement of trains
running at high speed between cities
and it seems to be the in thing to travel in this way,
some attractive females catch my eyes
and only lonely one, who are on her own smile at me,
it's high summer and she looks lovely
in a white blouse, gray skirt and court shoes,

small groups of talking people move past
while I buy a Afrikaans newspaper, ("Die Beeld")
and a Styrofoam coffee cup
of which the coffee is boiling hot but great
from the new café
before the train rushes into the station.

Some Policemen are on patrol,
where they walk up and down
chatting with each other,
passengers do disembark
and I take my seat
along with a crowd of happy people,
the friendly blonde takes a seat opposite me.

An old man (probably a professor)
running somewhere near to seventy
sits down with a briefcase next to him
right next to her and he opens it
and he is dressed in a neat black striped suit
with a wine-red tie

and probably he is also going to Johannesburg
to the literature department
of the university of Johannesburg
that as an entity
like a hungry monster had swallowed up RAU

and the girl and I look at each other for moments
before very cautious we start a conversation
about our jobs, the country's financial state
and when it turns to poetry
the blonde loves Shakespeare's sonnets
especially sonnet 116
"Let me not to the marriage of true minds."
I notice that the professor
is busy reading T. S. Eliot's "Wasteland."

He must have overheard our conversation
when he suddenly says:
"I see that you do also really like Eliot.
I like your poem: "In the grey-land of a wasted world"
and the way, in which you do interpret Eliot,
but then you do probably have a dim worldview
that everything is running to the end."

"I usually write more about reality, "
at which he laughs and says:
" and love and other things."
Again the blonde does catch my eye
with a much bigger smile.

"I did not realise that you are a poet, " she says.
"I do experiment with poetry, " I do admit
"Says the man that have written thousands of poems, "
the professor remarks and wants to know
about my views on life.

"Probably André Maurois had it right
when he said that the two worst inventions of man
was gunpowder and romantic love."

The professor is silent and the blonde is now big-eyed

when she asks:"Why do you say a thing like that,
how can anybody think like that? "

"Both do have the ability to cause things
that does hurt like hell..."

[Reference:"We owe to the Middle Ages the two worst inventions of
humanity - gunpowder
and romantic love."André Maurois. RAU:The Rand Afrikaans University.]

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Gert Strydom

H.F. Verwoerd

Today you are seen
as the designer
of a beaconed off existence;
of rending, disorder and hatred

but as the leader of a country
you wanted to bring forth order from disorder,
give an own chance to everyone,
as separate cultural groups and entities.

Now your image, you insight
and wisdom is barren and destroyed,
while we are living in a hodgepodge way,
where the government is destroying
everything that is our own,

pulling the centre out of religion, language
and culture
and putting everything
into a big witches' brewing pot

Gert Strydom

Habit (Free Verse Sonnet)

You let my cup overflow with joy and happiness
where I am coming to you on this pilgrimage,
do feel the prayer beads of your fingers and knuckles,
do want to pour out my being, body, soul and spirit
intimately deep into your fleshy font
where light does stream from the lead-glass windows of your eyes
and to love and fulfilment I feel called
as if without you and you around me
I am always thirsty, hungry and am going to stay naked eternally
as if the stars, the earth and moon looks drunk,
as if everything does decline into meaninglessness and insignificance
if I cannot look through your eyes, your heart and spirit,
as from my existence I do have affection for you hardwired,
burning unwavering in me.

Gert Strydom

Habitation (In Answer To Margaret Atwood)

Before man the first time
found sheltering,
lit a fire to burn, to cook, to destroy
he was interested in the company
of the female kind
found a place in the heart

and learned to love, to adore
even before he was forced
by the actions of his own choice
into a world of pain and bliss.

Gert Strydom

Had Found Its Mark

The night I saw you die
under a star struck cross
against the night sky
near the end of the age

your eyes were flaming with rage
as if that fire could leap
and set the night alight

and howitzer guns roared
sending their disciples
with thundering flame
across many miles

to convert with death and blood
and as fast as the enemy came
flooding the bush, the veldt
with armoured chariots

exploding shells, rocket bombs
and projectiles
decimated them
as if the inferno in your eyes
had found its mark
turning every enemy ablaze.

Gert Strydom

Hadidah-Ibis (Free Verse Sonnet)

Your body gleams a deeper purple and green-bronze
where with your beak you peck up snails and earthworms
before the backyard buzz as you screech shrilly,
and the afternoon rest is disturbed in a mere moment
when the two Jack Russell's do suddenly find you
where the sparks of the sun jump as your wings slap,
as you depart angrily in a northern direction,
while both dogs jump and try to bite you
and later when the dogs lie and peer at their food-bowels
the late afternoon drags past to twilight,
the tranquillity is restored while doves coo in the old oak tree
and the residents do not know about you as they come home
and this commotion of your atonal scold-language
is repeated day upon day in the backyard.

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Gert Strydom

Hagar And Ishmael (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

I find no quenching for my thirst
and bound you are to me
where I cannot find any water,
where I am feeding you from my breast,
your dad was a lord proud, bold and fierce
but the contempt of Sarah stays,
purposeless days do pass in the desert
where I cannot waste a drop of moisture,
you father found me in my fruitfulness
where I am desirable and do love him,
but it did lead to his first wife's scorn
and he did choose Sarah above the two of us,
did love her intimately and had fallen for her cunning
where I bring you up in hard hatred.

[Reference:"Hagar" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Haiku's At The End Of A Relationship

You want more freedom
but your voice rasps in your throat,
as closing prison.

Now my life falls down
into fields of existence,
a bolt of lightning.

Bad people like you
stink of a panic-stricken belly
could kill any childhood.

Didn't your parents
sort you out some bloody years ago
from childish disorders?

Pain is worthless now
let us acknowledge courage,
fermented hatred.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's Of Love

When the small death folds
around us, both of us sweat
and die together

you drive your nails in
I hear you moan, see your glance
the whole world sweeps past.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's At Daybreak

A mosquito buzz,
the red day come suddenly
to pieces it does fall.

*

Black a bird eye gleam
beyond the small window-glass,
it flutters away.

*

A weaver twitters
the morning twilight blood red
till the sun burns white.

*

A redbreast twitter
the red daybreak far away
from the many stars.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's For My Sweetheart

(for Annelize)

Your smile do linger
is just as your sunny bright eyes
with a strange language.

*

In all of my thoughts
you constantly do wander
as missing somewhere

*

Your voice stay in my
memory lingering on
always captive there

*

There is a great pain
as if a heart is broken
in my missing you.

*

Distance is a hell
of a kind of a monster
from here to there far.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's Of Love And Longing

(for Annelize)

I do now live on
with the silent memory
and I am empty.

*

You do remember
how intense that time was
in your shiny eye.

*

I want you again
my tongue is painful dumbstruck
as if words do lock.

*

On memory I
butter my toast with your jam,
do swallow a bit.

*

My whole life caves in
years and long decades are gone,
like the blue thunder.

*

My finger do touch
the depth of you lovely heart
and I am blinded.

*

Your breath do twinkle
the sweet words over the phone
if silence comes.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's Of Rain

Shiny raindrops hang
bells to a small berry-tree,
a small bird dive in.

*

The snout of the wind
cry with grief at the corner,
cannot find real peace.

*

After rain steam come
like breathe from the pitch-black tar
wishing away cars.

*

My house hides stoutly
when the blue-white thunder come
with the eyes drawn shut.

Gert Strydom

Haiku's Of Stormy Weather

Wild winds blow strong
when some bad weather does come
as thunder does fall.

*

The soft wind does sniff
when with lightning rain does fall
away pain does flow.

*

The white horses do jump
with each wave of the ocean
when a huge storm comes.

*

While in my back eye
a thunderbolt burns blue-white
yet nothing is left.

Gert Strydom

Hail

There are white bullets
falling from a blue sky
and blossoms, leaves on branches
and car roofs
are hit into smithereens

or carry signs of hail,
that descends bigger than golf balls
like rifle shots.

Like the retaliation of a woman
that appears merciless out of the blue
and crackles down
in spite of damage to herself
circling out wider.

Gert Strydom

Halo (High Altitude, Low Opening) Freefall Insertion (Terzanelle)

Falling through space with rushing air
you dropp from a plane as if flying on wings
with wind blowing everywhere, sweat in your hair

with the morning glow radiating between things
and the sun creeping over the horizon in a red ball
you dropp from a plane as if flying on wings

with oxygen feeding through the mask you feel small
seeing the earth rushing in at great speed
and the sun creeping over the horizon in a red ball

and your eyes watch the altimeter spinning, taking heed
trusting implicitly on the gear
seeing the earth rushing in at great speed

you are falling at terminal velocity with fear
and sensing the distance
trusting implicitly on the gear

and you pull the drawstring, expecting enemy resistance,
falling through space with rushing air
and sensing the distance
with wind blowing everywhere, sweat in your hair

Gert Strydom

Hand In Hand (Cavatina)

Hand in hand we walked through the city;
the market-place
had small stalls that sold almost anything.
On your sweet face,
the joy of living of sheer happiness
had some great grace
but today only emptiness do remain
and your untimely leaving brought great pain.

Gert Strydom

Hands

(in answer to Robin Camhee)

In town I greet some friends,
shaking their hands
before we start chatting,
some others drive by waving at us,

A rather beautiful lady
taps me on the shoulder,
to draw my attention,
asking me the time

while her blue eyes
make deep contact with mine,
her hand barely touches mine,
by accident or is it something else that is happening?

On the way home
there's a South African police services roadblock
across the road in colliery road in Springs
and I answer a call on my cellular phone,

cutting the connection as it's a wrong number,
one of the constables
shouts at his captain
that I have taken a photograph of him

and a group of blue arrogance
closes in around me,
with hands locking around my wrists,
hands going to the back
of my pants, going into my pockets,
holding onto my belt

with hands forcefully removing
my cellular phone,
with hands breaking into the privacy
of my life, breaking into my cellular phone
searching, searching for a photograph

and finding nothing,
with hands on my arms,
holding me from both sides
with faces pressed into mine,
with words from lips insulting,
threatening with assault,
it's a force majeure that tempts me for action

and at long last the white first lieutenant
(if police insignia is similar to that of the military)
who harassed me more than any of the others
tell me to be off, using the type of language
that some people that hate animals
uses on a dog

with his hands still threatening,
which at times are waving above his head
and I wonder why he is so very rude,
why he is trying so very hard
to impress his black colleges
and he walks some steps along with me
with his hands and words still threatening.

[Reference: Artist on the Wall by Robin Camhee.]

Gert Strydom

Happy And Lovely (English Sonnet)

Happy and lovely you are in the first morning light,
do walk picture perfect in to the realm of the eye
to female lines and curves you do bring bliss to sight,
as if in you the blueprint of grandmother Eve does lie

and above us rises the gleaming peaks op Helderberg Hill
where that mountain is brooding silent from the earliest age
and here we are now together wordless, silent and still
where this day is of God's works for us a pilgrimage,

where we do walk through the woods far away from our car,
walking on a small track on a sunny but chilly winter's day,
your eyes take in the scenery (soft and lovely they are)
where together by our own design we have lost our way

and alone with a picnic basket we spread a blanket at about noon,
the wind starts blowing again and in this winter it might rain soon.

Gert Strydom

Harare

The midsummer sun hangs flaming
over the capitol city
which is painted white,
(the same colour as the graves)
in a country
stripped from the white man's might,
stripped from providing
and exporting food, minerals
and products
where the value of the currency
changes faster than the billion dollar number
printed on the worthless bills.

Just here and there a car moves
as the country is without fuel
and even the traffic lights
are not working
(and neither are most people)
as the electricity is down.

.

The rural farms stand stripped bare
with primitive peasants
living there in utter poverty
and the fertile soil is vacant
as everything has being taken
by the people
(by force from farmers)
and now nobody has anything
and nothing has being planted
on a commercial scale
and famine is getting
to chaotic lengths
and the people
have returned to the land
to find a resting place there.

Children play under flowering jacaranda trees
in a light hot breeze
with stomachs swollen from hunger

and slime running from noses
and flies wandering over their faces
and some men urinate
against the nearest tree.

The street is filled with fear,
poverty, hunger, pestilence and death
and soldiers stand around idle
smoking cigarettes

longing back to the days
when they went as the fifth brigade
to the south west regions
and killed Ndebele people
plundering their villages,
raping their woman
and slaughtering the children.

Still there's no sound
of real opposition, as apposing politicians
are arrested and beaten
time after time
by the police
and an out voted president,
a man proclaiming to be a Jesuit,
remains in the ruling chair
and the secret police is everywhere
and he holds out a begging hand
to neighbouring countries
for fuel, electricity, food and medicine
and whatever he wants

and it's quite easy to head south
even if you have to crawl,
walk, take a bicycle,
a car, a bus or a train
to a neighbouring country
where the colour of your skin
counts much more
than a place of birth.

Hard Contact Lenses

With my feet lifted
I hang out of balance
while someone skilful observes my eyes
and a bright painful light

shines into the depths of my eyes
seeing where the focus of my own cornea disappears,
measuring the deflection in my eyes,
seeing why and where my sight languishes away

and it's like a rainbow
that deeper into my eye,
only still deeper wants to notch and spy
with rays in a wide circled bow

and when his eye later peeps at me,
he says look there
and let me look at another place
where he now feeds letters to my eyes

and with hard contact lenses I see like a falcon
but those things scratch, itch and pierce like a beam
there are furrows betraying the age of his face
and his teeth look like white lime,

my own freckles jumps out
and I forthright say to him
how much the lenses are bothering me
that there and then I want to throw them away.

Gert Strydom

Hard Contact Lenses [2]

With my feet lifted I hang outside of my own equilibrium
while a ophthalmologist does measure the deviation of my eyes
with a bright painful light

that shines into the depths of my eyes,
still deeper look into my eye,
where the focus of my cornea does disappear

and the ophthalmologist moves out of my sight
as if he does not know about the pain that he is causing.
With my feet lifted I hang outside of my own equilibrium

while an ophthalmologist examines why my sight is disappearing
and when his eye does later peep at me
still deeper look into my eye,

my eye is once again lighted up
(as if he does forget about my presence)
with a bright painful light

where he is now feeding alphabetic letters to my eye
and with hard contact lenses I do later see like a hawk
and when his eye does later peep at me

I do feel enthusiastic,
feel how I sweat involuntary.
With my feet lifted I hang outside of my own equilibrium

and his teeth look like white lime
my own freckles do jump out
and with hard contact lenses I do later see like a hawk

do immediately become witty,
does notice his whole face
with a bright painful light,

he looks very tired
and I am able to see,
my own freckles do jump out,

the ophthalmologist is very handy
and his teeth have got a split.
With my feet lifted I hang outside of my own equilibrium
with a bright painful light

that does bring pain which I do not deserve,
that shines into the depths of my eyes,
and I am able to see
where the focus of my cornea does disappear.

Gert Strydom

Hari Chrishna

People with light orange cloaks
comes pass in a jolly procession.
There are two hitting drums
and one sings over a loudspeaker horn
and I see a few
getting rattling noises out of cymbals
that makes the people
on the sidewalk stand still
while the small group of people
draws attention and pass.

It's a shrill "hare krishna hare krishna
krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare"
that goes right through you
and I wonder
what the strange words
are exactly saying
and I hear how the drums
keeps the earthly rhythm
and it's like a street circus
that disappears in the distance
while they disappear behind buildings.

Gert Strydom

Have Every Love From The Start

Has every love from the start
pain that nobody can avoid?
When you get that first impulse,
is sorrow already built in it?

How do things then still make sense
that you bring so much joy to me
if every love from the start
has pain that nobody can avoid?

Is it only youth that stands free
from everything and can conquer any problem
or does life immerse you blindly
into a relationship in which the you and me
by it self determines for how love is, from the start?

Gert Strydom

Have I Got To Close The Books?

No bad weather,
murderous natives
or even the British Empire
could stop our ancestors
to make a place
their own
at the southern end
of Africa.

Till on a day
some strange people rule
that has no concept
of that which is high and holy,
and tread every thing
with time into ruins
and believe that things are better

while criminals are stealing cars,
robbing banks, murdering people
and steal just where they can
and deceivers sit in parliament
and work are reserved
for only some.

Have I now also
got to close the books,
and leave the country forever
and climb on a jet plane
and make another place
with foreigners
my own
to have a life again?

Gert Strydom

Have I Told You?

Have I told you
that I hear the wind
whispering your name,
see your eyes in the sparkling stars?

Have I told you
that time and again
you sneak right into my dreams,
as if beaconing me to love you more?

Have I told you
that your voice lingers in my mind,
that I can feel your heart beating along with mine,
that sometimes I feel your breath on my cheek?

Have I told you
that since the day that we parted
every day something reminds me
of you, reminds me about true happiness?

Gert Strydom

Hazy The New Summer Day Does Hang

Hazy the new summer day does hang,
the sky is deep cobalt blue
and here and there the dew of the night does glisten
when the new morning comes in her glory
and in the early morn the moment is tranquil and silent
when only the cries of the plovers do resound
before sunlight tremble over the windows of the house
and its then when a person does think about deeper things.
In the backyard rose bushes rock
in a light wind that only touches here and there
and there are vegetables in rows on the red ground
where you are watering and unexpectedly do spray me wet
and that cold jet of water
does break my thoughts.

Gert Strydom

Hazy The New Summer Day Hangs

Hazy the new summer day hangs,
the sky is cobalt blue
and here and there the dew of the night glistens
when the new morning unfolds in her glory
and at the early time the moment is tranquil and silent
where only the calls of the plovers resound
before the sunlight does tremble on the windows of the houses
and its then that a person thinks of the deeper things.
In the back yard rose trees rock
in a soft breeze that touches just here and there
and there are vegetables planted in rows on the red earth
where you are watering and unexpectedly splash me wet
and the cold stream of water
does take me out of my thoughts.

Gert Strydom

He Came From A Fissure

in the brick wall,
a small creature
with a open mouth
and forked tongue,
moving its eyelids
and scales gleaming
in the early morning air.

His blue head caught my eye
where he laid in the sun
as if trying to catch the first
hot rays
and when I grabbed for him
I was left
with the twisting tail in my hand
and the rock-lizard disappeared
back from where he came.

Gert Strydom

He Could Have Been A Banker

Working in jacket, shirt and tie,
carrying a briefcase,
greeting the other staff
that is already in

he could have been a banker,
every morning first thing at seven a.m.
checking the world's major currencies
against that of his own country,
buying, selling and extending
foreign exchange contracts
trading United States dollars,
European euros, British pounds, Swiss francs,
Australian dollars and even Swedish Crowns

for deals made across the globe
in billions of rands
calculating costs and profits
over extended periods of time

but he is selling death,
are busy with the finances
of a major arms manufacturer
that does business
in almost any part of the world.

Gert Strydom

He Could Not Stay With Me (Parody)

(with apologies to A. E. Housman)

He could not stay with me; and it's getting me under.
He could not stay with me and I am amazed at his gaze,
I shook his hand and gave my heart in blunder
and went with half my life into my days.

[Reference: VII "He would not stay for me; and who can wonder? " by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

He Did Long For The Presence Of His Father

The crushing mob
did push closer and closer to Him
before He could go back to His Father
and they wanted to see an innocent good man suffering,

wanted to feel His blood on their fingers
when they roared: "crucify Him! "

And Pontius Pilate did try to wash off his own guilt
and their abomination from his hands
when suddenly the sun did go cold
and darkness did come to the earth

when the creator God did hang on a cross,
did long for the presence of His Father

and did carry the sin of all humanity
and the populace did wait on a wondrous sign to happen
while the curtain in the temple did tear right down
and God Himself did die as a mere sinner.

Gert Strydom

He Is Caught In Time

(after Mandi Engelbrecht)

The faces around him is a confusing sea
of unknown people for whom he does not care
and he keeps away from pleasure and enjoyment;
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

No beautiful girl catches his eyes
and he is afraid for all of life,
people on the street are strange and silly;
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

One dark night his wife left him,
talked cheerfully about her new lover,
took everything along even the last flower vase,
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God;

she told the whole world that he whores around,
that he peeps at other women,
that he keeps no Godly command,
he does not anymore know his Bible or God;

at the holy church he lost his job
when more and more people heard the gossip story,
he scolds himself that he is very stupid,
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

His whole life is broken into pieces,
around him there is only confusing impressions,
it's as if all his friends now are mocking him,
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

He locks himself in his inner room
opens for nobody that knocks on the outside,
he finds no other work opportunity,
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

During the night he is single, almost a monk
and he lives from dark moment to moment

is caught in time, feels dirty and rotten;
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

There is another world in his poems,
in memories wandering, searching faces
and dreams of some deliverance are somewhat silly;
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

He plants African marigolds, roses and jasmine;
feels the earth in his hands and too much pain,
he is broken and almost bankrupt;
he does not anymore understand his Bible or God.

Gert Strydom

He Is The Creator And Mediator

He that could speak and things appear right there,
that reached out His hand mightily over the universe,
He is the creator and also the mediator,
He who is blinding, who makes lightning bolts lash out,
did not save Himself for me a mere human,
He fell down from God to a mere man
and how can I explain His deepest love
that He still selflessly gives to everyone?

Gert Strydom

He Lies Stretched Out In The Sun

He lies stretched out in the sun
in the area next to the rugby field
that is still wildly overgrown at places
where a game reverse had been at a time.

He is safely fenced in,
protected against homeowners,
even some schoolboys
that wants to throw rocks at him

and like a wild animal
his hiding place is in the thick grass,
in the thicket and trees around him
there are birds that gambol
and some are building their nests.

He watches them somewhat hidden and amused
and he looks with mistrust
at the young man
that notices and calls him.

Ignoring the human he washes himself further,
does stretch out contently in the sun
and he cannot decide if he wants to climb a tree
or do want to find his prey in the gutter,

where he watches the world with his cat eyes
which yellow-green
does regard everything around him
and where he lies stretched out
he is the king of his own region.

Gert Strydom

He Lies Stretched Out In The Sun {2}

He lies stretched out in the sun
in the area next to the rugby field
that is still wildly overgrown at places
where a game reserve had been at a time.

He is safely fenced in,
protected against homeowners,
even some schoolboys
that wants to throw rocks at him

and like a wild animal
his hiding place is in the thick grass,
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where he watches the world with his cat eyes
which yellow-green
does regard everything around him
and where he lies stretched out
he is the king of his own region.

Gert Strydom

He Makes The Things Between Us To Be True (Collins Sestets)

I am set to love God more than anybody
His principles, character lives in me
the very essence of love is such
that one cannot love a person overmuch,
He makes the things between us to be true
which brings His love to that in me and you.

My joys are many, my sorrows are few
and every day with you is something new
while to me you are much more than a friend
the depth of our feelings is without end,
He makes the things between us to be true
which brings His love to that in me and you.

Daily I only want to love you more,
being together with you that I adore
with you small hand in mine on life's pathway
while we constantly head to the new day,
He makes the things between us to be true
which brings His love to that in me and you.

Gert Strydom

He Never Saw Thirty Three

He never saw thirty-three
and although he aimed
to be a great teacher
and had a university degree,
was a good writer
and loved poetry

he was struck down
before his time
by a illness
diagnosed too late
by university doctors
that didn't want
to believe that he was ill
until his life was taken by fate

and while his heart
burnt for his fellow men
he tried to reach
for something more
and his eyes was set
on another shore.

Gert Strydom

He Retched And Almost Choked In T

and as the stinking bile
hit his throat
the dizziness of one too many whiskey's
hit the mark
and he collapsed against
the chest of drawers.

His wife with her cold calculating eyes
reminded him of a dead fish
with a heart of cold stone
with lips pressed tightly together,

but there was something in the stare,
something that pierced him
and reminded him of the disgust
welling up in his spirit,

and erect she stood rocking the child
her nose inch up, as if he was below her
in each and every way
and anger gave power to his hands,
jerking a drawer out
he hurled it with great force
splintering the wood
against her head.

Like a animal that had its revenge
he was turning away
when out of the corner of his eye
he saw red blood
dripping from the forehead of his wife.

Drop by drop fell
on the baby boy's shining hair
soaking through to the child's scalp
and in fascination he looked on.

Gert Strydom

He Said That Everyone Will Have A House

(after Ena Murray)

He said that everyone will have a house
who believe in Him and in His words
and keenly I want to live in a place,
even if I stumble in my inability.
A place where it's always summer,
where a garden stretches out for hectares,
where all of my animals, now missing to death,
will move in with me,
where one day I would pick
rose on rose or any other flower
and even if at times you blush,
I would embrace you nurturing
and still I wonder
if I would also admire you there?

[Reference: "Roosknop vir 'n engel" ("Rosebud for an angel") by Ena Murray.]

Gert Strydom

He Was Lucky

The BTR-152 lowers its heavy machinegun
and starts firing,
before the 90mm shell
knocks the hell out of it.

The BTR stand motionless
and white smoke rises
from it like steam
and there's an acrid smell
in the air.

I jump down from Ratel's dome
and through the smoke
a Cuban appears,
with hands above his head
and there's a man unscarred
that should have been dead.

Gert Strydom

He Who Creates Innumerable Systems Of Stars

He who creates innumerable systems of stars
visits my heart,
He who holds the rain, the thunder and hail
also knows my sorrow,
knows even when a single hair falls from my head
and still separate
at times I want to lead my own life
and yet He always does love me.

Gert Strydom

He's Past It

Werner is not unconscious
from drugs and liquor,
he's past it

and a white ambulance
arrives with a flashing
red light.

He lies on the ground
in his own vomit
and urine
that lays yellow, orange and white
around him
and empty dark brown beer bottles
and a bottle of Johnny Walker
is broken
and the glass
stabs into his arm
and the man
on the label
walks past him

and blowflies
are everywhere on him
and a pot pipe
clings with vomit
to his mouth.

There's an injection
with the needle
still in his vain

and his eyes are big and grey
and empty without life
while his right hand
clutches a guitar

as if he's thinking
about the next chord

and there's tiredness
and emptiness on his face.

Gert Strydom

Heart Attack

What a strange and terrible thing
that brings terror to a person,

where you cannot breathe,
while such an odd feel and nausea do remain,

the left side right through the chest and heart does pain,
when that pain does not disappear in the chest, back and arm

in a moment my whole life turns around before me
and when the world goes back to its normal way

I am afraid that I will loose you so suddenly,
where in me only remains a hell of powerlessness,

where I know that I am not finished with my poems,
where I am searching for more intense light as darkness is coming

and I am strong, fit, have got low cholesterol
of the thing that is life I am full

but by mere blood pressure this thing hits me
with which everything just like this can come to an end,

where I wonder about everything, about which life is,
over the days of my own existence,

where you and the things of my life do become lovelier
and in joy I know that God does pour out his mercy over me.

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Gert Strydom

Heaven Help Us (Rhyming Double Sestina)

1

You are in my heartbeat and in my breath
and every though and little thing remind me of you
while God have brought our lives on the same way
and I do want to love you past the portals of death,
do remember you in everything that I do.
Our love is as vivid and alive as the sun
while I do miss you throughout each day,
but at night you lie so close to me in bed
and with you I am from my self-doubts free
as with you every other female to me is dead
and with you a new exciting life has begun
while you do tell me that you do truly love me.

2

Suddenly a deadly virus does threaten you and me.
It could be on another person's breath
and after months the world is not from it free,
where everyone knows it did in China begun.
Far too easily it does spread illness and death,
life is twisted to sorrowful day after sorrowful day
and daily I pray that God will protect you,
do miss you when at night I am alone in my bed,
do wish that life could be another way
while far too many people are from the virus dead
and dismal seems even the winter sun
while heartless become the things that I do.

3

Locked-down restrained I am now in what I do
while apart you do live away from me
and I long and miss you with each rising sun,
while I pray that you will be protected from death
that God will walk right beside you on each day.
Your personality and beauty takes away my breath
and I want to again be with you
while away from me you are on your own way
and all our dreams of yesterday are dead,
where from restrictions not a person is free
and I recall the day where our love begun,
do dream about you when I sleep in my bed.

4

This morning I could smell you in my bed,
thought of making you happy in each thing that I do,
knew that without you it will be another lonely day,
and I felt death's presence with the bloody-red sun,
where the news was full of an explosion and of death
and this brought great sorrow and heartache to me
where a family member and friend is from this virus dead
and she had been also very special to you
but this is now destiny and life's way
where from the time of Adam evil things had begun,
but everything was perfect with his first breath
but after a wrong choice life was of heartache not free.

5

The UN says that from the virus we may never be free
and from a nightmare soaked with sweat is my whole bed
but over my face lingers rays of the bright sun.
I dreamt about the Bush-War and soldiers that are dead
and that strange smell of spilled blood was on every breath
but that events happened long before I did meet you,
where in the military I had to spend day after day,
did have to face the enemy with havoc and death.
To stay alive there had been no other way
where this did completely change me,
did even have a impact on the things that I do
where not from my choice that war and its devastation begun.

6

With basic-training compulsory military service begun
and for two years and from camps after that I was not free.
I remember running up and down under a scorching sun,
how we were trained to kill to make others dead,
to just follow the training when we were facing death
and I wish that then I had known you,
where far too rapid went every single day
and at times with exercise painful was each breath
but those harsh times did only strengthen me
and like a rock I slept on the military bed,
did not even worry about the next things we would do
and civilian life seemed a very different way.

7

Years later I traveled in another adjacent parallel way
when the explosion in Church \Street, Pretoria, begun.

I knew I had to return to HF Verwoerd Hospital on that day,
that it would be filled from bed to bed
and the lives of others, not my job, mattered to me,
while a strange explosive smell was on every breath.
(I now wish the girl I wanted to treat were you.)
There were so many people shattered, broken and dead,
Filling out disaster-cards was all I could do
and too many innocent people were killed under an autumn-sun.
How I wished that those twisted people were from the explosion free,
innocent children did not have to meet such a terrible death.

8

Now commercial farmers continually do face death
as if to kill them are to some people the way
and from corruption and ineptness the country is not free
while some people work as if another day will come with the sun
and not to the best of their ability their work they do.
It's as if all previous principles are to them dead,
as if true laziness is inhaled with each breathe,
into the ground the country goes day by damned day
and this seems like a kind of robbery to me,
where I wonder where this state of affairs begun,
while people go to work and again to bed
and this has an impact on every citizen and on you.

9

With BEE and Affirmative Action no future I can give you,
where my career as an accountant did face a premature death
and there is nothing to turn things back that I can do.
The smells of decay is on every breath
while to a future there seems to be no kind of way.
Some others have it worse and do not have food or a bed,
where as beggars at traffic lights they stand each day,
where their previous life is now completely dead
and from poverty they will never be free
and with a new regime their devastation had begun.
A man, woman, child and dog living on the street bothers me
where to some people there is no place under the sun.

10

Before history you shone like the sun,
until iniquity was found in you,
from jealousy and haughtiness you were not free
and at a time you were perfect in every way
but Lucifer, with deceit and hatred you made your bed,

lies, twisted truths and impudence was on your breath,
you have brought pain and sorrow to each day,
Even as an angel of light still evil you do
and beyond you are the tracts of too many dead
but the Son of God you could not bound with death
and with His arising liberty to all begun
and He is the only Christ and only savior to me/

11

This Corona-virus is a Satanic attack to me
and there is new hope with the rising sun.
I pray at night even when I am in bed,
that God will protect humanity from death,
that He will walk ahead on the way,
that He will accompany me in all that I do,
that He will bring liberty and set all men free
that at His time He will raise the righteous dead,
that He will strengthen my love for you,
that He will again blow in the living breath,
and where a deadly virus had begun
I know that He still saves people on each day.

12

My Lord, You are with me on every day,
wherever I go You do accompany me
and You are to my life like the sun,
You do lead me on the only true way,
do pick me up and do set me from sin free
and You knew me before my life begun.
You do notice everything that I do,
know even the dreams I have in my bed
and should I enter death,
then still with first sight I will find You
and for an army You had awakened the dead,
there is much more than life in your words and breath.

13

I'Envoi

My Lord, You know me and You know each of the dead,
do hear each prayer in my bed and from bounds make all men free,
anew Your mercy comes each day, You do guard against death,
in You all men find the way while You are brighter than the sun,
in You love is selflessly true and You give to the weary new breath.
Before history selfless Your love begun and it's present in all that You do.

[Poet's notes: "I found an example of a double rhyming sestina in the poem: "The complaint of Lisa," by Algernon Charles Swinburne. BEE is Black Economic Empowerment.]

Gert Strydom

Hecuba

(after Petra Muller)

Who passes on the sidewalk she wants to grab,
wants to bite the postman's arm right off,
motorbikes and bicycles she wants to catch
and every newspaper delivery man

and so the yard is guarded faithfully
from strange criminals that do sneak about and strange cats,
where she snarls at the dogs next door,
but when it's full moon

she wants to get on her hind legs,
while she cries like a cruel wolf
while her head is jerked back
and there is nothing in the street that draws her attention.

[Reference: "Hekuba, die teef" (Hecuba, the bitch) by Petra Müller.]

Gert Strydom

Heidelberg Recollections

Too many memories cling
to the places where you life and stay
from being small and in thoughts you pass
the pain and think about the joy,
so as if good things can make up for that which hurts.

Poems was in my dad's heart, so as if Afrikaans
is a living thing,
from being small I was aware
of his voice letting words cling to me,
even at the mourning,
where without really realizing
what the meaning of it is
I stood at his grave in the red-brown sand
and saw crying people passing

and for me it was as if he just went away,
but his big black car
with the fins was still there and daily
mother used it to drive to work
and I was really scared
that at a time she would also take to the road
and when she in the mornings was leaving
I was wondering if I would see her again?

The black jacket and hat
with which dad made us scared
when we did not want to eat
or did not want to learn
what he was teaching us
still was hanging behind the door
and time and again I looked
at these objects
expecting them
to on a day come to life again
with dad disguising him self in them
like when I was naughty,
when he came in through the back door.

Heinrich

You and Werner play with little plastic men
and dinky toy cars, sometimes its war,
at other times you are heroes
who want to save the whole wide world,

or its karate on the computer,
where you have got to face each other
and no one spares the other,
when anyone loses there are tears flowing.

Later you lie stretched out on your bed
and at dusk
I cover you with a duvet
and if you had played outside

maybe had thrown a tennis ball to Jeanie
or had built paths and small dams
in the red-brown dust
I scrub your feet at nightfall in the bath

and then later you become a young man
who tries to catch the eyes of girls,
plays rugby at Craven week
fancying yourself rather too much.

My child, now that you are not mine anymore,
now that you have lost your innocence
and have to stand on your own feet,
I sometimes wonder
what is happening in your world?

Gert Strydom

Helderberg Hill (Sestina)

You are the high hill with numerous peaks,
that in summer looks magnificent and cheery,
where I have climbed up to waterfalls, to heights,
where I got a view of sun, beach and sea,
felt as if in presence of God, with tranquillity
with your moods you remind me of a lady.

Once I wandered with a young lady
on a twisting trail among your high peaks
to find some inner peace, some tranquillity
and she was quite happy and rather cheery
gazing up at the blue sky, down at the sea
from both of those dazing heights.

Climbing up to the sheer heights
was like exploring the body of a lady
as if finding a secret kind of sea
with beautiful rising pointed peaks
and the experience was quite cheery,
suddenly leaving an own tranquillity.

My privacy is invaded by her tranquillity
as from far I still do watch her heights
and although feeling rather cheery
there is danger in this lovely lady
that beacons me with her high peaks
to look upon an endless open sea.

I long to gaze out upon the sea,
to be with her in tranquillity,
to wander among her peaks,
to again explore her heights
as if to visit a dear kind old lady
but I wonder if I will find her cheery?

But I must now continually stay cheery,
keep far away from the troubled sea,
avoid all of the dangerous heights
of live to be able to find tranquillity

but still the beautiful ageless lady
is luring me continually with her peaks.

How glimmering and cheery with ice her peaks
high above the sea, do glow from their heights,
she is without tranquillity, a chilly frozen lady.

Gert Strydom

Helderberg Mountain

Outside the first rays fall
on one of the pinnacles
of Helderberg
and I look at the peaks
that disappears gigantic into the height.

In winter
there's snow on the mountain
and at times
it looks grey and dark
of coldness
through the winter rain.

Today there's something majestic
the picture
that the mountain
make with the long hot summer day.

There's the smell of turpentine
while I walk through the rows of trees
and from the top
the Strand and Gordonsbay
lies picture perfect
with the sapphire blue sea
as a backdrop.

Gert Strydom

Héloïse And Abelard

Even when we have to part,
it brings us still nearer to each other.
Nothing can keep me away from you
and nothing separates true love.

I live from the letters that I receive from you
and if I sometimes feel confused
I know even when we have to part,
that it brings us nearer to each other.

The feelings between you and me
claims no big gesture
and every thing is accomplished and has been settled
and my love and joy is always you,
even when we have to part.

Gert Strydom

Heloise To Peter Abelard

Far too small is the memory
with much too little to still preserve
of what you had been for me and maybe still is
and with time we fade to each other.
Here I am caught by destiny
when unexpectedly you wander through my thoughts,
I am bending myself to man and to God,
are waiting on a messenger to take my letter,
I am still lost in you, in our love.

Gert Strydom

Help Me Find The True And Only Way

To no world beyond will I climb,
when like in Jacobs dream
I see Thy ladder
descending down to me,
since I am man
and thou are far greater than I am
please give me dignity and humility
and let me know,
how to honor thee.

Let the lords of darkness be gone
and let they holy angels,
come to protect me
against Lucifer and his host
and those that do his bidding
and guide me on the narrow way
and help me not to stray.

Let others seek ways to Swadhisthana,
use ether and quantum mechanics
and human consicousness,
to try to get
to the world beyond.

Let me find the path
that leads to Thy throne
in Thy holy word
and send Michael, Gabriel,
Raphael and Uriel
to accompany me
and help me to obey
and find the true
and only way.

Gert Strydom

Help Me, My Lord

and I shall overcome
forgive all my iniquities from the earth
my salvation, my integrity depends on you
please do protect my family and my home
you do know my life and its failure and its worth
you do know every word and exactly what I do
nothing is hidden or secret where you do roam
you have been with me right from my birth
and all your promises and your love is true,
you are the one who knows everything, not I
but you do also know my heart and on You I do rely.

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Gert Strydom

Henk Pierneef (Free Verse Sonnet)

He is already high up into the rough rocky mountain,
there are three huge aloes standing in front of him,
with a deep abyss that halts any further chance to continue,
there is a still larger mountain higher in the distance.
Big blocks of rock lie brown and ragged around him,
fog do whirl early in the mourning up the cliffs,
in a view that fills a person with wonder
and it's right here where he stops for this scene,
takes out his easel and lay down this landscape on canvass
around his focus-point all other things comes into balance,
the fine detail a person can notice from any angle,
right next to him there is a steep exposed cliff.
He looks at his own painting for moments,
are astonished as masterly it is finished.

[Poet's note:I have written this poem on a painting of Pierneef that my wife does possess.]

Gert Strydom

Her Body Language Is Possessive

Her body language is possessive,
as if the pleasure is aimed at herself
but still her passion is active
full of knowledge, pleasure and meaning

with the heat of her tongue, lips and mouth
that covers my whole body
everywhere over me
before she pulls me into her hot depths,

when I hear her breath quickening in passion,
when she stretches over me,
bending her body over mine
with her long hair covering my face

while she is flowering over me,
astounding me in long moments of pleasure.

Gert Strydom

Her Eyes Is Shining (Terzanelle)

Her eyes is shining as the stars in the night
and with a type of grace
they sparkle bright, with an own true light

displaying character and sweetness in her face
and I wonder how she feels behind her smile's red glow
and with a type of grace

what lurks in her heart, what lurks below
her fiery radiance
and I wonder how she feels behind her smile's red glow

her natural charm and brilliance,
and I wonder what feelings she does really keep behind
her fiery radiance

and she is sweet and sharp of wit and mind
as a girl whose beauty comes from inside
and I wonder what feelings she does really keep behind

and what secrets she does hide?
Her eyes is shining as the stars in the night,
as a girl whose beauty comes from inside
they sparkle bright, with an own true light.

Gert Strydom

Her First Cellular Phone

On the day that I give my darling
her first cellular phone
she held it in her hand
looked at it for a moment

and later proudly
chatted with her girl friends over it.

When on a day she got angry with me
she threw it against the wall
and it was in peaces spread in front of my feet
and neatly I did put it together again.

Gert Strydom

Her Hair Was Gold (Than-Bauk)

Her hair was gold,
her hand cold, slim,
I bold they say.

Gert Strydom

Her Presence Brings The Greatest Joy

Her presence brings the greatest joy,
has warmth like that of the summer sun
greater love than between any girl and boy
she brings me while along our lives do run

and with my true love I want to be
past the ends of life, constantly into eternity.

Gert Strydom

Here I Am, A Man That Is World-Weary (In Answer To T.S. Eliot)

I

Here I am, a man that is world-weary,
in a month without rain
and passion and the pain
are still aflame and burning in me.

At the gates of death, destruction and desolation
I did in my youth trod
fired a rifle, a canon and whatever gun in angry shot
and then had a obligation

II

to be true to my country, to be true to you
but now I am getting weary
while life is slowly getting eerie
as if it's coming to an end, as if I have lost the glue

that has hold my body and my spirit together
and whatever waits in the new day
is coming from the hand of the new government to bother
my fellow countrymen and I and still God do I obey.

II

We live in times of signs and wonders
in the technological new age,
but my fellow men is at rage
as if they are getting orders

that is swaddled in darkness
to maim, to rob and kill
driving every white man to the edge of the abyss
as if it is to them an immense thrill

III

but still there are many blessings
flowing from the hand of God
that I, this poor sod
of a human being see every day in my awakening

and with careful hands
we try to build a future
but I feel like an old horse led to the pasture
in a place of pitiless lands

IV

and from shoelaces we build
try and produce something great
as if we are masters of some or other guild
knowing that time is running out and we cannot wait

in a world where this knowledge
is not comprehended by everyone
where the world of yesterday is totally gone,
we try to earn a living and to live on standing at the edge

V

of a darkening abyss
and with courage, without any fear
we see the new morning drawing near
as if it is

the age and time that a whole nation has waited on
and while the battle begins we comprehend that the fighting
is not left to us alone and that it's spreading
from the very hand of God, that His armies are marching on

VI

and the thousand thoughts and small deliberations
will not lead us to victory
nor any arms we take up in our iniquity
as we are only mere men in His mighty considerations

with love and understanding and in truth
we have to wait on His salvation

coming to our wrecked nation
and every one even the youth

VII

have got to comprehend
that the battle will in due time
draw to an end
that in this world of hardship and crime,

salvation will be coming from a power supreme and divine
and that His righteousness is overpowering
even in impossible situations still conquering
and that His covenant stays through time without any decline.

[Reference: Gerontion by T.S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

Here I Confess That I Do Love You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Lina Spies)

The words between us is something like holy ground,
where rhetoric gets meaning in the mundane,
the taste of gooseberries and prickly pears are on your mouth
while you tell me that in your soul and body you do burn for me.
Your expressions and gestures do remain your own
and in your eyes is something earthy
where day after I do like you more,
where you do wait on me under the shadows in our garden.
Your smile is bright and like the sun your eyes gleam,
where both of us constantly do find God in the darkness
and with my heart you have got a strange kind of ability
where you are everywhere in my soul and mind and body.
There is no formula for that out of which love does exist,
just the knowledge that right through my life you are with me.

[Reference: "belydenis" (confession) by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

Here I Write About Myself

Here I write about myself
and at times my personality is far too strong
my leadership wants to take control
wants to cut into conversations,
wants to teach people,
wants to get involved,
to make a better place out of the world
and all the time I am learning
how other poets brew their words

and maybe my spirit
is just too bold
and I am looking right through the enchantment
of beautiful ladies

and march right through
until I get my target
as if determination
locks her claws around me

and to one I stay true
as if I am a saint
and her soul is driving me deeper.

I know no fear
as war has changed
my humanity

and when I write poems,
I am myself,
at other times a spectator
who measures out time and space,
keeps book of the pain,
tear through rottenness
and illustrate beauty

and in vain I try
to walk in the steps
of the big word master,

as a true follower

but with my own talent
and the whole time
my feet comes down
like military boots in the right pace
but following a different march
as if I do not know
how to parade my poems

¶Envoi

and here I write about myself,
about how my life is

and when I get home
I listen to the voices
of Dylan Thomas,
Douglas Livingstone
and every great poet
that I can lay my hands on,
see what are written in their works

before I grab a glowing hammer
and hit words into forms
as if I can melt
thunder and fire together
to words that stays crackling.

Gert Strydom

Here Now John Keats, I Salute You

Some of your poems
were met with contempt
and yet above most
English poets your work rise.

Your words are deep and wise
and sweep past time
in eloquence,
breaking right through history
with magic and imagery
and only after death
your true honour comes.

Now famous are your name
and on first reading
"Chapman's Homer"
I was convinced
to read Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey.

Your "La Belle Dame sans Merci"
and "Lamia" are reflected
in my own verse
and here now
John Keats, I salute you
while your words
are immortal to me.

Gert Strydom

Here On The Night Air (Italian Sonnet)

Here on the night air I smell your perfume
as if right now you are right here with me
and how do I now wish this true to be
while outside red roses do in glory bloom

while we do live in times of endless doom
and a deadly virus do effect our own reality,
as endless deaths we do in news-reports see
and it's as if you are present in this room

but from me you are away locked-down
while to pieces I do for your presence long
and life has lost its simplicity in the way it is
and to family meetings the government frown
while as my wife together we do belong
and I pray for things to be different from this.

Gert Strydom

Here On This Planet

Here on this planet,
a dot of a place in the whole universe,
without end I did start loving you
and it's in the depths of your eyes that I fall
as you are more than just precious to me
And you do make my humanity complete

Gert Strydom

Here You Do Turn My Life And My Days Around (Free Verse Sonnet)

When I come to you as your bridegroom
my heart sings a song of love to you,
you do take me to places far past sorrow
when you leave me dumbstruck as my darling,
when darkness and night by themselves come together.
Your eyes shine like stars in the far-off distance
and all other things disappear in the naught
as here you do turn my life and my days around,
where everything by own accord flow into each other,
when the veldt are white and in pastel colours with cosmos,
your face is soft and veiled as if by fog,
while you do fascinate me in the morning, at noon and in the evening,
where I almost go into a kind of dream world
where love is something holy, intimate and sincere.

Gert Strydom

Heroic Exploits Told To A Child

(after Daleen Enslin)

When I told you about the seven wonders
about the great sphinx,
how Oedipus elucidated those riddles,
how in roguery sly
Odysseus caught Troy with the wooden horse,
there was a lump in my throat
when I had forgotten to tell you about Jesus,
who saves the world - this you must know -

[Reference: "Ek vertel jou" (I tell you) by Daleen Enslin.]

Gert Strydom

Hers Is A Clean Kitchen

(a small ode to my wife Daleen)

Hers is a clean kitchen
with everything tidy in its place
while white dough, turns to bread
in the black oven

sweetly smelling and surely delightful
and in baking pans some more dough
is rising and in a little while
it will turn to baked rusks

and her darling hands
that cares tenderly
have played their part in life
with a gentle smile on her face
and the first signs of age
are just touching her hair
but from her glance,
love is spreading everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Hetero Sex

(in answer to T.T. Cloete)

As long as we are together
we can adore
as companion, partner and comrade
as friend and friend
and trust each other selfless as husband and wife
own enrichment
and when you do lie in my arms we become one
when love brings a magic power to lust.

[Reference: "uniseks" (Unisex) by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

High Flight

With rocket ships,
man has sent a baboon, a dog into space,
has ventured into a race,
man has gone on trips
has trod upon the moon,
breathing through a aqualung
some were shattered flung
into a thousand bits

and any flight through space
remains a challenging thing, soaring into darkness
a quest against a almost endless night.

No man can by his own machinations
reach out
and touch the face of God.

Gert Strydom

High Summer

(for Daleen, after Rita Mouton)

Like every other afternoon the thunder roars,
I notice blue-white flashes coming down closer and closer,
while outside the Redbreast sings and rejoice and dance
when the rain at first drip and then pours down
and I smell the wet earth like new life,
it's as if you are right here with me
where right through the rain the doves coo
and in my heart it's also high summer,
there is a song of love and hope
while water pours down the windowpanes.

I write to you a verse
about a sunny summer that I do remember,
when you were with me at Ballito
where the dolphins in deep jump over the waves,
where we hiked miles every morning together
and your lips were soft under mine,
the days were almost endlessly long
and your eyes were sunny and big
where I do remember all of this
while water pours down the windowpanes.

Tonight when the darkness do come suddenly
and clouds do cover the stars where they hang
the moon will big-eye break through
and it's a while nearer
to when another summer will come for us
with days full of nice sunshine
and rain in the afternoon
while water pours down the windowpanes.

[Reference: "Seisoene" (Seasons) by Rita Mouton.]

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Gert Strydom

High Windows

(in answer to Philip Larkin)

My wife's words come to me:

"hands do go unthinking where they have been"
when in church a young unmarried couple I do see
who are hardly older than teens

and his hand caresses the open back of her dress
brushes against a thigh and a breast.

It's clear that they are having sex with each other,
have found a way to this side of paradise.
I know that this information will vex her father and mother
and I wonder what they do think when for prayer we arise.

(To hell with the pastor the church and its doctrine and teaching?)
To each other there hands are reaching.

She is probably on the pill and without any bonds they are doing it
they are breaking God's law and will, are living a life of ungodliness
and they are good kids that do not wish anybody ill but bit by tiny bit
they are in vain trying to reach for endless happiness

but to both of them there is a kind of tension
and when I look into the pastor's eyes I see comprehension.

Up high the pictured stained glass windows suddenly does glow
when a sunbeam is setting the face of Jesus alight
causing on the bald head of the pastor a kind of halo
and I know that nothing is completely out of sight

while together the church and choir does sing amazing grace
and I do know that God rules supreme through ages, time and space

[Reference: "High Windows" by Philip Larkin.]

Gert Strydom

Hiking To Durban

We wanted to be free
from the discipline
of boarding school
and catch a lift all the way,
to Durban at the sea.

What a life it would be
with bikini girls on the beach
and totally out of reach
of the head master's cane
and we would visit every shop
and meet girls on the street
and spend every sent
without having to pay for rent.

The beach would be the place
to sleep and tan and surf
and to spent,
the rest of the summer
as a place of fun.

We packed our bags
and left our school uniforms behind,
but what a calamity
when the first car that stopped
opened its doors wide
and the principal was inside.

Gert Strydom

Himalayan Balsam (Cavatina)

Quite indolent somewhat like purple orchids;
a rich fragrance
comes as they do a nice fruity scent spill;
they draw a glance
as they hang jointed, course and delicate,
like a romance
that comes with a sudden kind of whiff
changing to certainty from just an if.

Gert Strydom

Hiroshima Almost Returning

I saw Buccaneer bombers lined up
with bombs being loaded into bomb bays,
the ultimate of weapons coloured
in copper red with lead tips,
with pilots waiting on the attack command
strapped into their cockpits,
canopies closing,
taxiing to takeoff positions
and then again waiting there,
later switching engines off

and I wondered where these men
would unleash the manmade suns
if and when the attack command come

and if there would be winter, death and disaster
for a thousand years
and if this action would bring us endless tears
with similar retaliation in return
from some sympathetic soviet superpower
as a token of goodwill
to the countries being attacked

and far too clever for me were those
weapons of mass destruction,
that had the ability to burn even shadows
right into concrete
but luckily the order never came to proceed.

Gert Strydom

His Heart Is Broken

His heart is broken,
broken like pieces of glass
which nobody
can fit together again
and he has lost his own worthiness,
the meaning behind his existence
a long time ago

and the days fly past
as if time has escaped somewhere
along the road
and nothing still has meaning

and even bright days
turn grey to him,
with a greyness
which disconcerts and makes every thing dull
and there are spider webs and a lot of dust
where he keeps his compact discs
which he doesn't play anymore

and still loyally he prays,
tries to keep his integrity intact
but has lost trust
in a God, who sees everything and who understands
and it feels as if that God
does not exist for him
and as if he is fighting alone against destiny,
stands alone on this earth
without anybody caring
or wanting to know something about him
and the past lies just too deep,
too deep inside him
so that he cannot forget it
and never gets to a new future.

Gert Strydom

His Right

I knew a boy
who claimed
that doing drugs
and sleeping around
with druggie girls
was his right
in life.

To him learning at school
was for fools
and working
to earn a living
was not his thing.

As time passed by
he would steal and lie
and in the end
as life might do
his right took him
away to jail.

Gert Strydom

Hitch Hiking

On the hillock
he heard the coughing baboon bark,
saw them moving away in grey patches
where they were in the distance
with aloes making orange dots
and the sun was hot and bright.

With a finger out he was hiking,
dressed in brown military uniform,
carrying a kitbag filled with clothes
with cars passing at speed,

swerving around the corners,
changing gears with engines revving,
trucks throwing wind against him
while their airbrakes made a dir kind of noise.

Gert Strydom

Hitler Deliberates With Himself

At first I was a corporal
but now I am the commander
of the highest general
where I move my armoured forces

my squadrons of warplanes
like lightning,
throwing the whole of Europe and even Russia
into great confusion.

Millions of people worship me,
follow my commands to exact precision
while the whole world lies in my hands
and just a speck of island stands in my way.

My commands go out:
"let rockets fall there day and night
without end, raining down like stars,
let them bend before me as a god! "

I am the one, who cry along with German mothers,
who feels the wounds, the pain and suffering of my soldiers
the one that knows that a great future is waiting
and here I sit day and night looking at the world.

Even half-humans I make to bend to me,
in twenty two places like
Dachau, Buchenwald, Auschwitz where ovens are glowing,
for living space I hear crowds cheering
and some beyond my domain think that I am evil,
that blood is flowing in vain,

but they do not know how it is
to bring about change,
to exterminate those who had oppressed,
to stand like a god while your power is circling out.

You that look at me as if I am a monster,
maybe somewhere in your heart lies the same darkness.

Sieg Heil!

Gert Strydom

Hoba West Meteor

Near Grootfontein at Hoba West
in Namibia

I saw the fifty-five ton rock lie imbedded
into the earth
where as a fireball it fell from the sky.

That burning piece of iron rock,
could have fallen upon my town Springs,
could have wiped my suburb,
my home into the naught,

like a nuclear device dropping from up high,
in bolide form could have exploded
in blue thunder, could have vaporized
everything in the vicinity
including me, my dogs, my cats
and neighbours too.

Gert Strydom

Hobbling Along, I See Him Coming On

Hobbling along, I see him coming on,
he brushes his jeans off making it neat
and then he turns right around to face me
where he is looking somewhat tattered,

he stands without any words as if dumb
but his words lie in every glance,
suddenly I see the whole of humanity
whose glances do not quarter for anything

bringing the hurt, the pain that oppression brings,
telling how men that can work are jobless,
how this evil still circles out wider,
treading some people down without pity,
how it pierces the Afrikaner nation,
as a type of evil occurrence.

Gert Strydom

Hobo Revival-Meetings

During the Bible study in the morning
during the Sabbath school of the senior church members
where the church members do talk about parts of scripture
in a church that hold Saturdays holy
the head elder (a certain doctor in the East Rand)
is seriously convinced
and do want to bring others to his view
that the holy day of the Lord God
is not meant to be a day of rest,
he also says that the Lord God did not rest on it.

That congregation begins with a weekly revival meeting
with a puppetry at times
at Butler Park
to bring hobos and street people and children
to the Lord God,
to provide them with food
and sometimes with blankets in winter.

The church members are continually earnestly requested
to prepare soup in the winter
and stew and rice in summer as an endowment.

Where the Bible studies has got evangelism as theme,
church members are continually made aware
that they are not doing their Christian duty
if they are not involved
in the Butler Park revival-service,

later other outreach programs
for old people and children
and at hospitals are launched

and I who work three days a week for free
at the Meals on Wheels community program,
where early in the morning I do peel pumpkins,
I do slice them into pieces,
do peel some carrots,
sometimes onions, or green beans

where the meals on wheels do provide food to old people,
to children in orphanages
and I do not want to be saddled with work
on a weekend as well

and before I do know it
my own wife who manages the Meals on Wheels
of Springs are involved with this
to prepare food on Fridays,
again to heat it up on a Saturday afternoon
at three o'clock,
to distribute the food
when the head elder
and his glory hallelujah click
stand at one side talking with each other

and there is nobody to help
to wash the dishes
after this commotion

and on a Thursday evening
a bolt of lightning bashes down
upon the big walk in refrigerator
at the Springs meals on wheels
and where I do come back
with a deposit book from the bank,
with a load of vegetables
that I had negotiated
from the market to grant
to meals on wheels

there is a big crisis
as it is past
thirty-three degrees Celsius
and the large walk in refrigerator is broken,
the food for Butler Park is spoiled

and there is waited upon people
to come and do the repair work,
the vegetables that I brought,
are used immediately

and at nine o'clock
that Friday night
my wife comes tired from work at home
after she had prepared huge amounts of potato, beetroot
and carrot salad.

At the communion service at the church,
my wife comes only to wash my feet,
but she is missing from the church service
as she is busy baking pies
for Butler Park
and do not even get the chance
to use wine and bread
as the Butler Park revival-service
is getting precedence.

Gert Strydom

Holding Phaeton's Reigns

Driving my old blue Honda CZ900 motorbike at speed,
suddenly I am like Phaeton when a stone jumps up
and smashes the helmet's visor
and the right lens of my glasses
that shatters into flying pieces of glass
and by a miracle it does not hurt my eye,
but then I am totally of balance,
like Phaeton almost out of control
on that speeding machine
where my vision changes to something distorted
and I do close the eye with the missing lens
to regain focus and to safely
bring the motorcycle to a halt next to the road.

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Gert Strydom

Holiday

When the sun rises
the children already want to rollick
but you are still asleep
and very far from being ready.
Glued to the mirror
with your DD-breasts to your own glance you are too fat
while you regard yourself in a painfully small bikini
where you have got a perfect figure.
On the beach I rub suntan oil over you
where you sit under the big umbrella
and every man observes you
while you watch everyone from behind sunglasses.
Every afternoon we have lunch in a restaurant
where you do enjoy seafood and the children some steak
just at the edge of the beach
and you do regard the holiday as miserable
even when we drive out to some places
and the children want to stay at the sea eternally.

Gert Strydom

Holiday {2}

When the sun does flower outside
the children want to rollick
but you are still asleep
and will not be ready for some time.

You are glued to the mirror
and with your DD-breasts you are too fat in your own mind
while you do look at yourself in your scanty bikini
where you do have a perfect figure.

On the beach I do apply sun-tanning lotion to your body
where you sit under the shading umbrella
while every man does watch you
and from behind sunglasses you do peep at the other people.

Every afternoon we eat at a restaurant
on the edge of the beach
where you order seafood and the children feast on their steaks
and you do regard the holiday as miserable
even when we do drive out to places
and the children want to stay forever at the sea.

Gert Strydom

Holiday Letter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize in answer to D. J. Opperman)

In front of me in the sugar-bush tree a weaver twitters
where the old farm dam full of water does shine down below
and my days do become full of bright summer sunshine
where without end I am thinking about you,
do notice two bakbakiris (bush-shrikes) frolicking in the long poplar's branches,
how a catfish at the dam makes bubbles do come up and sink away
and I am almost walking on air as you have appeared in my world again,
do see you in my mind's eye in the distance winking at me
and here I am away from the city for moments like in my childhood days,
there is a kind of tranquillity and joy where the plants do grow wild in nature,
where I can pick porkwood, wild plums and medlar,
do wish that I could show you these things and I have got great joy
from the early morning sunrise and I do think of you hour after hour,
while once more my heart is beating unsteadily.

[Reference: "Vakansiebrief" (Holiday-letter) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Holy Dan

(after R. K. Belcher)

At a very large church and employment buro
in Brakpan I came across a holy Dan
that does preach to the world that it will burn
but that man left me speechless with his own sin
and he was the saint and also the Samaritan
but could not hide his lust for a woman in a mini-skirt
and still he do preach that a person does exist free from the laws of God
and in denim he told me while I was searching for work,
that from pride and arrogance I will perish
that the devil will bring me to a fall like Nebuschadnezzar.

[Reference:"Heilige Daan" by R. K. Belcher.]

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Gert Strydom

Home

You made changes to the house,
did again paint it on the in and outside,
hanged new curtains and lace-curtains,
and the roof-tiles are another colour.

With new gutters and down-pipes
and new floor-tiles on which I walk
everything is so perfectly beautiful,
at a Pierneef-painting I am speechless

and while the rain pours down outside we are alone.

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Gert Strydom

Home Invasion

A bullet for a Boer
and kill farmer,
kill a white
still rages on from
the ruling party
where members are singing it
from the age of eight

and in a rural district
a home invasion takes place
in the middle of the night
a male family member
is shot through the shoulder
tied up with wire
bashed with a baseball bat,
chopped with a panga-blade
and before getting to hospital
he is dead.

The woman in the house
is led to a room
where they are tied up
and are raped
and everything valuable
is carried away

And the incapable police
can find nobody
and the killers go free
and are still missing
like my two stolen cars.

Gert Strydom

Home Invasion (Englyn Milwr) (In Answer To Don Mattera)

Armed with small guns they came,
to me looked all the same,
then wanted to know my name.

[Reference: "The Day they came for our house" by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

Home Invasion By Black Thugs (Englyn Unodde Union)

The husband reached for a gun
but it was already done
robbers had their fun with his wife,
when the torturing begun.

Gert Strydom

Home Invasion In Springs

Masked like the black criminals
that robs you of your car
and just there and there promises you death,
they arrived

with a mini bus taxi on the farm,
drove right through the farm gate
and at the front door
jumped out of the kombi

with five steps intruded into the house
to bring death to the farmer,
to rape the wife
and daughter.

The farmer heard the crash
at the gate,
he realized that it was big trouble
heard them in their own language command

to kill, while shot upon shot
was ringing from the front porch
and he thought about the obliteration
of his whole family.

His wife was too far away
in the lounge busy with sewing
and he heard his daughter rushing screaming
to her mother

turned about hurried to the gun safe
and got hold of a pump action shotgun
with LG cartridges
and rushed down the hallway.

In the lounge four black criminals
aimed pistols at his daughter and wife
told them to strip themselves bare
and when they did not want to

one said to the others in his language
to kill them
while the farmer was sneaking
closer at the back of the lounge suite.

Just one glance from the farmer
made his wife and daughter fall to the ground
two shots came from the shotgun
lifting two of the gangsters right from their feet

and the other two started shooting
into the ceiling
and the wall of the lounge
and when the farmer fired again

they fled in fear to the outside
turning around to fire at the farmer
and another one dropped in his tracks,
the other ran wounded into the cornfield.

At the start the police, wanted to arrest
the farmer for the murder of the robbers,
but there was more than enough evidence
that it was self-defence,

even the farm workers
were witnesses
about the shooting, threat
of the robbers

and by his actions
the farmer saved himself, his wife and daughter
and the labourers praised him
as a kind and a just man

but at the church
some members regarded the farmer
as a mass killer
who had determined the fate of others with a shotgun.

Homecoming

The gravel crunches under my boots
like it does
when you're near to home
and take a shortcut over the tracks
of a railway station
and I see my train
disappear in the distance.

In the other world
there were bushes,
a lot of gnats
red brown sand that clings to everything,
shot out ruins
that was once living places
and at a place a town
and like weeds the enemy
sprung up at any place
and brought destruction.

It's as if this world
did not change
and at the Greek's cafe
children are playing video games
and I buy a ice cold Coke
and the people greet me
like a long lost hero
and in front of the Checkers and OK
there are rows of cars
and at the hotel's bar
I hear men laughing
while they are playing darts
and the owner comes out
and presses an ice-cold Castle in my hand
and strange girls pass
and smile.

Still the war rides me
and my life's end was just to near
and I wonder why destiny

let some die in a back world?

Maybe things turn around
about what you make of life
and everyone's time is destined
and while I walk down the road,
a red Toyota comes around the corner
and it breaks
and my girlfriend is in my arms.

Gert Strydom

Home-Coming

1

When the lock of the back door have been replaced,
the gutter's shiny down-pipe hangs on its place,
the pipes in the roof that want to leak are repaired,
the flour tiles stop wanting to shift around,
will I then stop longing for you?

2

Like the two canvases that wait white on the easel
on paint and paintbrushes to become paintings,
I feel empty without contact with you.

3

How do I measure it? This thing that people call longing?
I, man alone at times, always 85kg without a scale?
I see the leaves fall and know that the autumn and winter is coming.

4

The gate slides open and with quivering it welcomes me,
there are roses flowering and pots waiting on the watering can,
the place in the garage for my car is open,
three dogs do welcome me with crying-barks at the small gate,
little Fiefie screams and do rejoice and you that come to me.

[Poet's note: In the Southern Hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

Homecoming [2]

When I hear your car roaring in the street,
when the motor-gate of the palisades groan open

and the two Jack Russell dogs begin to whine
as if you had been gone for days

then I know that you are home

and there is something in the way that you walk
when you come near and walk away in front of me,

in the supple magic that you bring to a dress
when silly-mad the dogs caper about

and of every movement that you make I bear knowledge
but much more than this I know how much I do miss you.

Gert Strydom

Home-Coming At Midnight

At night in the empty hall,
the outside lamplight makes long shadows fall
as if some ghosts wants to explore
the walls and every closed door

and my footfall sounds unnaturally loud
on the wooden floor, that creaks
as if someone else, maybe something
is following

and the curtains stir in the slight wind
that the closing front door throws
and although I know that I am totally alone
at the corner of my eye something moves,
moves in a kind of blur

and something is approaching, with glowing green eyes
encroaching while the tall clock strikes off midnight
brushing past me,
and I switch on the light
and the black and white housecat
rubs against me
in a loving tender way.

Gert Strydom

Homemaker

All the dishes are cleared from the table,
washed, dried, stowed away
and the large old table is covered
in a snow-white tablecloth,
the washing is washed and perfectly ironed
and everything is folded
put away in the closet and the floors are bleached,
where unemployed he waits on his wife
to return on a early afternoon to him,
do notice the neighbour embracing her
and he is shocked and astonished.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Hope

When I do not understand the darkness,
the things that prison you away from me
at places where no light can fall

it's as if my whole life is extradited
to the one or other power
which destiny claims as its own

and I am just another player
who in Black Jack can count cards
but this is a totally different game

where the power of destiny
and of luck
always has the upper hand

and at times like in Hearts
you fold
and put your cards down on the table

and not always
are dealt the right, the best hand
by forces which you do not comprehend
are forced

to keep on playing the game
while life keeps on
dealing out new cards

and at times the loss is far greater
than you can comprehend
and you loose the hope
of a new tomorrow, of deliverance
somewhere along the way
and wonder about the hope,
the power of love.

[Reference: Hoop ("Hope") by Mandi Engelbercht Out of: Speel vir Tyd.]

Hope (Decastich)

We live in a world where war, disasters and destruction
are continually harassing us as if destiny is pursuing us,
as if everything in this world is out of control,
as if the portals of hell are standing wide open
and sometimes we become ill without any chance of being healed
and sometimes we loose loved ones to death
and it feels as if we are living on the edge of the abyss
but still the hope remains that life will become better,
that deliverance will come with the new tomorrow
as if a happier future is only waiting on us.

Gert Strydom

Hope (Pleiades)

Hope is at times just unseen,
having no fixed structure,
helping people to go on,
has the effect of some trust
happening as a great thing,
helplessness it does conquer
halfway into great success.

Gert Strydom

Hope For A New Tomorrow

I saw it in the faces
of homeless people
standing around drums,
with glowing coals
trying to get hot
at red-hot flames.

I saw it on the faces
of people living in villages
in a war zone,
that went forth with their lives
as if the war didn't exist.

Still I wonder when
the new morning is coming
and every day,
I watch the horizon
and look at the blue sky above me
to see if You
do not appear on the clouds.

Gert Strydom

Horoscope

Something caught my eye
when I drove past
a gypsy caravan
and although I know well
about king Saul
and the witch of Endor,
I stopped anyway.

A gypsy girl with long black hair
and dark brown eyes
invited me in
and she was rather more pretty
and younger
than I expected her to be.

It was as if she had been waiting
especially for me
and while the sun
was setting in the west,
a few candles burnt
in the caravan
almost romantic,
but adding to the mystery.

I wanted to know
what she charges
and what services she provides
and I was completely shocked
when she answered me:
"for you it is free."

She took my both my hands in hers
and their was electricity
and a very strange intimacy.

Very accurately she told me
about my life up till then
and said things
that no one can just figure out,

including that I have to forgive you
for leaving me for a friend.

Much more strange was
that she knew my name,
and date of birth,
about the dreams of war
that troubles me.

She flipped a tarot card over
depicting strength,
raw power, tremendous force,
of a saint or warrior
overcoming a lion.

Said that my rune
is Fehu which is
the Norse symbol of wealth
and depicts cattle
that reproduce and return
and wealth that at times perpetuate itself.

I smiled at this,
since my path at times
were full of hardship,
but who really knows
what the future holds
and that woman
certainly had powers
that I could not comprehend
and I wonder still
from where she gets
her knowledge?

Gert Strydom

Horses In The Desert

Out of the desert
I saw them come thundering by
wild, unconfined horses
with hooves glittering in the sun,
bodies muscled as if created
by a god,
heads held high
as if watching the sky,
manes unkempt, but swept back
and lifted swishing streaming tails
by the speed of their run.

Gert Strydom

Horus

Like Janus you have got two heads
where you stretch out your wings to the sun
but yet with time
you did fall in dust and ash,

maybe from the time
when you did drag along a third of the angels,
burning like falling stars
when defeated they fell to earth

and like no phoenix
you could rise from the ash,
you had to let your last space flight plan
lie undone,

and you still try to say
mighty words to your followers,
but you cannot rise beyond the scope of this earth
and you want a ladder like Jacob had

while the sun
becomes just a concrete thing to humanity
that does determine day and night
and does give heat at its time.

Gert Strydom

Hospital Journal

When the hospital swallowed me into a ward,
when they took me into a theatre
and later put me on a moveable bed
I could not remember you anymore

but still you lingered
somewhere in my subconscious
as if nothing, no hospital
could remove the virus of you

from my being,
my spirit and soul
and still I was not totally alone
but of my visitors
you were never one

and only before God
I could find humility,
could bind my life, my duty
and love to Him
where it was as if each and every day
He waited on the visitor's bench next to me.

Gert Strydom

Hospitals

I am amazed
that a hospital
stays a place of hope and despair,
where people come into life
and come to the end of their lives,
where they kiss each other
in pure joy
or where tears of regret, of pain
stream unstoppable down cheeks
and still it stays a place of hope
that life will again come right,
as if doctors have a kind of capability
as if the hand of God
at times are resting on hospitals
and as if He is always somewhere present.

Gert Strydom

Hour Of Twilight

When swallows and bats
gambol outside in flight,
with the moon hanging full and stars
are shining like bright beacons in the night,
some people are walking in the streets
to dance and gambol
at places where the bright lights are inviting.

Gert Strydom

Hovering

I drift on the wind
eying the world,
looking at things passing beneath me

and the whole sky is clear
stretching out blue and in the distance
changing in its hue

and I revolve watching for prey
hanging high, gliding almost endlessly
until suddenly finding it

and drop down at lightning speed
with the sun covering me,
materialising right upon my target

and with great skill
with outstretched claws and sharp beak
I make a perfect kill.

Gert Strydom

Hovering I Saw A Redbreast And A Wren (Roundelay)

Hovering I saw a redbreast and a wren,
who were both very scared of men
and to me both birds had some lovely charm,
as innocents to which I meant no harm.

Fluttering some cooing wild doves came down
making my small garden their very own
some pecked bread or landed on my arm,
as innocents to which I meant no harm.

Pecking some hoopoes landed in my yard
and the two of them was never apart,
fleeing in their scared heart throbbing alarm
as innocents to which I meant no harm.

Gert Strydom

How A Poem Comes To Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

I sit in the boardroom in Johannesburg in City Deep
where with precision I do prepare books for an external audit,
reconciling creditors and debtors and all kinds of things,
when a driver outside in the parking area do drive in at speed,
the managing-director across me does jump to his feet,
the MAN-lorry does brake outside to a halt,
gravel like hail do scatter in all directions,
where the horse does stand with the trailer like a pocketknife,
where a black hand does slam the keys down
and this is how a poem comes to me,
as here is a hellish kind of thing
and where I am working I am astonished,
where my figures do balance to the exact cent
and the breath of the director smells of peppermint.

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Gert Strydom

How Alive I Did Feel

(for Minette)

How alive I did feel
in the times that we did share
and suddenly it was
as if the whole world

did lay wide open before us
and your crystal-clear laughter
brought joy day after day
and to the deepest part of my heart
you did penetrate

and everything had been too good and too well
until one rainy day that disaster waited on you
and a paramedic phoned me
but at times I do dream that we are still together
as if you are walking in through the open door.

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Gert Strydom

How Bright The Colours (Haiku)

How bright the colours
of the rainbow gleam today
as clouds flee from the sight.

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Gert Strydom

How Can Anybody Ever Know?

How can anybody ever know
why the Satan do exist
and what could cause,
that he wanted to be higher
than even the Lord
and wanted a own throne
above the Son of God?

At a time a Archangel of the light
dutiful bound to honour, love and respect
and I wonder what
could have changed his heart
to become lord of utter darkness
and catastrophe
and could have lost all love so suddenly.

Still I wonder if it only goes about self,
self-interest, and me
if I do not stand
in the same shoes at a times?

Gert Strydom

How Can I Declare My Love?

How can I declare
exactly when I started loving you?
Even if you ask again

I only do know
that you make me very happy,
that I will not allow anybody to stop your loving,

that daily I am falling more in love with you,
that you bring meaning to my life,
that I will leave any other woman for you,

that I am forming unbreakable bonds with you,
that I want to embrace you
and sometimes you do make me perplexed

when I want to generate the same feelings in you,
and my eyes betray my feelings
that I want to cover you in kisses

and I wonder if you are aware of this?

Gert Strydom

How Can I Declare?

How can I declare
exactly when I started loving you?
Even if you ask again

I only do know
that you make me very happy,
that I will not allow anybody to stop your loving,

that daily I am falling more in love with you,
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when I want to generate the same feelings in you,
and my eyes betray my feelings
that I want to cover you in kisses

and I wonder if you are aware of this?

Gert Strydom

How Can I Love More? (Ribuyat Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I love you to my heart's content and to its inner core
and to the very limit of my soul. How can I love more?
I love you with the heartfelt feelings and hope and faith
with which a man does his perfect fit, his wife, his woman, adore.

I love you like William Blake's little boy lost
without counting the price to it and the cost,
for all of the crumbs at the door
and for much more and I love you most

where you came to me while I was broken
and in every day's tokens that are unspoken
in all of our labour and goodwill,
for the man that you have in me awoken,

I love you with my joy and sorrows and by far
for the lovely person that you are.

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Gert Strydom

How Can I Really Understand

How can I have comprehension
of how deep your love lies,
when you fold your hands over me
and pray that my life
are mended and get much better.

How can I really understand
about what our lives together are,
if out of yourself and without force
you make sacrifices for me.

There's times that I
do not really understand you
and times that I thank Him
and ask that you
never go out of my life.

[Reference: => 'There are three things that are too amazing for me,
four that I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky,
the way of a snake on a rock,
the way of a ship on the high seas,
and the way of a man with a maiden.'" Proverbs 30: 18-19]

Gert Strydom

How Can I Want To Love You Less?(Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

How can I keep my feelings and decisions about you in check,
or want to love you less and not tell you about my love?
It's easier to take life away from me
than not to write words and thoughts to you.
At night in my thoughts I constantly see your beautiful face,
do know intimately, fleshly and holy that I do want to love you,
also that words, years and acts do lie silently between us
but to me in all of this you do remain an angel of the light.
It's easier to replace my food that I do enjoy
and to deny the joy that music do bring to me,
it's easier to feel my lungs burn without breath
as to remove you from my heart and soul and spirit en flesh,
to have you absent from my life,
and whatever I do life does just return you back to me.

[Reference:" kan ek hierdie hete hart betig" (can I stop this hot heart)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

How Can I Want To Say Unheard Things?

How can I want to say unheard things
when they lie outside the comprehension of most people?

Although simplicity comes with the naked truth
most people are disillusioned and astounded
when words and sentences flash with an own reality
and some thoughts they do turn over and over

and there are borders between people
and also a kind of darkness
that does disguise holy secret meaning
and people do wonder what I am really saying
when they cannot even grasp or feel the simplicity.

Gert Strydom

How Chilly Like Winter

How chilly like winter have you been
with emotions of love stripped in the bud
and what dark unpleasant experiences I have seen
as if what love had been between us had been cut

and nothing of the laughter and light that I had seen at a time
was left as if it had been killed by decease.
You are happy as when our love had been at its prime
when you do talk and act with a kind of ease

as if of those happy days there are to be many more,
as if you do not want to be from this relationship free,
as if I am the only one that you do adore
and I do wonder what is to be

while in my heart there is a kind of fear
when in the evening to me you do draw near.

Gert Strydom

How Dear You Are To Me

Felix lies curled up sleeping on the bed
and the cold streams in like from a fountain
at the open window
and I feel rather ill
with flue and a sore throat,

but the worst still
is how much I miss you
as if the day is stretching out longer
and with the winter sun
big longing comes

and yet you are in my heart
where your love
falls like a star over the horizon
and burn with a power of its own

and the more I miss you
the dearer you become to me

Gert Strydom

How Deep Love Really Is

While I try
to give a new life to the garden,
I wish at times
that I can stay forever
with you.

Days to get hitched
and repeat
maybe for
a thousand times

and that every day I see
you smile,
the sparkle in your eyes
that really speaks
to my heart
and pray that we
fall more deeply in love

and when one day
I give my last breath
I want to place my hand in yours
and know
how deep love really is.

Gert Strydom

How Devoured By Disconcert And Totally Vulnerable You Can Be

How really devoured by disconcert
and immensely vulnerable you can be
against them that make gruesome mistakes
when you change from a child to a man
and blinded by destiny, by the army
a constant indefinable fear gnaws,
while you start to doubt between right and wrong,
and it is difficult to find some truth

and in that tough battle for survival
it is at times as if you are disarmed,
things get totally different meanings,
while you are at full vulnerability
with people that view women as a sideline
who confound sex to an animal drive.

Gert Strydom

How Difficult It's Sometimes

How difficult it's sometimes
to decipher the codex of your heart
and at times when your eyes catch mine
its if sunshine and deep truths
hang in their depths
but sometimes I see something else
which I have difficulty to fathom
when your eyes keep longing.

Sometimes it's as if our love
and I am precious to you,
as if nothing can disfigure our love,
as if you look at me with a comprehension
that already comes for ages

but at other times
the deeper meaning of our love is disguised
and then I wonder
about what I am seeing in your eyes,
about that which bounces in the bell of your heart

but in the language of love
I will try and talk to you
and look at you and catch your eye
until all of our dreams are similar
when I find comprehension
for the wonderful things that remain unsaid.

Gert Strydom

How Do I Describe You?

How can I describe you,
your golden eyes that are constantly shining
that is at times hiding your thoughts
and the symmetry of your body,

the gleam that is caught in your hair
that falls soft as silk over your shoulders,
how your glance and expression sometimes catches me,
the intimate knowledge of your body,

the way that you walk graciously,
how you throw your hair over your shoulder,
how you draw your mouth at times,
how easily you start a conversation

and just far too many things come to me
and it's as if in nothing I can jot you down,
as if my thoughts are only hanging in empty words
and you are in my heart, in my spirit and my head.

Gert Strydom

How Do I Express My Feelings?

How do I express my feelings
that runs so very deep,
when out of sight you are
in my daily wandering,
while our love is precious and pure?

When there is much more in the words:
'I love you'
than I can in any way express?

Maybe a mere gaze
at times says much more,
and maybe a single touch
has got a deeper meaning

but love is still more than this
in the way that it is.

Gert Strydom

How Do I Forgive This?

From the day of our wedding years back
you do accuse me that I do flirt (woo other women)
and nothing can now over-bridge these lies:
you think that you can say and do just as you will.
At the Jet department-store where I buy clothes for Raleigh
you want a black eye-pencil for your make-up,
the teller jokes (wants to steal it)where it lies on the counter.
I think about my cars that had been stolen when we walk out.
At the door my parcels are searched by a black lady.
She, a security-guard, does not want to let go of that pencil
and decently I laugh and wonder if I rather should have cursed.
You accuse me that I did flirt and it is going to cost our marriage.
You my only sweetheart-wife do not carry my name
and this thing sits raw in me, a white Afrikaner-man.

[Ps. You laugh this off as if there is no value to how I feel
and I wonder what you do really mean with your words and acts?]

Gert Strydom

How Do I Love You?

In mere words I can find no kind of way
to express the depth of my love for you,
the yearning of every passing day,
not even in the things that I say and do.

In the simple small daily kind of things
that fit into the mere puzzle of life,
intimate, sincere heartfelt tidings
outbalancing the every day strife

it is all unclear in the silent need,
that comes natural to you as my wife
it is from far beyond any act or deed
and its truth never pierces like a knife,

but is much like childhood faith, without pain
it is somewhat difficult to explain...

Gert Strydom

How Do I Love You? (Cavatina)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

In every day's longing, in the sheer need
of how life is,
when feelings are totally out of sight,
in each sweet kiss,
in my childish kind of lingering faith,
you bring me bliss
and to the depths of my soul I love you
in everything that is good, noble and true.

[Reference: "How Do I Love Thee? " by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

How Do I Love You? (Sonnet Corona)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

I

There is no way
that I can truly express my love for you,
the yearning of every day
not even in the things that I say and do,

the simple things
that fit into the puzzle of life,
and heartfelt tidings
outbalances the every day strife

that comes naturally to a consort, or wife
is all unclear in the quite need,
and its truth never pierces like a knife,
it is from beyond any act or deed

but is like childhood faith, without pain
it's somewhat difficult to explain.

II

It's somewhat difficult to explain
how love is supposed to be
in rays of sunlight, drops of rain
and everything that we see

totally without iniquity
even in sorrow, pain, joy,
as a natural instinct, sprouting free
from every ploy

or whatever life brings, in sincerity
it is in every heart beat, every breath,
the things that you are to me
surpassing even the power of death,

that against adversity can endure
as something sweet, something pure.

III

As something sweet, something pure,
our love is always striving to be true
coming free from any pressure and being sure
it bonds me to you in all that I pursue,

my world, everything that is dear,
gets a own clarity
when you are near and without fear
we take on the responsibility

that living together brings
loosing ourselves in each other,
finding meaning in small happenings
in things that brings blithe and bother

and I am attracted to you're dear smiling face;
you surpass any other grace.

IV

You surpass any other grace
beauty or splendour that I do see,
everything is in the praise
of you who loves me,

blessed I am among men
to have found a heart as kind,
that comes alive when
I am near and if I call to mind

among the greatest things that I have experienced
you reign supreme with your lasting love
that comes unprejudiced
as the finest blessing from above:

in every single day I am truly alive;
although we are hardly yet through the fight of life.

V

Although we are hardly yet through the fight of life,
still with time we struggle on,
you are the one
who supports me, as my sentry, my dearest wife

and through the strife
that destiny demands, until it is done
no one can leave each other or be gone
as we are bonded and the challenges is rife,

we live with no lies, with truth between us,
we walk hand in hand and eye to eye
although sometimes we are frightened,
every thing we do discuss,
as children of God under the clear blue sky,
to each other we have opened.

VI

To each other we have opened,
the doors of our hearts and souls
we have straightened,
the lines of our narrow lives, letting out the ghouls,

we have experienced the secrets of the body's bliss
have unbarred our inner selves, every windowpane
in every single kiss
with warmth and understanding tried to explain

the beauty of loving each other
we have opened doors that cannot be shut again
in sheer nudity without a bother,
we have bonded without restrain

and I read intimacy as time flies,
in the silences in your eyes.

VII

In the silences in your eyes
there is an own language and every gesture
have more hues to it than the skies
in its structure, it's simplicities and its nature

and some things I do not comprehend or hear
while you unfold with petals while you are flowering,
as I am far too near to distinguish lustrous things as clear
and it's as if I am in the middle of spring

and the fragility with which you unfold,
is very striking, takes my breath away, taking it hither
while I hold you in the cold
of this winter, as if it will whither,

as if like a blooming rose you cannot stay,
there is no way.

[Reference: Sonnet XLIII "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways" by
Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

How Do I Tell You?

How do I tell you again and again
about how true my love is,
when continually I miss you when you are gone?
Sometimes love brings healing to pain

and these feelings I cannot stop
when even in sorrow they are present.
How do I tell you again and again
about how true my love is,

about how much I constantly yearn for you,
that our love brings a sparkle to each day
and is far stronger than any hindrance,
that there is more to love than just an oath?
How do I tell you again and again
about how true my love is?

Gert Strydom

How Do I Wish To Go Home (Wordsworth Sonnet)

to a place where some green meadows greet me,
where cattle, horses and sheep roam carefree
under the wide heaven's bluest kind of dome.

The fresh country air has an own welcome
where man can still see small signs of his God
and near to Him come, constantly daily trod;
far from the city, to senses I will come

daily see His works in the green cornfields
in the many bright flowers that blossom,
peacefully experience crops that yields
to bounty and live totally wholesome,

walk daily in patches of some wild flowers
see living effects of the rain showers.

Gert Strydom

How Do I Yearn

How do I yearn
to embrace you for moments,
to catch the fragrance of your perfume
and this impression
of how your fingers sometimes cling around mine,
is part of the great longing
of your sunray-looks
that I want to preserve in my memories of you.

Gert Strydom

How Do You Show The Depth Of It In Words?

(after Herman de Coninck)

When half angry you get into the car
then you want me to travel with you.

When angrily you do peer and do point your finger at me
then you want me to take you in my arms.

When you start crying in the movies
then you want me to take out a handkerchief and make you whole again

and when you do tell me how much you do love me
then you want me to tell you how deeply I am in love with you

and even if I do say: "I do love you infinitely, "
it still does mean nothing
as how do I show the depth of it in words?

[Reference: "Poëzie" by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

How Eagerly I Want To Share My Thoughts With You

Eagerly I want to share my thoughts with you
of things far past just imagining,
of things that lay so deep in my heart
that I do not always know how to express them
and I want to tell you about the depth of my love for you,
and tell you of that which lays inside me
but it's as if time passes far too quickly,
before I can share the essence with you
but do know this:
that our love which is so intense in my heart
brings holiness, nobleness and purity to every thought
and does go much deeper than mere meaning
and that I do struggle to find the words
for the unsaid things that our love does confess.

Gert Strydom

How Easily You Could Bring Change

How easily you could bring change,
could change the dark hate
that had surrounded my humanity,
could bring love in me
for my enemies, God and my fellow-men;
as my partner in life
could show me the depths of true love,
with your life as an image of God's character.

Gert Strydom

How Enchanting

How enchanting does passion make your face
and your eyes glow with an own power
and still your face
are endlessly soft
while deep love radiates from it.

How lovely you smile makes you look
as if I am looking
into the face of a angel of goddess

and still there's something hidden
that brings character, experience and maturity
right through your innocence:

sparks with a own intensity
that let electricity go right through me
and leaving me speechless.

Gert Strydom

How Far To The Next Garage

Just as I stopped at a garage today
the car's engine died,
as it was running
with the yellow light burning
and the last gasoline was gone.

I had no cash on me
and there was no card machine
and the auto bank
at the shop was broken
and I was told,
about an auto bank at the next garage.

I started walking
and found a black man
along the way.

How far to the next
garage I asked
and he replied,
just on the other side
of the bridge.

On the other side
of the bridge,
there was one more bridge
and on the other side
of it,
no garage could be seen
for two kilometres or more.

So I wondered while I walked along
with a plastic can in my hand
that if he really didn't know
why did he lie,
or was the man
too afraid to be seen
as a fool
while the biggest fool

was I?

Gert Strydom

How Fast Does Time Fly By

How fast does time fly by
and with a wink of the eye,
the world has changed.

The time of sweet solitude,
unlocked doors
and little cares are past.

How fast have every thing changed
from a world of promise,
to a world gone wild and mad.

Before I can wipe
the sleep from my eyes,
I find myself in another time and place.

Uneducated people
are running my country,
into the ground.

Kids have no respect
and run their own lives
and use drugs and steal,

live only for themselves
and the here and now
like a bunch of hooligans running amok.

There's corruption and gangsters everywhere
and hijackers and house invaders
and the police do not really seem to care.

How fast does time fly by
and with a wink of the eye,
the world has changed.

Gert Strydom

How Great The Palace Stands

I

How great the palace stands
with its golden domes
in a city that is on seven hills,
snow white where it towers seven times.

As if everything holy, righteous and wonderful
comes to stature in it,
where hymns are constantly sung,
in the inner court and at the outside

with a central stela as a sign
of life originating, pointing into the air,
with the moon and sun meeting,
rises and dies as in ancient heathen worship,

circled twice,
almost like the throne of God Himself
and year in and out
have been seen as the very fortress against evil.

This place is full of light and darkness that mixes,
much like the checked surface of a chess board,
maybe symbolic of a cycle of life and death,
that is eternal for these people?

II

After a journey over the whole earth,
coming from far as a pilgrim,
the traveller looks at the big palace,
later he stops in front of a copper door,

where there are soldiers on guard duty
and these symbols are depicted on that door:

Jesus Christ on the cross, the death of Mary,

death by torture, death on earth,
or in space,
symbols of the communion,
a vine and sheaf of wheat

and on the edge of the door
birds of the night and day
and thus again light and darkness:
a dead dove, a sleeping guinea pig,
a hedgehog, a night owl,
a tortoise bitten to death by a snake
and a threatening raven.

Gert Strydom

How I Do Look Upon The Town (Refrain Stanza)

Streets full of office blocks have a greyish hue
where they rise against the cobalt blue,
in the distance it seems as if the factories do burn down
where with smoking stacks they fill the town
but if you take a closer look that is true,
there are steam rising and pipes that flame bright
while the poison that pollute is out of sight
and when alarms ring I wonder what to do,
where they rise against the cobalt blue.

Gert Strydom

How I Do Miss You At Times

(for Annelize)

My going away decades back was hell to me
but let me tell you about my life,
about how pretty the sunny spring and summer is
in which I do still sometimes miss you,
that the rain at times do splash down for days,
that probably you are my greatest love
and sometimes-simple things do bring you back
like the hollow in the back of a woman or a small girl,
the smile on the face of someone else
as our love is intense and sincere.

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Gert Strydom

How I Do Remember

(for Annelize)

When a pretty girl does suddenly cheerfully laugh
do throw her hair back and pass me,
my senses do become full as if you are right here

I then do remember you

from the flashback memory,
the colour of your eyes
the husky sound of your voice,

I then do remember you

in the walking towards me and the walking away,
as if you are suddenly a part
of every other living woman

I then do remember you.

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Gert Strydom

How I Long Again For A Time

How I long again for a time
where people can leave doors unlocked, windows open,
where children can play innocently in the park,
where you can stroke carefree through the hair of your wife.

Where you can see her cook jam
from the yellow peach tree,
can smell the fresh bread that she is baking,
can see her smile satisfied with life,

where you can day after day know
that to be living is a wonderful thing,
when in the evening's candle glow
she looks big-eyed romantically at you

but it's in a different world that we are living,
where black criminals fire shots
burst into houses, torture, rape and murder people
and somehow everything has started to go wrong

while hatred becomes a reality,
with darkness spreading further and further.

Gert Strydom

How I Love Thee

When mere feelings are gone, are not with me
my love still stays with thee
and in every sweet tenderness
and tranquil kiss

I long for thee in my everydayness,
even in the night's romantic hour I long for thy bliss
and what's between us comes clear and free
without any inequity,

as just the experience, the lives of you and me
in all of love's purity
is even there when I bow to pray
asking His blessings on you each day

and I love thee with all that is in me
past life, past death into eternity, as it's supposed to be.

[Reference: XLIII. "How much I love thee? by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

How Is It Possible?

How is it possible for the sky to be bluer,
that the white-hot sun feels hotter,
that every bird sings outside
and that you suddenly bring back spring
to my early winter?

That I walk with new power,
as if yesterday
I was another man?

That your smile is prettier
than that of any other women,
that my heart is beating hammer beats,
when you are standing next to me?

Gert Strydom

How Is Possible That Dreams Here Are Broken? (In Answer To Fanie Olivier)

How is possible that dreams here are broken,
with life suddenly becoming threatening
with black criminals attacking, sneaking in at doors
and every home is barred like a fortress?

From every alleyway a drug peddler peeps out
or there's a street whore
that patrols up and down at the corner
and I am just another white Afrikaner

that see my country is falling apart,
I hear shots being fired at the child's school
where car hijackers suddenly strike
and numerous crimes are being committed

and no crying bird have got to warn me
about the new upside-down existence,
that every strange black man may be a criminal or terrorist
while jobless I worry about bread for my table

and it's no war zone or the border that I am visiting
but raping robbers strike at the home on the corner
where the police later ineptly
gather with numerous cars.

[Reference: "grensbesoek" (border visit) by fanie olivier.]

Gert Strydom

How Joyfully Surprised You Made Me (Cavatina)

How joyfully surprised you made me
on a week day
as tears of happiness did spill and something
strange was at play
when quite suddenly your words and actions did
your thoughts betray
as if you have seen me in a new light,
that day was far past lovely, sunny and bright

Gert Strydom

How Long My Lord

How long my Lord, will my nation be blown
like dust by the wind
and will I find white Afrikaner child
upon white Afrikaner child
in countries right across the world?

Is there a Diaspora intended for my small nation,
a exile that washes dark over us
to be dispersed world wide
away from Africa's black throng?

Or am I in vain asking for deliverance
for the white sons and daughters of Africa?

Gert Strydom

How Long?

At the robot light I see a child
in dirty clothes and his hair blown by the wind,
his cheek is swollen from toothache
and where he is begging I wonder if he is going to find any help?

The old man near to the bridge has lost his job
at the Aurora goldmine
and he is grey but his arms looks strong
and I wonder what kind of hope he has?

At another place an old lady is standing and she tells about her daughter,
that she is suddenly pregnant
and she is confesses sing about her own life
where she is counting the few coins that she gets from people

and I look at a world that is falling apart
with jobless poor strugglers almost without number
and how long I ask the God of the universe
when pistol shots ring out down at the Checkers chain store.

Gert Strydom

How Lovely You Are

How lovely you are but you are unaware of it
and sometimes it's as if the sun shines through your humanity,
sometimes it feels as if I have known you for years
as if you fit perfectly into my soul, into my life,
as if I can feel your heart beating in mine
and sometimes I become aware
of the presence of God in your heart, in your spirit and soul.

Gert Strydom

How Many Summers Have Already Passed

I wonder while the winter wind cuts
with icy fingers through me
and still it's as if my life
has difficulty to find direction
and now I am really longing for you
where you are waiting lovingly at home.

Gert Strydom

How Many Things Go Through My Mind

(after Herman de Coninck)

How many things go through my mind
when she does phone and say: "I just want to hear how it's going
and why are you not sending me any more electronic mails
or did you loose my address? "

So as if she did not break the relationship
and each time when I wonder why she is phoning
she says directly:
"Do not write anything personal to me."

It's then that I can feel the line getting hot,
when game for a fight she asks: "Are you getting angry?
What is wrong? "
and I want to leave her and the subject just right there,

do want to silence the telephone eternally
and I hear her swallow
when I do bring the conversation to an end
and do wonder why she is phoning?

[Reference: "Wat een gebrek aan pathetiek" (With a lack of being
pathetic) by Herman de Coninck.]

Gert Strydom

How Many Times

How many times
I have looked at the stars
as if they can lead me
straight to You,

as if with their help
I could find my way
and still untouchable
they hang above me

but Your name stays on my lips
as if the power of it
can catch everything around me
and to You my life is bound.

Gert Strydom

How Many Times I Have Missed You (Italian Sonnet)

How many times I have missed you,
during this uncommon desperate year,
and with a deadly virus life is not clear
where the end can come by what we do

where daily we stayed to precautions true
but how much I wanted you to be near,
wanted daily your lovely voice to hear,
where the symptoms were just like flue

and married but by circumstances separate
it has been a real trial living life just like this,
being locked-down each at a different place,
we did not know when the virus would abate,
when again we would meet, embrace and kiss,
or what new unexpected trials we had to face.

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Gert Strydom

How Much

How much do I wish to keep
all the coming years somehow
just as this moment, just as now
and where you next to me sleep

I know there has never been any other one
like you and that loving you will never stop
even if from this live you are gone
and on my cheeks there are dropp upon drop

of happy tears that flows from my heart
and I wish that we will never part.

Gert Strydom

How Much Do I Love You? (Italian Sonnet)

(For my wife Daleen)

Love takes you to places where you had not been before
and this is how I want every new tomorrow to be with you,
the essence of selflessness is in every thing we say and do
while love does keep on asking for more and much more,
brings peace and joy to a world filled with pain and gore
and at times I know that your feelings for me are true,
while with hope and faith we pass this world through,
while I see something special in you who I do adore
but then no words can truly define a thing that passes death
where in you and your happiness my self I do constantly lose,
where I love you in your noble modest sincere and lonely ways.
Even when you bring heartache your name is on my last breath,
this principle is in the heart and is not something that I choose
where God has destined you in His grace in all of my days.

Gert Strydom

How Much Do You Still Love Me?

When we went separate ways
that which was high and holy to me was broken,
I doubted if love could really
stand against any other thing

and so many years went past far too quickly
and I was looking at other women
until life again brought us
face to face with each other

and now I am wondering
how much do you still love me?

Gert Strydom

How Much I Love You

Only God knows how deep
my feelings for you go
and sometimes it's difficult
to tell you.

How do you say
that's how much
I care for you,
if there's nothing
to measure it against.

Ridiculous it may sound,
but at times
words fail me.

.
It's you, it's you that I cherish
are words from somebody else
and for me it's only singularly you
and no other
that I truly want to love much more.

How can you know
exactly what part of you,
your darling loves
and what causes
somebody to adore you?

Or is it something deeper
and much more
that binds people together
and cause that the I and me and you
together becomes us?

Sometimes you ask me to say
how much I love you
and I wonder against what,
must I measure it for you.

Can anybody somewhere gather

all the water of the sea
and give size and depth to it.

Who can catch the wind
and hang words on it,
or really determine
the extent of the sun
and moon and stars

Where must I find words
to say what the extent is,
of that which lies between us.

All that I know
Is that depth and size
of my feelings for you,
are totally unfathomable.

[Reference: 'Jy kyk my vlak en jy het my lief, Jy kyk my diep en jy het my lief.
Ek wil myself opnuut, nuut beding; Dis jou, dis jou, wat ek bemin'. Antjie Krog.]

Gert Strydom

How Much I Miss You

This afternoon the smell
of barbeque is in the air
and it would have been nice
to fry some chops
with you over the coals
and I really miss you.

I miss the way that you lay against me
your pet man-human name that you call me,
the being together and dreams
that I sometimes
see in your eyes.

I miss the colour
that you bring to my life,
the nonchalant way
with which you start things
and I feel like jumping
on my motorbike
to spend some time with you.

Gert Strydom

How Much I Wanted You To Come

How much I wished for you to come
and a million times, I thought I saw your face
returning to me, coming home
as if you were walking through the market place
and girls other women were passing by
through the almost empty silent town
and I was catching every eye
day after day until the sun goes down
but my gentle rose had gone away,
and some flowers withers quickly,
some loves cannot stay
and sometimes love ends prickly:
a person within the mind's echoes fade
disappears away, into an eternal shade.

Gert Strydom

How Naked The Veldt Lays Uncovered

How naked the veldt lays uncovered
widely stretched out and great
with aloes that speckle the hillocks red
and wild plums that sprout out of the earth's womb

Gert Strydom

How Sadly I Have Been Absent In This Spring (Rubiyat Sonnet)

How sadly I have been absent in this spring
while new sprouts and flowers were rising
when the loveliest hot days you have seen
and our love had been a struggling withering thing

and how stripped like winter have our lives been
without a hot summer day between
while our love should have been at its prime
as a plant that is with new growth green

and yet it was if there was in destiny no time
and to everything just the coldest deadliest clime
but in hope I am still waiting on you
to forgive every word and every kind of crime

that you do hold true to me
but does actually lie in your own insecurity.

Gert Strydom

How Single Can A Person Become

How single can a person become
when love dies
and how without any cause
can things become,
when nothing matters anymore.

It is as if unhappiness
eats at every thing,
like a spreading cancer
and life is even rid
of all its pleasures.

When a deadly winter
slowly stalks everything
And your life is frozen.

Gert Strydom

How Slowly The Days Creep By

Maybe for a time I have been dead
and are living in someone else's dream
or illness paranoia in this silent existence,
where I cannot any more make love or find it
as if I am already in the realm of death
and too slowly time continues to creep by
as if every thing has come to a deadly halt.

To nowhere I can turn
and daily I am wondering
about the reason of my existence
and the purpose of everything
and nowhere there is hope
that can let the darkness around me
pass a little quicker
while I am haunted.

Or maybe there are gods that are voluptuous,
that have got to beg nymphs
for their sexual favours
while I am lost in my madness
and do not write great words anymore
and they are now visiting other places
rather than my poems
as if something in me, maybe something intangible
wards them off from me and are refusing them
and they echo their mighty words
out at other places

and their roaring and jollification resounds around me
while they have pleasure and are enjoying themselves
to which I can only yearn
and in this hell I have to stay shackled.

Now lock your hands around me
as if nothing can every loosen them
and let your lips find mine
and bind us in sensual passion
that when death's fingers grab for me

I for a last time
hear your heart beat
and you surround me for a last time lovingly.

[Reference: Wie langsam kriechet sie dahin by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

How Slowly The Days Creep By [1]

Maybe for a time I have been dead
and are living in someone else's dream
or illness paranoia in this silent existence,
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[Reference: Wie langsam kriechet sie dahin by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

How Small Does Our World Appear

How small does our world appear
when jets traces lines through the sky
and email immediately goes through
and everything can be fit in
a tin or two and quick fix
is like a magic word.

Yet some things
takes greater understanding
and values, believes
and knowledge to solve.

Culture, way of life,
hopes and fears
are different
to different people
and every society
needs to solve its problems
in its own way.

I have seen the naivety
of a quick fix superpower
causing more damage
than there was before
when it tried
to change the world
to its way of life
and believes.

Bombers, fighter jets,
battle tanks and bombs
raining down
and the absurd
use of force,
killed the guilty
and the innocent fell
while that Super power
chased the shadows.

The whole world knew
how lies was turned
into truth
and the gun was supreme
and still the struggle
goes on
and the world pays the price
and I wonder when
the killing will stop
and people will respect
one another
and will have
an own place in the sun.

Gert Strydom

How Strong Do I Love Thee? (Rubliw)

How strong
do I love thee?
Together we belong,
much more than mere feelings could be
is each word and deed in the daily throng
and far beyond eternity
our feelings go along
being gently
and free.

Gert Strydom

How To Paint A Striking Rinkhals

Green knee high grass
paves, covers the veldt

making the snake's hideout
its place from where it sails.

First observe the snake
sneaking from the grass

while it passes camouflaged
to the next shade

or lies turned over
as if dead, showing its stomach

enticing you to pass, or to come near
to investigate,

maybe you'll see the stripes
ringing its neck

in colours of cream
or something near to white

or maybe you may not
when in terror astounded

to whoever looks
it flashes alive

like a lightning rod
with death sizzling out of its mouth

and if you can paint this
you have the essence of it,

making terror alive,
in a snake which looks placid

but which can spit and strike
carrying death as far as it goes.

[Rinkhals: Spitting African Cobra.]

Gert Strydom

How To Write A Psalm

I. The poet

The restless soul
who wanders along with words,
trying to find meaning,
in simple things, complicated things,
who tries to change the world in vain
and shares other people's pain
and like a mad man,
waits and remain waiting on the gods
to hear their thoughts as his own.

II. The poem

Words on a paper, sometimes written
in innocence, that expresses feelings, meanings
or just describe
the world through the eyes of mad men,
or telling you how to comprehend them.

Gert Strydom

How Vulnerable And Defenceless Man Is

How vulnerable and defenceless man is
on the ways that we daily go,
so curtailed to the border of his body and soul

always busy with the details
that is beaconing his way in life.
How vulnerable and defenceless man is

far too easily hurt by his fellow-man
like a flower that far too easily wither and perishes,
so curtailed to the border of his body and soul

in the short scope of the earthly life
days and nights continue on and on.
How vulnerable and defenceless man is

too sentimental for every unfulfilled wish,
sometimes irresolute about the choices that lie before him,
so curtailed to the border of his body and soul

too easily wounded when somebody curses him
if he has got to take notice;
how vulnerable and defenceless man is
so curtailed to the border of his body and soul.

Gert Strydom

How Will I Appear?

How will I appear when before the Creator
I stand and He calls me forth
to bear testimony of His shattered world,

when every thought, every single deed
and everything that I have spoken,
have written, stand as evidence against me?

Will He look at me in all my transparency
and see the blood of His Son
or will every sin, every vile deed
bear witness of my severe iniquity?

Gert Strydom

How Will I Daily Look Upon God's Face? (Cavatina)

How will I daily look upon God's face,
while I do sin
and still daily continually do fall?
When I begin
each day with a prayer, inside my heart
His love is in,
while He daily makes my life again new,
much more pure than all of the morning dew

Gert Strydom

Hues Of Blue

From the holiday apartment's window
I see people swimming in the blue pool
and the water looks icy cold
from the dark blue colour

Some girls and women have
bathing caps on in colours
of white, green and blue
and others swim without
while some lie
around the pool.

While the day gets hotter
the colour of the pool changes
to a lighter hue

and just across the road
the beach is full
of people lying in the sun.

Some swim with the waves
breaking white
and some are deeper
in the aquamarine water

and still deeper
some surfers
are riding the waves
the of a navy blue ocean.

Gert Strydom

Hunting Party

I walk with a guide
(that's what they call
a tracker now days)

and leave on soft red brown sand
number nine boot tracks
(somewhere between
Potgietersrus and Ellisras)

and there are two other hunters
walking along
each carrying his own
point three seven five,
the guide has an old
ELG twelve bore shotgun

and with my Sony Cyber Shot
every thing is enhanced
more than ten times
and before any shots ring out
there are wild bucks
falling under my scope.

Gert Strydom

Hurry Up And Wait

The continuing visits
to the military
brought home to me
the thought of organized
disorganization, as if
live runs along in stretches
and at times wait on something
to again get meaning and coordination.

Gert Strydom

I Aim My Bow Against The Sky

I aim my bow against the sky
and set the mark
for the unknown
far beyond the blue.

Somewhere out of sight -
far beyond the stars
against the black of night,
there's a place
my arrow aims.

Legend speaks about a place
beyond the sky and somewhere
among the stars,
where true and great warriors go.

At times I wonder if my fallen comrades
are waiting there for me
and if they are really free
from the chains
that still binds me -
are they more than mortal men?

I long to be with them at times
and to walk with great Achilles
at my side,
with Alexander in the lead
and to gather all my comrades
to march to the throne
of the Prince Of Peace
and to kneel at the feet
of the Almighty warrior king.

Gert Strydom

I Am (Parody)

(with apologies to Don Mattera)

I am
free,
standing
at the death
of a infernal autumn,
gripped and baked
my kindred spirit falls about:
soothe me with a sword
hanging over me,
with one bread
of baked fabric,
that doves may blossom
from my mould.
Soothe me, with a word,
soothe me.

[Reference: "I am" by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

I Am A Farmer

I am a farmer
who are up before first light
and I drink my coffee
between the cows in the stable
where milking machines
are doing their thing sucking
and I pour cream into the black.

A few eggs from my own chickens
and sheep chops from the animals
that grazes right over the farm
is great for breakfast.

Later I walk down to the fields
or ride on Umfaan
my Arabic stallion
to see
if the keepers
are tending the cattle
and where they are grazing.

Sometimes I can stay for hours
in the grassland
and look at the bushes
about me
and the serenity
of it all climbs very deep
down into my heart.

I am as strong as the earth
that I love
and help to hack holes
right through iron stones
with a pickaxe
where the new fence
pole after pole
is beginning to stand.

I am pitched into this Africa

just like this
and have nowhere else
to go to
and my hands are hard as rock
from years of work
and years of resistance
against the sun and weather
and I love my farm
and my country.

Gert Strydom

I Am Afraid

I am afraid, my Lord divine,
that a life of constant trouble is mine,
that most men do part from Your ways
and do not see the way where Your glory does shine.

In this world of constant chaos You are the omnipotent deity,
the only one who set men from their troubles free
and yet evil brings this world closer to the Judgement Day
while all peace and rest is only in Thee,

while by science men try to prove that You are not
and a twisted, distorted view of You they have got
while with mercy and love You do offer restraint
and do not destroy, devour or remove the lot

while You do possess immortality,
are from the evil ways of this world free
and selfless love is in Your eternal plan
while You do dwell in infinity
and are trying to save all the descendants of man.

Gert Strydom

I Am Afraid For Your Life During Covid-19 (Couplets)

(to my wife, Daleen)

It's as if to the needs of others we are blind,
in this time to those who life has left behind

to those who have no own kind of resting place,
who now have got the same hardships to face,

to the elderly that you at Meals on Wheels do feed,
and those with poverty that has got a dire need

but then my love, right now you want to go
and hand out food to those that you do know,

while I am afraid of trepidation to your very life
and I strongly tell you to avoid this, my dearest wife,

but you do as you want to and I can only pray
that safe in this deadly time you will stay

and this is not of well-being or loyalty
but of your own life and your own safety,

where at a time all of this deadly situation will be past
and you will be able to make a contribution that will last.

[Poet's note: I want those at Northern Conference ACS and Meals and Wheels headquarters to take special note of this poem.]

Gert Strydom

I Am Afraid For Your Very Life During Covid-19 (Couplets)

(to my wife, Daleen)

It's as if to the needs of others we are blind,
in this time to those who life has left behind

to those who have no own kind of resting place,
who now have got the same hardships to face,

to the elderly that you at Meals on Wheels do feed,
and those with poverty that has got a dire need

but then my love, right now you want to go
and hand out food to those that you do know,

while I am afraid of trepidation to your very life
and I strongly tell you to avoid this, my dearest wife,

but you do as you want to and I can only pray
that safe in this deadly time you will stay

and this is not of well-being or loyalty
but of your own life and your own safety,

where at a time all of this deadly situation will be past
and you will be able to make a contribution that will last.

[Poet's note: I want those at Northern Conference ACS and Meals and Wheels headquarters to take special note of this poem.]

Gert Strydom

I Am Asleep Having A Childhood Kind Of Dream

I am asleep having a childhood kind of dream
of me lying in the hollow of a boat
drifting on a river, meandering down to the sea
and about me the sturdy curved planks
are solid etched against the night sky

where millions of stars gaze down
and a big full moon hangs yellow and high
and the boat rocks gently almost as a cradle
with undercurrents pushing it into a estuary
and I smell tar and salt and suddenly death
while the prow rises before gliding onto a shore.

The smell of death and daylight greets me
is much more intense, with some seagulls
screaming and jostling against each other
sounding almost like a group of vultures

and the boat is on a white shore
with some palm trees,
the water of the river is clear see-through blue
and there's shingle under my feet
like one would expect at a sea beach

and stranger still just beyond the shore
crossing two dunes
a dusty plain of red-brown sand
stretches out to the horizon
but just at the bottom of the dune
I stumble over a huge graveyard,
maybe a battlefield
and the seagulls fly up in a protesting flock

with the bones of ancient knights lying
in full shining decorated metal armour,
with drawn swords,
war axes, war hammers, metal crossbows
and finely decorated shields
and farther beyond two gleaming golden chariots

are parked at opposing sides
with crowned skeletons only just sticking out of them.

Gert Strydom

I Am Caught In You

(for Annelize)

I have been captured in you
and when I do miss you with pain,
I do write messages
on the walls of your heart

and far from the horizon
lays my bloody trail
and I wonder if you do sometimes find me
or hear the screams of my torture?

Still you do remain my angel
and my perfect fit,
the one who I do love above all others
and the one, whom I want to adore,

the one that I know
have also got intense inner feelings for me
but life and destiny
does continually rip us apart
but when I do find myself again
I do always find
more signs of you
where you do bring meaning to my life.

Gert Strydom

I Am Devoting My Whole Life To You

My Lord, I am devoting my whole life to you,
I have sworn a sacred oath to be true,
you affect my life, my every breath,
if it is necessary even my death;
I do consider you in all that I do,
I am devoting my whole life to you.

Gert Strydom

I Am Devoting My Whole Life To You (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

I am devoting my whole life to you,
days that are merry and some that are blue,
some divine intervention made us meet,
to me you will always be very sweet
with your eyes glittering in perfect hue,
I am devoting my whole life to you,

I am devoting my whole life to you,
of the future I do not have a clue,
here and now our feelings are very strong
while only together we do belong,
and I want to stick to you like strong glue,
I am devoting my whole life to you,

I am devoting my whole life to you,
until my last days are gone and are through
I am giving my body, soul and heart
and wish never again from you to part
every day your life I want to pursue,
I am devoting my whole life to you.

Gert Strydom

I Am From Heidelberg With Its Sugar Bush Hillocks

I am from Heidelberg with its sugar bush hillocks
and cannot remove the memories
from childhood days from my thoughts;
still I see open protea flowers waiting on bees,

with their smell that lingers in the air,
and I am caught by aloes
that fills the hillocks with their orange-red colour,
and in the late afternoons I find the shadows that the hillocks throw

and when the jacarandas in the city bloom,
when the garden in my yard is full of flowers,
when I find comfort at the fireplace in winter
then my thoughts keep going back

and even when my darling looks great-eyed at me
(whom I adore with my heart and soul)
and my friends that visit constantly
I cannot remove the city which is always crowding into life

and although our house of stone and brick
exists as if it will remain eternally,
where it's bordered by palisades like a fortress,
protected by electric wires

when the city's end suddenly comes,
when by man destruction
or a nuclear accident suddenly occurs
I will return to Heidelberg with its sugar bush hillocks.

Gert Strydom

I Am From Pretoria

Notwithstanding the way
that the country and world goes,
I still want to stand for many years
in the streets with purple-blue
Jacaranda trees.

Let my friends go and live
in London, New York,
Amsterdam and Sydney
but in Pretoria I earn my keep
and no other city
calls me away from my fatherland
since only Pretoria
is right for me.

I am from Pretoria,
a place where princes stay
and if you go to Pretoria
you will find many Afrikaner princes there.

In Pretoria noble Afrikaners are everywhere
and they build their lives
in the right way
and like their ancestors,
still cling to the hand
of the Almighty God.

Gert Strydom

I Am Happy To Be Alive

The African sun is white hot
in the bright blue sky
and the fresh wind
jerks on thorn branches
and blows the red dust up,
where dead enemy soldiers
lie on the battlefield

At places there are burned out tanks
and armoured cars
but so many people are reaped
that shock waves even hit Havana
where women and children
keep on crying.

Thorn bushes make fat round shades
and those of the higher trees
are stretched out longer,
while one of the officers
draws lines in a little black book
through names.

White powder are thrown over the dead
lying in ditches
and hang burning in the air
for anyone that inhales it
and there are flies everywhere,
but nothing can dissipate
the smell of death.

Further away three puma helicopters land
in big brown dust clouds
to pick up our few wounded
and the brigadier looks complaisant,
where he smokes a Camel
and are talking with a commandant and a major.

Everywhere around me lie Cubans and Fapla
shot to pieces, burned, maimed

and there are body parts and ponds of blood
that meets my eyes
and my three-day-old beard itches
and my eyes are tired and red
while sweat runs in small streams
down my cheeks
and I am happy to be alive.

Gert Strydom

I Am Hoarse, Stupid And Have Fear

I am hoarse, stupid and have fear
that you do not look past
the tears
and see how it looks
deep in my heart
and do not comprehend
or really know
that I am building
my life around you

and that what are between us
are unmade
by circumstances,
the passing of life
and what other people
say to you
while I just
want to love you more.

Gert Strydom

I Am Looking For A Life

I am looking for a life
and have been robbed of children and wife
and it seems as if the Lord God
doesn't exist or doesn't care

and as if Satan is everywhere
following in my tracks,
shadowing me, trying to steal my destiny
as if I will never be free

and it comes to me that in reality
Jesus is carrying me
through all the misery.

Gert Strydom

I Am Lost And Adrift

(After T. S. Eliot, for Daleen)

I am lost and adrift in a sea filled with banks of fog,
with rain pouring intermittingly down,
without a single glimpse of the sun are at places unknown
while for weeks by the stormy weather I have been thrashed and flogged

while out of my life my love is gone

and my compass has long been broken and I fear the rocks
fear that any tidal wave will break the back of this ship
where the waves do throw it around and up and down it does skip
like a broken tree in a flood river the there is no nearby dock

while out of my life my love is gone

with the bowsprit just holding, the garboard rotten and leaking,
the rigging and the canvas ripped to pieces and I am thinking
that this vessel is my life going to unknown shores
and that I cannot afford it to be sinking

while out of my life my love is gone

and where I am I do not really know,
neither where in all of this I do go.

[Reference: "Marina" by T. S. Eliot.]

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Gert Strydom

I Am Lost In Another Country, Maybe On Another Planet

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where children are without any respect
and have got more rights than their parents.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where the politicians
steal away a own culture, religion and the values
from the souls of children.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where primary school children
do love each other naked and intimate
in the bushes of the park.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where drug addiction
is the in thing
among children and their friends.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where foreign criminals
possess real estate, hijack cars
and stay and live at about any place.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet
where people see almost any other thing
to possess something divine
and think that they are equal to the Lord.

I am lost in another country
maybe on another planet

where the former system
totally declining
where now in the havoc people wander along
without any humanity in them.

Gert Strydom

I Am No Nietzsche Follower

That there is something dark in everything
and God does not exist,
that love is doomed
even before it's beginning
and that morality depicts enslavement
are believed and lived by people
that seizes power
to force themselves on everyone else
and in such a way create their values.

I am no follower of Nietzsche
and to me he is fundamentally wrong,
as in every thing around me
I see the creator's hand,
I see set laws,
and how good people make sacrifices
and it's almost if I
can touch God Himself.

Gert Strydom

I Am Not The Person

I am not the person
that You have destined me to be
and eagerly I want to walk on the right way,
do and say the right things
but before I can find myself
I do fail You my God
and then I wonder where to start again?

Gert Strydom

I Am Now Done And Finished

Against the lock-down and a virus I am worn-out,
also to the many compelled examinations,
the government that do curtail and keeps on admonishing,
from disinfecting, soap and drying clothes,

the writing of your name in different books,
to continually everywhere wait in long lines,
for people's tempers, their aggression and curses.
Against the lock-down and a virus I am worn-out

and totally upside-down life does now continue,
while the government exercise control from all directions
and others believe that all of this will pass,
also to the many compelled examinations.

Some people view others as spineless cowards,
as if much better they do comprehend the restrictions and the virus
and others buy all kinds of sweets and cakes.
The government that do curtail and keeps on admonishing,

do far too little where all of humanity is perishing,
receive for more monetary relieve a multitude of applications
and people want to run away as fast as they can,
from disinfecting, soap and drying clothes,

and want to flee to the outposts of the world,
to where they do not stand out among others,
away from new regulations and more law-books.
I am opposed to control and a futuristic existence,
against the lock-down.

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Gert Strydom

I Am Proud To Be White

My two dogs patrol the yard
from side to side
and walk along the wall
with the street
to and fro
as if they at any moment expect
a threat
or armed invasion

and I have moved the mailbox
for the poor postman
to do his duty in safety

and it's quite clear
that lawful authority
is decaying
and the country is more insane than mad.

Black policemen walk eight
next to each other in a shopping centre
and even when I stand pressed
against a shop's window
to avoid them
they still bump into me

and when I let them know
that the walkway doesn't belong to them
with a submachine gun
they turn to me
because I am white
and this intimidation I laugh off

even when I have to
give a statement
for my stolen car
to the gate guard
on the outside of the police station.

So near to a black police state

I have not yet seen
and still for this nonsense I am not afraid
and know my rights and the law
and these people will never know
how much I love my country.

I am proud to be white
and my language, culture, norms, values
and humanity differ so much
that I never
want to be another colour.

Even when I am now
a third rate citizen in my country
which claimed
military service from me
where there are discriminated
against my human rights
and where from time to time
I am without an income and a job

since I serve an almighty Lord
who sets governments up and let them fall
and who gets solutions out of impossibility.

[Reference: Lawful authority decaying: "Ethnic hatred is the result of the terror that arises when legitimate authority disintegrates." Michael Ignatieff: Blood and Belonging Croatia and Serbia.]

Gert Strydom

I Am Really Blessed By Her Presence (Cavatina)

I am really blessed by her presence,
my truest love
brings the most intense feelings that nothing
can quench, remove,
she has been prepared, designed for me
by God above
and while we are constantly together
she is dear and I cannot forget her.

Gert Strydom

I Am Really Blessed By Her Presence (Cavatina)2

I am really blessed by her presence,
my truest love
brings the most intense feelings that nothing
can quench, remove,
she has been prepared, designed for me,
by God above
and while we are constantly together
she is dear and I cannot forget her.

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Gert Strydom

I Am Really Caught In You (Free Verse Sonnet)

I am so deeply caught in you
that we do breathe together,
as if for years I am a part of your body
and in your humanity I am totally lost,
as if together we come to the Lord in prayer
while deep in each other we feed our hunger,
where nobody and nothing has to rescue us from this
as all holy beautiful things are in His will
and like wings you do carry me higher up
as if moments do become eternal between us,
and I can feel your heart beating together with mine
when we do pour our souls and bodies into each other:
you are the pattern and form, in which I am,
to my life the whole goal and all meaning of it.

Gert Strydom

I Am Scared (Couplets)

I am afraid that parts of you do in my verses remain
as you are in my words in the longing and pain

where I write verses like letters to you
as I try to expel your ghosts in what I do

but you are much more than any other woman or wife
where you do bring meaning to my life

Gert Strydom

I Am Scared (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Sometimes wordless I want to remain silent about us,
where I am scared over the power of mere words
that does bind our lives and moments
where there come moments of unhindered holiness
between a man and truly beautiful woman
and how can I protect these moments and us,
that which as a mere human you do entrust to me,
where even words can make it naked and insignificant
and too scared I am that anything can infect it,
when I want to tell about intention and sincere love,
where no one has got a clue of the depth of it,
where you do give your heart, person and substance to me
I am so scared that something will enter this locked circle
that could bring destruction or confusion or pain.

[Reference:"Sonnet. My stem moet wakker word as joune swyg"
(Sonnet. My voice must awake when yours are silent)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

I Am Searching

I am searching for a charming beautiful woman
that does fit comfortable under my arm,
one whose wiles I do like,
whose slender body draws a man enticingly
and constantly she must be friendly
but must also have secrets of her own
and I must find softness in her eyes,
she must love to lie wedged against me,
like the summer sun her laughter must come
and she must really understand my poems,
she must not disguise the absolute truth,
when life brings its thunderstorms she must still stand by me.
Like a child she must trust and believe
in selfless love and in the heavenly Father.

Gert Strydom

I Am Searching For A Beautiful Little Cottage At The Ocean

I am searching for a beautiful little cottage at the ocean,
for a place where at times a person can stand still
and behold the miracles of the Lord,
where waves continually break with brute force,
somewhere far away where the sky is blue
where I can rest in my years of old age,
a place that both my wife and I will love
even when the storms with the worst winds do come.
I am searching for a place where visitors are always welcome
even when they are unknown and lost,
where there is a place of rest in the wide world,
where the hurting experience of each day
grows faint and undone,
even when the floods of life do stream down.

Gert Strydom

I Am Searching For A Verse

I am searching for a verse
that is somewhat different and unhindered,
of which the words are pure and without blemish,
that gives more light than a flaring candle

something monumental into which I do not press any words
but where it flows freely from its own accord,
where no political correctness hinders any ideas,
where I do not deviate when a great poet grind his teeth to me

a verse that pierces the heart of a reader,
that carries something of my humanity
and nowhere I can find it but to focus my eyes on You
and this searching is a funny thing,
a searching for a type of unique song
with an outer-worldly insight.

Gert Strydom

I Am Searching For Love Never Ending

Although sometimes love is caught
only in moments long
and comes and goes far quicker
than it should be
and I remember every flame,
every girl that cherished me

I am searching for love never ending,
someone to hold dear
when the final years draw near
and even beyond this thing
that we call life
to be a companion, a lover and a wife.

Gert Strydom

I Am So Very Scared (Free Verse Sonnet)

I am so very scared that you are going to get ill.
I am so scared of losing you completely,
where this lock-down limit any contact with you
and very little of any freedoms do remain.
In this time the president talks about disowning commercial farms,
while the government is into Cuba and China from where it comes,
the Corona virus is demolishing all of humanity
and I wonder if they now want to start communism right here?
The SABC constantly broadcasts Chinese technology,
(say at their news that they are independent)
where Chinese technology could not stop this deadly thing,
they did not avoid that all of humanity get the virus.
Loss with death is such a final thing,
I am so scared that you work will bring it to you.

Gert Strydom

I Am Still In Love With You (Free Verse Sonnet)

Sincerely, honestly and with passion I do love you,
the person that you are carries meaning for me,
and my whole humanity is important to you,
where you do view God first above all other things.
I am in love with you as a wonderful woman,
from God comes our tight union,
and I really miss you when we are separate,
where day upon day I see you as a human being.
I cannot banish you from my heart
where love for you do constantly stay,
even when destiny does come with its worst,
as you are my wife and I am your husband
and of you I can never get enough
as day after day you do leave me speechless.

Gert Strydom

I Am The One (Terzanelle)

I am the one to whom animals flock,
dogs, cats and every tame dove
as if bewitched by the midnight clock,

coming to me as if I am, the one that they love
without getting attention from me,
dogs, cats and every tame dove

has something that they see
looking past human sense
without getting attention from me,

coming sincerely without pretence.
I am the one with love in my heart
looking past human sense

always trying to be me, without playing a part
trying to learn from the creation of the almighty God
I am the one with love in my heart,

to some just another sod,
I am the one to whom animals flock,
trying to learn from the creation of the almighty God
as if bewitched by the midnight clock.

[Reference: I am the one by Thomas Hardy.]

Gert Strydom

I Am The Wanderer (Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I am the wanderer of a man and you are the spring goddess
with your laughter and eyes in a summer sunny-ardour
and you are in my heart, my soul and spirit and in my blood
from our very first meeting from the beginning
and here I do pray you into my days,
I do not want to and cannot guard against your love
and that your love for me is lasting I have suspected for a very long time
as nothing can fabricate that which is between us like a kind of game.
You are my inspiration for the days that still have got to come
and I love you with everything that is in me,
where constantly I am speechless with your humanity and beauty,
you do bring daily new meaning to my life
and I do not want to and cannot disguise my feelings for you
as to you and me they are no great secret.

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Gert Strydom

I Am Thinking Of You Tonight

Some people avoid contact with anyone else
as they are scared of being deeply hurt again
but I am not against going right to the start
to correct the things that brings pain to the heart.
Sometimes love asks for more than people are willing to give
and life changes from what it had been before
but I know intimately knowing you is really to live
and broken people I have seen who do not smile anymore,
they are afraid to hope and to trust and to expect,
to take chances on that which could change life
and constantly from contact they are turning away,
they go lonely to bed excepting life to stay as it is.
I know you are reading deeply in my poetic art
and I know that your love is sincere and true,
where being apart is not an issue of the heart
and through a life of misery you have stuck like glue.
To me you are my precious angel of light
and I am longing for you tonight.

Gert Strydom

I Am Told That We Are Just Animals

I am told that we are just animals
and like all other species
perform the tasks
and eat, live and die
and that this life is all that we have.

Still this humanoid sees
the grandeur of the sunrise
and how it burst through the clouds
in different colours
and there's something utterly great in it.

I am told that subconsciously apes may equate
the sunrise with the colour
of some ripe fruit,
but I see a master creator's hand there
and no hunger stirs in me.

I am told that we are just animals
and still I am aware of myself
and my place in this life
and how infinite small
I am against the Supreme God
and of the values and laws
that protects me
and of the education
that set my career on its way.

I am told that we are just animals
and yet I have the capacity
to reason, to comprehend,
to speak, to calculate
and to plan
and believe that I am rather
a human being called man.

Gert Strydom

I Am Tossed Into A Wretched Life

(after John Clare)

I am tossed into a wretched life
where all my friends have forsaken me
and you whom I loved are only found in memory
while senses and sensibility is all at strife

and yet in this nothingness I am still alive,
but from hardship I am never free
and its only darkness that around me I see
but once you were my beloved wife

and now all my aims and esteems
are shattered, broken to pieces,
even our love, our joy and happiness
are swept away like broken dreams
while the darkness, the destruction increases
and people treat me with a kind of aloofness.

[Reference: "I am – yet what I am none cares or knows" by John Clare.]

Gert Strydom

I Am Truly Glad

I am truly glad
as you like the greatest gift
that the Lord bestows
have come to be with me
as my companion, love and friend
and blessed is the time that we spent.

Gert Strydom

I Am Waiting For You To Return

I am but a normal kind of guy
but there are times that I do cling to love
as if it's going to disappear trackless
between you and me
and sometimes like everyone I do hide behind a mask,
at times I want to disguise the pain
and believe that everything is alright
as you has become part of me,
you are intertwined into my own humanity
and in you I do drown.
I miss you every day when you leave
and wait on you to return
as it's as if part of me
is gone to another place.

Gert Strydom

I Am Weak

I am weak but when You are with me I am mighty
and I am bound by my own insecurity
by the terrible things that life does bring
but when You are with me I am totally free,

free from each and every worry
and Lord, with You beside me
there is nothing that I cannot overcome
and then I am the man that I am supposed to be.

Lord, You do lift me up from where I do fall
and with You beside me I am tall,
while You do straighten the way
and all of my troubles seem insignificant small

and Lord, You are my only friend
when all others do me forsake
and You do see me through to the end
and do my own part take

with you love, power and dignity.

Gert Strydom

I Am Writing A Poem To You

I write a poem to you
just to let you know
how much I love you.

It will be simple
without any baubles
and where the words lack
you will find the meanings
between the lines.

Maybe it's great
that you know
how much I am thinking of you
and that the times together
I again live through in my thoughts.

I do not know
what a new tomorrow without you hold
and I cannot wait
to see you again
and am still in love with you

and maybe it's next week
or maybe a little longer
that we have got to wait

but I leave everything
in the hands of God
who makes His own plans
and knows the future.

Gert Strydom

I Ask That You Do Hold Your Hand Daily Over Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

I ask that You do hold Your hand daily over me
where I string through the streets of the city behind other cars,
when minibus taxis try to run me off the road
and angry motorists do hang out of windows to curse,
when glamour-girls patter past at work
and every second white man of my age does loose his job,
while people do talk about their animals and children but especially
about robbers that rape, torture and kill other people
when sirens of ambulances, the fire-brigade
and the police do rush past and I am stuck in traffic
when something terrible, merciless and inhuman
do happen to someone else somewhere
where my land is falling to pieces
and You do know about everything from somewhere in the universe.

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Gert Strydom

I Ask You My Lord (Free Verse Sonnet)

I ask You my Lord, to make my people holy again.
In times of a deadly virus that comes and in times of happiness,
that You do touch each life with Your Spirit and love and mercy,
do jerk everyone in this country out of the fire like burning-wood,
I ask that You do remember the people that are serving You still.
My Lord, You know how the condition of hospitals here is.
where I do still trust in Your omnipotence and great mercy,
You know how the virus from China do obliterate people here,
where medical personnel have to face this deadly thing in fear,
where others do not know about the sacrifices that they make,
as if every other person just can forget that kind of dedication,
it seems that people have no interest to serve You by the heart
but where people in cities, towns and on farms do silently perish,
I pray that You do without fail act against this viral danger.

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Gert Strydom

I Asked God For A Wife

I asked God for a wife
and then you came
to fight for me and pray with me
and together to cry and laugh
and to understand
without any words being said.

Gert Strydom

I Became Aware

how lonely it's sometimes with you,
that both of us come from two different worlds,
that misconception rules at times
and I did wonder
how to go on with such a kind of life
where the few beautiful things that I do
at times are shattered
and I came to the realization
that love is something that brings joy to any situation
and without you my whole world is empty.

Gert Strydom

I Become Aware Of You While You Come To Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to André Letoit)

I become aware of you while you come to me
with the sun in your eyes that gleam when you do laugh,
the mere darkness you make light for me
and with you I am enchanted and dumbfounded,
you do turn around my whole life and my days,
you are my darling and my source of heat at night,
the one on whom I had been waiting for a life-time,
our love is new and sincere and undisguised:
like Adam and Eve we stand before each other,
in the fall to sin we are naked and exposed
but it's as if for eons we do know each other,
do know each thought, each glance and every gesture,
this tells about our small and bigger feelings something,
yet there is so much that we still have got to discover.

[Reference: "vision 1979" (vision 1979) by André Letoit.]

Gert Strydom

I Believe Everyone Has A Urge To Want To Believe (Free Verse Sonnet)

I believe everyone has an urge to want to believe,
even if they are agnostic or sceptical about God
and in each human being He does create that ability,
where we want to go to someone with our own destiny,
even if a person do only come to a sense of belonging,
where organized systems do make people anxious,
it's to an Upper-Being that everyone does long,
somebody to talk to, who could give protection,
where there is a yearning for someone who do understand,
where we want to come to God without any fear,
to someone that stands between man and dilapidation,
where people want to be free from myths and icons:
do want to know a God, who is sincere with us,
in a world full of pain and darkness.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Believe God Does Still Turn Every Life Around (Free Verse Sonnet)

Bloody red gleams the sun at the horizon
where another new morning full of promises comes,
where the beauty of nature leaves me speechless,
while I hear the call of a boubou shrike
and in the world there is everywhere great sorrow
while a deadly virus is disguised as flue
and I believe God does still turn every life around
but man gives to Him no credit.
My missing and longing of you remains very intense
where the government controls too much to my will,
where I am wishing for other circumstances
and in vain people try to stop something deadly,
some do curse the Chinese for incompetence
and too few people do honour the God of the universe.
© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Believe God Helps Whatever Does Happen (Free Verse Sonnet)

With daybreak the sun has a tangerine colour
where it looks like a much hotter winter-day.
Just two days ago I had to block an iron-pipe
and the morning-breeze carries the fragrance of rain
but I believe God helps whatever does happen
and the birds outside sing their praises to Him,
where I look at rosebuds that are opening
but here in my thoughts you are in your prime.
It's disturbs that black robbers do come during the day,
stop with a white Nissan-car outside and just walk in
where the three do rob me and without a disguise
one of them hit at me with an iron-pipe.
Where I am missing you and your love do leave me speechless,
I do not understand the will of God in all of this.

[Poet's note: I will not write politically correct where there is oppression, injustice or any kind of evil. I have been reprimanded before by using colour where it comes to people. I am writing factually correct when I write and tell the absolute truth as it really had been three black men in the robbery. I am 56 years old, my mother 86 and her sister of the black men jerked the 92-year-old lady exact words to my mother by one of the other black men were: "White woman shut-up or I will smash your head until you are dead." His exact words to me were: "White-man I am going to kill you." For a full description of what happened during the robbery read my poem:
Robbery in Springs South Africa at 13h00 on 23 June 2020 (Sonnet sequence) .]

Gert Strydom

I Believe There Is A Place Called Zion (Sonnet)

I believe there is a place called Zion
that was prepared by Jesus, who is my Lord and my God.
where joy and happiness does without end go on
and through the trials and tribulations I will go dry-shod

and even if other people do think it odd
He has changed my heart that was as cold as stone
and even if I am laid beneath the earthly sod
by His blood for my sins He did atone

and I will see His loving face
when the Lord Jesus does come
in a act of amazing grace
from that great Zion to take me home

and now a love that is unequal and divine
Jesus has made mine.

Gert Strydom

I Bind Long Blackwood Poles

I bind long Blackwood poles
with a blue pair of pliers and binding wire
between green palisades
and cut it with a old pruning scissor
into the right lengths
and wear a blue bull cap,
but the sun
burns the hell out of me
and every now and then
there's coffee and water
and a friend's pruning scissor
that I get from my sweetheart.

I work into the night
and she calls
and ask me
to stop working
and my neck and shoulders
and back and hands are sore
and my face is burnt red
by the sun,
but my sweetheart
is very happy
about how the fence looks.

Gert Strydom

I Came To You

I came to you
and you were in every thought,
were right next to me through all of the dark nights,
did walk with me when the first roses started flowering.

I came to you
with everything that I am
and there was something more than just knowledge
when I could hide no opinion or desire.

I came to you
and you were loving and full of hope
when you started to walk through my life and dreams
and still are here in my first days of old age.

I came to you
and did trust you,
did cling to you like a drowning person
and although the last days of my life is turning over

I do know how deep your love is.

Gert Strydom

I Can Imagine Your Company (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Come to me pretty noble woman
the love in my heart is yours alone
and I am setting my life only for you
to bring reality to it.
Outside there are shadows and a tranquil stream
here is bread to eat, wine to drink,
you do bring reality to a wonderful dream
and nothing better than your company I can imagine.
So many kilometres do lie between us,
more than that there is decades that I do miss you,
still when I do think about you my heart does skip a beat
as I do know you like you really are
and you do know me and do know my heart and soul
but without you my whole life is futile.

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Gert Strydom

I Can Measure You To No Other Woman

(for Annelize)

I can measure you to no other woman,
do not want to, as you are very special
and it's as if you do always know at a time
when to come and help me to get out of the fire.

Your concern is poured out over me,
when you laugh my heart does jerk with a strange power
and my love for you nothing can curtail
where decades I am praying and waiting for you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Can Not Wait For Two O'clock To Come

I cannot wait for two o'clock to come
to climb on my motorbike
and to ride to the place
where the words of other poets
get life and energy
and bring bliss and burning beauty
and sometimes sincerity
or stark reality
as magic to me.

I cannot wait for two o'clock to come
to hear the words
of a master and to find something
in his thoughts that I can make mine,
as if it was buried in my soul
just waiting for the sun and rain
and interaction to sprout
growing green like a living thing.

I cannot wait for two o'clock to come
to read my own poetry
and to see what other
people make of it
and to know
if my words are truly
hitting their mark.

I cannot wait for two o'clock to come
and to experience something great
that makes life worth living
and perhaps for some time
to sit near the presence
of the Immortal One
that gives man the ability
to turn words into the magic
that life ought to be.

Gert Strydom

I Can Only Tell You How Great The World Seemed (Rispetto)

I can just tell you how great the world seemed
and what at the time you had meant to me,
suddenly destiny at a time deemed
fit to unleash unknown pain and tragedy
from which you could not be saved, redeemed;
nothing could avoid coming calamity
claiming you to the cold and uncaring ground,
turning my whole world upside down and around.

Gert Strydom

I Can Sit Here In Your Company All Night Long

It's the kind of music that I hate,
but done to utter perfection
in synergy of blues in twelve,
Dixieland and Jazz
and it's already quite late

and trumpets and a clarinet
intermingles
with the piano and a tenor at counterpoint
as to me a mad mixture of sound,
in a strange, almost awkward melody

and somehow tonight the music goes deep,
passes the abrasion and irritation
that it usually awakes
and I see the piano player
enjoying the tune

and over a bottle of light red wine
you kiss me in the romantic candle light
and I can sit here in your company
all night long, listening to song after song.

Gert Strydom

I Can Think Of No Other Better Summer (Free Verse Sonnet)

Weavers do twitter, warblers chirp and doves coo
and the summer overflows with joy
but for the cat that do try to murder the birds
where from the branches of the fig tree the birds peep
and in the days of the summer I am swept away
by all of the birds that so cheerful do sing in their choir
and do notice them splash and drink at the water bowl
when they do flutter down and I do feed them crumbs
and every bird does sing an own love-song
that continually does sound up with joy
as if all of creation do enjoy this summer,
the birds land as if the fruit trees do beckon them,
know that they do offer seed and fruit to them
and I can think of no other better summer.

Gert Strydom

I Cannot Avoid You

I cannot avoid you, keep you from my thoughts
whatever I think about; you are still clinging there
and in me you stay,
I am never free from you
and I see your eyes looking at me.

Sometimes you pass in the street
and I cannot trust my feelings,
at other times I see you driving past,
I cannot avoid you.

Sometimes it feels as if this sensation wants to abate
until somewhere again I behold you
and then I know that you are in me,
that I really want to see you again,
I cannot avoid you.

Gert Strydom

I Cannot Forget

how unnoticed
for a week we follow tracks

where women terrorists
go to a native village
to trade their bodies

and they bring back food

and leave weapons, ammunition, landmines
and hand-grenades at that place

how that women
break away unnoticed from that village
and plant landmines in a road

and a farmer and his wife and child
with their pickup truck lie blown to bits

and I wonder if those people
did not also want a life?

Gert Strydom

I Cannot Forget You

(in answer to Heinrich Heine)

Never can I forget you,
my darling, you that I do embrace through the night,
where I do know of the impact of your love
and the perfect woman I only find in you.

Your body, soul and your spirit
fill me with joy and fear,

is a part of my in everything,
with whatever destiny do bring

and day and night I do yearn for you
as my companion, girlfriend and my wife,

where in each breath you are in me,
in each heartbeat you do have meaning.

Never can I forget you,
my darling, you that I do embrace through the night,
where I do know of the impact of your love
and the perfect woman I only find in you,

where as a unit we keep functioning
and we do not try to control each other.

[Poet's note: "Ich kann es nicht vergessen" by Heinrich Heine.]

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Gert Strydom

I Cannot Forget You (2)

Where you are very pretty to me,
it's as if I do understand every glance and gesture
and even the smallest things do carry meaning,

where your love and care do keep on surprising me,
where I know of the depth of your feelings,
and you do fit perfect into my life.

That this infection can determine life and death
causes us both to be extradited.
Where you are very pretty to me

I am away from you and at night reach for you,
and everything you are in life to me
where I know of the depth of your feelings.

I do continually miss you severally,
I want to go straight to you
and even the smallest things do carry meaning.

Only a glance does lure me or drive me mad,
you are the one that brings heartache and joy
and everything you are in life to me.

I do not have to get certain of your love
as it's everything out of which my life do exist,
where you are very pretty to me.

You let my heart with joy sing,
where you are in my most beautiful memories.
You are the one that brings heartache and joy,

of my life you do know everything and each secret,
do know how much I want to embrace you
and even the smallest things do carry meaning.

Although we do not know what the future holds.
you are for me past special, beautiful and clever
where you are in my most beautiful memories,

and that I am madly in love with you is no confession
but without you my life do locked-down continue,
where you are very pretty to me
and even the smallest things do carry meaning.

I want to get into my car to go to you
where your love and care do keep on surprising me,
you are for me past special, beautiful and clever
where you do fit perfect into my life.

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Gert Strydom

I Cannot Give You (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I cannot give you stretched out open lands
I do not possess any great well-stocked farms
where to you I do come with empty hands
and want to wrap you tight in my arms

I can write only a simple kind of song
that lifts the spirit up and love high
where the feelings between us is strong
where only thoughts of you have I

I cannot give you many stones that are rare
that does glimmer with a tranquil deep sheen
I can only stroke through your lovely hair
throughout my life treat you like my queen

I can only my goodwill and love on you bestow
and hope in time you will follow me wherever I go.

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Gert Strydom

I Cannot Help To More And More Love You (Villanelle)

I cannot help to more and more love you
and wish to be giving you bunches of roses
while I miss you with everything that I do

but unexpected a deadly virus came out of the blue
and with it the government severe restrictions imposes.
I cannot help to more and more love you

while locked-down of your thoughts I do not have a clue,
but know that extreme danger to everyone it poses,
while I miss you with everything that I do

and I do not know were everything is leading to,
only that borders and travelling the government closes.
I cannot help to more and more love you

where I know you through and through
and far too many people it indisposes
while I miss you with everything that I do.

where it looks similar to normal flue,
while poems many heart-felt feelings encloses,
I cannot help to more and more love you,
while I miss you with everything that I do.

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Gert Strydom

I Cannot Leave My Country

I cannot leave my country
as it is in my blood;
this earth is part of me
and when it rains
it's as if I smell new life.

I do not want to see any other horizon
when the sun that almost every day
burns hot here,
hanging in a cobalt blue sky
makes that I already yearn for my own country.

What can you find in the culture
of other people, where you do not really fit in,
when your own humanity binds you so
that you know that you would be foreign
and goalless there,
like a stranger that is longing
to go back home?

Gert Strydom

I Cannot Save You From Yourself

I cannot save you from yourself,
from your father who died,
from your mother
who likes to quarrel with you
from every man that has broken your heart

but I can be there for you
when you need me,
try and bring tranquillity
after we visited your mother
listen and try to understand
about the things that worry you

and hugging and kissing
I do fairly well
and she looked at me
quite carefully
as if I had spoken pure truths.

(In answer to Sally-Ann Murray/Reference: Analysis by Sally-Ann Murray.)

Gert Strydom

I Come To You (Sicilian Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

I come to you during the silence of tonight
to tell you how very dear you are to me
as in the sky stars twinkle from eternity,
some are dim and far, almost out of sight,

you look lovely in the silver moonlight,
on your birthday smiling with tranquility
and volumes I do in your pretty eyes see,
they glow full of love and are very bright.

A weaver does its love-song twitter-sing,
there is the smell of rain hanging in the air
as the end of summer does autumn bring,
while sounds of joy do echo everywhere
as if tonight there is magic in everything,
as if right now all of life is without a care.

Gert Strydom

I Constantly Chase After Love

I constantly chase after love
and ask girls to wear my ring
and it's as if happiness departs from me
and plagues me with one or other thing:

I

The first girl
that I loved and married
finds my so called friend
to be a better guy for her

and she suddenly can't stand me
when she goes to him and what had been
between us, is suddenly finished
and she sends me away to the moon.

II

Over the second one
my tears flow like rain
as our time together is so quickly past
as if she was only leant to me

and her innocence and beauty
is destroyed in a single day
as if destiny holds out its hand
and waits constantly in the background.

III

The third one can steal any man's heart,
but shares herself with others
and with knives, molten plastic and a pistol
plays a deadly game

and by her self she left me
and went to her newest lover
after ruining my life

and I am still glad about her departure.

IV

Now I care for you
and wonder where
you stand with me?

Gert Strydom

I Could Not Guess

I could not guess how deep my love for you would be,
that it would pierce through all pain and fear,
that you would come into my life
to heal me from years of pain.

Gert Strydom

I Could Not Guess [2]

that you could bring reality to my dreams
that you would bring happiness to each new day
and on my established life a earthquake

that would move my humanity, would shift my mind,
that you would become such a part of me,
would fit so perfectly into my life
that I would find something more in your love.

Gert Strydom

I Could Smell The Thunder

I could smell the thunder,
could smell the first spring rain
that was falling outside on the earth
and when it suddenly did stop

I saw a Cape robin twitter-dancing,
rejoicing about some more rain that was coming
and when the lightning later did fall
some more rain poured down

Gert Strydom

I Couldn't Avoid You

I couldn't avoid you,
since destiny determined,
that we must have each other.
Your love took the pain out of me
and although my heart was armoured with steel,
your hands went into my deepest soul.

I couldn't avoid
to love you since it was determined by destiny
and engraved into my soul in a own language.
Who and what I am you understand
and you make me happy,
know how to bring out the best in me
and I couldn't avoid you.

Gert Strydom

I Dare Not Fill My Heart With Anguish

I dare not fill my heart with anguish
and although at times it thrills me,
in your memory to languish,
if I do, from it I will never be free.

Sometimes it's better to forget you,
sometimes its better to not have known
the blessings, the passion shown
of you who in death still remains true

and life goes on with its promises
a sun that rises, shines and vanishes
but there's no other you to take me
with children into posterity,

from winter into spring
to bring a new awakening.

Gert Strydom

I Dare To Love You

I dare to love you
even beyond despair
while time and circumstance
has robbed me
from that which was meant to be,
as if a new tomorrow still lingers
and yet our love still is true
as if it will last to eternity.

Gert Strydom

I Did Escape

I did escape
from concrete buildings,
I did escape
and want to go back to the country,
I will never go back if I can,
I want to stretch out somewhere in the sun;
I did escape ...

Gert Strydom

I Did Feel The Earthly Ship Tilt

I did feel the earthly ship tilt,
as if the thing were jerking
everything around me did shake,
lifeless things did jump around
as if they were coming alive

and to retain my balance
I tried to cling to the wall
while around me things were crashing down,
I thought that the whole old building

will tumble in on me,
maybe would burst,
probably would collapse
but then the twitching did stop
with some things laying broken
and alarms going off everywhere.

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Gert Strydom

I Did Go To The Church Today

I did go to the church today
and the minister
and elders and deacons
were there
and even young guys and girls
and older people too
and it felt like a huge gathering
and I was told to pray.

My voice was too unmelodic
to sing a song,
and I was afraid to pray
and did not really
know the right words to say.

Yet the words came
and flowed fluent and strong
and that prayer was great
and the people felt blessed,
but did the Lord
hear a word that I said?

Gert Strydom

I Did Hear The Staccato Sound

I did hear the staccato sound
of a machinegun barking,
in the distance saw wind-devils turning
and saw antelope jumping up and coming down
and we were down-wind.

At the river there was fired
on the hippopotamuses
as if they were the enemy

and between this great cacophonic noise
we did sneak during broad daylight
into the enemy camp
without anyone noticing us
and did spy and scout upon them thoroughly.

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Gert Strydom

I Did Not Bite The Apple To Its Core (Terzanelle)

I did not bite the apple to its core,
before the sensual sexual act of intimacy
but excused myself through the unlocked door

and kept to this tendency
not kissing the embracing woman on the street,
before the sensual sexual act of intimacy

not following her, but wished her Godspeed
and so I send three wanton women on their way
not kissing the embracing woman on the street,

not interested to kiss and play,
but now it feels as if life is speeding past
and so I send three wanton women on their way

I wish to have my life back as it was
to experience, to find the secret to life
but now it feels as if life is speeding past

and I am without a wife.
I did not bite the apple to its core,
to experience, to find the secret to life
but excused myself through the unlocked door.

Gert Strydom

I Did Not Seek Death But She Came Along (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Emily Dickinson)

I did not seek death but she came along,
was visiting
in passing looked at me wearily;
I was shooting,
she was a entrancing, lewd, lascivious
kind of being;
who really did love destruction and war,
she promised to visit me once more.

She said that all of her kisses and bliss
would transport me
into a unknown distant restful place,
eternity
was one of her many vague promises,
from her grasp free
grenades, rockets, shells detonated
while still in vain, with longing, she waited.

["Because I Could Not Stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson.]

Gert Strydom

I Did Not Truly Know The Depths Of Love (Sonnet)

I did not truly know the depths of love
until I met you, did not really know
of something that is at times selfless
until the day you came into my life
with sunshine in your smile,
a kind of gentleness that is caring
and now with strange bliss in each kiss
it's as if suddenly I am waking,
I am arising in a different world
that is full of goodness, a very special place
where I find peace and the depths of tranquility
as constantly you are true, are sincere without a guise
and to your feelings there come no change
while the days in your company passes far too quickly.

Gert Strydom

I Did Sincerely Love Once Again (Sicilian Sonnet)

(in answer to Walter Savage Landor)

At a time I though life and destiny turned the wheel,
for each living thing destruction would be placed
as daily through war and peace this life I had faced,
that even love came with its decrees of hardest steel,

yet you changed all of that for me in what I did feel
as from the very start unpredictable my heart raced,
at a time I thought that my feelings was misplaced
and that every married man under the female heel.

The hurt and heartache was not to be retrieved
while I did you and you did me truthfully adore.
By some previous lovely women I had been deceived
and there and then I changed from what I was before
but you acted, spoke and smiled and I believed
as the impact of your love became more and more.

[Reference:You smiled and spoke and I believed" by Walter Savage Landor.]

Gert Strydom

I Did Wonder About Women And About Girls

about the ones that do pray,
about the ones that do go away
do disappear as if they never were near
and about the ones that do stay

but to me it did not come
which ones do make a happy home,
which ones sleep their way to the top
while up the corporate ladder they do roam

and from experience I do know
that some do goodwill and happiness bestow,
that some do fight through the day and the night
and that a fulfilled woman does with happiness glow,

that some girls can raise hell and make up and kiss
and that life can be full of this or it can simply be bliss.

Gert Strydom

I Die Of My Own Will (Italian Sonnet)

(after Teresa of Avila, After John of the Cross)

Daily I die of my self, of my own will,
while You do live inside of me
and with other eyes I do the greater world see.
Daily I pickup my cross and of my sins I am ill

while You do my heart constantly fill
do help me a far better person to be
do set me of my sins, my iniquities free
do in my heart putt your goodwill

but the nearer I do get to You
the more of my own sins I become aware
but in my heart You have the throne
the more you teach me good things to do
the more of others I do care
while in my heart you do become the only one.

[Reference:"I die because I do not die" by Teresa of
Avila."Stanzas of the soul that suffers with longing to see God" by
John of the Cross.]

Gert Strydom

I Die Of Self

I die of self, are of my own wiles free,
free from my own iniquity
while humbly I ask
my God to live in me

Since I am living estranged from what I have been
changes have been made unseen
by Him that dwell in my heart,
and for His service, for His love I am keen

and day-by-day I am crucified,
while I am struggling like Him that died,
am struggling against the darkness of my own will
but while He lives in me, to Him I am tied,

while death of self and life together go
it's only His will that I know
and happiness fills my mind and soul
and I wish it to be forever so.

[Reference: "I Die because I Do Not Die" by Teresa of Avila.]

Gert Strydom

I Died

When first I kissed you
I died,
and we were one

in sparkling eyes,
in sweet breath,
in soft lips.

Like gods we were
without a care,
not aiming anywhere,
and even in silence
we heard music there.

You made me young
and alive,
to burn, to yearn
for you
to need you near,
to feel the thrill
of what love is.

You swept me away,
to another place,
a plane, a dimension
out of time and sync
and in a space
of its own,
and I couldn't think
but only knew
how much I needed
and loved you.

But now I cry
since you are away,
my heart prays,
it aches in me,
my thoughts stream
like a torrent through me.

No day is bright
and even in the sun
there is no light
and every thing
is diminished
as if I have lost
the sense and sensibility
the thing that makes
me to be me
as you are no longer mine.

Gert Strydom

I Do Adore You

(for Annelize)

Where I am aware of your fragrance,
your own humanity,
the way that you do look at me,
the glamorous person that you are
and the beautiful things that you do bring to my life
I do adore you

and I love you, as you do really understand me,
where you do change me
to the better person that I can be.

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Gert Strydom

I Do Adore You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I adore you late at night, at daybreak and in the afternoon,
even if the days of hardship would come without an end,
even if all of life did only flower as thistles
it would do nothing to my love for you,
even if I had to reconcile myself with another person in your life,
for years you will still have me speechless
where I do love you still in my later years
as love do not set demands to fulfil,
it only leaves its own lovely tracks deep in the heart
and like the seasons nothing can stop it
where it lasts for decades and go far past the aeons,
it brings healing and happiness instead of sorrow,
it is something that do includes all great things and also hope
and with my love I want to envelope your whole world.

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Gert Strydom

I Do Believe In God

(in answer to Heinrich Heine)

I do believe in heaven existing,
no preacher has to cite it to me
as God's grace is in each natural thing
and you as a wingless angel I do see.

I do believe in a God that is full of love
where He is the one that binds us as one,
is present between us and not just above,
and He still comes to the rescue as the son.

I do know that demons do exist in this life
and your charm is not such a kind of spell,
as you are with kindness my lovely wife,
but that they want destroy me many things do tell.

Daily a relationship with God breaks their deadly art
but usurping, they remain ever lingering with ill intent
and while of their domain I do never become a part
they are powerless where God do time with me spent.

[Poet's note: "Ich glaub nicht an den Himmel" by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

I Do Believe That Love Lasts Forever (Tritina)

I do believe that love lasts forever
even if after death it starts again
to find someone that is very special,

although some days do not feel quite special,
feel as if life stretches out forever
as if I will not be happy again,

but sometimes someone quite new comes again
who with time does some things that are special,
who make memories that last forever,

will I forever love, again feel special?

Gert Strydom

I Do Believe...

...that You still hold Your hand over us
that you are looking with fatherly eyes at us
that sometimes Your tears flow
about a world in which things fall apart

...that even when we see no more light
You and every angel and being that serves You
fights in a fierce battle
to regard us as Your own.

...that every thing stands against the dark might
as You want embrace us like Your children
that Your words and all of Your laws
only express Your great unending love.

Gert Strydom

I Do Fear That All Love Does Come To An End

I do fear that all love does come to an end,
that for each piece of happiness there is oblivion
and the thought turns around and around in my head
as if each life is bound to a kind of darkness,
as if all things and people must go to naught
but then the realization comes
that the essence of love
goes much further than this earth,
that love hits with an own power and fullness.

Gert Strydom

I Do Have A Picture Of You (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I do have a picture of you in my mind
where you do me truly deeply understand
where you are sunny, happy and kind
to me the most wonderful woman in the land.

I wish you into my day from first light
as for years I have been under your spell,
I do long after you right through the night
as without you my life is a kind of hell,

and daily I do come to love you much more
as you have changed my life from what it was,
life is different since each other we do adore,
far too slowly without you a day does pass

and this great abundant summer I hardly see
while you are away so very far from me.

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Gert Strydom

I Do Know

(for Daleen)

I do know the story of your life,
the things you like and the things
that you do not
your favourite poets and poems
movies, cartoons and books
the whole lot
and once we were so very close
that I even did know each and every thought
could predict your words to the dot,

yet here we are now living separate lives
are estranged from each other
and no more tears I have got,

never again will we kiss
find intimate bliss
in a world full of heartache and pain
with each other know exactly what happiness is,

we had some dreams about life
when you still were my wife
had a comprehension of what love really is
and I did the utmost to keep it alive

some people tell me that it's just custom and habit
in the way that they do see it
and the bad things that did happen
do in their view of love neatly fit

and yet this sad story of our lives is turning my world blue
as still I do in a very deep way love you
but never again
will our broken relationship continue
and what of it does remain is only pain.

© Gert Strydom

I Do Know (Rubliw)

We will
meet each other
on a bright summer day
or in the chilly winter May
and all this great love between you and me
will be lasting eternally
and the things that bother
will fade away
with love.

Gert Strydom

I Do Know How Love Truly Is (English Sonnet)

Although at times I do you not understand,
at times we laugh and at times tears do flow,
with you I do always know were I stand,
I do you truthfully and still completely know.

I know that a person cannot love too much,
that life is unpredictable in how it's to be,
there is more than electricity when we touch,
at the times when you are the real you to me.

I do know how love truly is in its essence,
that you bring to me both pain and bliss,
that I am the complete me in your presence,
that with you my life is supposed be like this,

that even with a deadly thing going around
with you I am always on solid ground

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Know That In The Heavens Above

I do know that in the Heavens above
the angels cannot procreate with love
and although they do love and respect each other
love cannot them in the same way as humans move.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Know You

I know your details from head to toe
but more that you do live deep in my heart,

I know your green-brown eyes in which a cosmos does exist
that does fill with tears with both joy and sorrow

and as a human you are so own to me
as if with every heartbeat you are right here,

God created you wonderful, strong and perfect
and I thank Him that your love does touch me daily.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Like Appreciation

I do like appreciation
and of it I can never get enough.
Not just to say thank you
but to know that you are thinking of me.

As a mark of your love
it can forever stay with me
and I do like your words:
"you are everything to me."

But I also believe in deeds
that can gladden my heart
if you can
just give me something
that I know comes from your heart
-to treasure and to keep-
and it will bring you nearer here to me.

Just any thing that you do possess,
even if it is small in value
to me is more than anything here on earth
and I am asking
for something to express your love for me.

Gert Strydom

I Do Love Africa

I do love Africa
and although my predecessors
did pay with their blood
to be able to live here
there is no fear in me
even when shots were fired
as somewhere the signs of the white
is thundered into the ground
as if coming from heaven itself

and although some black rises
through the red-brown dust
and is present in drums
when indunas dance with their spears around fires
and although everywhere there are hungry people
that has been broken by poverty,
and people are praying for rain
while the desert is stretching wide

I still want to remain in my Africa
as after more than three hundred years
even if culture and language
leaves its own mark
we are without any colour
with the sand being blown by the same winds
and only people,
visitors to this
incredible continent
that does belong to all the children that she brings forth.

Gert Strydom

I Do Love You (Crystalline Poem)

I do love you day after day
in each syllable in all that I say.

Gert Strydom

I Do Love You Each Day (Rubliw)

I do
love you each day
but the great loneliness
does possess a kind of deep ache
and when we are apart my life does halt
as if nothing good does remain
and emptiness is left
until you are
right here.

Gert Strydom

I Do Love You Frighteningly (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I become frightening in love with you
past all the horizons of a thousand miles,
do miss you and with me there is a lifetime's memories
that does linger in the depths of my heart.
Your name rolls like a rite, a spell from my lips,
in this wild, terrible beautiful country where we live
as if it's incantation against all of the evil in the now and here,
as if it strengthens the bonds between you and me
where in a merciless rocky-hard country you are my fortress
and my longing is great and you are so terribly far away
but I do adore you in my heart, in my blood and marrow
and with you in my life everything comes right bit by bit
where you do believe and hope in my abilities and in me
and I in the eternal Lord God and in His omnipotence.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Not Believe In The Big Bang

I do not believe in the big bang
like most of humanity,
my trust in God cannot go to ruin and I do know
that light and love and power does come from Him.

I do notice innumerable stars
and I cannot forget God,
even if I do not really know how the universe does work,
do not know why every planet was created

or to where everything does go,
I do see with every awakening
that the earth does turn in its orbit,
still I see his Godly touch,

how He is filling places in the universe
and it's the handiwork of God and no kind of deceit.

Gert Strydom

I Do Not Fear The Blazing Hot Summer Sun

I do not fear the blazing hot summer sun
nor the icy snow or frost when winter comes
nor the thunderbolts that in a storm bash down
or harsh winds that at times do gush and moan

but are afraid at times of losing you
while destiny and my life continually rushes on,
are afraid that at a time in death you may be gone
and yet the feelings between us remain constantly true.

Gert Strydom

I Do Not Have To Ascertain Your Love

I do not have to ascertain your love
where I think from pre-history it has been destined
and I am certain that it's sincere.

Both your words and acts do carry meaning
where I am now lost in memories.
I do not have to ascertain your love

and of your humanity I have a deeper knowledge
where your character do shine through your eyes
and I am certain that it's sincere

and with the lock-down I am missing you terribly,
do write verses to you in any language that I am able to.
I do not have to ascertain your love

as you do love me truly,
without you I am totally lost
and I am certain that it's sincere

where we are hard-wired to each other
and every word of you I can again quote.
I do not have to ascertain your love
and I am certain that it's sincere.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Not Pity (Cavatina)

I do not pity that darkness do come
at end of day,
nor flowers fading at the end of spring,
are swept away
by the coming of the new summer fruit,
loose you I may
with the summer sun in every kiss
when no other love could be just like this.

Gert Strydom

I Do Really Like You (2)(Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I like the way that you do fit in under my arm,
of how easily I can embrace you
without you clinging to me,
how perfectly you do fit into my hands
of your words with never a maybe,
of the things with which you do me trust,
of the smile with which you do look upon life
but your image remains with me of how it had once been,
your sunny eyes that suddenly do come after days of rain,
where you are secretive like the twilight
but it comes with day and night in between,
you are beautiful like wild flowers that suddenly appear,
your humanity like the sun that brings a light to the darkness
and every day starts like a brand new tomorrow with you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Really Like You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I like the way that you do fit in under my arm,
of how easily I can embrace you
without you clinging to me,
how perfectly you do fit into my hands
of your words with never a maybe,
of the things with which you do me trust,
of the smile with which you do look upon life
but your image remains with me of how it had once been,
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you are beautiful like wild flowers that suddenly appear,
your humanity like the sun that brings a light to the darkness
and every day starts like a brand new tomorrow with you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Remember A Day

I do remember a day
that you wore the pink and white summer dress
with the copper rings at the bands
that I had bought for you
and you thought that it did draw
too tightly around you breasts,
and do come down too low
along with those pink Athena sandals
and how you looked more beautiful than a goddess
at that brick building
where people do pray,
do wait upon a blessing of the Lord God.

On the steps at the porch entrance
it made you look so alive,
so happy and full of energy
with a sudden strong wind
that tried to fray your long blonde curls
and the reception committee at the church
jumped to greet you by the hand,
women did embrace you
and looked angry at the old men
who kept peeping into your direction.

Every influential man did come to brag
with a 4 x 4, a pickup truck
and with a expensive German sport car
but we did walk from our home around the corner
and on that day every man in the church did know
how really beautiful you really are.

There was a sacred atmosphere
if you can find such a thing in a small church
where the organ suddenly does scream falsely,
where the song leaders do loose their words
and do again start the hymn anew

but when we did sing along
in worship to the Lord God

He was really present
when we did worship Him sincerely.

Gert Strydom

I Do Remember The Holiday (Sicilian Sonnet)

Dearly I do remember the holiday at the ocean,
how you and I at times where with other single,
also how with the children at times we did mingle
also each day, each aspect and each true emotion:

the open beaches with no kind of unruly commotion,
just a little bit of small shells and bits of tiny shingle,
a bell for worshipers of another god that did jingle,
the water sweeping in and out in its endless motion

but best of all the expressions on your face and brow,
how in every swimming costume you were elegant,
how your whole body did of the sun constantly glow
while we did the best moments with each other spent
and I now realize that no other better time I do know
where we were intimate, close and also quite innocent.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Remember You

I remember your eyes glancing at me,
I remember you as the woman of joy, sorrow and passion,
as the one against whom I sleep cosily
and also every intimate sincere kiss.

Gert Strydom

I Do Through All Eternity Care

That I will gladly follow you
to either heaven or hell,
I say as if I am under your spell
and to you I remain true in all I do.

Maybe from Adam it's been like this
that in sincerity a man loves his damsel fair,
he wants no other's kiss or bliss,
are of the imperfect perfect things aware.

Just as Dante viewed Beatrice,
do I through all eternity care,
where too severely I do you miss
as you are special, as a woman rare,

and where without you I do continue,
more of the longing and missing I do tell
and maybe of Dante missing Beatrice I have a clue
where in mien and beauty you do pass others excel

but the Lord of love, life and death guards at the eternal abyss,
even if the Prince of darkness himself does dare
and us He binds, do the infernal waylay, do those claims dismiss,
do ahead straighten and the way prepare.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Want To Buy You A Dress (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I do want to buy you a designer dress
in red, blue, green, black or even white,
with it my love to you I want to impress
that I love you daily and through the night

to wore in winter, summer or in the rain
that to your beauty serenity it will bestow
that you can know that our love does remain
and in it elegant up and down you will flow.

I want to buy you the loveliest kind of gown
where you have grown to mature womanhood
as a person that who is lovely on your very own
where to me you are really great, kind and good

with pretty eyes that do shine just like the sun,
the noble caring cheerful compassionate one.

Gert Strydom

I Do Want To Have (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I do want to have long conversations with you,
to tell you how meaningless my life is
that days, months, years and decades do turn around and around
but still in my heart love and a dim kind of hope does remain
that in your depths you are feeling the same
and suddenly I do run out of words
when you are right here in my thoughts with me
and I do not want to waste any more time
just say that I do truly love you,
I do pray you day after day into my life
and where we are so far apart for each other
I do constantly pray for a new beginning
that God will make the ways even
and do touch your heart and soul.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Want To Have (Free Verse Sonnet)(I)

(for Annelize)

I do want to have long conversations with you,
to tell you how meaningless my life is
that days, months, years and decades do turn around and around
but still in my heart love and a dim kind of hope does remain
that in your depths you are feeling the same
and suddenly I do run out of words
when you are right here in my thoughts with me
and I do not want to waste any more time
just say that I do truly love you,
I do pray you day after day into my life
and where we are so far apart for each other
I do constantly pray for a new beginning
that God will make the ways even
and do touch your heart and soul.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Do Wish To Be With You Tonight (English Sonnet)

It's cloudy and tonight there is no moon
while I am restricted by a lock-down,
and I think that it's going to rain soon
while a cloud of fog hangs over the town,

almost eerily dogs howl at a black sky
while I do wish to be with you tonight
and overhead I hear a jet passing by,
far off see a car's dim moving headlight

and I do pray for God to save us all,
yearn just to be for moments close to you,
while in this autumn some more leave do fall,
sincerely my feelings for you are true

and suddenly it has started to rain,
I wish not to say to you goodbye again.

[Poet's note: In the Southern Hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

I Draw Your Face

I draw your face
in my mind each day
in the same way
that I have seen you
paint faces on pieces of canvas,
trying to fill in
the small details,
but at times
the image fades into oblivion.

Sometimes while I drink
a Coca Cola
I play with the steak
and chips,
stuck in my thoughts
and I see your golden eyes sparkling,
your lips curling
and smile back at you
and see unknown people
smiling at me.

Gert Strydom

I Dream Of A Little House

I dream of a little house
that's in a suburb,
or a place at the sea
just big enough for two.

There are surf breaking on a white beach
and it's a place,
where the sun always shine
and where worries disappear

When I wake up
you lie next to me
and I see how the sleep
take you to a wonderful place,
but we live in a big house
where the dogs bark at the neighbours
and the cats lie in the sun
and at that moment I know
that this place is far better
than the places of our dreams
and that you
make it heaven for me.

Gert Strydom

I Dream One Night

I dream one night
that I stand in front of the Creator
and flames lash glowing,
from His mighty throne.

There's a black book in His hand
and I see Him writing something in it
and wonder what He is doing?

There's peace and great angels
around His throne
and I am almost blinded,
by the sheer light of it all.

All around me every thing is white and pure
and I feel as if I can escape away,
to somewhere in the earth.

It's terrible to be before One,
that reads every deed
and thought accurately
and His voice speaks in my head
and I watch Him while I shake with fear.

What do you want from Me?
Resounds immediately in my thoughts
and I see how I get angry with my brother
and I think,
teach me to love my fellow man
and when I suddenly wake up;
I see how the clock
ticks of the minutes before midnight.

Gert Strydom

I Dream That I Do Dream (Roundel Prime)

I dream that I do dream
about a bright and sunny day
where waves rush in and out in the bay
that perfect everything does seem

and you are right when you deem
that together in my minds eye we do play.
I dream that I do dream
about a bright and sunny day

where we both swim in a clear stream
are in love, happy and gay
and trusting like little children we do pray
while drops of water in your hair do gleam
and I dream that I do dream
about a bright and sunny day.

Gert Strydom

I Dreamed Of An Angel Last Night

I dreamed of an angel
last night,
that appeared shiny and bright.

The angel had a sword with an orange burning blade
in his hand and was dressed in armour
as if it was going to war.

Thunder rumbled from the sky
when he spoke and a terrible wind
rushed past and dark clouds covered the stars.

Write and give power,
to set things right and let your enemies feel worst fury
than they bestowed on you.

Write and smite them with words,
that their words and deeds might crucify them
and that fate may take them before their time.

Write about destruction
and take vengeance on thy enemies
and give power to words, he commanded.

The sword changed to white-hot heat
and the clouds and wind
took the dimensions of destructive power.

They are ordained to be brothers of mine
and the Lord says that vengeance
belongs only to Him, I replied.

The angel faded away
and the wind and the clouds disappeared from the sky
as if they never were there.

Gert Strydom

I Dreamed Of You Last Night

I dreamed of you
last night
and the coldness,
woke me up
early this morning.

With the first light
that draws stripes
through the small window,
my first thoughts
touched you.

This morning the sun
was high up in the sky
and I prayed
for you
to love me more
and right through the day,
my thoughts
stayed with you.

Gert Strydom

I Dreamt About Loving You Again (Italian Sonnet)

Almost just like the first time we did kiss
you went to the bedroom and closed the door,
as if with each other it did not happen before
we were catching up on the time we did miss,

the yearning we could simply not dismiss,
lucidly as if destined we did each other adore,
our love wanted satisfaction and much more,
it was much more and deeper than mere bliss,

our nakedness was almost sacred and holy
where we did each other touch with tenderness,
but the sheer intensity of it took us by storm,
it was something jubilant without melancholy,
that we did absolutely satisfy our covetousness
and against me you were passionate and warm.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Dreamt Of Walking In A Lovely Garden

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I dreamt of walking in a lovely garden
and it was in the time of spring
where sprouts appeared where the ground did harden
and everywhere I could hear birds sing.

Around me there were flowers everywhere,
irises in colours of yellow, purple and blue,
scented roses in white, orange and red that made me stare
at their particular lovely hue.

Everything was fresh and new after the rain showers
and in that garden I was somewhat cosy,
I wanted to pick a bunch of flowers,
tie them into a scented posy

and I wondered for who,
as no one to me was true.

[Reference: "The Question" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

I Dreamt That I Woke Up In France Today

I dreamt that I woke up
in France today
and that every word
that I spoke in Afrikaans, English,
Dutch or the little German
that I knew
fell incomprehensible on unenquiring ears
just as if I wasn't there at all
and the people were living
as if only the French
were welcome in France

I walked through the streets
at the Latin Quarter
and It was the country of liberty
and in the street foreign kids
erected barriers
and were burning cars
and wrecking shops
and attacked the passers by
and there were police everywhere.

The city of Paris was beautiful
and people where smiling
and it was very romantic,
but I wasn't a part
of the city and the world
around me
and drifted in and out of it
as dreams go.

I said a prayer
at the Notre Dame cathedral
and looked in awe at the flying buttresses
and rose windows
and heard the Seine flow past.

I walked along the pont des artes
across the river Seine

and in the background
the lights on the Ilse de la citè
burnt bright and reflected
on the dark waters of the Seine.

Bright lights flared
from the Arc de Triomphe
and the Eiffel tower was all lit up
where it was like
A upside down
V-sign against the sky
and suddenly I felt free
from all the things
that bounded me.

Gert Strydom

I Eat The Fresh Home-Baked Bread

I eat the fresh home-baked bread
that tastes like no other can
and taste the love that is pressed into the food
and this lentil soup
people will trade for an inheritance
and it is wonderful
to be at home
and to read love in your eyes.

Gert Strydom

I Find Peace And Rest

Only you do bring me some tranquillity
and you I can trust in absolute honesty,
I can tell you about the things that make me hurt
and also about the things that do make me happy.

Gert Strydom

I Fly Away From Tanzania

I fly away from Tanzania
and as the plane turns
over Dar es-Salaam,
I see the statue
of the black man
breaking his chains
and I wonder
who is really free
in a land of poverty?

The sea is dark blue
and a flotilla of small boats
are carrying tobacco, coffee
and cotton to ships
in the deeper water.

The great country
stretches out under the plane
and the massai mara planes
looks as if it goes on
into infinity
and I plan to visit
the Serengeti National Park,
to go to Zanzibar
and to climb mount Kilimanjaro
when I return

Three weeks of erecting cell phone towers
flew past in a blink of a eye
and I am going home again
and the Nyasa Lake
passes like a blue sea
under the plane.

Johannesburg international is hot
and it's the beginning of spring
and the Wimpy has got
cheap burgers
and bottomless Coke

and I drink
as if coming out of the desert
and it's great to be back
in my own country again.

Gert Strydom

I Found Him

I found Him when the darkest
of darkness was over me
and in that black night I did see
some light in the starkness

and when I doubted in Him
into my life He entered in.

Gert Strydom

I Gave My Love To You

(after Christina Rossetti)

I gave my love to you,
but to my heart
you did not want to be true
and from my love you did part

and to me for reasons unknown
you viewed my love as childish, told me to wait
you made my enemy your own
and my heart was thrown to the whims of fate.

With my shattered heart to Him I did come
and found some solitude,
from all my wandering a home
and although my heart was marred and crude

His love was selfless
and His power filled my nothingness.

[Reference: "Twice" by Christina Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

I Greet You With The Hand

I greet you with the hand,
look directly into your eyes
and my lips want to burn upon yours,
where I long at how yesterday had been
and I think to hell with protocol,
notice people passing us
as continually you do fill my life
where I stand for moments very close to you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Had A Crunch

When I was in standard nine
(now grade eleven)
I had a crunch
on my English teacher.

She was very young
maybe twenty-one,
(must have matriculated at seventeen)
and had a cute
or rather beautiful face,
was slender
with soft dark hair
hanging to her shoulders
and even softer
dark brown eyes.

She never raised her voice
(not even when I and Daan
would cause a small fight
to be sent out to the winter sun)
and in her class
we had a lot of fun.

She read the poem of the highwayman
and at times
I still hear her sweet voice
and the noise
of the hooves coming on.

That year we did
Shakespeare's Othello
about the brave black general
and his white girlfriend,
was caught in the tragedy of
to Kill a Mockingbird,
read Jonathan Livingston Seagull
and played Neil Diamond in class

and live really was a blast

until she left at year end
to be married.

Gert Strydom

I Had Been Lost Deep Into The Big City (Free Verse Pantoum)

I had been lost deep into the big city,
in alleys circling almost endless around me
with only the fuel fumes
hanging almost cuddling around.

In alleys circling almost endless around me
I could not find my way in the darkness
hanging almost cuddling around,
I could not even see the stars.

I could not find my way in the darkness
with only the fuel fumes,
I could not even see the stars:
I had been lost deep into the big city.

Gert Strydom

I Had Been To This Sea Sometime Before (Catena Rondo)

I had been to this sea sometime before
where water stretch out beyond from the bay,
it had been on a tranquil summer day,
I had been to this sea sometime before

where water stretch out beyond from the bay,
the surge swells before it crushing breaks
while a tiny boat rocks upon the wake
where water stretch out beyond from the bay,

the surge swells before it crushing breaks
with some shells and sand swept out everywhere
before deeper in the water we both dare,
the surge swells before it crushing breaks

with some shells and sand swept out everywhere
while you smile in a way that I adore
we hear the thundering on a distant shore
with some shells and sand swept out everywhere

while you smile in a way that I adore,
we both swim through the crashing pull and flow
trying to find a way back, a way to go,
while you smile in a way that I adore

we both swim through the crashing pull and flow
it feels if our world is suddenly gone
while still together we do struggle on
we both swim through the crashing pull and flow

it feels if our world is suddenly gone
while we do see only the sky and sea,
we are trying to get back, to be free,
it feels if our world is suddenly gone

while we do see only the sky and sea,
we are blinded by a distant kind of sun,

hear the engine of a fishing boat run
while we do see only the sky and sea,

we are blinded by a distant kind of sun,
as an unknown, sheltering bay we reach,
as we both stagger out upon a beach
we are blinded by a distant kind of sun,

as an unknown, sheltering bay we reach,
we embrace and you stroke my hair gently;
a rich boat owner looks at you, smiles at me,
as an unknown, sheltering bay we reach,

we embrace and you stroke my hair gently,
we ride on a boat that rocks up and down,
but still we are in a world our very own
we embrace and you stroke my hair gently

we ride on a boat that rocks up and down,
I had been to this sea sometime before,
while we kiss each other and kiss some more;
we ride on a boat that rocks up and down,

I had been to this sea sometime before
where water stretch out beyond from the bay,
it had been on a tranquil summer day;
I had been to this sea sometime before.

Gert Strydom

I Had Dreamt Of You

I had dreamt of you
living in a world
where skies are always blue
and you loved me
with a kind of sincerity

and we had much joy
as just a girl and a boy,
had a kind of innocence
while our thoughts
whirled up like incense.

Your smile radiated like the sun
while you loved me like your only one
and our companionship was sweet
while butterflies fluttered at our feet.

You kissed me with sheer bliss
and there was magic in this

but I had to go then
back to the world of men
as promises I had to keep
and I was devoid of further sleep.

Gert Strydom

I Had Dreamt Of You [2]

I had dreamt of you
living in a world
where skies are always blue
and you loved me
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and we had much joy
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while you loved me like your only one
and our companionship was sweet
while butterflies fluttered at our feet.

You kissed me with sheer bliss
and there was magic in this

but I had to go then
back to the world of men
as promises I had to keep
in a world full of pain and strife
and I was devoid of further sleep,
I was devoid from you in my life.

Gert Strydom

I Had Noticed Suddenly

(for my wife Daleen)

I had noticed suddenly today
that the whole world was turning grey,
and my heart felt ripped to pieces, as if it was bitter
while outside some birds still did twitter

and deep in sleep you were gone
still a part of the lingering darkness of night
while lonely the moon had shone
and some little stars was the only other light

until the morning came and you smiled at me
and the sheer beauty of your radiant face I did see.

Gert Strydom

I Had To Forsake The World Of My Childhood

The cat tells me
that its time for its food
and outside bees
still fly past in a swarm

and I realise that it's late afternoon,
that the shadows are drawing long lines,
the wind rustles through the tree branches
and it's already almost cold
as the winter is coming.

Still there's something in the late autumn
that catches me
where here and there leaves
hang like dots on tree branches,

that the sun sometimes still gives hot rays
as if it does not really want
the cold to come
and the grass is still green
like in the summer.

Gert Strydom

I Have A Friend That Rides A Vespa

I have a friend that rides a Vespa
and at traffic lights
he quickly flashes past several cars.

Under the saddle of his motorbike
his gun is loaded
and on the back
there's a notice
greeting people in Aramaic.

Just where he comes
he first unsaddles
drawing out his gun.

One day he was standing
with his weapon
in his hand

and I heard a traffic cop say
to his mate:
" stop swearing
a messenger of God is near."

Gert Strydom

I Have A House Against The Sugar-Bush Hillocks

I have a house against the sugar-bush hillocks
where like orange speckles aloes grow wild,
where thunder strikes iron stones blue-white
with flowering proteas growing everywhere

and I see chacma baboons impudent
coming in a horde to my fruit orchard,
eating some whole peaches with meat and pits
in a blatant aggressive noisy group,

before they all run away indignant
and they are gone before the dark night comes
when storm clouds hang threatening black and grey,
with lightning bolts hitting some blue-white sparks
and every visitor that knocks on my door
is awaited like a welcome kind of guest.
he brushes his jean off making it neat
and then he turns right around to face me
where he is looking somewhat tattered,

he stands without any words as if dumb
but his words lie in every glance,
suddenly I see the whole of humanity
whose glances do not quarter for anything

bringing the hurt, the pain that oppression brings,
telling how men that can work are jobless,
how this evil still circles out wider,
treading some people down without pity,
how it pierces the Afrikaner nation,
as a type of evil occurrence.

Gert Strydom

I Have A Solace In My Heart

I have a solace in my heart,
a place that's only mine
where cool breezes blow
and I can be,
forever under a hot African sun
set in a pure blue sky.

Birds and bees swish to and fro
and everywhere there's
red, blue, yellow and white flowers
and green bushes and trees
and in that place
I am totally free
and totally me.

Gert Strydom

I Have Awoken To A Bright New Day

I have woken to a bright new day
with sparrows, weavers and redbreasts singing,
the sun playing over my face,
with their sweet voices ringing

in songs of grace,
with the new day dawning,
dew shining where it did fall
and this very day, this morning,

feels like the very first one
and creatures big and small
everyone sings in the sweetness
of their voices from the dewfall:

of God's entire creation and the new day,
in elation while they work and play.

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Gert Strydom

I Have Been Afraid (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I have been afraid that this great love cannot last,
knew that nothing again could be as great as this
and in my thoughts you come alive from the past
in times of great joy, of happiness and great bliss

while the duties of life do take us here and there
to times of hardship, to times of joy and great fun
and in my mind, my heart and thoughts you are here
as you remain my joy, my stars and moon and sun

of that which does bring meaning to me you are the sum
and although others do not think so I want monogamy
whether great times of calamity or whatever do come
only with you I want to be truly joyful and really happy

even when from each other we are at times far away
back into my life daily I do you again and again pray.

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Gert Strydom

I Have Been Dreaming Of A Girl (In Answer To Dorothy Parker)

I have been dreaming of a girl
with sunshine in her hair,
about someone lovely and fair
whose locks the wind does twirl

and up to me she would be walking
on the brightest sunny day
and spontaneous we would be talking
while she would flip all of the yesterday's away.

Then one day suddenly
my life and the world changed
while you walked up to me
and it felt as if everything had been rearranged.

Maybe there is something in the first time that we both did love,
a secret kind of blessing that did come from above
and although it had been many years ago,
still I do of that blessed summer know.

[Reference: 'The red dress' by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

I Have Been Looking For You

From my very first breath
I have been searching
for someone just like you
and I have been looking into eyes that are beautiful
for the one that is just perfect for me,

have been looking for the beauty of your face,
have been searching for the one
of whom the very first sight leaves me breathless
and on this very day I have caught sight of you,
have seen the kind of perfection
that the greatest painters and sculptors
dream of laying down on canvas,
of chiseling out into life.

I have found you
and all of my dreams,
my hidden desires
have suddenly come true
when equally smitten you did look back at me.

Today you have walked right into my life
and this was totally unexpected
although my heart, my body and soul
have been expecting you for years.

I did yearn for you
and those who have laughed at my view of love and life
have still not found the right one
and they are uncomfortable with our happiness,
are embarrassed with the very idea
that real true love does actually exist.

Your beauty amazes me,
my head,
my heart spins
while I look at you
and see your perfection
in a zillion different ways

and these feelings,
this decision to love you
has made me alive
as if it's much more than just being human,
as if meeting you
is an act from the divine.

While I do behold you
your breath brings life to a heart
that had been yearning for years for you
and I am at your mercy
while I do pray
for endless days in your company.

Gert Strydom

I Have Been Right Here Before (Italian Sonnet)

(after Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

Suddenly I know that right here I have been before
but of this place and when there is no knowledge to tell,
it's as if right now I am under an ancient kind of spell,
where outside waves are lapping at the rocky shore

and something tells me, reminds me, here I was in times of yore,
where in my heart and soul and mind I know your smell,
where you smile to me in a way, as you do know me very well,
where it is clear that you do me intensely adore,

on an old table a candle does shadows throw where it does glow
you lead me to the bed as if it's something we are doing again,
your neck like that, your back and naked body bend just so,
where like a thousand times before with you I have lain,
while you do me extremely well and intimately know,
while we love, live and exist without any kind of pain.

[Reference: "Sudden light" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

I Have Been Sentenced By The Blues

I have been sentenced
by the blues and that music
cuts right through me,
like a chilling electric saw
grinding at the fabric of my soul.

Maybe there's more to this story
than what these few lines tell
and the blues
have no fascination for me
and just leave memories,
of how sad life can be
and the strings played

by a child hooked on drugs
who would never be free.

Gert Strydom

I Have Escaped From This Cruel Real World

(after Ingrid Jonker)

I have escaped from this cruel real world
and is now back at Sedaven

where in the stream I play with the water beetles
while the Lord God do share the wild fruit of the veldt with me.

I am at the bee that flies from flower to flower
where red and white proteas on sugar bushes do fill the hillocks.

I am at the guinea fowl that screams like a creaking wheelbarrow in the veldt,
at the peach and apricot trees where the green shiny starling

hungry do eat the flowers off
and already know about the coming fruit

but terribly dishevelled by a wild wind
I walk there as a child

that does find the omnipotence of the Lord God
in all beautiful natural things.

[Reference:"Ontvlugting" (Escape)by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

I Have Experienced Seasons Passing

heard shells whistle, rockets soar and bullets sing
saw people perish, felt the icy winter chill
was in a war forced to shoot to kill

and at times life drags on so very slow,
at times myself I did not anymore know
but still I trusted God through everything,
trusted your love like an awakening spring.

Gert Strydom

I Have Floated Through The Sky

I have floated through the sky
while bullets whipped by
and on that day
my God sheltered me with his wings,
sheltered me from exploding things
from rockets, grenades
and even in
the valley of death
walked with me
and helped me to see
the horrific disaster called war
and the tragedy that it enacted
on the innocent, even on soldiers
forced to be there as enemy.

Gert Strydom

I Have Forgotten How It Feels To Loose Someone

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

I have forgotten how it feels to loose someone
where it starts with emotions and feelings
and later come to the intimate flesh
but against this you are immune
and constantly you bring me into your days
and in everything you are present.

[Reference:"Verhouding as vers as verhouding" (Relationship as
verse as relationship)by Joan Hambidge.]

Gert Strydom

I Have Found A Kind Of Pure Innocence (Cavatina)

I have found a kind of pure innocence
in your bright eyes,
in your words great sincerity and truth,
you tell no lies,
I will not stare at you, vex your feelings,
act grave and wise
but just want to know the depths of your soul,
find happiness in a world that is foul.

Gert Strydom

I Have Given My Heart To You

I have given my heart to you,
and did bind myself
more unconditional than wisdom does want,
did lay myself down in your hands

and now my whole existence have been extradited to you
as if to everything you are the core.
as if significant meaning is only to be found in you.

Gert Strydom

I Have Gone To Unknown Shrines

I have gone to unknown shrines
to kneel before Thee
and have sung strange hymns
with strangers that worship Thee
and prayed in places
strange to me.

Yet everywhere was sincerity
and even to this wanderer
blind and deaf
and smitten down,
sweet was Your companionship
among people that others do not regard.

Yet, You brought me back
to the fold where I belong
and I have become
more faithful and strong
in Thy ways
and in humbleness
I wonder who are my brothers
to judge others
when Thy children
are everywhere and at every Christian shrine.

Gert Strydom

I Have Got The Power

I have got the power to make something of my life,
in the heat and cold of all seasons that touch me,
I will not be political correct where there is oppression
and will cleave open the absolute truth from secrecy.
I will live like the person that I was created to be
as I am not caught by life and by fear.
Only the Lord God and His principles will be my criterion
and I will see the effect of His salvation.
My flame still burns high in days where everything is covered by snow,
I am white in dark Africa in the twenty first century,
in a time and place where criminals are taking my country apart
and I want everything better here and everywhere
where I am continually waiting on God
to come with His great Judgement-Day.

Gert Strydom

I Have Got To Confess (Crystalline)

I have got to confess to Thee,
God, You are inconceivable to me.

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Gert Strydom

I Have Learned To Know You

I have learned to know you,
have witnessed your beauty,
the grace of you perfect body,
have experienced your intimate thoughts,
have known the tenderness
and joy that to my life you do bring
while I have learned to love you

Gert Strydom

I Have Learnt (Sicilian Sonnet)

In life I have learnt to laugh at fate
even if my existence it did betwixt,
while by your true love I was fixed,
to live on while people do me hate,

that all hurting things with time do abate,
that in with sorrow happiness was mixed
that you are to the point without a prolix,
with imperfections you are a perfect mate,

a living angel without a golden wing
and in my mind your presence does glow
where in love a person can do anything,
even at other people do anger very slow
and with your name my heart does sing
while I do you truly and intimately know.

Gert Strydom

I Have Lived In Times Of War And Peace (English Sonnet)

I have lived in times of war and peace,
have know fools and important men,
have seen the effects of famine and disease,
have know the kindness of some women,

I have traveled near and far
have visited both family and friends
by train, plane, bus and car
and some has acted as bad as fiends

and life continually goes on,
great heartaches and joys have come,
some friends were dear and some are gone
but nothing true I have found until you made a happy home

as your true love does evermore remain
in times of joy, sadness and even pain.

Gert Strydom

I Have Loved You (Strambotto Romagnuolo)

I have loved you during each summer's day,
though age now comes with years far too suddenly
nothing existing can take our feelings away;
in the times of hardship you have been friendly,
have brought light and brightness to every shade,
your beauty comes from the heart and will not fade
its great power springs from love that does not decay;
in winter your smile is like a summer's day

Gert Strydom

I Have Missed My Country

I have missed my country
and suddenly did land in another world
where everything is third worldly
and does fall apart and is backwards.

Before I could wipe my eyes
people are working in government offices
and they do believe that the day of tomorrow will come
to do the things that is necessary

with those that had been qualified
pensioned off early
so that everything is in a mad confusion
and I am lost on another planet.

Gert Strydom

I Have Never Been Over The Atlantic Ocean

I have never been over the Atlantic Ocean
to Great Britain
had a glass of gin in a bar,
but Hunters Gold cider
and Johnny Walker whiskey tasted fine
nor have I seen the white cliffs of Dover,
but one of the most beautiful poems I have read
was about it
and it gave me a greater thrill than any of mine
but I have gone up on a hill in my own country
where two oceans meet,
seen them clamouring beneath my feet.

I have never been under Ben Bulbin's head
but went instead with a cable car
high up on Table Mountain
and could look out far over the city and sea
and saw gulls flying up there to meet me
although they were quite noisy.

I have never been to Galway to see its Glories
or visit the bay, but visited Uvongo
before the flood and played
with my kids in the lagoon
diving from the waterfall
and to them I was a hero gigantic and tall

and I have never seen the granite peaks of Mourne
or being borne to Tyrella beach
but have gone up Paarl Mountain and it seemed as if
Franschoek was within my reach
and at the Strand I bought my girlfriend a gift

and for a time the dreams of my life was true
to explore with a girl that I did adore
the beach and the sea
and for a summer,
the sky of Cape Town was the bluest hue
and she then loved me.

Gert Strydom

I Have No Words

I have no words, no idea
and do not know how,
to write that which lies between us
on paper.

There's a spark
that exists between us by itself,
that I never want to kill.

Still you remain much bigger to me,
than what I can say
in mere words.

Like every other man
at times I do not know,
what are in your heart
and how to understand you.

Truly life passes quickly
and the tomorrows
are turned to fast into the yesterdays,
but as long as we are together
no time will come
between you and me.

Even in eternity
I will find you somewhere
and will still want to
love you more.

Gert Strydom

I Have Not Been (In Love (Decuain))

I have not been in love as just right now
and I have never been so much blessed
have not seen a golden eye that does glow,
have not been by anyone possessed
as to you my love I have professed
and during this late summer or our lives,
no greater true love I have expressed
and there is no one that more freely gives
than you from whom all of my blessings flow,
and no other women I do long to know.

Gert Strydom

I Have Not Seen The Spark Of Life

I have not seen the spark of life
and yet I do know that it does exist
as people, animals, trees and plants
are alive all around me

and all the secrets of love I do not know
but wherever I do look its compassion does glow
and God in His glory I have not seen
but still He does His goodwill on me bestow.

Gert Strydom

I Have Often Wondered About The Men That Lead The World (Decastich) A

I have often wondered about grasping men,
I have wondered about the way that the world goes
under the people that were elected to lead the way
and about their desire for fortune and fame,
about Presidents that do not waver to tell a lie,
about leaders that sent soldiers off to war
and wondered if they do consider the consequences
or is there something evil that besets each great good man
a corruption that power does always bring?

Gert Strydom

I Have Realised That Your Love Is Sincere And True

I have realised that you are key to my existence,
that your love is sincere and true without end,
where love comes with its own kind of insistence,

that it does act and insist with great persistence,
that through life on your loyalty I can depend.
I have realised that you are key to my existence,

that true love does break down any kind of resistance
but never does it the absolute truth to its will bend,
where love comes with its own kind of insistence,

that it is true and do not use any kind of pretence,
at difficult times it will beg, borrow and lend.
I have realised that you are key to my existence,

and your fears, hopes and faith I do sense
where daily you do my life bit-by-bit mend.
Where love comes with its own kind of insistence,

I have prayed to God to use His omnipotence,
that He does you shelter, protect and defend.
I have realised that you are key to my existence,
where love comes with its own kind of insistence,
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Gert Strydom

I Have Seen Continents Written On Faces

I have seen continents written on faces
with eyes full of pain, postures in a weathered mien
and at a number of places
images went to my brain, of some people keen
with their loving embraces
while others living in a world that had been,
of which only memories remain.

It is as life changes from its summer form,
changes with ageing
while people from youth through adulthood transform
and if daily some have a struggle that is waging,
a kind of brewing silent storm,
that lashes against the remainders of summer and spring
while daily they have duties and a myriad of tasks to perform.

When through ageing and destiny
people have to live alone,
or it may be by their iniquity
that a loved one is forever gone,
then there is sadness that I sometimes see
while they struggle to live on and on
and from life and living some wish to be free.

Yet others age well
as if they are totally exempt
from life's spell,
while younger women still do them tempt,
it's if they did not experience the same kind of hell
and to ageing, illness and death have contempt
while they still in their mansions do dwell.

Gert Strydom

I Have Seen Lightning Falling Blue-White (Sonnet)

I have seen lightning falling blue-white,
did see it split a tree into two
did know about the power that hits, the sparks that dance
and then the deafening, dumfounded clap,
there was a small broken universe,
and I did forget of everything else around me,
while birds did flapping call out their despair
while nests, branches leaves sprayed in a big amount
and then I started to wonder about that thunder
if it did come from God or from Satan
or only is but a negative load
that falls from above to below,
but in my incomprehension of God I remain stupid
and daily do search for new better meaning.

Gert Strydom

I Have Seen Men

believing in avenging gods,
believing in weapons of war
and have experienced
the havoc that war does bring
and do know that nothing that is good
comes from fighting
and only death and destruction
is the final outcome of it.

I have seen men
believing in materialism,
that peace joy and love comes
from what you do possess
and in a hospital bed
I have seen a wealthy man
in desperation trying to end what life is
for whom life had cost far too much.

I have seen learned religious men
proclaim that Jesus Christ was only one of the gods,
I have seen learned religious men
proclaim that Jesus Christ did not rise from death,
I have seen learned religious men
proclaim that Jesus Christ was only a good man

and then they lecture at university seminaries
and call themselves Christians
and it's clear that they do wait
for the Cosmic Christ to appear.

And still I do know that God does really exist
and I do believe in Him,
believe that Jesus Christ will return
to this catastrophic world
as its judge, redeemer and king.

Gert Strydom

I Have Seen Some Fading Red Roses (Cavatina)

I have seen some fading red roses,
pink hollyhocks,
all withering at the end of summer,
stripped like rocks,
many trees standing like huge skeletons;
the sheer amok
that black ripe brings as it falls destroying,
and that all life has also an ending

Gert Strydom

I Have Seen Them On The Freeway

I have seen them on the freeway
doing forty and creeping along
in brand new cars, driving BMW's
Mercedes Benz compressors, Audi's
in the one hundred and twenty zone.

In the fastest lane
with huge white eyes in night black skins,
stretching over female faces,
totally alone with big L-signs
on the back or back window of the car,

passing signs prohibiting doing less than sixty
and ignoring them
as if totally petrified,
shocked by the reality of driving.

Gert Strydom

I Have Thrown Words Beloved

I have thrown words beloved,
thrown words at thy feet,
tried to comfort and blanket thee
with verses complete
tried to wrap me
in words of meadowsweet.

I have tried beloved
to express my love to thee,
tried to be at thy side
but life with its challenges
sent me far and wide
and sometime only in my mind
I still see your sweet image,
scent your smell, touch your lips
and have you here with me
and I still love thee sincerely.

Gert Strydom

I Have To Escape From The City's Roaring Din

I have to escape from the city's roaring din,
from the continuous rushing of hasty feet,
to a place of tranquillity that I do adore
where the breaking blue sea is rushing in,
far away from the crowded busy street
at the shelter of a snow-white pure shore.

Gert Strydom

I Have Tried To Pen Love Down

I have tried
to pen love down,
but time and time again
there's a new thing
that you teach me about love.

There's a red heart
I get from you,
but more important
is the love
coming from your heart
and the three small kisses
or only a word or two
makes a day great to me.

Gert Strydom

I Have Waited Many Years For You (Keats Sonnet)

I have waited many years for you,
and now is the time for us to mend
even if our loving at times were fain,

and by our love all things will be new,
that which life between us did bend,
even if I had to make peace with a enemy

and after times of pain, when tears fell like rain
to each other we will never be untrue
while together we will live to life's end

and never again there will be pain
while from the past we will be totally free
as you are deep in the depths of my heart

and the sun will shine bright with tranquillity
while never again we will be apart.

Gert Strydom

I Have Witnessed Lightning

I have witnessed lightning
hitting a big tree
and thunder I have seen
coming down on its own
and I wonder if it's presence,
true nature and makeup is truly known?

Gert Strydom

I Hear About A Farmer

In the news on Pretoria-FM
I hear about a farmer
whose black neighbour
(who is also a farmer)
lets him know
about new people that are starting to reside
in the corner of his property.

When he does arrive there
the veldt is full of strange cattle,
a black man runs to him
with a knife that he holds out as a weapon
and yells at him rudely to clear of the land
as a certain young politician
has said that the farms of white farmers
must be taken from them.

The farmer calls the police
that does promise to come
but they do not turn up
and on the next day
there is a caravan
and a lot of shacks have been erected.

When the farmer does go to the police
the station commander tells him
that no charge has been laid
and that he must get a removal order
before the police
are prepared to act.

[Reference: Pretoria-FM is a Afrikaans radio station broadcasting from Pretoria.]

Gert Strydom

I Hear Children Playing

I hear children playing in the street outside,
hear their laughter and shouts
as they do pass on bicycles on skateboards
and the call of a lone broom-seller
above the noise of breaking glass,
of things being thrown around
and rattling pots and pans
during the neighbour's bickering
(they did not have any children)
and that they will kill each other some time
is none of my business
as minutes later hand in hand
they will walk to where their car is in the driveway,
smile at me and wave
as if they are really in love
and are happy to be together
while the children do play
in the summer, the sunshine, of their lives.

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Gert Strydom

I Hear Footsteps In The Street Passing By

I hear footsteps in the street passing by
and sometimes the rhythm clatters on,
sometimes lingering and stopping at places
as if in another world and not here
and when the rain starts pelting down
they hurry away

but sometimes you rush in
and I see lightning bolts sizzling
between the flower beds
like gigantic trees
branching off in the sky
and your lips are cold and wet,
there are crimson shades on your cheeks
and your eyes have a familiar glow.

While you are shivering at the edge of the bath
I do wonder if a person does another really know,
how far the thing called love between us does go
or do we at times take a strange and different path
to places where the wind does really stormy blow?

Is there only the spark of passion that does sizzle
between us and when the storms of life do drizzle
do they leave a kind of mark
or do love bind us together with something unseen
that changes life from what it has been?

From the hot bath you do smile at me
and the picture of a naked beautiful woman I do see.
who says that she does daily love me more.

Gert Strydom

I Hear The Nearby Thudding Of The Blades (English Sonnet)

I know that war is a shattering terrible thing,
I hear the nearby thudding of the blades
of Puma-helicopters coming and leaving,
see from the lookout-tower the open glades,

that is crisscrossed with dark shades,
later in the barrack my troops are sleeping,
I am awakened by one of the colonel's aides,
see innocents while into the sky the moon is creeping.

It's 03h00 and there has been a terrorist attack on a farm,
it's time for wake-up and going into action on hot-pursuit,
a farmer and his wife and daughters has come to terrible harm,
in minutes with a Busman tracker we are ready, great and good,

do run bended to the Puma helicopter, which blows up dust
and like a well-oiled machine we do each other's abilities trust.

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Gert Strydom

I Hear The Sugar-Bush-Hillocks Breathing

I hear the Sugar-bush-hillocks breathing,
a jackal howling in the night,
see a few bats turning in the moonlight
and hear turtledoves cooing in the dark
with the smell of flowering proteas in the air.

Gert Strydom

I Heard The Breakers Roar

On Africa's most southern shore
I heard the breakers roar
saw a wave breaking right over you
while I swam with you who I adore

and life was not as it was before
while you were not in your bikini-top anymore
and big-eyed a boy watched you and blushed
away did his eyes from you tore

Gert Strydom

I Heard The Thunder Of The Guns Resound

I heard the thunder of the guns resound,
saw rockets taking red tails into the sky,
with passing battle-tanks felt the trembling ground
and over and away fighter jets did fly.

To some it was the judgement-day
and I a mere man was lost
when I saw thousands decimated lay
and wondered about war and its cost

while those sights, smells and sounds
remains with me still
and the explosions of shells, the thudding of rounds,
brings back the deadly chill
of when to escape burial in the ground
mere boys were forced to kill

and this brings to me
the reckless indifference of life in the previous century
where no man was really completely free
from a myriad of obligations
and responsibility.

Gert Strydom

I Is For Immoral

If you play the word game
to some people
I is for innocent,
or for me
or imagine
but to me
I is for immoral.

I have experienced people
deceiving each other
being depraved and dissolute
for advancement,
to make money
and just for the fun of it.

Acting as if there is no God
and without conscience
as if satisfaction to the self
is all that there is to life.

Gert Strydom

I Just Want To

I just want to for the enjoyment of it
prepare a meal for you
and serve it with candlelight and a bottle of red wine,
and I want to find you soft warm lips,
take you later by the hand
and lead you away to our bed
when the moon hangs enchanting in the heaven
and the night spreads her billions of stars,
when time comes to a halt for the both of us.

Gert Strydom

I Kissed A Girl

I kissed a girl
and something more was there,
than the touch of lips
and something of her soul
was burning into me.

I kissed a girl
and it was more sweet,
than any kiss before
and it was if that kiss
was meant to be.

I kissed a girl
and knew from somewhere,
that no kiss would ever be
like this again.

I kissed a girl
and was stunned
like by a thunderclap
and she had awakened,
all devils and angels in me.

I kissed a girl
and my passions were
aroused to extremity
and still I wanted to be sweet
and know her better than a friend.

I kissed a girl
and she turned my world
and somehow caught destiny
and I did not want
to ever let her go.

I kissed a girl
and I love her still
and you know,
that the girl are you.

Gert Strydom

I Knew A Girl

I knew a gorgeous blonde girl that thought
that she was stuck to her thirties
and some injections,
some erotic exercises,
and plastic surgery
made her curves shapely,
her boobs firm
and her face younger
than her years
and when she was forty nine
everybody celebrated her birthday
and believed that she was thirty three
and time and the mirror
and every one was stunned
and had a great lot of fun
at that birthday party.

Gert Strydom

I Knew A Girl [2]

I knew a girl
who was so pretty
that I did not recognize her,

in a own class,
as if she walked right out of a magazine,
who was so pretty

as if you can hardly comprehend such beauty,
she was far past beautiful,
as if she walked right out of a magazine

and no prettier girl you could get.
Till on a day that she looked so strange,
she was far past beautiful

and till then I was aware of her beauty.
I knew a girl
till on a day that she looked so strange,
that I did not recognize her.

Gert Strydom

I Knew A Man

I knew a man
who met a working girl
and with a twirl
of her head,
she entranced him
and he did not hesitate
to pay for her company.

I knew a man
who sold his bar
and bought the girl
he loved a car.
The girl married him
and when his money
was spent,
she went away.

This story
is kind of lame
as sometimes a wife,
could cost much more
than a cheap fling.

Gert Strydom

I Knew That Together You And I Belong (English Sonnet)

In a late cold afternoon's winter gloom
where all of this life felt so limited,
I saw my red rose with open buds bloom,
it reminded me of love unlimited,

I knew that together you and I belong,
that our love is such a wonderful thing
on the slight breeze was the dove's evensong
and to its own mate it was carolling,

with dim twilight I felt alone and small,
knew a hot meal I had still to prepare
and prayed to the Lord God who knows all,
that of you He would kindly take good care.

In my mind I saw your lovely face,
sincerely I love in this time and place.

Gert Strydom

I Knew You When We Met

I knew you when we met
for we had become acquainted,
over the internet
and with the telephone.

Still there was something
more real when you smiled
and I felt delighted,
to see you in person
and was scared
of losing you.

Two persons meeting in person
for the first time
was something pleasant
and the first kiss,
was like a key
that opened a new world to me.

Gert Strydom

I Know

I know the perfume that clings to you,
the deeper glance
that sometimes for seconds lingers in your eyes,
the long moment
that we are at times caught in each other,
every breath and gasp
when joy and passion burns the highest
and the tender feeling of your soft hand.

Gert Strydom

I Know It's Terrible (Couplets)

I know it's terrible that I think of this deadly thing of late
but my heart is broken where thousands it does exterminate

and sometimes people are perplexed in all of this,
as there is enough suffering and pain as life normally is

but I am with the impact of it speechless and find it odd
and it's in times as this that people do come to God.

In my thoughts comes a God that cares for man in his need,
who by mere love as a human being did bleed,

who on a wooden cross did bear the suffering of all of humanity
and I am dumbstruck by this selfless love that sacrifices eternity.

Maybe He means nothing to someone with this deadly thing
but He does shelter me and do to me protection bring.

He is the One that keeps death from most people away
and still the rain falls with blue-white thunder on a cloudy day,

still the seasons turn as have been assigned to them,
still seedlings are sprouting little stem by little stem

and maybe this is the time where man learns to pray again,
where all of life do in the balance remain.

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Gert Strydom

I Know That I Have Never Have Been As Alone

I know that I have
never have been as alone
as at the Strand
that December holiday.

People in love
smiled at each other
everywhere that I looked,

some walked hand in hand,
some sunbathed together,
some splashed into the sea

but there was no you and I
and on that day
my heart was breaking

and I sat on my own
gazing at the deep blue
when a shadow fell on my face.

The sun made her blonde hair gold
and the smile on her face
was innocent and pure

and somewhere in the blue of her eyes
I saw my own pain
and she sat down next to me wordless.

That same morning before I took
the train to the beach
I prayed for someone to understand

and felt so lost from life
and hopeless as if never again
I would make a impression
on somebody beautiful

and she said that tomorrow

will be another day
and that in time
the pain would go

and that girl was really sweet,
we shared some ice cream,
acted as though were in love
and somehow everything felt right
and I never saw that girl again.

Gert Strydom

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Gert Strydom

I Know That There Is More To Life With You (English Sonnet)

No matter how destiny measures life out,
however circumstance in our days are,
even if at times you do cry and shout
when from your loving presence I am far,

whenever people judge the way that we do live,
do not comprehend our feelings and how we act,
to you all of my life and love I will freely give,
even if I know that we are under constant attack.

I know that there is more to life with you,
no matter if we cannot turn our lives back
in all of the things that we together do
and even if our days do life's luster lack

I am experiencing love like it really truly is,
in every touch, embrace, word and kiss.

Gert Strydom

I Know That You Love Me True

Trust me; I know that you love me true
and I love you with everything in me
but God I love the very most
and whatever the cost
I only want to make you happy
even if I cannot promise you prosperity.

Gert Strydom

I Know That You Really Love Me

You press my hand
against you chest
and I feel life,
pulsing through you
and your hand
is soft on mine.

The smell of your hair
goes through to my soul
and your breath
is hot in my neck,
while I draw you
deeper into my arms.

It's nice to have you
right against me
while we are lying wedged up
and I feel a nipple,
coming alive
and become hard under my fingers.

There's intenseness in our kisses
and my tongue
braids around yours
and your skin is soft
under my fingers
and I see sparks
in your golden green eyes.

The picture on the TV
takes its own route
and we are unaware of it,
while love and lust and passion
are steaming between us.

When you lie soft against me
and I disappear in the depths
of your golden eyes,
I know that you really love me.

Gert Strydom

I Know The Depth Of Love

I know the depth of love
that goes beyond,
that goes far above
mere feelings what are found

in every caress and kiss
that has a far deeper meaning
than is found in the sweetest bliss,
that is much more touching

than acts and words
and are centred in trust and respect,
being more profound than sounds from vocal chords,
goes much farther than one can expect:

when two people are lovers, companions and friends
giving more than allowed by means and ends.

Gert Strydom

I Know The Harsh Wilderness (Roundelay)

I know the harsh wilderness, the wild veldt,
the craggy hillocks I had at times beheld,
the wide open scorching cobalt-blue sky
but the tranquillity I cannot deny.

There are some aloes growing in the crags
their orange-red flowers waving like flags,
like old spots of blood dotted on the eye
but the tranquillity I cannot deny.

Sugar-bush and medlar in spring does flower,
while grass jumps knee-high after each shower,
up in the air falcons and eagles do fly
but the tranquillity I cannot deny.

Time has not influence on this rugged land
where high cliffs are between the grass and sand,
I had seen rock-rabbits run at a single cry
but the tranquillity I cannot deny.

Gert Strydom

I Know The Way That You Do Smile (Trijan Refrain)

I know the way that you do smile,
the crinkles of your lips,
how your golden eyes sparkle awhile,
the movement of your hips;
and we might have been together
might have really known each other
and we might have
and we might have
been gone away with another

I know the way that you do smile,
we are inseparable
as if walking together mile by mile
as if unbreakable
as friend to friend we do belong
through many years we are strong
as friend to friend,
as friend to friend
through years we had been all along

I know the way that you do smile,
as the years do move on
and not a single thing can beguile
our love till time is gone
as if our lives are somehow twin,
each newer life we do begin
as if our lives,
as if our lives
will somehow suddenly meddle in.

Gert Strydom

I Know Tonight (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Marlene van Niekerk)

It's in a world of lonely mercilessness
where you do constantly bring joy to me,
where you do give me great hope at a time of despair
and make my heart to sing with love an own song of praise,
where in the veldt you do walk along with me,
do know the calls of the plovers and the guinea fowls,
do comprehend the love songs of the turtledoves
where you are precious to me
when you show me how the redbreast calls the rain,
how the peacock-lilies and rain lilies do flower for the rain to come
and when at sunset we together sit on the porch
when the lights of the stars do silently come to the heaven,
then I do know that our love is mere mercy,
something given to us in the Lord's secret grace.

[Reference: "ek weet vanaand" (I know tonight) by Marlene van Niekerk.]

Gert Strydom

I Like

I like the way that our bodies do fit into each other's
when we lay spooned in the bed,
when your breath is sweet and hot against my face
when sometimes on my chest you sleep cosily in my arms

the way that you do look at me
when you do awake
but much more than all of this I like you
and a person can call this thing love.

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Gert Strydom

I Like Blue

I like blue
and my motorbike is that colour
and some of the clothes that I wear.

If I am happy,
my eyes changes colour from grey
to bright blue.

The lavender bushes in our garden,
are rather blue
than purple to me.

When the sun sets behind the hillock
there's a wonderful scent in the early evening air,
that comes from the blue bushes.

a Blue sky with a hot sun
can do miracles to me
and I cannot get enough of summer,

but Monday or any other day
must please stay away
from that colour.

Gert Strydom

I Live For Her (English Sonnet)

I live for her and help her constantly in many ways
and unreckoned passes every second of time
as if there is only pain coming to all my days
and as if to nothing there is reason and rhyme

while right through each day and each night
I try to make her happy
but my world remains in darkness with no light
and she acts as if she does not even know me,

as if the end of our time together is near,
as if the coming chilly winter will be endless
while I do anything that I can to hold her dear
as if simple words and actions could heal this

while I see no action, word or sign
that she wants to remain mine.

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Gert Strydom

I Long Nowadays (Free Verse Sonnet)

I long nowadays to times long gone,
with the virus time ticks on too slowly,
as if life and everything just comes to a halt
it turns our whole world upside-down.
To keep the faith and head on we have ability
although this thing messes with our own existence,
each person as a human being is not yet defeated.
There is hope, trust and longing in your eyes.
Too alone away from each other we go through these times
while nothing and nobody shows the way to deliverance,
where we still do know about the omnipotence of God
and about the coming into existence of the virus there is silence
with a government that do constantly demand new things
but in all of this I cannot forget you.

Gert Strydom

I Look At A Picture Of You

I look at a picture of you
and at times feel
as forever I am smitten

by your beauty,
the glance in your eyes
and the soft pink gloss of your lips

and I hold it in my fingertips
and a faint smell of perfume
takes me back
almost twenty years
and maybe I am a fool
but the kiss on the back
still has its magic.

Gert Strydom

I Look At Clouds

I look at clouds
which sails past
in the blue sky
and it's almost as if white
is part of the blue colour
and maybe every thing here
is more pure

and yesterday and the rain
from days long
and grey clouds
have disappeared

and the sneeze
that comes
from lawn
that had to be mowed
even Allergex
Cannot stop

and it's so different
from where you are,
where the air
is much deeper and dark blue
with things much more intense.

Maybe today I long
just a little too much
and look at two toddlers in pink
playing on the grass
next to the road

and I wish
that life could turn back
as it had been,
but I am here
and you are there
and now I have
to sit and stare

at the clouds.

Gert Strydom

I Look At You (Hybridanelle)

I look at you and more than others I do see
but at times to what love is I do feel blind,
where you are more than just dear to me.

You do bring me both heartache and joy
and the principles of love do carry me along,
while this virus do humanity destroy

and no one know how life is going to be,
where to me you do remain good and kind.
I look at you and more than others I do see,

where love does a kind of magic employ
but in all of this I still do feel forlorn
and the principles of love do carry me along,

while locked-down away from you I am not free
but your face and humanity remain in my mind,
where you are more than just dear to me,

where our plans have not yet happened as if unborn
and still daily I do love you just more and more
but in all of this I still do feel forlorn,

while it feels as if God's blessings are not many
but still His presence I do daily everywhere find.
I look at you and more than others I do see

and I do pray that God does this world again restore,
where far too lengthy feels each passing hour
and still daily I do love you just more and more

and from this time and place I want to flee,
wish to be like a bird drifting on the wind.
Where you are more than just dear to me,

love has a secret unknown kind of power
and it feels as if all hope does languish,
where far too lengthy feels each passing hour,

while I long for and miss you terribly,
in a world that is dangerous and unkind.
I look at you and more than others I do see,
where you are more than just dear to me,

while we do live in a time of great anguish.
You do bring me both heartache and joy
and it feels as if all hope does languish,
while this virus do humanity destroy.

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Gert Strydom

I Look Up At The Stars

(after Samuel Ha-Nagid)

I look up at the stars
and they sparkle like drops of hail,
but where they are shining, with awesome power
their existence had to be planned to the finest detail.

They burn as if their power will never be spent,
are scattered in galaxy upon galaxy
and are numerous, almost without end,
as beacons to the glory and power of God.

Yet He calls them by name,
constructs their disposition, the way
that they are set
like a omnipotent magician

or maybe He gathers and leads them
as His shining flock,
while He shepherds even every stray one
by His great power, at His mere will.

[Reference: "I Look Up to the Sky" by Samuel Ha-Nagid.]

Gert Strydom

I Looked At You On A Nearer View

You are not just a biological machine,
you are a sentient living loving being
who act, talk and walk in ways serene.

You are very bright, pleasant and good,
do live by the faith of your childhood
and do provide to others their daily food.

You act and talk with a levelheaded will
do endure, teach and command with skill,
do the lives of others with joy and love fill.

Your life to others is full of simple wiles
as you act self-sacrificing, do drive miles,
daily give out embraces and tender smiles.

Without you there is no meaning to my life
as you are an angel in a world with evil rife,
you are my best friend and my dearest wife.

Gert Strydom

I Looked Into The Mother-Night

I looked into the mother-night,
into the darkness that befalls us all,
hushed was the age-old gloom
where some stars were dim and others bright
and some were large and others small
while shadows were creeping about the room
and there was no man-made unnatural light
just planets, stars and galaxies did the scene befall
and the night was in her prime, in her bloom.
Glimmering, glowing dots of blue, yellow and red was in my sight
and I wondered about the universe and what of it I could recall,
wondered if this world was destined for greatness or for doom
and while I did peer upon space without any feeling of fright
its expanse was like an unsurpassable wall
while in the distance sounded the shore's thunder and boom.

Gert Strydom

I Love Africa

I love Africa
and although the blood
of my forefathers flowed
to stay here
there is no fear in me
even when shots were fired at me during war
as somewhere the signs
of the white is thundered in
as if falling from the sky itself

and although the black comes right through
the red brown sand
en you find it in drums,
indunas dancing with spears around fires
and it pierces right through you,
and wherever you go you find it
and everywhere there are hungry people,
broken by poverty
that prays for rain
while drought makes the desert spread

I still want to stay in my Africa
and after more than three hundred years
even though culture and language
makes a own mark
we are blown with sand by the same wind
and only people,
visitors to this incredible continent
that belongs to all the children
that she brings forth.

Gert Strydom

I Love Tea

I love tea
and when I was a boy,
my grandmother made me some.

Her tea was better,
than any other tea
and she told her secret to me.

At eleven in the morning,
or four in the afternoon
we used to chat,

my grandmother and me
and we shared
a lovely pot of tea.

She taught me to respect
and grant dignity,
to those from whom my ancestors came.

But mostly she taught me
about integrity
and how to live right in the eyes of the Lord.

I really miss my grandmamma
and her love still spreads over me,
when I make that special tea.

Gert Strydom

I Love The Window Facing North (Rubaiyat Sonnet)

My bedroom's window is an awesome thing
wherein birds are reflected, as they sing
sometimes pecking or knocking on it
drawing them to land, to start their whistling,

and I have a lovely kind of view
of hollyhocks covered with dew,
growing over a fallen tree, with ferns
and bright geraniums looking crisp and new,

although I am alone, are on my own
I do see at times that the birds have flown,
I know that nature's beauty affects me,
see the leaves in autumn falling down

and nature speaks right into my heart,
whether being together or apart.

Gert Strydom

I Love You

I love you,
more than mere words
can express.

Even though I must confess
that I did not really know,
what love really was
before I met you.

More than any feelings
and passions could command,
you taught me the principles of love
and gave yourself
without expecting anything back.

At times every thing in live
looked in vain
and yet endlessly you kept on
dreaming with me
and when disaster struck,
you still stayed and prayed with me.

I love you,
more than mere words
can express.

Gert Strydom

I Love You (2)

(for my wife, Daleen on 25 February)

I love you to the depth of the most distant reaches of my soul,
in the innocent ways of a child,
to the places where understanding does end,
but also to the intimate need of a grown man.

I love you further than my life does go
and I love you in each day's
simple and complicated experiences

and on this birthday of yours
where we have been together for five years
I wish to love you to the very end of my days.

Gert Strydom

I Love You (Villanelle)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

I love you with feelings that are true and right,
as our relationship has come with Godly grace,
I do love you through every day and night,

even when times of joy are far from sight
as you make this earth a heavenly place.
I love you with feelings that are true and right,

while I long to be to you the companion that I might
as the depth of our feelings are sometimes without a trace,
I do love you through every day and night,

while you draw me nearer to the Godly light
and onward daily our lives do constantly race.
I love you with feelings that are true and right,

with gentleness, without any fear and fright
although my childish ways might be commonplace
I do love you through every day and night.

Even if for you I have got struggle and fight
have got to face the most dangerous menace;
I love you with feelings that are true and right,
I do love you through every day and night.

[Reference: 'XLIII' 'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways']

Gert Strydom

I Love You (Wedding Vows)

I do not love you for who you are
but for what you make me,
for how you bring the days to meaning,
touch me with love
and that you look past my mistakes
that I look wonderful in your eyes
and that you
and that you
love me and here I bring you honour.

I do not love you for who you are
and take you Daleen
to a eternal union
as the only one
and I promise to trust you,
whatever the future holds
and I promise
and I promise
that my love will not abate.

I do not love you for who you are
and whatever comes
in every joy and hindrance
I do declare before Him
that I will stay with you always,
that continually I will love you more
that I will,
that I will
try to lead you to Jesus Christ.

Gert Strydom

I Love You [3]

(for Annelize)

I love you more than the sky do the sun
more than the clouds do the rain and if I could
I would tell the depth of it in words
about the love between a man and a woman
where you do sit in my heart as the moon does in the night
as the sun with enchanting power in the day.

Gert Strydom

I Love You [4]

More than words can say
are the feelings
that lies deep in my heart

and although you tell me
about the intensity of your feelings,
there are no words
that can carry mine to you

as I do love you
more intensely than the bright sun,
more than the grains of sand
that you can hold in your hand,
deeper than the bright blue ocean,
past the distance of the most far off star

and when you are close
with your arms wrapped in love around me
my breath is taken away
and it feels as if eternally
I can bind my life to yours

as I do love you
with feelings up to now unknown
and the glance in your eyes,
the smile on your face
has got a sparkle that goes right through me.

There is electricity every time
that your hand touches mine
and like two love struck teenagers we are infected
with something that no other people has got,
with passion that keeps starting afresh,
with a flame that can never be smothered.

Gert Strydom

I Love You Girl

I love you girl,
you once again are making me young,
while I find love in your heart
that touches my life,
eternally I am bound to you
whatever we go through;
nothing can devour our love,
as it is protected by God.

Gert Strydom

I Love You More

I love you more
than the light
falling on the earth,

more than clouds
loves drops of rain,
the sea can cherish the beach,

more than the birds
care for the bright blue
in which they sail up,

as much
as a human being can care
for another
are the feelings and principles
lying in my heart.

Gert Strydom

I Love You Past Reason And Meaning

I love you past reason and meaning
and constantly you climb deeper into my heart
when the days disappear into oblivion
and new seasons start continually.

Gert Strydom

I Love You Still

While your eyes
still burn in mine,
your love still yearns for me,

from each other
we will never be free,
even if you leave me.

Even if you betray
our love
and swear by God above

that your feelings are void
the sun still shines
and reminds me

and in every woman's face
yours are reflected
and in every female voice
I hear yours.

I love you still
and forever will
even if it devours me.

Gert Strydom

I Love You Through And Through (Pirouette)

I love you through and through
in all things that happen
your care is here present,
you do bring real meaning
when I am far away,
when I am far away,
you feel very missing,
as if I forget you,
do not know of your love
measure you to others.

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Gert Strydom

I Love You To Pieces

(after Johann Johl)

All of my words are bled out,
where will I find words
to tell you how I feel?

Your voice is in my thoughts,
your heartbeat against my inner ear
as you are and do stay the best part of me.

Now I do experience you by touch,
as if the syllables of you
lie just under my fingertips.

Constantly there are new things that I find,
when you interpret your humanity to me
but long ago into each other we have been incorporated bodily.

My lips do set your neck on fire,
your eyes gleam and your face and body glow
where in your arms I lie cosily right against you.

The wild code of your heartbeat I can understand,
as you are hot, desirable to me,
in this lively night.

Alone in and with you
my verses of love do become reality,
become much more than the greeting cards of Cardies.

Eye contact with you does swallow me,
when you do teach me the dialect of love
and nothing can mar the meaning of these holy moments.

[Reference:"Vertaling" (Translation)by Johann Johl.]

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I Love You With A Man's Selfishness

I love you with a man's selfishness
longing that you will be true
to only me
and you are beautiful in every thought

and selflessly I love you
and want to share
everything that I am
and everything that I own

Gert Strydom

I Love You With The Feelings

I love you with the feelings,
the silent power
that comes from the depths
of the heart of a man

and although you live beyond the horizon,
in a world that is miles away,
thoughts bring you at times
to here close to me.

Gert Strydom

I Love You2

I love you more
than the rain loves the earth,
the sun the sea
from where it takes water.

I love you
with more feeling
than there is
when the sky
folds open bright blue above us.

I love you
with every thing in me
and with the person
that I can be
without any anxiety or fear
and it's easy
to love you.

Gert Strydom

I Loved You In So Many Ways

From the first moment
that I saw you
there was love for you

and from the beginning
you effervesce
was in my thoughts
and in every word and sentence.

I loved you
in so many ways
and sometimes
even when it did really hurt
and no reason remained
for love.

I saw you sleeping
next to me
and marvelled about
your dreams

and you were so pretty
while you laid there peacefully
that I just fell more
in love with you

and while you are away
sometimes I wonder
how it feels
for someone else to love you
and I tear my thoughts away
and see happy people
around me

and the answers that I get
at times
rips right through me
and still I stay
endlessly in love with you.

Gert Strydom

I Make Your Lovely Open Smile Mine

I make your lovely open smile mine,
your golden sun filled eyes do watch me intensely
where we stand at the fishpond
and golden fishes come up to peep at us,

the dogs jump like antelope over the flowers,
run to the great old oak tree to bark at doves
and the picture of the spring garden full of flowers
is caught on the surface of the fishpond.

There are bees buzzing around us at the purple-blue sage bush,
butterflies that flutter against the wind
and for moments everything, the whole world does stop
when I kiss you and feel your soft hot lips.

Gert Strydom

I Mark The Pace Praying

I mark the pace praying
send up prayers continually,
avoid food and fast,
do not even eat bread or soup
and still it's as if I am in the dark
and nothing can ever beat the misery.

I mark the pace praying
send up prayers continually,
try to wash my life clean,
do not loose my head
and still I remain blacker than burned out ash
and do not know how to stop my sin
(when I find myself I sin again) –and I mark the pace praying-

Gert Strydom

I Marvel At Your Love For God And Truth (Cavatina)

your eyes that glow
with a kind of light that is pure and rare,
as if you know
things divine that are hidden to most men;
you do follow
the convictions of your heart with great care
with selfless love you lay reality bare.

Gert Strydom

I Met A Girl (Novelinee)

I met a girl called her at times a child
in her forties, she was really mature,
her glances did draw me, drove my heart wild
to love her every glance did me allure,
suddenly my feelings for her was strong
as if something sweet could happen with us,
I thought that I might have it somewhat wrong
that forgetting of her I really must
she smiled, turned all my fears to dust.

Gert Strydom

I Miss You

Tonight I am alone again
and know how miserable separation is
and wish that we
could discover the heat of flames
in front of the fireplace
and only you and me could be in our own world.

Winter's first cold fingers
is already here
and time flashes bye
and I miss you.

Gert Strydom

I Miss You (Triolet)

It's almost the beginning of spring
and locked-down I do miss you so,
while outside the weavers do sing.
It's almost the beginning of spring
and missing you is a strange thing
while to you I do daily yearn to go.
It's almost the beginning of spring
and locked-down I do miss you so.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Miss You And The Missing Does Severally Remain (Villanelle)

It's another chilly day with unseasoned winter rain,
with frost damaging my flowers almost everywhere,
where everything in life seems to be totally in vain.

The government do measures against the virus explain
and this kind of thing no one did expect or for prepare,
It's another chilly day with unseasoned winter rain

and throughout the world there is sorrow and pain,
while of you and your love I am constantly aware,
where everything in life seems to be totally in vain,

while people do about police brutality complain
and I picture you combing through your fair hair.
It's another chilly day with unseasoned winter rain,

that a deadly thing comes from China is very plain.
I do to the depth of my heart and soul for you care,
where everything in life seems to be totally in vain

but I miss you and the missing does severally remain
and I picture you dressing with your usual lovely flair.
It's another chilly day with unseasoned winter rain,
where everything in life seems to be totally in vain.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite
to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

I Miss You Very Much (Rubliw)

I miss
you very much
in the early morning
and in the afternoon still more
and in the evening heartache does sting
more than anything that I know
but still our love remains
wherever life
does go.

Gert Strydom

I Miss You With All My Heart

It's early dark and already cold,
the winter sneaks in furtively
and I miss you.

Miss you with all of my heart,
miss every thing about you,
your sparkling laughter
that lies softly in my ears,

the gaze that caresses me
and the energy that you share,
the golden aura
that radiates out of you,

your head that sometimes
makes my shoulder a pillow,
your hands
that touches me gently

and how much
I want you here with me
no words can express

and the music
of the neighbours is extremely loud
as if they are having a performance

and I wonder what you are doing
as the night
folds alone round me.

Gert Strydom

I Miss Your Pretty Face (Rubliw)

I miss
your pretty face
and I truly do miss you
but together some sparks do fly
and apart there is a big emptiness
and yet we do perfectly fit
as if meaning is lost
when you are gone
from me.

Gert Strydom

I Must Go To The Bush Again

I must go to the bush again
and for a time be free,
from the inward chill
of the big city
and the emptiness
that life among strangers brings.

I must go to the bush again
and see the baobab trees,
frame against the setting sun
and know that somehow
the Almighty One
cares about everyone and me.

I must go to the bush again
and watch the wild buck,
drink from a stream
and see the crocodiles slide
into back into the water
and find the tranquillity
that nature brings.

I must go to the bush again
and give a prayer
and to find solace there,
from a world
that's totally out of control.

Gert Strydom

I Need You

I need you,
I need you to think of me,
and in the darkness
I want to see your big shining eyes,

I want to feel your heart beating in your chest,
I want to quench my thirst of you,
I want to hear the tinkle of your laughter,
I want to feel you when we lay spooned together

and I do need you
to love me without any restraint.

Gert Strydom

I Notice The Rain (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I do notice the rain that is literally pouring down for days
with the birds still visiting me I am astonished
and while the rain do softly sieve down I do miss you,
notice everywhere in the garden new flowers rising
but our love I keep entrusting to the Lord God,
pray that He holds his omnipotent hand over you,
know that this is the earth's time of refreshment
and high above in the sky the clouds remain grey
with the ponds of wetness and rain and fog
with fruit that become fruit in nature's secret
and fountains, rivers and water-sources that are filling up
our love after decade do also come to greater meaning
as if God does supplement the new essence,
where the Lord does continually reveal your deeper beauty to me.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Once Knew A Man

I once knew a man
who was a master
at his art.

The secrets that he knew
set him apart and enkindled brilliance
was the mark.

Discipline and dignity
inspired curiosity
and he was a great man to me.

A very clever man,
who played chess just as a hobby
and for the fun he got from the game.

Grand masters fell
under the spell
of the moves that he made.

He taught me to play
and I studied the moves
of Bobby Fisher
to try and conquer him.

Till one day
that his mind slipped away
and no chess set
would ever get
his attention again.

To this very day
when I play the game
it's not the same
and I curse Alzheimer's,
that more than
humbled him.

I Once Looked At A Face

I once looked at a face
which in a single glance spoke volumes to me,
the traffic lights, the cars
the other people on the sidewalk
went by unnoticed

The glittering of her eyes
their colour and expression
her slender nose, her dimpled cheek
her lustrous dark hair
made a lasting impression

as if I was looking at an ideal form
but there was more to it than just that
and her sparkling laughter
the way that she threw her hair back
had an own significance

Yet more stunning was her actions
of which years later I am still trying
to decipher the meaning
as she walked up to me
flinging her arms around my neck

She drew my head down to hers
her perfume was enchanting
her lips sweet, soft and hot against mine
and there was a kind of electricity
while she kissed me

I was totally dumbfounded
while her laughter
was both sweet and serene
and she was a stranger to me
but extremely pretty

She looked at me
for another moment in excitement
with a smile on her lips

before she walked away
with swinging hips

Gert Strydom

I Once Worked With A Beautiful Girl

I once worked with a beautiful girl,
whose face, every feature of it
could easily
decorate a portrait painter's canvas

as there was something really alive
that shone from her face
and it was as if her condition
did not exist at all, did not worry her,

as if her heart was filled with sunlight
while she started the morning
with a very attractive charming smile,
would smell a fresh picked rose

that she every day brought along
which I thought a boyfriend gave to her
and her work bore the quality
of a committed well trained person.

Even her speech wasn't
very much different
from that of any other girl
and day by day

I would watch her pray
before eating her sandwiches
in total silence
and it seemed as if she did enjoy them.

Only when the phone rang,
she did not register it
and then I was reminded
time and again that she could not hear

as she was far too much alive
to good at reading lips,
too well articulated in her speech
to even act as being deaf.

Gert Strydom

I Only Want To Be Free

Some chase after love,
others after liberty,
but I only want to be free
from the war demons
that shadows me.

Some search for fame,
others think that life is a game,
but I just want the opportunity
to have a life of my own.

Gert Strydom

I Praise Thee, Creator God

I praise Thee, creator God
whose lightning's roam
the storm clouds unchecked
and set laws
all of nature respect.

I praise Thee, God
when I see Thy lights at night
and they hang above me
twinkling and bright

and everything that Thou have created
has an order and logic to it
and a beauty of construct
and a design
that mere chance
has no grasp to make.

Gert Strydom

I Praise You, God

I praise You, God and You are
the one who knows my heart
and every word and deed
and what they are going to be
still before they come to me.

I praise You, God
for although You really know me
my choices, my deeds, my words
are free and mine to make.

Gert Strydom

I Promise Everything (Parody)

(with apologies to A. E. Housman)

I promise everything: to friends or art
and what will end, had to begin
as without truth or singleness of heart
I am a mortal man full of sin.

But this lucky love should not pass
when unanswered passion are in the air,
or I will with fate at last.
be able for once in earth's foundation to care.

[Reference: XII "I promise nothing: friends will part" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

I Reach To You Lord

My childhood prayers
so easily found there mark:

With childish faith in you
and David's words to Goliath,
I walked alone in the dark night
as a child of your bright light.

Even in the fields of death
your mighty hand gripped mine:

Out gunned, out numbered
You helped us outsmarted the enemy
and gave victory,
in the face of certain death in adversary.

At times I sensed you by my side
as if You shadowed me:

But my life is in peaces
and I reach to You Lord,
but don't any more know how
and my prayers do not feel as if they go
much further than the ceiling.

I reach for You Lord
in the darkness of my life
and still I look for You,
in every thing around me.

I reach for You Lord
and ask to help me pray
and believe like a child,
that You are there and true
and able to help
and that Your mighty hand
still reaches out to me.

I Read Poems

I read poems and they are past pretty.
I wish to get words from the Lord and angels,
to say something immortal past the heart
but it's only my own words that do remain with me.

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Gert Strydom

I Really Miss You

The sun has burnt
the morning's fog away
and now its
a bright hot sunny day.

I take photo's
of gigantic yellow
and black bees
the size of big black beetles
whetting their appetites
on the flowering sage

and the sun burns my face
and even the wind is hot
for a April autumn day

and without you my life is empty
and I find small things to do
to keep me occupied
and I really miss you.

Gert Strydom

I Recall You (Terzanelle)

I do really long for and miss you at night,
I distinctly do remember your grace,
I recall your eyes with their light,

in my mind remains your sweet face,
the way that you do constantly glow
I distinctly do remember your grace

and every part of you I do intimately know,
with a almost angelic radiance,
the way that you do constantly glow.

I know your charm and brilliance,
where just lovely things of you I do find,
with a almost angelic radiance

you are alive in the depths of my heart and mind
and these feeling from you I cannot hide,
where just lovely things of you I do find,

while you are in my heart in the inside.
I do really long for and miss you at night
and these feeling from you I cannot hide,
I recall your eyes with their light.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Receive A I Love You

I receive a I love you
ending with a
SWANK
and life is greater and better,
than it was
a moment ago.

I love you too
and the feeling
is more intense,
than anything
I have know to now
and that is how
I want it to stay
is what I say back
by SMS
to the one that's near
and very dear to me.

Outside I hear children playing,
the noise of dogs barking
at the passing postman
and some cars driving by
and life is really great
although I am ill in bed
and I just cannot wait
for the evening to come
and to have her
back from work.

[Reference: SWANK=> Send with a nice kiss.]

Gert Strydom

I Receive A Sms

I receive a SMS with a short sentence
about how much you are missing me
and are aware of your humanity

but electronics peeps at me
with a small screen drawing a skew eye.

Gert Strydom

I Received A Email From You

I received an email from you
that gives me notice
as if I am just a tenant

and another one before it
that no man
ever wants to get

which is like a sword
between us,
piercing and cutting much deeper
than what I know

and I think Lord God
I do not comprehend,
but maybe You do
and still I try to tell you
about my deep love
but between us
every thing now is dead.

Gert Strydom

I Recognize Your Voice

I recognize your voice, your cheerful laughter,
when I enter a room full of people
and even your soft steps each day

catches me with a tingle time after time,
through your beauty that flowers continually.
I recognize your voice, your cheerful laughter,

sometimes it feels as if you are waiting on me
but constantly you do astound me
and even your soft steps each day

has a kind of skipping to them
and with being in love I am stupid.
I recognize your voice, your cheerful laughter,

sometimes hear it echoing at night
although your face is disguised by the darkness
and even your soft steps each day,

but our love is not a game of force
and still continually you turn my life upside down.
I recognize your voice, your cheerful laughter
and even your soft steps each day

Gert Strydom

I Remember

(after Walt Whitman)

I remember a transparent sunny summer day,
where on that particular early twilight morning
you parted the sheets from my bosom,
you kissed me and covered me with your body
and we fitted to each other from head to toe-tips.

[Reference: "A transparent summer morning" by Walt Whitman.]

Gert Strydom

I Remember (2)

I do remember, before and afterwards and still later
from where you asked me to be your husband,
of every sunny-look that you gave me,
about how you look on a thousand different days,
about when I brought you red arum-lilies
and in that beautiful remembering
a million meanings are built in,
how days did become brighter after I said yes,
where you asked me to be your husband.

Gert Strydom

I Remember (Rondeau Redoublé)

(for Daleen)

I remember the summer had been so gay,
your smile had been to me a great delight,
but now locked-down from you I am away,
solitary loneliness and missing is my plight.

In this time people do others against the police incite,
the world falls apart with illness and death do sway
and that Balito summer in my memory is bedight,
I remember the summer had been so gay.

Together we picked up shells did in the waves play,
saw yachts sailing in the tempest, in the storm's might,
but throughout that time you smiled on each sunny day,
your smile had been to me a great delight,

on the beach we walked and saw birds in flight,
but the storm-tossed ocean was cold and grey,
beyond this your happiness was a delightful sight
but now locked-down from you I am away,

and away from each other we have to stray.
You are my true love, my life and my light
where there is not much more to you to say,
solitary loneliness and missing is my plight.

In the moonlight the beach was silver-white,
with high tide we were wet and full of spray,
we did joyful wander there by day and night,
every single moment did our happiness portray:
I remember.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Remember A Home (Cavatina)

I remember a home that smelled somewhat
of sandalwood,
a happy place where each longing, each wish,
was understood,
where the family kinship made you feel
welcome and good
but destiny makes life a fading thing,
like a flower that withers after spring.

Gert Strydom

I Remember A Summer

I remember a fair summer
with fragrance in the air
when you were there
with white blossoms in your hair
and life was without a single care.

How much I do long
for such a summer to come again
and this cold lonely winter to pass,
for you to be back with me
and most of all for your tender love.

Gert Strydom

I Remember Her Fluttering (Cavatina)

I remember her fluttering, a bird
at the window,
twittering as if calling me to her,
a small shadow
on the ledge, finding a new kind of world
she did not know;
that she moved on the day of her death,
great pain then took away my very breath

Gert Strydom

I Remember You (Rondeau Redouble)

(for Annelize)

I remember you in that summer so happy and gay,
from early morning the sun was high and bright
but now my love, from me you are away.
Lonely I look at the stars in the night

while destiny do people against me incite
but without you my world falls apart and unsteady sway
and where with summer's beauty the days are bedight
I remember you in that summer so happy and gay,

how the wind did as white horses with the waves play,
that rainy winter caught in a tempest storm's might
and then again with you smiling on another sunny day.
From early morning the sun was high and bright

on the beach at the Strand we saw gulls in their flight,
our St. Bernard George ran up and down and sea was grey
and when a freakish wave uncovered you, you were a sight
but now my love, from me you are away.

At times on the beach the wind was full of spray
and almost endless that beach was white
where those times were as happy as they may.
Lonely I look at the stars in the night

and solitary without you is my plight
while out of each other's lives we do stray
but to me you are my love and my light
and I hope that these few words say:

I remember you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Remember You As You Were In The Winter

I remember you as you were in the winter,
with a warm cap worn like a kind of beret,
with the silences that were in your presence,
while your hair were autumn, your eyes

blazed with a kind of inner passionate fire
while the great wind swept rain and leaves
and your words, deeds and intimate sighs
in wonder went to the very depths of my soul.

While you embraced me like a morning glory
climbing against me constantly, always searching
for some deeper meaning, for more intimate bliss
while the timber of your voice was full of tranquilly.

I feel your eyes wandering and the sun is far gone,
with your brown cap, your autumn hair and blazing eyes,
while you are drawing me to you and now its summer
while your kisses glow with passionate burning fire.

Your memory constantly visits me, are always there
like fog rising in the early winter mornings
and to you I yearn, are like a migrating bird
always searching for the newest bright summer

and the memory remains of your presence
as you were in winter with a myriad
of small gestures, words, intimate sighs
with hair of autumn, green blazing bewitching eyes.

Gert Strydom

I Remember You In The White Hot Sun

I remember you in the white-hot sun
with rays flaming
when you die shake your hair out
near to the small pond
in which the blue sky and clouds were reflected,
with the oak's trunk
where morning glories are climbing up
and similar we are tied to each other.

Gert Strydom

I Remember You Waving A Small Fan (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

In church I remember you waving a small fan
to dissipate the heat and I was then a young man
and those thoughts were of you proper and prim
where now I think of you were lights are dim
if you can dance like the Spanish women can
or if you will linger in a slow dance, more a embrace,
that is full of sensuality and has a absolute grace
but I do also remember how your kisses began
to dissipate the heat and I was then a young man.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Rise To Prepare Breakfast

Woken by the black-collard barbet
knocking on the window
as a token from the gods

like a acolyte dedicated to your service
I rise to prepare breakfast
consisting of toasted chicken mayonnaise sandwiches,
some squeezed orange juice

and the tender relaxed serenity
fills your face with a kind of dignity,
a kind of uncommon grace
and when you look up at me

I see a warm pleasant welcome
almost like the rising sun
displayed on your face

and your slender arms
reach out to me
drawing me down
to soft sheets and a hot pillow
and to you.

Gert Strydom

I Rise To Prepare Breakfast [2]

Woken by the black-collard barbet
knocking on the window
as a token from the gods

like a acolyte dedicated to your service
I rise to prepare breakfast
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and your slender arms
reach out to me
drawing me down
to soft sheets and a hot pillow
and to you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Saw A Lovely Girl (Terzanelle)

I saw a lovely girl sheathing her claws and settle
becoming a part of my heart
but skin, beauty and charm were only camouflage for bear metal

and at times her pupils would dart
trying to zoom in with glances
becoming a part of my heart

but could cut ferociously as if with lances
and still deep down
trying to zoom in with glances

and her body were lithe, tanned brown
drawing my hand to caress with pleasure
and still deep down

some animal was hiding behind the leisure
beyond a lovely smile and wiry curves
drawing my hand to caress with pleasure

waking electric nerves.

I saw a lovely girl sheathing her claws and settle
beyond a lovely smile and wiry curves
but skin, beauty and charm were only camouflage for bear metal.

Gert Strydom

I Saw A Man (In Answer To Don Mattera)

I saw a man, whose life had been affirmed,
by the new black government,
who was constantly job hunting
and getting nothing.

He was utterly lonely on the street,
could not afford even to buy bread or milk,
nor to pay for a place to sleep

and while he was barely staying alive,
there was no way to even date a girlfriend,
even to have one
and you talk about lonely people,
about a sea of tears?

[Reference: "I saw a man" by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

I Saw A Thunderbolt Exploding

I saw a thunderbolt exploding,
hitting a tree and splitting it,
cleaving it open from top to roots,
causing it to fall down trembling,
throwing off some leaves,
some of the knotted weaver nests
and screeching those little birds
were flying in fear and amok.

Gert Strydom

I Saw A Twenty First Century Man

I saw a twenty first century man
who knew three or four or five girls
intimately well,
like a tribal chief;
but not all
at one time.

His heart was shattered
time and time again,
like mosaic
with little patches
that love brought to him.

Every time he loved
as if she was the only one
and yearned for the durability of stone.

Gert Strydom

I Saw An Enemy Soldier Smoking

I saw an enemy soldier smoking
a long cigar and the flaming match
lit up the sight
and the glowing red
draw my aim

and the shell soundless fell
under the tree
and stars were in a black night
glowing as if knowing
where the angel of death
would visit next

and I used a branch as a gun rest
took another magazine
from the webbing on my chest
and clipped it on to the rifle.

A soft breeze started blowing
and I adjusted the sight
searching through the dark night
for movement or anything
that gave away the location
of the next enemy soldier.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Children

I saw children
smoking Marijuana
and taking crack cocaine
and injecting heroine
and the government
opened the borders
and more criminals
streamed in
from all over Africa
and the law
looked the other way.

I saw children
smoking Marijuana
and taking crack cocaine
and injecting heroine
and they did not want to be helped
and escaped from rehabilitation
and made as if they were cured
and they robbed
and broke in to houses
and whored
and lied
and some died.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Death

I saw death,
but she did not come
to visit me.

She almost brushed
against me
and passed me by.

My comrade cried out
and for a moment
he was still with me.

She took him
in her arms and he was gone
while the war raged on.

When in the dark of night
I hear a mother crying,
a chill passes through me.

At times she walks the streets
and Aids and drugs,
bring strings of people to her.

When I drive to places,
I see people meeting her
on the highways.

At a friends bed in the hospital
I saw her again
and still she did not glance at me.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Death Come (Rondelet)

I saw death come
by way of a machinegun,
I saw death come
quickly or more slowly to some
while some soldiers did away run;
its visitation I did shun,
I saw death come.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Death Take Her Toll

I saw death take her toll
and friends and enemy soldiers fall
and maybe they all went
to a much better place to be.

At times soldiers knew their fate
and at other times
death took whom she claimed,
very unpredictable and unexpectedly.

Yet in her arms all go to rest in time
and when her sleep comes to an end
damnation or live eternal waits
and forever more,
gone will be her victory
and pain and sickness and tears.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Her Glance Into The Glass Mirror (Cavatina)

I saw her glance into the glass mirror,
she was smiling
and our love seemed very great and such
a simple clear thing;
life at times brought many heartaches and pain;
- this was living -
and if any day could be just like this,
then even bad days would be utter bliss.

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Gert Strydom

I Saw Him Smoke A Cigar

I saw him smoke a cigar
and the binoculars
brought him here with me.

His cap was at a rakish angle
and sweat from the early morning sun,
was running down his face.

He stood in his tank's open hatch
and gestured and laughed
with a comrade.

It was like a moment of peace,
but my Ratel's gun
send a deadly shell at point blank range.

He was no more and splattered
and just another casualty of war
and burning white phosphor decimated
the enemy tank's entire crew.

Gert Strydom

I Saw It In The Early Spring (Free Verse Sonnet)

I saw it in the early spring,
saw it creeping out of the long grass
where the spots on that cheetah
melted in with the grass and the bushes
of its surroundings and that yellow eyes
did look at me, microscopic watched,
I was intensely aware of it,
and it of me as if we were the only creatures
that does exist on this huge planet
but later it stretched out,
with a curled tail
that swished to and thro
while that glance in its eyes do remain with me still,
the awareness and the urge to survive.

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Gert Strydom

I Saw It Myself (Short Verse Drama)

Dramatis Personae: Adrian, his wife Ester, his sisters Rebecca and Johanna, his mother Elizabeth, the high priest Chiapas, the disciple Simon Peter, the disciple John, Mary Magdalene, worshipers, priests, two angels and Jesus Christ.

Act I

Scene I.- Adrian's house in Jerusalem. Adrian has just returned home after a business journey in Galilee, in time to attend the Passover feast. He sits at the table with his wife Ester and his sisters, Rebecca and Johanna. It's just before sunset on the Friday afternoon.

Adrian. (Somewhat puzzled) Strange things are happening,
some say demons dwell upon the earth,
others angelic beings, miracles take place
and all of this when they had put a man to death,
had crucified a criminal. Everybody knows
the cross is used for degenerates only!

Rebecca. (With a pleasant voice) Such harsh words used,
for a good, a great man brother?
They say that without charge
he healed the sick, brought back sight,
cured leprosy, even made some more food,
from a few fishes and loafs of bread...

Adrian. (Somewhat harsh) They say many things!
That he rode into Jerusalem
to be crowned as the new king,
was a rebel against the state,
even claimed to be
the very Son of God,
now that is blasphemy
if there is no truth to it!

Johanna. I met him once.
He's not the man
that you make him, brother.
There was a strange tranquilly to Him.
Some would say a divine presence,

while He spoke of love that is selfless,
visited the sick, the poor
and even the destitute, even harlots.

Adrian. (Looks up) There you have it!
Harlots! Tax collecting thieves!
A man is know by his friends,
or so they say and probably
there is some truth to it.

Ester. Husband, do not be so quick to judge.
I have seen Him myself, have seen
Roman soldiers marching Him to the hill
to take His life, with a angry crowd
following and mocking Him.

[Adrian, Rebecca and Johanna is stunned
by her words.

Rebecca. You have seen him crucified?
You haven't said a thing about this,
but after returning this afternoon
you were strangely pale, somewhat distant.

Johanna. Sister Ester, are you alright?
Your face looks full of pain.
It must have been terrible,
even if he was guilty of what they say.

Adrian. (Stops his sisters) Hush sisters!
Ester, what were you doing there?
I am not angry, am only worried about you.
Tell us what happened. It seems that you
were an eyewitness? There is some truth
to a first hand account, much more than what is told
by the gossip of men, by some scared women.

Ester. I went to pick mushrooms
and some wild spinach up on the hill.
Mary had spotted some
and had picked baskets full.
The flowers are beautiful this time of year

and I picked some and found lilies
right on the edge of the cliff.

The front door opens. Enter Elisabeth.

Elisabeth. My children it's becoming holy hours
and you are not eating, are not finishing your meals.
From the bottom of the street I have heard you talk,
talk about an unrighteous man who harvested wheat
on the very Sabbath, who claimed to be God,
or His very Son? Who died for his own sins?
It is almost time to light the menorah.

[Adrian rises to his feet and smiles as he speaks.

Adrian. Welcome dear mother. Join us at the table.
The bread is fresh and still hot. Rebecca baked it
this very afternoon. We could not help to talk
about this Jesus, the Nazarene, he was a strange man.

[Adrian hugs Elisabeth and takes his place
at the head of the table

Ester. Dearest mother, what if He was truly the Messiah?
What if He was the very son of God and innocently put to death?

[Elisabeth is perplexed and speechless.

Adrian. Wife do you truly believe this?
That this Jesus, was more than just a mere man?

Rebecca. Some say that he was a prophet,
but nevertheless he had wonderful powers.
I saw him cure a man that was blind from youth,
right there at the magical pool, on the Sabbath.

Elisabeth. Rebecca, on the very Sabbath!
Demons work on the Sabbath, not godly men!
Daughters, what are happening to you?
Ester, you believe he was the very son of God!
This is ridiculous. There would have been signs
and the priests, the Pharisees would have proclaimed it.

Rebecca. Demons do not do selfless good deeds.
He was teaching us about Godly love,
that God is the Lord of the Sabbath,
that the Sabbath should be a joy for mankind.

Adrian. Sister, this is some strange kind of philosophy.
If he is truly God why did he not use his powers,
to stop the crucifixion, to smite those very Romans?

Ester. Husband I am sure
that he is the very Son of God!
He asked His father to forgive them
while they were mocking Him, nailing Him
to a rough cross. His kingdom
is not of this world.

Elizabeth. You have seen him being crucified?
Why do you think that he was the very Son of God?

Ester. Mother, there was only love on His face,
a kind of amazing grace that is hard to explain.
They say that even Pontius Pilate could find no fault in him
and had washed his own hands while the priests
and people, maybe even demons urged for his killing.
His mother and some women followers cried,
while he died and there was such sorrow to it
as He was totally innocent, had the face
of a very good and righteous man.

Adrian. Wife, looks can be deceiving!
Even great and good words
can come from the mouth of a rebel.
There must be more than you are telling,
to make you believe that He is
the very Son of the almighty God?

Ester. Husband, there were people
screaming to the soldiers to kill him,
spitting in his face. Maybe demons,
as I have never seen people acting so crudely,
begging for his blood to flow

and He asked His Father to forgive them.
That is truly love, a selfless act!

Elizabeth. Man is a strange kind of animal.
We play our roles as if we are on a stage
and God and His holy angels are witnesses.
Maybe, it was only a kind of act for sympathy?

Joanna. If he was the Son of God,
then His love would be unconditional.
He would have the power to destroy
and might hold it in check by His very love.

Adrian. Let us eat, the food is almost cold.
It is already becoming Sabbath
and this discussion is about murder,
if he was innocent and mayhem.
Those things are surely not holy,
not fit to be discussed at this time.
A divine being would have preformed a miracle?

[Ester looks seriously at Adrian.

Ester. Husband, your word is law
and as you say it is now a holy time.
You are asking about a miracle,
want signs and wonders, some kind of proof?

[Ester looks around the table, at the other people
with some sincerity.

Ester. Let me tell you just this and then I will be silent.
I believe He is the Messiah.
Think seriously about what I am saying.
When he died in the middle of the afternoon
it turned to night, while a terrible earthquake
rocked the city, with graves opening.
Surely you must have felt it?
Some of the dead had risen, was again living,
gigantic thunderbolts flashed down
from the darkest sky that I have ever seen.
As if the very earth was protesting

at its creator being killed,
even the Roman soldiers who had pinned Him
to that cruel cross, there and then
had forsaken their own gods, called Him the Son of God,
called Him God and everybody knew that there was truth to it. [Exeunt.

Scene II.-The main bedroom in Adrian's house in Jerusalem.

Ester sits on the bed crying. Enter Adrian worried.

Ester. (whispering while crying) . Mortal men have killed the Son of God today.
I am scared. I am afraid for all of us.
What will become of this world? They killed God today.
You should have seen those men, they were demonic and evil.
No normal man beg for the blood of a really great man
and laughs with that kind of madness and glee when he dies.

[Adrian walks up to Ester. Pulls her up from the bed
into his arms and tries to comfort her.

Adrian. (In a calm pleasant voice) Hush. Hush my darling.
It must have been terrible. To see an innocent man die.
Men do strange things. What is becoming of this world?
They must have been only men. Wicked unruly somewhat
bloodthirsty men?

Ester. (Calm and collected) If you had been there, you would have felt
the presence of great evil. It was simply terrible and horrific,
but the scriptures speak of the Lamb of God
who has to die for the sins of the world.
Even great father Adam had told us of the promise,
of a man coming to smite the snake, the devil,
and that the serpent will strike Him in His heel.

(Ester starts sobbing again.)

Adrian. My poor darling, it is strange things
that you have witnessed. These are strange times.
You are right; no good can come from such a deed.
If men act above the law, against what is right and good,
to set a killer free at the whim of a unruly crowd
and kill a man, who lived selflessly,

what will become of us of this world?

Ester. Perhaps He will set us free from sin,
will keep the Godly promise. There was
a strange kind of kindness, gentleness to him,
while love had radiated from every look,
had mingled with the pain,
but it was not the pain that had killed him.

Adrian. All men die at a time, it is our worldly lot.
We experience joy and happiness, sometimes worries
and eventually old age and pain and are not up
to help ourselves anymore...

Ester. (Shakes her head.) Enoch did not die,
God took him up to Him and the prophet Elijah
was fetched with a flaming cart.

Adrian. (Shakes his head perplexed.) But the very Son of God
dies on a cruel, dirty cross? When he could have called
angelic soldiers for help, when he could have only spoken
and mighty miracles could happen at the sound of His voice?

Ester. The life of Jesus was without sin.
He acted out Gods will, saved wretched lonely people,
cured many of them, it is even said
that he had raised Lazarus from death.
Some priests insulted Him on the cross and said
that He was going to destroy the temple
and build it up in three days, while it took the builders
years to build it, but then shouted at Him to save himself.

Adrian. But he could not save himself,
what kind of God is that? He could only act for other people?
How could he save others, but not save himself?

Ester. One of the robbers insulted Him and shouted
that if He is the Christ, He should save Himself and them.
Then a strange thing happened. The other robber asked
to the sneering one if he does not fear God?
He said that their punishment was according to the law,
was just for their deeds, but that Jesus

had done nothing wrong and then he said to Jesus
to remember him when Jesus comes
into His kingdom. Jesus answered: I say to you today,
that you will be with me in paradise.

Adrian. (Frowning.) He still claimed to be the Son of God
while being crucified?

Ester. The soldiers mocked Him and said
if you are the king of the Jews save yourself.
They even nailed a written sign above His head
that said: "this is the King of the Jews."

Adrian. But if he was the Messiah, the king
of the Jews he would have smitten his enemies,
he would have smitten the Roman soldiers.
He would not just have died like a normal man?

Ester. Beloved husband, I have told you
that He did not die from pain,
it was not the whip lashes,
not the pain from the nails hanging him
against the sky, not the scorching sun,
not even the blood
that he was loosing that did it.

Adrian. (Looks perplexed.) Maybe it's just something
that women understand,
I cannot make out head and tail of what you are saying.
What killed him then?
If not that cross on which he hanged?
What killed him if not the nails,
his open wounds and that very pain?
If he was truly God, why did he die then?

Ester. It was the separation from His Father,
His separation from God. He stepped into Adam's place,
came to die for him, for us and took on our sins upon Himself.
The sins of this world were too much for Him.
The sins killed Him. He called out:
"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? "
Still the chief priests mocked him

shouting "come down from the cross,
if you are the son of God."
Some said that He was calling Elijah
and Jesus cried out in a loud voice again and died.

Adrian. Then those strange miracles took place
that you had told us about, about which everybody
are talking?

Ester. Then the darkness came and the earthquake,
and the things that I have told you about,
but I saw your friend Simon Peter near to the cross,
he was a follower of Jesus.

Adrian. (Is astonished.) Brave Simon Peter who pulled a sword
when we were attacked by robbers?
Are you sure that it was him?
I know that he had left everything to follow a holy man,
but could he be a disciple of this Jesus?

Ester. There was awful pain on his face
when they whipped Jesus, when they nailed Him
to the cross. Simon Peter was crying
and they must have been very close friends.
Simon Peter tried to comfort Mary Magdalene
and probably they all are now in severe danger?

Adrian. They may want to persecute
the followers of Jesus, maybe they will even
treat them in the same way. If Simon Peter was at the cross
he will be here, somewhere in Jerusalem.

Ester. We have some sheep, fried mushrooms,
some spinach and bread and its enough food for a feast,
that is already prepared. Why don't you invite
Simon Peter and some of his friends to join us
tomorrow for lunch? They are probably scared
and hiding behind locked doors, nobody will
search here for them.

[Adrian pulls her in his arms again.

Adrian. Tomorrow very early we will go to the temple
to make our offerings before the thousands
of other people go there for the Passover.
It's a very holy Sabbath day,
but I will go and see if I can find Peter and his friends,
they will be able to tell us much more
about this Jesus and his teachings. [Exeunt.

Act II

Scene I.- In the temple in Jerusalem, early on the Sabbath (Saturday) morning.
Enter Adrian, Ester, Rebecca, Johanna and Elizabeth.

[Adrian, Ester, Rebecca, Johanna and Elizabeth
puts offering into the temple treasury

Adrian. (Prays.) Oh great God of our fathers,
we are here to ask for forgiveness
for all our iniquities, that we have done
to You, to each other and our neighbours,
for we are but humans and Your laws
are just and You are our only light in this world. Amen.

[Elizabeth draws in her breath sharply,
looks up at the torn temple curtain
and notices the ark of the covenant.

Elizabeth. The curtain is torn right through,
from top to bottom and I can see into the most holy place.
I am looking as a sinful human being
at the very presence of God and I am living,
there is the ark, the ark of the covenant!

Adrian. The curtain has been ripped from top to bottom
and it three times as thick as my hand. How is this possible?
No earthquake could have done this, everything else
are still standing, are still in their places. No man has the power
to do such a thing.

Rebecca. The precious dwelling place of God
is beautiful, so peaceful. Look at the gleaming angels

on top of the ark.

Johanna. We can even walk right through. No person
with any sin can face the presence of God,
even the high priest has bells on his cloak
to tell that he is still alive on the day of atonement.

Adrian. Where are all the priests? The temple looks deserted
and this is the Sabbath day of the feast of Passover.

Elizabeth. Maybe we are too early.

Rebecca. No mother the smoke offering altar is burning,
the candles are burning. This is all very strange.
Smell the sweet odour of it.

Ester. Jesus was the final sacrifice, on the cross.
Only God could have ripped that thick curtain apart,
no man is up to it and all of us can look to where
the presence of God had been. It is clear that God is not here.
No sinful person can stay alive in facing him.
Moses wasn't able to directly face him
and when he came down from the mountain
his face was gleaming, was shining
from the very presence of God.

Enter Chiapas and two priests.

Chiapas. (Angry.) What kind of blasphemy is this,
in the holy house of God? No man
can take the place of God, not that heretic
that was crucified and now is dead!

Ester. Great high priest, why is the curtain ripped?
We can see into the most holy place,
can look at the very ark of God,
can look at where His presence should be
and we see nothing but the ark?

Elizabeth. (calm and collected) It's so strange. We are sinful people
and are still living? Where is God?

Chiapas. (Angrier.) Where is God indeed? He is everywhere,
He is omnipresent! Do you not believe that He exists,
are saying this in this very holy temple?

Adrian. Exalted priest, we are simple people. We mean no harm,
but if God is not divinely present in His temple,
like he was on mountain with Moses,
why has He left His temple?

Chiapas. You are spreading blasphemy upon blasphemy.
Surely God has other duties to attend to, but for this Godly house!

Elizabeth. Other duties indeed, but He is omnipresent!
I ask humbly, what has driven Him out of here
on the holy Sabbath, of the very day of Passover?

Chiapas. I am not up to hear some more blasphemy
on a most holy Sabbath day!

[Exit Chiapas and the two priests in a hurry.]

Adrian. How strange the things that we said to them,
but stranger still that they did not do us any harm,
for saying these things in this holy place?

Ester. Stranger still that not one word was said,
by the two other priests, that we are living
and God is not here in His divine presence
on this very holy day.

Adrian. (Perplexed.) What if Jesus was the very Son of God
and now is resting in the grave?

[All the women including Ester looks stunned at Adrian.]

Elizabeth. Dear son, if there is truth in what you say,
then God the Father might be mourning
the death of His Son. [Exeunt.]

Scene II.- In the forecourt of temple in Jerusalem early on the Sabbath morning.
Enter Adrian, Ester, Rebecca, Johanna and Elizabeth, a crowd of worshipers,

Chiapas and a group of priests.

Chiapas. [To a priest secretly whispering

Chiapas. Go and pull the curtain together. Go, hurry
or we are going to have a riot on this very Sabbath.

Priest. (Afraid.) What if I am killed by touching it?

Worshiper. What is he whispering? What is wrong?

Why are we being stopped from entering God's holy temple?

Adrian. (In a loud voice) The curtain between the holy
and most holy places has been ripped open
from the top to the bottom!

Chiapas. [To the Priest.

Chiapas. Hurry, nothing will happen to you. Anybody can now look
into the most holy place, I suspect even touch the ark.

Ester. My husband speaks the truth, I have witnessed it.

[Chiapas who did not hear the conversations looks up startled

Chiapas. What did you say there?

Rebecca. I have seen the golden arc of the covenant
with the two lovely gleaming angels.

Johanna. We could have entered the most holy place,
we looked straight into it and are still living.

Elizabeth. They have got blood on their hands,
they killed an innocent, good man yesterday!

Ester. They killed the very Son of God
and God is not in the most holy place in the temple.

[The crowd of worshipers gets somewhat unruly.

Another worshiper. Jesus healed my only child.
He was a very good man!

Another worshiper. He caused me to see,
when I was blind from birth,
he was the very Son of God.

Another worshiper. He changed the water into wine
at my wedding when we ran out of wine.

[Adrian to the women of his family.

Adrian. Hasten home, the people are getting angry
with the priests and things are going to become unruly.
I have spotted Simon Peter, there he is slipping away.
I am going to follow him.

[Exit Adrian, Ester, Rebecca, Johanna and Elizabeth

Another worshiper. You have ordered an innocent man killed,
a prophet who did only do good
and his blood is on your hands,
you have brought his blood on everyone's hands
and now God has left his temple.

[The crowd of worshipers rush forward to
Chiapas and a group of priests.

Another worshiper. He taught us to love
and you have killed him in hatred!

[Chiapas to a priest

Chiapas. Quickly, go and call the soldiers of the Roman legion!

Another worshiper. Is the curtain really torn right through?

[The crowd of worshipers gets silent to hear the reply

Chiapas. What did you say there?

Another worshiper. He asked if the curtain between the holy
and the most holy place has been torn from top to the bottom?

Chiapas. (Looks worried at the crowd) There is some truth to it,

but God is still there, God is omnipresent!

Another worshiper. Can mortal sinful men look
into the most holy place?

[Chiapas turns to the priests secretively whispering

Chiapas. We will have to hurry into the temple
and close the doors for our own safety,
until the soldiers of the Roman legion arrives.

A priest. But this is a most holy Sabbath
and all of these people just want to pray,
want to be in the presence of God
and you are calling upon heathens
to interfere on the Sabbath?

[Chiapas to the priests.

Chiapas. These people are dangerous,
they are holding us responsible
for the death of that heretic Jesus.
Anything can happen. Let us leave right now. [Exeunt.

Scene III.- Adrian's house in Jerusalem. At midday. Adrian sits at the table with
Ester, Rebecca, Johanna, Elizabeth and their guests Simon Peter and Mary
Magdalene, where they are eating lunch and are in conversation.

Mary Magdalene. Jesus was such a wise man, so full of love,
so full of live and integrity, a man with real sincerity
and selfless, He changed all of our lives.

Elizabeth. Did you have a relationship with him,
as between a husband and wife?

[Adrian, Ester, Rebecca and Johanna looks shocked at their mother
Elizabeth,

Simon Peter looks encouraging at Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene. (Blushes. Calm and collected) I had slept with men,
before I met Him. He was like no other man,

His love was selfless and for any man and woman.
I am astounded by His strange love,
by the way He wrote in the sand,
forcing the men who wanted to kill me to leave
and forgiving my iniquity and said sin no more.

[Adrian, Ester, Rebecca Johanna and Elizabeth
are stunned by Mary's words.

Simon Peter. He changed all of our lives.
No one could have truly known him
without becoming a better person,
without learning to love selflessly.

Mary Magdalene. To answer you Elizabeth,
at times I wonder where my love
for Him started, if I was made with it.
His eyes did know the dark depths of my heart
and had touched me like no other,
had healed me and make me completely free
from all sin. Even my lovely face,
my body, my pomegranate red lips
and round full breasts
made no impression on Him.
His holiness and unconditional love
touched me so deeply that I washed His feet
with ointment of nard
and in humility used my hair to dry them.

[Ester pours some more wine
while they enjoy the meal.

Rebecca. He sounds like a wonderful man,
but his death is so unexpected,
it is unexpected for a holy man that only did well.

Mary Magdalene. (Cries silently.) With every stroke that the hammer made
against that cross of wood
and every nail that had pierced
right through His body,
I knew pain like I never did before
and in my soul the dark depths died with Him.

[Simon Peter rises from the table to comfort Mary,
drawing her into his arms like a bother.

Simon Peter. Hush dear Mary. It's painful,
extremely painful for all of us.

Ester. I saw them crucifying him,
and although I knew that he was innocent,
as it was quite obvious,
there was nothing that I could do,
nothing that anyone could do,
without risking his or her own life
and strangely there was only love on His face,
a kind of amazing grace that is hard to explain.

Simon Peter. I was ready to defend Him
with a drawn sword
but wasn't brave enough
to admit being his disciple.

[Adrian stares at Simon Peter unconvinced of his words

Adrian. I am sure that you did everything
that you could?

Simon Peter. Let me tell you how it was.
It was dark in the garden
when Judas and a crowd of soldiers
and officials with clubs and swords
came to us and I heard Judas saying:
"Greetings Master, " kissing Him
and the Lord asked:
"Friend, why have you come? "
But to me it was clear that Judas
was betraying Him
and when Malchus with some soldiers
stepped up to Jesus and seized Him
I draw my sharp sword
and chopped off his ear
trying to drive them back,
trying to defend the Lord.

Adrian. You were always brave,
quick with a sword.

Simon Peter. The Lord Jesus said to me:
"Peter, put away your sword
or you will die by it. Don't you know
that my Father will send
twelve legions of angels
if I ask Him? And shall I
not do as my Father commands me? "

Elizabeth. I still cannot understand why
he did not use his power,
why he did not take the Roman legion by force,
why he did not establish his kingdom here?

Simon Peter. (Smiles understanding.) Those things did bother me at a time,
even Judas thought that he was doing a good thing,
when he betrayed the Lord.
He thought that he will force the Lord to act,
to act to establish His kingdom
but the kingdom of God,
of the Lord Jesus is not of this world.

Elizabeth. How can you be so sure,
that this Jesus is the Messiah,
that he truly is the very Son of God,
not just another prophet or holy man?
If he is the Messiah, the Christ then the scriptures
and the priests and Pharisees would have proclaimed it?

Simon Peter. Dear Elizabeth, the scriptures does proclaim him,
does even proclaim his coming,
Isaiah says that He was lead like a lamb to slaughter,
that for our transgressions He was stricken
while he did not open his mouth,
that he was assigned to death with the wicked,
to be with the rich in his death.

[Mary Magdalene suddenly comprehends starts crying.]

Mary Magdalene. He was buried in the grave of a rich man,
Joseph from Arimathea.

[Ester comforts Mary Magdalene.

Elizabeth. To me this is still somewhat vague.
Peter, did you say that the scriptures proclaimed
the time of his coming?

Simon Peter. The prophet Daniel talks about
seventy 'sevens' (four hundred and ninety years)
to put a end to sin, to atone for wickedness,
to bring everlasting righteousness,
of the Anointed One the ruler
after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

Elizabeth. You are talking here about
four hundred and ninety years,
from the time that Artasasta decree
went out to rebuild Jerusalem,
but there must be more to this Jesus, than just this?

Simon Peter. You must have known Him personally,
must learn his teachings to love your fellow man,
must have know more than his miracles
to understand how he portrayed a God of love.
Let me tell you about my last contact with Him,
about the night in the garden in Gethsemane
and how I failed him.

Elizabeth. Simon Peter, I have know you
from the time that you were small
and you have never failed anybody,
you have always been a pillar of righteousness.

Simon Peter. The Lord took the ear from the ground
attaching it to Malchus's head and then asked the crowd:
"Am I a rebel leader for you to come to me armed
with clubs and swords? While I taught at the temple
almost every day you didn't arrest me."
They bound Him and only John and I
followed Him to the residence of Annas

and John went in since he was know
to the old high priest
and I waited outside that door,
but it was cold and then John brought me in.

Johanna. The past few nights had been rather cold,
but what happened then? They must have seen
that they had arrested an innocent man?

Simon Peter. The girl on duty at the door asked
me if I am not one of the disciples of the criminal
and then I denied it, being afraid
that they would arrest me too.
It was very cold and I shivered
and I stood closer to the fire
with some servants and officials
to warm myself and saw an official
striking Jesus in the face.
At the fire one of the officials asked
if I am not one of the disciples of Jesus
and again I denied it,
as these were very dangerous men.

Adrian. I would have fled,
never mind just denying to knowing him.

Simon Peter. (Crying softly.) But it was terribly wrong of me,
I loved him. If he isn't God,
then no other is worthy to be God.
A relative of Malchus then challenged me:
"Didn't I see you in the garden? Aren't you
a Galilean? " Again I denied it
and then a cock crowed
while the Lord turned and looked at me
and I remembered Him saying:
"Before the cock crows today
you will renounce me three times, "
and I saw nothing but love
and understanding in His eyes.
My heart was filled with sudden anguish
and I went outside, into that cold night
wept bitterly, hearing those men

mocking and beating Him.

[Exeunt

Act III

Scene I- The garden of Gethsemane. Early on the Sunday morning with Mary Magdalene, Ester, Rebecca, Johanna and Elizabeth near to the tomb of Jesus Christ in conversation.

Johanna. It's such a lovely sunny day
and we have brought the spices for the anointing.
Why is the earth shaking so violently?
Let us wait a moment. Look how that tree is swaying.
Look! The tomb is open.

Ester. Who has rolled the large stone away
from the entrance of the tomb?

Rebecca: The tomb is empty! It's strange
the bandages, the clothes are neatly folded.

Mary Magdalene. (Crying.) "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,
and we don't know where they had put him."
We have got to go and tell Peter.

[The other women start crying, Exit Mary

Enter John, Simon Peter and Mary Magdalene running

John. Peter, the strips of linen, the burial cloth
are all neatly folded.

Simon Peter. Look, the tomb is empty.
I wonder who has taken His body?
Can it be the Pharisees? Can it be some of the priests?
They dare not touch anything dead,
as they will be unclean.
To where would they have taken Him?

Mary Magdalene. (Crying.) "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,
and we don't know where they had put him."

Simon Peter. (Trying to console Mary.) Mary, it's very strange.
Who could have rolled the rock away?

Mary Magdalene. (Sobbing.) I do not know, just that my Lord is gone.

Simon Peter. There is not much more that we can do here.
Let us go home.

[Exit Simon Peter and John.

Enter two angels appearing like lightning

[In fright the women bow down
with their faces to the ground.

Angels. (To Mary Magdalene.) "Woman, why are you crying?
Who is it you are looking for? "

Mary Magdalene. (Crying.) "They have taken my Lord away,
and I don't know where they had put him."

[Mary turns around see Jesus, but do not realise that it is Him.

Angels. (to the women) "Don't be alarmed.
You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene,
who was crucified?
Why do you look for the living
among the dead?
He is not here; he has risen!
Remember how he told you,
while he was still with you in Galilee:
"The son of man must be delivered
into the hands of sinful men,
be crucified and on the third day
be raised again." See the place
where they laid him.
But go, tell his disciples and Peter."

[Mary Magdalene walks up to Jesus
thinking that He is the gardener.

Jesus Christ. "Woman, why are you crying?

Who is it you are looking for? "

Mary Magdalene. "Sir, if you have carried him away,
tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

Jesus Christ. Mary.

Mary Magdalene. "Rabboni! " Teacher!

[Overwhelmed, totally astonished Mary Magdalene reaches for Jesus.

Jesus Christ. "Do not hold on to me,
for I have not yet returned to the Father;
go instead to my brothers and tell them:
"I am returning to my Father
and your Father,
to my God and your God."

Mary Magdalene. My Lord I see love radiating out of your face
I wanted to come to you
with arms wide open,
come to you with my pain and fear,
wanted to wrap my arms adoring around you,
wanted to make you my only my own.
You know how much I love you,
but you are God; the Son of the Father,
your selfless love goes to everyone...

Elizabeth. He truly is the Son of God. He really is God. [Exeunt

** -End-**

[Poet's note: The bible does not contradict itself. For consistency I have written
"Jesus answered I say to you today, that you will be with me in paradise." Many
translations get it wrong stating: "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me
in paradise." These words were said on the Friday of the crucifixion. Luke 23:
43. After being risen on the following Sunday Jesus Christ says to Mary
Magdalene in John 20: 17 "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to
the Father."]

I Saw Lightning Fall

I saw lightning fall on a tree,
saw it split in two
in into the roots
with the blue-white bang,

and the branches did lay spread out,
a bird nest did fall out of the tree
while it was collapsing

and until today I do wonder
what did happen with the small birds?

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I Saw Lightning Fall [2}

I saw lightning fall on a tree,
saw it split in two
in into the roots
with the blue-white bang,

and the branches did lay spread out,
a bird nest did fall out of the tree
while it was collapsing

and until today I do wonder
what did happen with the small birds?

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Gert Strydom

I Saw Men

I saw men wetting their pants
when the first bullets fly past them
in their first contact with the enemy
and I saw men,
shot out of their military boots
and lying broken and covered with blood.

I saw men burnt to ashes
by white phosphorous
in a shot out Ratel IFV
and I saw men
left limbless by landmines.

I saw men making the best
of what life dealt them
and fighting to survive
against the odds
and gaining victory,
against a outnumbering foe
and still believing the old lie:

Dulce et decorum est
pro patria mori

[References: Dulce et decorum est by Wilfred Owen. Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.=> 'It is sweet and right to die for the homeland"]

Gert Strydom

I Saw Men And Women Bowing Down (In Answer To Musaemura Zimunya)

I saw men and women bowing down,
prostrating themselves around red hot fires
in front of the ancestral spirits
and they begged to worship stone,
believing a peculiar bird statue
to have power in its silence,
to be older, greater and more wise
than Moses, even the Lord Jesus Christ
and they were begging demons
to walk among them,
and begged for fire to flow
out of that dragon
and for the fury to come

but rock stayed only rock,
a silent lifeless dead thing
and the cities constructed by the white man
was faltering and pestilence
and poverty covered the land
while stolen farms went to ruin
and death followed every new moon.

[References: Climbers, Zimbabwe and The Stone Speaks by Musaemura Zimunya.]

Gert Strydom

I Saw More Than A Dozen Of The Bomb Of Bombs Being Loaded

I saw more than a dozen
of the bomb of bombs being loaded
from pallets out of a big Hercules aircraft
shining in yellow copper intensity
with the lead tips looking strangely cold
into the bomb bays
of Buccaneer bombers
at Rooikop air force base
and with other special force soldiers
was doing guard duty that night

and still wonder if the bombs were only atomic,
or were they hydrogen, maybe neutron
or a newer generation of something even worse?

While a bit of rain was drizzling down
every piece of metal gleamed
under bright lights
and in my heart
I could already feel the country's,
the world's death rattle
as the Third World War
was about to start
and no Sassoon, Wilfred Owen
or even Alun Lewis
could have felt like this

being caught as a citizen force soldier
at the whim of politicians
who have the power
to obliterate millions, even billions of lives
while being only mere men.

[Reference: A War Poem by Christopher van Wyk.]

Gert Strydom

I Saw Private Spencer Going To War

I saw private Spencer going to war
and his eyes were lonely or so I thought
as he never got a letter
on that godforsaken camp
and he was forever stuck in thought,

reading his Bible, or cleaning his rifle
as if he was in a world of his own
and I worried about that lad
wondering if things at home were going bad?

But when we returned to civilization
and cleared out to go home
the most beautiful woman kissed him hello
and I realized
that he didn't understand life and war
and the killing that it brought

and to tell the honest truth,
neither did I.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Soldiers

I saw soldiers
with eyes opened wide
who in fear, dutiful served their country.

They were only boys and moreover
unravelling from all humanity
and mechanical like an oiled machine.

Aged early, cold in heart and soul and besides
driven past madness and stripped from reason
to in fear, dutiful serve their country.

Without any glory or esteem
they assaulted the enemy challenging death
and I saw young brave soldiers.

Boys abandoning their own free will
and caught in a almost endless cycle
to in fear, dutiful serve their country

Boys who did not concede to the reasons for the war,
later sold out by politicians,
I saw as soldiers
who in fear, dutiful served their country.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Some Bright Blue Stars The Other Night (Sonnet)

they were twinkling as your eyes,
they had a secret kind of fragile light
and it was as if all of our goodbyes,

the loneliness and pain that they brought
was just the expression of our love,
a thing that through life we did sought
and then I knew that nothing can remove

the feelings, bliss and joy that we had found
that with the essence of a supreme will
we were with our relationship on solid ground
and even when the leaving seems ill

we still have got to do as we must
and an essential part of love is trust.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Some Refugees That Were Fleeing (Rondel)

I saw some refugees that were fleeing,
many leaving their rural homes in fright,
running away during the day and night,
and as a soldier I was not sight-seeing,

was sick of killing and war into my being,
and those poor rural people were a sight.
I saw some refugees that were fleeing,
many leaving their rural homes in fright,

I had not opportunity to be disagreeing
had to hold my weapon firm and tight
had no chance to think about wrong and right,
was in war trying to be still existing,
I saw some refugees that were fleeing.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Something Of It

I saw something of it
in the morning sunrise
on Clifton beach
and a bit was part of the rushing surf
and it was in the aquamarine sky
and in the green colour of the sea
and somehow the white seagull
had some of it,
but fairer still
was the blonde topless girl
that smiled at me.

Gert Strydom

I Saw The Moon Reflected On The Lake (Rondine)

I saw the moon reflected on the lake
many stars sparkled in the dark night sky
while far off fishing boats were passing by,
I saw it dancing on the ebbing wake
somewhat like a huge white shining cake
while a bright manmade light up high did fly,
I saw the moon

while we sat on bench from which paint did flake,
while stars glittered in your sparkling eye,
to find the right words, I did not have to try
as we kissed we both felt the earth shake;
I saw the moon...

Gert Strydom

I Saw The Prettiest Girl In Town

(after Luis de Góngora y Argote)

I saw the prettiest girl in town
standing alone at the pier, looking at the sea
where the love of her life had drown
and from life she wished to be free
with tears in her sparkling blue eyes,
as the love of her life was gone
and days with sparkling skies
passed and still she sobbed on and on:

"leave me and let me be,
to cry alone at the sea."

Nights and days slipped by
and day-by-day I saw her
watching the seagulls fly
clasping her hands together
and she said nothing to me
but at times her eyes caught mine
with a message in them while she kept her own company
watching the rising sun that was the colour of wine

"leave me and let me be,
to cry alone at the sea"

and I left her there in tranquillity,
wishing her to find harmony
but still in my mind
stays the girl at the sea

and now it feels as if she is beaconing me
calling every night and day
and from her voice I cannot be free
and she sounds pretty and gay:

"come to me, come to me,
I am waiting for you at the sea."

[Reference: "La Más Bella Niña" by Luis de Góngora y Argote.]

Gert Strydom

I Saw The Sun Of Life Die

I saw the sun of life
dying in his eyes
seeing that last farewell
with feelings, emotions and being there
fading much too quick
and there were some drops on my cheek
but in the distance the stars shone bright
as if something was giving
a new light to his soul.

Gert Strydom

I Saw The Sun Rising Slowly

I saw the sun rising slowly,
changing the hue of grey dawn
to pink, orange and orange-red
and the breath of the air outside
smelled with the odour of blooming flowers

and with the passing hours
the world came awake,
birds started to sing, flying from tree to tree
and this morning I knew
that it was the beginning of spring.

Gert Strydom

I Saw You Building Castles On The Beach

I saw you building castles on the beach
and mine were in my mind,
in dreams, in a world out of touch
still out of reach
but so near that I almost
could touch them

and when your eyes found mine
something there connected
with my thoughts, you smiled
and the sea brushed
all your castles away
but that was really ok
and the sky, the sun, the surf
and even the lacking wind
made it a perfect day

and together we walked
into the sea, splashed
and swam to the other side
of the crushing waves
and I wish that every day
could be as carefree as just then.

Gert Strydom

I Saw You Walking Around

I saw you walking around
in Tuscan streets
between yellow painted villas
on roads of cobbled stone.

The sky was light blue
the Mediterranean a darker hue
and all the places
had red tiled roofs
and some balconies
cordoned off by black iron rails.

Somehow your soul
was lost in Italy
while you walked
through fields of purple lavender
smiling lovely and being high
on the sweet perfume.

At dusk the light shone bright yellow
from windows all over
and a little later
we drank sweet red wine
at a café
and borrowing a guitar
you singed along
with the performers in the street
and I know it's great to dream
about life in romantic places everywhere
but I am here and drink my tea
and write these lines down.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Young Men Keeping Courage In The Grim Night (Villanelle)

I saw young men keeping courage in the grim night
burning, aflame before the end of day
bravely carrying on before the dying of light

raging in war busy with a almost endless fight
with no chance to ever again dance and play.
I saw young men keeping courage in the grim night

trying their utmost to do what's right
challenging a outnumbering foe they
bravely carrying on before the dying of light

looking at enemy warplanes in their flight,
seeing bombs dropping down on their way.
I saw young men keeping courage in the grim night

seeing with blinded eyes far past sight
another world, a glassy sea and its bay
bravely carrying on before the dying of light

looking at a heaven endlessly bright,
cursed but before finality, on their knees to pray
and I saw young men keeping courage in the grim night
bravely carrying on before the dying of light.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Young Men, Boys Just Out Of School (Villanelle)

I saw young men, boys just out of school,
working men with university degrees
far too clever to be any anyone's fool

being called up for war, being tossed into its whirlpool
set on fire and burning like a bunch of trees.
I saw young men, boys just out of school,

who over war did not drool
but hated every moment of it, men with great qualities
far too clever to be anyone's fool

who's lives were threaded out like from a spool,
treated like mere sediment, dregs, refuse, like lees.
I saw young men, boys just out of school,

in places flaming hot, icy cold wearing jerseys of wool,
praying, standing in the wilderness on their knees
far too clever to be any anyone's fool

with pierced bodies draining in bloody pool after bloody pool
becoming the sons of Cain, the devils own employees
and I saw young men, boys just out of school,
far too clever to be any anyone's fool.

Gert Strydom

I Saw Your Image In A Dream (Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

I saw your image in a dream's retinue
where you excelled with love's gonfalon,
lovely were you and beautiful your works thereon
with a soulful face filled with personality's hue,

while to my life you did your attention turn to
and then suddenly your lifelike image was just gone,
where I reflected on a lovely statute of stone
but as with birth suddenly my life was new,

into the essence of it someone was caught
who to the principles of truthful love does cling
and on my cheek I suddenly felt your breath,
as in real life a living person truly aught,
where right here with me you are existing,
do adore me through both life and death.

[Reference: "Death-in-love" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

I See A Blind Man This Morning

I see a blind man this morning
with dark glasses
and a cream coloured jacket
leading a blind woman
dressed similarly
and his white stick taps past me
and I wonder
how they manage
to get any direction
and it amazes me
that they find the bus stop so easily
and their love is apparent
when they embrace.

I know that life throws its
challenges to people,
but it's what you make of it
that effects how it turns out
and there's a God
that also looks after the blind.

Gert Strydom

I See A Day Withering In The West

I see a day withering in the west
and although it is past
I am truly blessed
and wonder if a day as this
will ever come along again?

Your eyes are bright in the twilight
and your smile more brilliant
than the stars in the sky
and the beauty and wonder in your eyes
hit deep into my heart.

When our lips meet
it is not to greet and the passion
flows strong, much stronger
than I remember
and suddenly I know
that every day with you
I will be truly blessed
and if destiny was at my behest
I would want to have you with me
long past eternity.

Gert Strydom

I See A Small Shack

with pumpkins and rock
on the tinplate roof
to keep it in place.

There's fog hanging over the marsh
and the croaking of frogs
comes forth like a choir.

I smell rain
that suddenly is falling on the outside
and the smell rises from the red brown dust,
and I see thunderbolts
drawing blue lines
and I am well sheltered
against wind and rain

and around me
the maize fields are green
and I have found my own little Eden.

Gert Strydom

I See A Storm Brewing Up

I see a storm brewing up
at a time
that I am days and nights away
from any shelter

and there are thunderbolts
hitting around me
and the bright blue
suddenly becomes black and grey.

If I have to fall,
then I will
I have tried every thing
and are long past endurance

and on my own
I still go on
until there are no more
clouds, rain and hail
and the bright blue
opens above me again.

Gert Strydom

I See Five Small Sparrows Bathing

I see five small sparrows bathing
where they wash their pied feathers in the drinking bowl,
and stand twittering with slapping wings
to shake off small drops of water
from their feathers

and think that God
hold His hand even over the sparrows
while I witness their joyful dance.

Gert Strydom

I See God In The Morning

when the eastern horizon glows blood red
and I see the sun changing its colour
where it's climbing higher against the sky

when the night and the twilight
suddenly disappears silently
and the birds are singing their joyous praising songs
while the sun shines bright white in the pure blue sky

and there is something enchanting to the blue
as if it holds a deeper kind of meaning
when God holds the occurrences of the coming day
firmly in His omnipotent hand.

Gert Strydom

I See Her Dancing Gaily

I see her dancing gaily
swirling the leaves outside
as if her spirit would forever be young
and although the autumn of my years
is all ready leaving its marks
I am still strong in body and spirit
and now a more mature man.

I see time creeping
into the corners of my body
and ever slowly chiselling
the features of who, I am

but still she embraces me
as if she's part of the divine
with the knowledge of her ways
as if the entire world is mine
and yet sometimes I am cold
from her breath kissing my cheeks
and I realize
that I am turning old.

Gert Strydom

I See Him Doing Carpentry

I see him doing carpentry,
smoothing a piece of hard wood with a plane,
clamped on a big old vice
before cutting it, sawing it off
to the right length
and there were fire in his big blue eyes,
a burning intensity and integrity in them.

The smell of glue and sawn wood
tell tale from his tool shed,
with always a instrument,
sometimes a pencil, a hammer, a saw
in his big calloused hands
and a tenderness, compassion, love
in the eyes that looked at me.

He was a man who drew up plans
and build a big church
with his bare hands,
without charging for his labour

who knew the exact amount
of bricks, bags of cement,
lintels and whatever
went into a building or house
just by looking at the blueprints
and who could immediately
tell you the cost
almost to the last cent

and his workplace was tidy,
with everything in its place
and my grandpa was gigantic to me,
until one day
that a huge door
at a building came loose
and fell on him thundering

cutting his internal organs,

causing internal bleeding
and at the time
the doctors could do nothing for him

and he was an educated man
who swore that no child of him,
would have to be an artisan,
would have to work with his hands
like himself,

who wanted each and everyone
to get a proper education
at university
and have a decent job
and a great life.

Gert Strydom

I See Shadows Everywhere

I see shadows everywhere,
one follow me
but the rest just
image off the things in my life.

Still love fills me
and is now more than just
another thing leaving its mark
since it's part of every word and deed.

Gert Strydom

I See Some Shadows Everywhere

I see shadows everywhere,
one follow me
but the rest
just image off the things in my life.

Still love fills me
and is now more than just
another thing leaving its mark
since it's part of every word and deed.

Gert Strydom

I See The Red Pink Nebulas Of Orion

I see the red pink nebulas of Orion
that only You are able to unravel
where other stars still are forming
and there's a bright white light
that shines through it all
and the seven sisters that You alone
are binding together
and I know that You control the laws
of the heavens
and hold sway on earth

¶Envoi

that You will turn off the lights of that solar system,
the sun and moon
on Your predestined time and day

but Lord
I keep hoping for Your big appearing day
and wait like the cabbalistic doctrine
for You to return glorious
to this old earth.

[References: Job 38: 31 & Isaiah 13: 10.]

Gert Strydom

I See The Smile

I see the smile
when your mouth opens when you see me,
do long for the heat of an embrace,
for the soft rapture when your lips touch mine,
for the tremble when I hold your hand,
for the glance in your eyes that speak volumes,
for the music of your voice
when you affirm with me
the things that you have said
and to me you are like a beautiful garden
in which I want to be lost forever.

Gert Strydom

I See The Sun

I notice the sun, the sky and a whole continent in your eyes
but I cannot really capture you in my inadequacy

and the human being that you really are, your laughter, happiness and pain
how I do really feel wants to disappear from my words,

your beauty that draws eyes when you do walk past
do not want to skip and walk along in my words

but you do make me the man that I am destined to be
great meaning to my life

and humbly I write my verses to you.

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Gert Strydom

I See Them Dancing Around Fires

I see them dancing around fires
with panga-blades in place of spears
while they are holding a séance.

More wood is thrown on the fire
while a wizard throws out his knuckle-bones
and the fire flares up with a bright ardour.

More brewed beer is poured and downed
and some more are being brewed
and the old spirits are called to appear.

Under the glowing of the golden moon
they later stand in rank and file
and pangas are put into the fire

to get magical power
as the white man has to bleed
and must be exterminated.

Who can still stand on his knees,
with eyes lifted to the Creator
while they sing Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika
asking for His blessing?

Gert Strydom

I See Two Blondes

I see two blondes
that's sitting next to each other
and they are watching me covertly.

The one looks soft and fine and beautiful,
as if she's really pretty
and the others voice is screeching
and she's got a hooked nose
and dark brown eyes,
that is to near to each other.

Her hair is getting thin
as if she's losing it
and she answers her cell phone.

The phone is on speaker
and a formidable man talks to her,
as if she's the most beautiful
of all women
and I realise that beauty
lies in the eye
of the beholder.

Gert Strydom

I See You In Each Thoughtful Breath (Italian Sonnet)

Through years I came to know your lovely ways,
you fill my heart to its breadth, depth and height.
Many little things you do and say are out of sight
while you do act in solitude with innocent grace,

bringing emotions sweet and serene to every day's
silent need, whether I find you by day or at night,
in times of real pain and in times of sheer delight
as you go on your needful way with little praise,

do put your wit and temperate will to good use,
as you do go through life with reason and hope
experiencing blame, smiles, praise and tears
acting daily as if you do have nothing to lose
and at times of great distress you do still cope
while you trust in God and live without fears.

Gert Strydom

I See You In Everything

The words in Your book remain
scribbled in my heart,
in memory to retain
and from them I cannot part.

If loving You
is a true art,
like a colouring with its own unique hue
then from its principles I cannot depart

as I see You in everything
in everyone's face
even in the early spring
in every season, time and place:

Even in the blue sky, there are praises due to You
as if to You, everything beautiful remains true.

Gert Strydom

I See You In My Thoughts (Free Verse Sonnet)

I see you in my thoughts with candles in chandeliers
when the moon hangs bloody red outside,
with the gleam of light falling softly in your hair
where now I am broken in longing for you
and the moonlight brings to you a kind of magic,
while doves without end do coo their songs of love,
and a cat tries to jump in through the window,
as the romantic atmosphere wants to sweep me along.
This simple scene jerks on my heart
as we do love each other intimately and eternally
but in the week we do live apart
and our feelings remain through all of this active
where you are a part of my best thoughts
while day after day I miss you very much.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I See You Move With The Agility Of A Deer

I see you move with the agility of a deer,
your dark brown eyes glow luminous,
you black hair is braided into many strands
and there is something fragile petite about you.

Although mature, maybe you are too young for me
but there is a kind of attraction that really catches,
when the pool of your eyes reflects my face,
something pure and great and lovely to you.

Somehow you stun me, stop me in my tracks
like a black butterfly with magical bright specks,
I continually see you fluttering on a fragile wing
and know how easily I could fall in love with you.

Gert Strydom

I See You Walk Away And Disappear

I see you walk away and disappear
when the full moon is shining outside
and suddenly you are free from me,
when star wet streets are shining suddenly,
while the light on the tower beacons red
and still I want to love you more.

Gert Strydom

I See You With The Light (Octave)

(after Petra Müller)

I see you with the light radiating around you,
that bright glare with you hair silky-fine
in the summer-sun the rays do almost pierce through
where it looks as if it shines from you, from every line.
So innocent and holy this moment is
that in my mind the image does remain
where no mortal person can resist this
when love comes in glory, brightness and in pain.

[Reference:"Lamplig" (Lamp-light)by Petra Müller.]

Gert Strydom

I Send To You

I send to you the spring that is early this year,
the sun that is already turning hot,
every new flower
to tell you how much I miss you.

Maybe you will also be able to pick stars
that hangs shining like diamonds,
maybe you will be able to press them to your heart
when you become aware how much I am longing for you.

I send to you every morning full of hope,
the hope that this day may be exceptional
with grass-warblers, sparrows and doves walking up and down
and trust that you will read my love in all of these things,

that every day when you see the sun,
it will be my glowing messenger.

Gert Strydom

I Set My Gaze (Persian Quatrain)

I set my gaze
in the early morning haze
to where aloes bloom in dots of orange-red
and the hillock looks ablaze.

Gert Strydom

I Sing The Song Of The Body Electric

This morning a lovely girl woke,
showered under hot water from a tap,
dried her hair and curled them with some tongs
before she was dressing
in a neatly ironed blouse and skirt,

got some orange juice from the refrigerator,
fried some eggs and made some toast
and poured a cup of tea
and her eyes were blue and happy as the sky,
her smile was brighter than the sun

and she watched cartoons on the television,
saw in the news
what was happening throughout the world
for some reflection and moments of fun,
before her working day begun

and I do sing the song of the body electric,
the one of technology that is a blessing,
where everything is functioning perfectly
on the power coming from a wall plug
and we all live happy, secure and snug
where no ESCOM South Africa does cut the power off.

Gert Strydom

I Sit In A Bar In Sixth Street (A Reply To W.H. Auden.)

I sit in a bar in Sixth Street,
with some flashing lights at the slot machines,
people playing at the pool tables,
the bar man smiling at someone's joke
and bringing another cold Hunters Gold
and I am neither afraid nor uncertain
nor doubt what my future is going to be
and the world has changed in this decade

men guilty of crimes are in the highest positions,
for some people a political party
has become a religion,
people from all over Africa
are streaming in, are killing whites
with more than three thousand farmers dead
and I have no fear but trust in God instead

and no scholarship nor a study
from Luther till whenever
is needed to know
why the government is oppressing
white Afrikaner men, are acting
against human rights,
are reserving job opportunities, economic wealth

¶Envoi

and even if the bewitching stays
like one last final curse
of evil received creating evil in return
and the innocents who received punishment
become the monsters of tomorrow,
even if a psychopathic god is in place
still destiny, the will of the creator God
holds the future, raises leaders and nations,
brings them to a fall.

[Reference: September 1, 1939 by W.H. Auden.]

Gert Strydom

I Sit In Teasers

I sit in Teasers
and there's tenfold
of the most pretty
bare breasted girls around me,
but my thoughts
do not want to
be with them.

Light falls through
the yellow of the Hunters
in my glass
and throws a golden gleam
over the table
and my thoughts,
are with my life
that is fraying slowly
bit by bit.

The girls are merry
and maybe a man
can get a chance to touch
or more from some of them
and nowhere there's fridgetness
that hides behind the surface,
but I am not here
to catch a beautiful butterfly.

Some of them glance at me
and a few dance with twisting bodies
near to me
and I wonder why my soul
wants to stay in its dungeons
and darkness keeps folding in
and slowly but surely
wants to kill
and I cannot also
like this pleasure,
get a quick fix
and happiness and the meaning of life

cannot be found here
or anywhere else.

Two couples come and sit near me
and I see how the men
watch the dancing girls wide-eyed
and a redhead clenches her husband's hand
and I hear a black head say,
that she can also lie like that
and see how she kicks
her husband under the table.

.
a Soft hand is suddenly
on mine
and deep blue eyes
takes my pain away
and it's as if every thing round me
disappears by itself
and we are in our own little world
and my fingers stroke
blonde curls,
but I am brought back
to reality
when a beautiful girl
shakes her supple body
right against me
and her perfume hangs strong between us
and her dark eyes catch mine
and a stranger
lifts his glass in a salute to me
and my blue-eyed girl stays dead
and hit by a car
and only for a moment
I can escape from it all.

Gert Strydom

I Sit In The Shade Under The Chestnut-Tree

I sit in the shade
under the chestnut-tree
with the golden ginger cat on my lap
who pushes his front paws
around my hands

bending them to hold on to me
with nails just touching me
and his golden eyes
looks lovingly up into mine
while he licks me
with a pink grating tongue
and I am again without you.

I read a poem in Ted Hughes's
"Birthday Letters"
telling about how
he met his wife
and the hours of my birthday
now passes very slowly
after I had to say goodbye
to you again

and the sky is blue
and now cloudless
as if the sun
is specially shining for me today
and I do not know
what to do
to get you back again
and my spirit is tired
and it's a hell of a thing
to be alone once more.

Gert Strydom

I Smell The Fragrance Of The Falling Rain

I smell the fragrance of the falling rain
hear how startled the wild horses snort,
see the dust-line of the wild wind savagely
blowing sand and leaves
and hear and there it turns lingering
when thunderbolt after thunderbolt blue-white crushes down

and I see swallows circling against the dark sky,
hear turtledoves singing praises to God
and in the veldt the joy is wide
over the rain that brings new life.

Gert Strydom

I Stand In The Eye Of A Hurricane

I stand in the eye of a hurricane
and try to survive while my career is falling to pieces,
while stormy winds go destroying around my life.

Daily I feel the stormy winds jerking,
I am still waiting for Your omnipotent power
and try to survive while my career is falling to pieces.

When blind I try to find direction in each event
and when I am without hope and do perplexed wander around,
I am still waiting for Your omnipotent power.

Out of my fear and travail You are the one that comes to my salvation,
You do change the dark night
and when I am without hope and do perplexed wander around,

You do change everything to a sun filled day,
there I can see your pure light burst through the black.
You do change the dark night

and joy does come to my heart.
I stand in the eye of a hurricane,
there I can see Your pure light burst through the black,
while stormy winds go destroying around my life.

Gert Strydom

I Stand Upon A Rocky Shore (Triolet)

I stand upon a rocky shore
tightly holding your hand
and everything is different from before.
I stand upon a rocky shore
see a rising gale hear the billows roar
feel the pelting blowing sand
and I stand upon a rocky shore
tightly holding your hand.

Gert Strydom

I Started To Love You

I started to love you
when I met you
and that love will forever,
be part of me.

I am not lost in you
and am too much of a realist
to be lost in dreams,
but I am totally lost
when you are gone out of my life.

Still I do not wait on you
to put out my senses,
but just want you
to be with me.

Gert Strydom

I Still Keep Remembering

When my thoughts are lingering
to when uncle Franck came to fetch me with his Chevrolet,
to times in my childhood days
where someone could set the way of my life,

I see Uncle Franck with as the person he had been,
as a man who trusted sincerely in God,
knowing that everything fit somewhere into the big whole,
and still I look at him with childhood eyes

as a man whose word had real meaning
and to when I had followed him with wobbling steps,
and he was a person that you ask for help at any time,
a person that would give to his own harm

and now that the darkness comes between us,
now that it brings overwhelming separation
with death
that jumps in between our lives

I still keep remembering...

Gert Strydom

I Still Want To Know That You Do Love Me

I still want to know that you do love me
even when at times I must ask forgiveness
and when I am weak in the days of old age
I still want to look into your eyes
and know how true love does look.

Gert Strydom

I Still Wanted To Say

(for Annelize)

I still wanted to say that you do still stay in a way in my heart
that my love for you still remains
but reality is that wishes do not always come true.
I still wanted to say that you do still stay in a way in my heart
but that which had been between us, did at a time pass
and now there is a lifetime with years between us.
I still wanted to say that you do still stay in a way in my heart
that I still love you from the depth of my heart.

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Gert Strydom

I Suddenly Lost My Heart To You

I suddenly lost my heart to you
where we were listening to a singing bush-shrike,
when your perfume unexpectedly overwhelmed me
and that bird sang continually
while you held my hand.

Gert Strydom

I Take A Bus That Goes To Vryburg

I take a bus that goes to Vryburg
from Pretoria station
and there are people about me

and we are all caught
in a own world
with destiny on which everything depends

and cornfields flash by
and the bus roars on past some ruins.
I take a bus that goes to Vryburg

and the road winds like a snake,
teenagers are listening to music
in a own world

and I am going to Vryburg to collect a car,
I see a man with wild bushy hair
and there are people about me

who click together
and we drive through the main street of a town,
teenagers are listening to music

and everyone tells something of his or her hurt,
even the younger generation.
I take a bus that goes to Vryburg

and a young girl looks somewhat desperate
with innocent beauty
and we drive through the main street of a town,

and she gets scared and more scared
without any intimidation
and there are people about me

on whom family wait in Vryburg
and she is going to her parent's home
with innocent beauty,

and she prays to have a life again
and wears plain clothes.
I take a bus that goes to Vryburg
and there are people about me

and she is pregnant and can call nowhere home
and we are all caught
and she is going to her parent's home
with destiny on which everything depends.

Gert Strydom

I Take Your Fingers In Both Of My Hands

I take your fingers in both of my hands
see a smile in your eyes, on your mouth and teeth

and far away from reality I am taken
into a time of sudden wild joy and happiness.

A tear runs down your face while unexpectedly you do cry
and that which is between us becomes something more firm and deeper.

In our embrace and kisses there is something that we do not expect
a new discovery, an adventure full of beauty,

it's the kind of pleasure that a person thinks must be sin,
the kind of thing of which you do only read in women's books

and where we cling to each other for mere moments
I do love you like no other woman.

Gert Strydom

I Taste You As If You Are On My Lips (Novelinee)

I taste you as if you are on my lips
while slowly in my arms you do unwind,
it's as if I can touch you with fingertips
but its only memories in my mind.
As no longer you are here, can be mine
and life is now different from before,
even if our feelings still do combine,
you I cannot find, anymore explore,
destiny, death had slammed shut that door.

Gert Strydom

I Thank God (Catena Rondo)

I thank God for the infinite blue sky,
for every day that is truly amazing,
for tiny birds fluttering on a wing,
I thank God for the infinite blue sky,

for every day that is truly amazing
for living on this big old mother earth
where every day is to something a birth,
for every day that is truly amazing

for living on this big old mother earth,
for existing here and merely being
in times of winter and during the spring,
for living on this big old mother earth

for existing here and merely being
I thank God for the infinite blue sky
for the look of care and love in your eye,
for existing here and merely being,

I thank God for the infinite blue sky,
for every day that is truly amazing,
for tiny birds fluttering on a wing,
I thank God for the infinite blue sky.

Gert Strydom

I Think About Your Bright Face

I think about your bright face
as if you are right here with me
but far too quickly the image wants to disappear
as if there is nothing left
and my attention stray to outside, to the street.

Gert Strydom

I Think Back To A Childhood Day (Refrain Stanza)

I think back to a childhood day,
I see the thunder branching in its brilliant ray
before it bashes down blue-white
and in the rain the dirt track is a sight,
where a woman runs with a child on her back, do fear display,
her headscarf flutters like a flag
and the child falls and by the hand she does him drag
while the flooding river at a low-bridge do bar the way,
I see the thunder branching in its brilliant ray.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Think Of You

I think of you while the stars and moon do pray
during the passage of each night and day.
Memories and meaning fill my thoughts and sight
and you are like black letters on the white.

Gert Strydom

I Think Of You Far Away At Our House (English Sonnet)

Shadows move on the wall in the moonlight,
I think of you far away at our house
while I do miss you so deeply tonight,
as roses bloom bending on the arch of boughs,

jasmine and gardenia are on the breeze
and you do not even hear Impala's turbines
as tranquil you sleep while you are at ease
while my wishes and prayers for you combines.

With a lock-down to you I cannot now go
while I want to hold you close in my arms,
about my true love I want you to know,
that I wish to protect you from all harms,

away I have been sixty days altogether
and soon we will again be together.

[Poet's note: I am talking here about the turbines at Impala Platinum refinery
that do constantly cry while they run.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Thought It Was Spring

I know Algebra
and Calculus too
and I wish for a world
where there's only
you and I.

No other persons
to complicate things
and to tell you stories
of their perspectives
which changes like the wind.

Maybe our little zoo
should be there too
as life without children
is a miserable place.

I can calculate
and comprehend things
but cannot understand
your mind and your feelings,
but neither do you

and I thought
that I know your body
and every contour
and line of it,
but I am lost within
and without it

and I didn't really want
to master you,
but wanted to show
to what depths
love could go
and why I failed
I do not really know

and maybe another

will have more to give
and to take
and I less mistakes to make
and now that you are gone
and I had to go away
my life just drags on

and I miss you more
than I know
how to say.

The shadows draw long
like some words
in your sad songs

and I see clouds
gathering on the horizon
and I wonder
what the new dawn brings

while the wind is filled
with leaves of this autumn
and winter is almost setting in
and I thought it was spring.

Gert Strydom

I To Me And You To You

I to my bachelor life
and you to your one bedroom flat
with two children,
which of us will first rue
the day that we met?

I to love you forever
and you to do it too,
which of us will first rue
the day that we wed?

I to care for you
and you for only you
which of us will first rue
the way we lived together?

I for raising your kids as my own
and you for being totally alone
which of us will first rue
children in our home?

I to you as my morning,
afternoon, evening
in sunshine, hail and rain

and you dealing out pain
with several other lovers
setting your sails to the wind.

I not glad to know you
as a lover, wife or friend
and not anymore
wanting to go to
the very end

and you bringing down destruction
and going where
the wind blows best.

Which of us will not rue,
the day that we met?

Gert Strydom

I Tower Almost To The Clouds

I tower almost to the clouds
on the lookout to see you,
to be aware of your arrival

and at night I hang out bright lanterns
while I scout into the distance

are looking if I can see your star jumping
or somewhere can find a sign of your arrival
over the plains that lay far into the distance

and when you are far off at the horizon
then my heart is already flowering,

then great joy is present in the cathedral
of my eyes,
then the hall of welcome
is prepared for the banquet of our love

and as if I have consumed
too many bottles of champagne
you are already foaming in my veins
long before you are with me.

Gert Strydom

I Tried To Define Love (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I tried our love and all of its ways to define
and of it I wrote from memory's recollection
but only feeble and humble words were mine
where I could not fathom its ways and direction

love were greater and very the sum of many things
with no alien eye I could easily its ways discern
but almost without thought in my words it sings
while daily for you and your presence I do yearn

and by experience I know that it does joy bestow,
that it can make and also break the soul and heart,
that a person by its mere magic at times does glow,
that of a human being it can be the noblest part,

that when we choose to love we have to be brave
while others do in the world with great anger rave.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Truly Know That You Do Love Me

The paintings of a jar of roses,
with a touch of Picasso,
the sunflowers like those of Van Gogh
some cosmos that looks almost waxen in a pot
are on the walls of our bedroom
and red roses in a glass vase
brave it through the last days of summer
while some are withering
and have dropped a few of their petals.

The lamp above the bed draws lines
against the wall and the ceiling
while another burns in the long corridor
while our clothes and underwear lay scattered
like some of the leaves outside
next to the bed.

The curtains are drawn open,
and bushes of roses, some shrubs,
a tree or two and flowers on long stems
cordon the street off
and the night smells of falling rain,
of the promise of new life
when you lay right against me
and I truly know that you do love me

and a tremendous lightning bolt slams down
in the front of the garden
and explodes in blue-white thunder
and we can smell the scorched earth,
can smell electricity
while in the backyard
the two dogs howl and cry
in fear and terror
and outside the whole world can fall apart
but here it's only you and me.

Gert Strydom

I Try To Penetrate Your Pleasant Guise (Wreathed Octave)

I try to penetrate your pleasant guise
without a bruise to be the hero,
but feel like a zero while I act somewhat wise,
without surprise the sun is hot on my sombrero
as it does glow and still you make me feel tall
and as my all in all, life has to be like this,
this is the way that it is even when I do fall,
when life makes me small and you still do me kiss.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Wait For The First Summer Rain

I wait for the first summer rain,
the killing winter black ripe to cease to fall,
the grass to turn from white brown to green
before I will turn the ground again,
plant new vegetables, flowers and shrubs

but I hear birds sing
in the evergreen berry tree
as if asking me
to plant the first seed,
as if they are already inviting spring.

Gert Strydom

I Wait Upon God (Free Verse Sonnet)

I wait upon God to help me
to pick up the pieces of life
where I do whatever I can
to try and make a living
where the high officials of a church
do make my career undone,
say that I do have a problem with women,
that I cannot work under authority
and after ten years
I am still being persecuted without cause by people,
my mother says vengeance do only belong to God
where eternally I want to jerk them in the mouth
and I wonder if they do know
that hell awaits liars and deceivers?

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

I Waited At The Motored Gate

I waited at the motored gate
when winter was bleak and grey
and the early morning fog seemed desolate
as I had not seen the sun on that day

The morning mist blotted out the sky
and in the distance a plover's call did resound
but then much more lonely was I
when much further away howled a hound.

The features of the houses seemed to me
like spectres ever present but unknown
as if all hope was covered by the foggy canopy
with no sharp, real features being shown

and wet and wicked smelled the earth
if like this all days would now run by,
as if a kind of illness was present at each birth,
as if the destruction of man was nigh

but in the old oak tree some birds were fluttering
and crystal clear and gay
a dove did its song of love sing
and unlimited a sudden ray

did the fog part
as if the bird had a kind of hope and love
that did speak to the depths of the heart,
as if brightness was coming that nothing could remove.

Gert Strydom

I Walk In A Garden Under A Dull Blue Sky

I wander in the garden of a businesswoman
under a dull blue sky alone
at Tamboerskloof in Cape Town
past a huge blue swimming pool,
do follow a stream that bubbles
up to a natural pool
where the sun and sky is reflected in
but it's as if something glistens
under the depths of it and the wild aloes
do grow around the rocky bank
and I am reminded of Nonqawuse
who had led her own Xhosa nation to annihilation
and caused almost everyone
to die from hunger.

[Reference: "Crowds of Xhosas gathered at the pool" by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

I Walk In The Veldt Near To Majuba Hillock

I walk in the veldt near to Majuba hill
where once farmers in battle stood
and the morning wind has a chill to it
where a bullet hit a British general true and good

and all that I feel is the lost,
the lost without measure and the severe cost
that British forces made women and children pay
and here at this outpost,

not even at the sight of the greatest victory
can I find any peace in me,
even if I fired that selfsame gun
that killed major general George Pomeroy
or drilled a hole right through
1st Earl Horatio Herbert Kitchener

it would not take away the killing, the homicide
that the British brought
and the terror, the injustice,
the inhumanity will never be gone.

[Poet's note: This poem is written in remembrance of the twenty thousand (some figures are as high as thirty five thousand) innocent white Afrikaner women and children that died in British concentration camps, after their farms were scorched by the British in the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa, which includes a great grandmother of mine. For a clear picture of these atrocities read my epic poem "Through the eyes of a field coronet" which is based on the eyewitness account of field coronet JJ Potgieter.]

Gert Strydom

I Walk In The Veldt Near To Majuba Hillock (2)

I walk in the veldt near to Majuba hill
where once farmers in battle stood
and the morning wind has a chill to it
where a bullet hit a British general true and good

and all that I feel is the lost,
the lost without measure and the severe cost
that British forces made women and children pay
and here at this outpost,

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can I find any peace in me,
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Gert Strydom

I Walk In The Veldt Near To Majuba Hillock (3)

I walk in the veldt near to Majuba hill
where once farmers in battle stood
and the morning wind has a chill to it
where a bullet hit a British general true and good

and all that I feel is the lost,
the lost without measure and the severe cost
that British forces made women and children pay
and here at this outpost,

not even at the sight of the greatest victory
can I find any peace in me,
even if I fired that selfsame gun
that killed major general George Pomeroy
or drilled a hole right through
1st Earl Horatio Herbert Kitchener

it would not take away the killing, the homicide
that the British brought
and the terror, the injustice,
the inhumanity will never be gone.

[Poet's note: This poem is written in remembrance of the twenty thousand (some figures are as high as thirty five thousand) innocent white Afrikaner women and children that died in British concentration camps, after their farms were scorched by the British in the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa, which includes a great grandmother of mine. For a clear picture of these atrocities read my epic poem "Through the eyes of a field coronet" which is based on the eyewitness account of field coronet JJ Potgieter. © Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

I Walk Next To The Tomato Beds

I walk next to the tomato beds
in our garden and here and there
are a few fig trees
which are covered with green swelling fruit
right against the main branches.

At the back in the corner and between the tomatoes
are rows of prickly pears
and look as if they have lost their thorns
but if you look carefully
the rows of thorns are still there.

You that I see as the flower
among my flowers
who are tender and soft hearted,
are now piercing the most
as the going away cuts through me
and staying apart, stays a terrible thing
but seeing each other again,
remains a wonderful
and yet every day
I see the fruit of you selfless love.

Gert Strydom

I Walked Into This Vista

I walked into this Vista
to work there
and the garden was beautiful,
but in such a place
I did not want to stay
and nobody will get me
into such a place.

The people that work there
were decent, friendly and god fearing
and a patient followed me,
as if I am the leader
in a game
and a woman walk stark naked
and asked me
where the president's office is
and if I came from the parliament?

That this Vista is a wonderful place
when life's walls fold in on you
and life loose all its meaning
and you hear voices in your mind,
nobody can deny,
and I saw people find God there
while there humanity
and life tried to destroy them.

a Polish doctor wanted to know from me
why the grass in summer
is yellow brown and dried out,
while the winter chill was biting me
and I wondered
from which Siberia she comes.

I saw there that specialist doctors
are also people
and there were rumours
that some of the doctors

had more serious problems
than their patients
and that one has a drawer
full of crumbled paper
which he hoards like a rat.
and I wondered how a doctor
that lived next to the hospital
opened his garden gate with his feet.

Electric shocks that goes straight through you
and hypnotic therapy
can pass me by
and the day that I walked out of there,
it was better
than escaping from a jail
and I could comprehend
Ingrid Jonker's poem much better
and maybe the damage
was more in her soul
than in that Valkenburg.

[Reference: Ontvlugting by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

I Want Someone To Read

I want someone to read
my poetry today
and somehow I want it
to be something
that brings joy and a smile,
or something that makes
teardrops flow,
or to give a better understanding
of life and its intricacies,
Or a person to pause
to think about the deeper cause
and never just to be
another dull thing.

Gert Strydom

I Want To (Free Verse Sonnet)

Eagerly I want to bring happiness to you,
write verses about love in sincerity
and you are in my head, soul, hart and body,
between us there is much more than just emotion.
About you constantly I want to sing a song of praise,
rub your hands warm in the bleak cold winter,
describe my feelings and principles to you,
although the world around us is twisted
Day and night I want to give myself to you,
come with taste like yellow wild-peaches,
joyful like wild-plums cover your branches,
with the patience of eucalyptus trees forge affinity,
silently like medlar amaze you with fruit
as in my heart, soul and life you have got a place.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Ask You To Reveal To Me

I want to ask You to reveal to me,
to let me find
that which no one else knows

to bind my soul, my intellect, my hand
to the things that would blind others
and to lead me to understand
things far above human conception

and when You someday measure my humanity
to get a element of Yourself
of Your greatest words in me

and may You always stay in my heart
and may I find rescue
only in Thee.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Be With You

I want to be with you
and times take its toll,
make that I fear the separation,

cause me to long for you the whole time
with the distance that divides us
and times take its toll

and come and stand between you and me
and I do not know what to do
with the distance that divides us.

When I start longing
I only think about how much I love you
and I do not know what to do

since I am hindered from you
and when I see things in a different light
I only think about how much I love you

as if I am embracing you against me.
I want to be with you
and when I see things in a different light
it makes that I fear the separation.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Be With You [2]

I want to be with you
and times take its toll,
make that I fear the separation,

cause me to long for you the whole time
with the distance that divides us
and times take its toll

and come and stand between you and me
and I do not know what to do
with the distance that divides us.

When I start longing
I only think about how much I love you
and I do not know what to do

since I am hindered from you
and when I see things in a different light
I only think about how much I love you

as if I am embracing you against me.
I want to be with you
and when I see things in a different light
it makes that I fear the separation.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Come To You The Omnipotent Lord God

My God I do not only want to ask for wisdom, intelligence and insight
but like Moses in the old times, I come to You the omnipotent Lord God,
I beg that You do constantly inform me of Your plans,

I beg that You do stand against every Satanic decision,
and its just if this request do claim my own life,
I beg that You do stop this virus and the effects of it,

as on old people and those with illnesses the effect is severe
and I beg turn around the life of every person.
My God I do not only want to ask for wisdom, intelligence and insight

I beg that You do stop the withdrawal of Your blessings,
forgive where humanity do view You only as a myth
and its just if this request do claim my own life,

unaware people are busy with the things of Satan
and against Your insight, Your omniscience as a human I remain stupid.
I beg that You do constantly inform me of Your plans,

where people think they are like gods but unaware do serve Satan,
believe in their immortality where alone it is in You
Forgive where humanity do view You only as a myth,

do not care about others, when misery do destroy and hurt them,
as such people are to them bad, insignificant without words.
My God I do not only want to ask for wisdom, intelligence and insight
:

where You know this virus as omniscient You have got all knowledge
but Your children die and the young people think they are gods,
believe in their immortality where alone it is in You

and whatever they do is most of the time out of sight.
As an angel of light, the Cosmic Christ, Lucifer disguises himself.
I beg that You do constantly inform me of Your plans,

where we live in a futuristic according to a political correct design,
where people are being told that it's your judgements against mankind,
but Your children die and the young people think they are gods,

turn truth and to their will do live and still You are the only light
Do not let Satanic signs and wonderful miracles leave man speechless.
My God, I do not only want to ask for wisdom, intelligence and insight
I beg that You do constantly inform me of Your plans,

even if I die, do stop Satan to be elevated to a god,
I beg that You do stand against every Satanic decision,
where people are being told that it's your judgements against mankind,
I beg that You do stop this virus and the effects of it.

[Poet's notes:

That only God is immortal:

1 Timothy 6: 13-16"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession,14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:15 Which in his times shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 Who only have immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

1 Corinthians 15: 51-54 "Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump:for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality/ 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

That man is immortal and can be a god was from the start a satanic is 3: 2-5 "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat it, Ye shall not surely die; 5 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

See Revelation 12: 9 that the devil / Satan is the serpent / snake.

On the judgements of God: At the flood, Noah preached for 150 years to convert did not indiscriminately just go ahead and kill people and Noah and his family was saved.

At Nineveh Jonah preached to the people there and God did not right-out destroy that city as they did convert them.

At Sodom and Gomorrah God did save Lot and his two daughters and answered Abraham and was willing to spare those cities if there were any righteous people left in them.

The Lord God does not destroy people indiscriminately but does virus targets any person that it gets in contact malignant powers do destroy in an indiscriminate way.

Every last plague with which God will come against the earth in its final hours are spelled out literary:

Revelation 16: 2 Grievous sores upon men

Revelation 16: 3 The sea becomes blood

Revelation 16: 4 The rivers and all water becomes blood.

Revelation 16: 8 The sun's heat is increased to scorch people with fire.

Revelation 16: 10 The kingdom of the beast is is darkness over it.

Revelation 16: 12 The Euphrates dries up.

Revelation 16: 18-21 Voices, thunders and lightning's and an earthquake that was the greatest in the time of great city was divided and the cities of the nations fell and great hail fell upon mankind.

Isaiah 14: 12-14. "How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer son of the morning [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations {O Lucifer: or, O day star} 13 For thou hast said in thine heart I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north 14 I will ascend above the

heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

Matthew 24: 4-7 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.⁵ For many shall come in my name, saying <3004, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.⁶ And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet.⁷ For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places."

Matthew 24: 23-24 "Then if any man shall say unto you here [is] Christ or there believe [it] not ²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders insomuch that if [it were] possible they shall deceive the very elect."

2 Corinthians 11: 14-15"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.¹⁵ Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose shall be according to their works."

Maitreya at religious meetings have several times literary appeared and some of the members of Theosophy call him "the cosmic Christ that are coming."The Theosophy and Buddhists talk about Maiteya as a savoir / world teacher /advisor / world master that will come.

As in the New Age religion (with reincarnation)Theosophy talks of the evolution of humankind to being part of god, which is to me very disturbing as nowadays people on the road or in whatever situation do act as if they are gods without respect to any other as a regard to myself and me and my own will

Absolute truth is the truth about how things, history or whatever events really ive truth is the way that people want things rather to be and is another form of deceit.

The reason that I am say that God's own people are dying:

The statistics in South Africa indicates as they do worldwide that people over 50 over 60 and older have a greater chance to die from COVID-19, that people with high-blood pressure have a greater chance to die, that people with diabetes have a greater chance to die, that people with asthma have a greater chance to die.

A lot of older people live with high-blood pressure, diabetes and asthma.

Throughout Europe, in South Africa and probably in the United States of America

you will find that the older people are those that still believe in a living existing God.

It only takes logic to come to the conclusion that older people are being singled out by this virus to die from it as they have got a greater chance to die statistically speaking.]

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Gert Strydom

I Want To Draw You Tight Against Me

I look away in the direction
where my longing lies
and now wish to be busy
travelling to you

and that something could heal this fear
since the being away eats,
eats like a cancer

and so eagerly I want to be
part of you, read feelings
experiences, joy and even pain
in your eyes

and the when the darkness folds in on you,
fold my arms around you
and I want to draw you tight against me
and lock out
the world and its things.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Give You A Place

I want to give you a place
where in my heart
I do keep my most precious things,
a place where the summer-sun does always shine
and where the rain in thundershowers
do come at the right time,
a place where your greatest ideals
and most beautiful wishes
can become a reality.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go Back To The Veldt Again (Rondel Prime)

I want to go back to the veldt again
to watch nature to see little things,
to hear how pretty small red weavers sing,
to on my skin feel the summer's cool rain

to live with harmony without some pain,
to get of God a clear understanding.
I want to go back to the veldt again
to watch nature to see little things,

and away from the city to remain,
to see flowers rise in the months of spring
opening and life slowly awakening,
I want to go back to the veldt again
to watch nature to see little things.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go Home

Right through the night
the armour is rolling forward.
Cannon thunder,
while rockets
blow the enemy to bits.

I want to go home
where the sun
goes peacefully through the pepper tree
and the dogs
lie and wait on top of plants

There are people dying everywhere
and some are wounded
and missiles and bombs rain down
and grenades and guns keep going of
and death takes its toll around me.

I am deprived of peace and rest and a life
and I want to go home
and stand under the avocado tree
and see the avocados fall
and see the sun set over the ridges
and live a life again
and avoid bloodshed forever more.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go To The Highveld

I want to go to the highveld,
go and stand next to the green hillocks
and see how aloes
hit red sparks out of it.

I want to look up into the thin blue sky,
at night look at the bright stars
as if I can pick Orion and the sisters
and like marbles stroke my hand over them.

I want to walk in the red sand,
tread barefoot tracks
and even if the sand burns my feet
I want to leave marks that betray my presence.

When the thunderstorms arise
I want to see lightning bolts breaking on iron rocks,
see blue sparks spraying over the rocks
and hear the roaring clap as if God Himself is speaking with me.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go To The High-Veldt

I want to look up into the pale-blue sky,
stand next to the green hillocks

and I want to walk on the red sand
when the stormy weather rises
and barefoot leave my tracks there,

I want to raise my eyes to the heavenly lights,
and at night look at the bright stars.
I want to go to the high-veldt,

leave marks that betray my presence,
see the blue-white sparks jump
when the stormy weather rises,

smell the falling rain,
see how the wet ground looks,
stand next to the green hillocks

where nature pays homage to the Creator
and I want to experience the world of my childhood days,
see the blue-white sparks jump

and fold my hand around beautiful stones
and like marbles stroke over them.
I want to go to the high-veldt,

leave no place unvisited on my hike,
find all of the old secret places again
and I want to experience the world of my childhood days,

follow the sun on its bright white orbit,
to where the most distant horizon is,
stand next to the green hillocks

and blinded in the eyes of a child
live out moments of my childhood days again,
find all of the old secret places,

just walking on and on
without diverting from the old footpaths.
I want to go to the high-veldt,
stand next to the green hillocks,

for moments be woven back into the fabric of time
and I want to walk on the red sand,
live out moments of my childhood days again
and barefoot leave my tracks there.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go To You

I want to go to you
while thunderclouds hang grey and black
against the heaven
and catch you
as the sparkle in my life.

I want to direct
my simple words to you
while the light hides
beyond that which brings separation
and I want to get you
as the one
that frees me from all despair.

On no account
I had the desire before
to come with every thing that I am
and to purify it
with the love that you give
and really to know
that we are one
as human, as soul, as spirit.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Go To You[2]

I want to go to you
through every thing
that divides us
and the thunder and rain
falling between us,
I want to dissipate

and I want to tell you
how precious
you are to me

and I want to aim
my whole existence at you
and I want you
to know
how much I really love you.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Love You In All Of My Days (Italian Sonnet)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

I want to love you in all of my days,
live with you a life that is true and right,
find you next to me in each solemn night,
bring to your humanity and beauty praise,

love you in all of my life's simple ways,
see you day by day smiling very bright,
find with you happiness with candlelight
and then by God's infinite kind of grace,

never a moment in your company loose,
in the hopes of life find a childhood faith
that our love will surpass the bonds of death,
that God's kindness in us, be put to use,
that in His great plan He will us both save,
I love you in every word, deed and breath.

[Reference: "How do I love Thee? Let me count the ways" by Elizabeth Barrett]

Gert Strydom

I Want To Love You More

I want to love you more
than contracts can bind
and in you I want to find more love
than this few words can say

and I want everything that happen between us
only to be free and natural,
to not only to bring memories but deeper meaning,
give colour to our existence

but much more than this
I want to build a life with you
without swallowing you up in it,
I want to embrace and hold you tight
and put every feeling into this gesture
and to know that you love me
pass time and experiences.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Love You Much Deeper

I want to love you much deeper
than contracts can bind,
I want to find more love in you
than what these few words can say

and I want everything that happens between us
to be free and natural, not to be just a afterthought
but that it will bring deeper meaning,
give colour to our existence

but more than this
I want to build a life with you
without overwhelming you with it,
I want to hold you tightly in my arms
and I want to put every feeling into it and I want to know
that you do love me past time and past any other thing.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Make You More Than My Love And Wife (Free Verse Sonnet)

I want to nationalise you as my own,
make you much more than my love and wife
where daily I do deposit verses
in the reserve bank of your heart
and constantly I find myself in a state of war,
as if every other can also confiscate you,
as if everyone in this welfare state in Africa
want to and can play taxi with your heart,
the multitude of the proletariat growls at me
where my verses are too full of love and capitalistic
and to me you are more than just another independent-woman,
as you are the beginning and end to each day.
I will write to you a manifesto of love
and confirm it with tears, blood and many kisses.

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Gert Strydom

I Want To Pass The Unnamed Borders (Free Verse Sonnet)

Every beautiful thought I want to save for you,
I want to sing a song of praise to you,
out of memories bring the beautiful to you,
do want to protect and shelter you in times of danger.
I want to accept the worst and best of you,
where people do continually twist words
but for God you are for me the most important thing
and you drive me mad and sometimes leave me perplexed.
I want to look unembellished to our sincere love,
know of your longings and even dark wishes,
with every yesterday and today I want to go to you,
I want to pass the unnamed borders
that stands between a man and woman in life
and with my whole being reach out to your whole being.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Pray

I want to pray, but are at times without words
and it feels as if none of my prayers
are going much further than the ceiling,

as if I am alone extradited on this earth
and in this chilly time, it feels as if all my prayers,
all my words are going nowhere.

There is so many times that the self
wants to take control of my life
and in the lives of others,
where the self wants to draw attention to it.

I ask You to help me to stay modest,
to stretch Your hand out wide over my country
covering each and everyone with Your selfless love,
make us free from the self.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Shower You

I want to shower you
with all the love I have got
to make certain that you will forget me not
and when the time of old age does come
that you will be the one to whom I come home,

Gert Strydom

I Want To Sleep With The Same Innocence

I want to sleep with the same innocence
as the lad who slept among apples
away from the tumult brought by centuries
and awake as if every new day
is a morning filled with new promise.

I long to be at the sea
with the same kind of longing
as the boy who wanted to cut out his heart
because of the sea
to see the surging and swell
to experience the endless energy.

Let me lie down somewhere in the veldt
far away from the atrocities of man,
where grasses, the bushes and trees
grow in splendour
and some animals still roam free
where the first rays of the sun will awaken me.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Take You In

I want to take you in for the woman and human that you are
because moments with you do carry meaning to me.

You laugh and swallow me with your green-brown eyes,
cause all kinds of metaphors to start in my words,

to me you are a stranger but are own to me,
where you are cutting food for tasty dishes for us,

at night in the winter's chilliness do lie spooned against me,
do want me intimately as a part of you.

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Gert Strydom

I Want To Tell You About My Love

(after Heinrich Heine)

Where years pass much too quickly
as everything do change to dust
I want to tell you about my love,
where unending you do fit into my heart

and in a world of both heaven and hell,
where in longing people keep on searching
you are the one that do matter to me,
where just a glance binds me to you.

[Reference: "Ad Finem" by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

I Want To Tell You More And I Tell Less (Sicilian Sonnet)

To me you are an angel of the light,
the one to whom I do my love express,
the one who against me I want to press
in days of tranquillity and of fright.

I come to you in the stillness of the night,
ask that God do you everyday truly bless
and I want to tell you more and I tell less
but I have not seen you as lovely as tonight.

How happy are the days that we meet,
where selflessly to each other we give,
with true affection do each other greet,
while never we do each other deceive
and to me you are kind and very sweet
as we do at times separate our days live.

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Gert Strydom

I Want To Tell You That I Do Love You

I did not think about the implications of being away from you.
I constantly am lost in my severe longing of you,
With your green-brown eyes that full of life shine in my thoughts.

I do write sincere verses to you that in my ears sound lame,
feel powerless where destiny is now setting our lives.
I did not think about the implications of being away from you.

Where you are ill I try to comprehend the situation without me
and your humanity, your image, is constantly lingering with me,
with your green-brown eyes that full of life shine in my thoughts.

That this virus is deadly constantly becomes clearer
and I do not know how to take you and me out of all of this.
I did not think about the implications of being away from you.

The USA did conclude a trade-agreement with China,
that hundreds do infect thousands is clear in any language.
With your green-brown eyes that full of life shine in my thoughts

it's as if with great longing you are beaconing me
and I do want to tell you that I do love you, a thousand times.
I did not think about the implications of being away from you,
with your green-brown eyes that full of life shine in my thoughts.

Gert Strydom

I Want To Thank God

(for Annelize)

I want to thank God for you,
do want to live days that we will remember forever,
pray that the years that lie ahead and do come
will unfold with only the loveliest things.

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Gert Strydom

I Want To Write About Your Omnipotence (Free Verse Sonnet)

I want to write about Your omnipotence Your care
how thunder, flame and devouring fire
and ice and water do come out of Your hand
but then are astonished by the mere sparrow
where Your great love I see time after time
and against the Satan for us You do stand
but Your love does stay true although the earth seems neglected
and against my own sin I cannot stand by myself
but You do still care for all of humanity
and as a human I am stupid against Your works,
notice selfless love, which You are teaching me,
and with my life in Your hands I am carefree
where I do notice Your works and love in everything around me,
do know that in trust I must hold on to Your powerful hand.

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Gert Strydom

I Want You To Know

I want you to know
about the depth of my feelings for you,
that you do something to my inside
as if every glance is a kiss.

I want you to know
that I cannot wipe you out
and I am not able to forget you
and that you are the whole time
in my thoughts
and just with you I get rest and peace

that I do not know how to express
words into love
and how precious I regard everything
that you give on your own accord
out of your heart
and how terrible it is
to be separated from you.

Gert Strydom

I Want You To Live On

I want you to forget me not
when I am gone
and when this life
leaves me and death
takes me away,
I want you to live on
like you did yesterday.

If you fill your heart
with sadness and cry every day
there will be no place
for gladness
and all that will be left of me,
will be pain and tragedy.

If you live life to its fullest
and love again
and find pleasure
in every thing,
I will be a sweet memory
and you will set my spirit free.

Gert Strydom

I Want You To Stay Because You Want To

I want you to stay because you want to,
that you love me out of your own,
locked like a circle without a beginning or end
that we wait no further moment.

I want to peel of moments like an orange
finding your depths and in the day and darkness.
I want you to stay because you want to,
that you love me out of your own,

I want to make no untrue promises,
want to feel you quake in ecstasy,
want to dissipate my joy, fear and longing in you
and find you in every thought and sentence;
I want you to stay because you want to,
that you love me out of your own.

Gert Strydom

I Wanted

I wanted to trust you
with my biggest secrets,
wanted to tell you the things
that I tell to nobody, did want to remember things with you

when the years of old age do come.

Gert Strydom

I Wanted To Find More In What Love Is

I wanted to find more in what love is,
and its depths I wanted to know as truth
while maybe like a child I did trust
that its part of a real experience
of which you sometimes miss all of the parts
but something really essential of it still does remain.
I wanted to find more,

I wanted to have something more than just meaning
and then so suddenly and unexpected I did find you,
when I looked at eyes that unblemished caught mine
and now I know much more than only knowledge,
I wanted to find more...

Gert Strydom

I Wanted To Go Back To My Childhood Days

I wanted to go back to my childhood days,
wanted to play with the delight of a child,
wanted to steal ripe peaches and hide them in my shirt
and I wanted to brake away from the here and now
but then I did meet you
with eyes reflecting the sun,
dancing like starry lights.

Gert Strydom

I Wanted To See What No Man Comprehends

(after N.P. van Wyk Louw)

I raised my eyes to You
and wanted to look past this world
into infinity, into eternity
but before You I was naked
and covered in sin
but still You created images
and emotions in my depths,
You just drew me nearer to Your fatherly heart.

Gert Strydom

I Was A Skinny Child

I was a skinny child
in short shirt and pants,
who walked blonde through the ploughed fields,
feeling the soft lumps breaking beneath my feet,

whirling through the orchard,
looking through the ink black window at the stars,
watching the golden moon for some time
while wondering when the doves will stop cooing,

while that life with the ringing of the clock
was slowly ticking to an end
and everything now is so much different,
in a world almost without meaning.

Gert Strydom

I Was Dumbfounded

When I was a student
I bought a box of chocolates
one evening at a café
to give as a gift
to a girl

who chatted with me
in class and with whom
I had a walk
and a talk that afternoon

and she was really pretty,
far past cute
and the sky glittered
in her grey-green eyes.

The box looked inviting
beyond the glass
and I bought an apple there
later a pear
which I gobbled down

and at twenty one
I experienced how astounding
new love could be
and was more dumbfounded
that she really liked me.

Gert Strydom

I Was Only Eighteen

Mom did not see the passing out parade,
twelve hundred kilometres to home and back
is a long run, but she did visit me in a military hospital

and border duty wasn't anybody's choice
but by train, plane, truck or armoured car
the military got you there

where the sun was scorching,
some nights were cold
and you're life was every day on hold

and patrols could be great strolls
through the veldt, the bush
with gnats flying around your head

or moments of life and death,
with pain in every breath
and I was only eighteen

saw some men blown to bits
was half concussed with
rockets exploding near to me

heard bullets whine over my head,
shot some enemies to stay living,
split trees with rifle grenades

and the army was great fun
especially if you hopped in and out
of choppers every single day

and knew that your time was running out
and still I am here
but changed to someone else
who is more of a soldier than a human being.

[Poet's note: A chopper is a word used for a helicopter in the South African Defence Force.]

Gert Strydom

I Went In Into The Hospital (Free Verse Sonnet)

I went in into the hospital
saw three doctors standing around your bed,
oxygen tanks did guard you,
outside it was night with the moon
big eyed watching the world
and I trusted you to the Lord God
who does care for all things in this world,
to hold you through pain and suffering in life,
like angels that continually brings sunshine
many nurses did time and again surround you
in the taut white delimitation of the hospital
and your suffering was to me a bittersweet thing
where death does wander along in the hallways
do try to find its place in every hospital.

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Gert Strydom

I Went Into The Night Again (Welsh Sonnet)

while the sky was filled with rain,
saw some lightning streaking blue-white,
lighting up some of the dark night
and the roads gleamed somewhat black
while the cold wind touched my back,
the backlights of cars gleamed red
and the road meandered ahead.

The earth smelled new, clean and fresh,
a slight shiver crept up my flesh
as your face swept into my view.
as something pretty, somewhat new
your smile was gorgeous, start-struck
I lost sight with a passing truck.

Gert Strydom

I Went Into The Wide World

I went into the wide world
and everywhere
where I could

stood on snow white beaches
reconnoitred the blue ocean,
hillocks and hills,

saw plains
and in the desert
white skeletons
of animals that disappeared,

encountered and learned to know people
said farewell to others
and experienced every thing
that I wanted
and still tried to keep
to that which is good,

held different banknotes
in my hand
and paid a price for a living
and took pieces out of my humanity,

when I realized
that yesterday, today and tomorrow
really are the same

with a sun that appears
and disappears at its time,
stars shining on the heavenly dome
and fleeing for the blue,

that there always are people
that cares for each other
and likes you
and that some dislikes you
who leaves pain and discomfort,

that we are sometimes happy,
exuberant, mournful
or sad

and try too hard
to buy every minute
of life before it passes

and that the course of life
is tied to its own time
and farewells
sometimes lies just around the corner,

that people are human
and stand
at the feet of God
for whom a thousand years
passes like a single day.

Gert Strydom

I Went Wandering On A Journey With You

I went wandering on a journey with you,
exploring the secrets,
the mountains, the valleys
of your body
while you lay stretched out beside me
wandering through a forest
while you fingertips and lips
meandered over mine
and there was something almost divine
in our shared intimacy
and little pleasure thrills
running up and down your spine
while I traced the contours of your neck
and I wished that each and every day
we could lie down and play like this.

Gert Strydom

I Will Die And Go To My Father

I will die and go to my father
without any further postponement, now
I will take my car and to the road,

die from everything ugly in me,
die from the wrong things between us,
die from that which separates us,

drive to where his white house is against the mountains
although fear clings to my heart.
I will die and go to my father,

die from that which has kept me so long from him,
die from all my pride,
die from all the wrong things in me

and even if I drive for hours long
while the sun fades,
I will take my car and to the road

and anchor myself on the eternal rock
(believe that he will be waiting me in) ,
die from all my pride

and believe that he will wrap his arms around me,
will hold me tightly.
I will die and go to my father

and believe that we will cry and laugh together,
believe that I will know of his love,
believe that he will be waiting me in,

without suspicion
and with repentance
I will take my car and to the road

and I will eat with him again
before time forever runs out,
believe that I will know of his love

and that he will really understand,
shall see me as his own.
I will die and go to my father
I will take my car and to the road

we will enter into deep conversations with love and new hope,
die from everything ugly in me
before time forever runs out,
die from that which separates us.

[References: Ek sal sterf en na my vader gaan by Breyten Breytenbach. Ek sal
sterf en na my moeder gaan by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

I Will Die And Go To My Mother

I will die and go to my mother
where her white house stand against the mountains,
without any further fail
I will take my car and to the road.

Die from every thing ugly in me,
die from that which parts us
and had kept me
so long from her.

When she awaits me there
we will cry and laugh together
and it will be as if I had never been away
and we will talk to deep into the night, maybe till the next day.

I will again eat some of her cooked food
and of the depths of motherly love I will know
while we page through photo albums
and remember and forget things.

Before the time forever is gone
we will have deep conversations
and I will die and go to my mother
with love and new hope and into life we will again walk together.

Gert Strydom

I Will Go To My Father

Next to me a pig sow snorts
and the stench of pig manure
hangs heavy in the air
and the pigs are eating pods,
and I may not even
eat thereof
and my stomach burns with hunger.

It's very hot
and I drink water from a fountain
and when the sun begin to set
and I heard the pigs,
I know that I must
go and fix my affairs.

I will go to my father
where his rows of tents
are set on the other side of the Jordan
and when I see him,
I will be happy
to be back with my dad.

He can admonish me
since I deserve it
and even if he doesn't want me
as his son anymore,
I will ask him
to forgive me.

*

While I am still a great way off
he notices me walking on the road
and comes running,
and there are tears of joy
in his eyes.

[Reference: => Luke15: 11-32]

Gert Strydom

I Will Go To My Wife

I will go to my wife and wrap my arms around her;
I will go and forget about all the things that hurt,
I will go as if I know about the depth of her love,
as if she will understand all of the sadness of my brokenness
and when I stand crying next to her
I will tell her about the things that are eating up my heart,
I will tell her that I do understand every raw cry
and totally stripped from conceit
I will tell her how much I do love her
and if she trembles like a small child
I will kiss her tenderly on her cheek,
remind her about days full of sunshine,
like a child convince her that life does have good things,
even if tears are still hanging heavy from her green-brown eyes.

Gert Strydom

I Will Not Loose My Grip

(after Gerard Manley Hopkins)

No, I will not flee,
while I struggle as a mortal man,
using all the power that I can,
while I am struggling to be free,

to be free, from sin, from my own iniquity
and yet its your familiar / unfamiliar face that I scan
while I am trying to comprehend why our fighting did began,
why someone Godly, divine chose me as an adversary?

The dust covers both of us,
while the sun is already rising
and my foot feels full of pain and odd,
but I will not loose my grip even if I must
and I am first begging for your blessing,
for your compassion, Oh my God, my God.

[Reference: "Carrion Comfort" by Gerard Manley Hopkins.]

Gert Strydom

I Will Recognize You (Stanza)

(after Lina Spies)

In living out Kahlil Gibran's verses I will recognize you
and in all of the loveliest small things you do
when jacaranda trees do hang with purple flowers
and I long for you through sunny days and rain-showers,
I will burn a candle just for you, as your love is true
you are written on the walls of my heart
and I will know you when we are together and apart,
you are a part of each prayer and are in my mind
and impressions of you I do everywhere find.

[Reference: "Herkenning" (Recognition) by Lina Spies.]

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Gert Strydom

I Will Recollect You In Any Place And Time (English Sonnet)

Drink me in with you green-brown eyes
and with your image I will fill my heart
that when we are apart again it will rise,
as of my inner self you will be a part.

Dearly think me in to your mind sublime
and I will truly sanctify you in my mine,
will recollect you in any place and time
as if you are angelic, as a person divine.

In this life you are more than dear to me
where I wish to know you beyond death,
still beyond no one knows how it's to be,
while you are in my blood and my breath,

of my sincere love here I do you tell,
do know that your feelings are parallel.

Gert Strydom

I Will Resist This Injustice

Never will I like C.L. Leipoldt say:

"My country is not mine anymore;
my nation is dead from the struggle,
my courage is not heroic anymore -
God, please forgive me! "

and although my people
now stay right over the world
and my country has been taken away

the struggle continues forever
as long as prayers go up
to God in heaven

who is almighty in control
and even during times of impossibility
practises His will.

as long as a Afrikaner
stand on his right
to lead a life

I will get a ray of hope
from somewhere
and as long as I am alive
I will resist
this unfairness.

[This is my translation of C.L. Leipoldt's Afrikaans verse.]

Gert Strydom

I Will Take You Along To Beaches

I will take you along to beaches
that I know, where I have been
drawing you into the hot water

as you are a sea nymph
who yearns for water
and we will ride the waves

and stay the whole day
in the sea
until the evening's twilight catches us.

Gert Strydom

I Will Tell Everyone

Pull a machinegun, a pistol,
a panga-blade, a knife
and say: "white man give me a reason
to kill you today."

Rob my cars,
take whatever belongs to me
and even if the police
cannot catch the criminals
and the government looks the other way
as if the robberies, the killings
are not happening
and while I am still living

I will tell everyone, the whole world
about the gangster's paradise that I live in.

Gert Strydom

I Will Write Some Real Poetry

Sometimes life is just not fair
and what you expect
doesn't happen

and merit takes a hike
and is away
on a super bike.

Let somebody's literary expert
stumble over some more words
and see Leonard Cohen
cloned in what I write

"and if you want
to strike me down in anger
here I stand
I'm your man"

but I will write
some real poetry
while the world goes on...

[Reference: I'm your man by Leonard Cohen.]

Gert Strydom

I Wish I Could Read Love In Your Eyes

I wish I could read love in your eyes,
that you look at me with a smile that says more,
that all days could be full of the summer-sun,
that your hand could lay softly in mine
and in my thoughts its only you
that continually does figure.

Gert Strydom

I Wish I Did Tell You

(for Daleen)

I wish I did tell you that nobody is like you,
you are in my soul, spirit, flesh, and heart and in my mind
each word and act of you does carry great meaning,
that you are truly lovely and far past pretty to me
so soft, entrusting and utterly intimate you take my hand.

Now a virus comes silently as if it's a secret for everyone
and no human can remain uninfected and are to it immune,
where locked-down away from you I miss you terribly.
I wish I did tell you

that love stays eternally far past the other side of life,
in the past, present and future everything carries meaning,
where life is only a struggle against the powers of darkness,
that I love you through every big and small event
and in all places and times you do to me remain the right person,
I wish I did tell you...

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Gert Strydom

I Wish I Had Said (Rondeau)

(for Annelize)

I wish I had said how lovely you are to me
and I am saying this with sincere affection
never did I the depth of my love to you mention
while you were of all other lovers free
and daily images in my thoughts of you I see
as if you are in every great and good emotion.

I wish I had said
and daily images in my thoughts of you I see,
never did I the depth of my love to you mention
and I am saying this with sincere affection
how different everything should be,
I wish I had said...

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Gert Strydom

I Wish Our Lives So Much Different To Be (Sonnet Sequence)

I am waiting months for a thing in the mail
and people are down to daily living in fear
while there is just sad news that we do hear:
of being infected by a virus that do others ail

and with too many patients hospitals fail,
while people are afraid others are too near,
as governments scramble for the right gear
and it seems that the virus will prevail,

while we are down to standing in lines,
as we do live in a time of a nightly curfew,
cooperation to the government are giving,
are prohibited from cigarettes and wines.
Restricted freedom is not something new:
if in communism and China we are living.

II

If in communism and China we are living:
we are down to wearing facial masks,
with state control in almost everything,
trying to stick to the government's tasks.

I am down to remembering the times
and the things that we together did do
while the morning news is full of crimes
and right now I am so terribly missing you,

learn about a beautiful girl hanging in a tree,
the police are asking for information about it
and I wish our lives so much different to be
while this virus is causing havoc bit by bit

but to me as a woman you are the one and only
while apart from each other we do remain lonely.

I Wish That I Could Clearly Recall The Day (Italian Sonnet)

I wish that I could clearly recall the day
the exact moment, the instant that we did meet
but it runs away like something with ever moving feet
as if the emotions between us are ever at play

and now I cannot really clearly say
what had happened but that moment was sweet,
each other we did pleasantly greet
and although that time had slipped away

to both of us later it meant so much
and at the times when we are apart
nothing can our true love remove
and its impact lingers in each touch
are in each glance like a silent kind of art
which does its sweet presence prove.

Gert Strydom

I Wish That We Could Forever

Our love came to fullness,
before the church bell
rang off midnight.

Before twelve o'clock you were a well built nymph,
that kisses and are kissed
and I was free from everything around me.

My small manhood got a life of its own
and grew much larger
and was prominent against you

You were the flower,
that lovingly folded open and drew me tenderly deeper
into the godly dew inside of you.

I could feel you shake and tremble beneath me
and I were part of you and you of me
and so intense was that pleasure, that soul and spirit melted together.

The night passes dark and the moon and stars,
flies past in the sky and a smell like that of rain
hangs shrouding between you and me.

Your soft body lies hot against me and I am amazed,
when we lie like Adam and Eve naked
and no words can really express our emotions and feelings.

At two o'clock we again thirst for each other
and the windowpanes are wet with the rain,
that sieves down outside and somewhere a thunder strikes down.

a Neighbour's dog howls like a wolf for the night,
but no whether and nothing can stop the passion
and the feelings between us
and I wish that we could forever be
like this in each other's arms.

I Wish That With Tokens Of Love My Words Could Glow

I wish that with tokens of love my words could glow,
that some secret kind of grace they could obtain,
that the depth and span of my true feelings you might know
and yet what I want to say does in my heart remain

when my words do only express a bitter kind of woe
and where I want to bring laughter and joy I do bring pain
when I do not really know how to in verse my true feelings show
and I do err again and again

but when I do look in my heart my fears I do loose
and simply the right words I do find to use.

Gert Strydom

I Wish To Have Met You In Your Prime (Un-Wreathed Octave)

I wish to have met you in your youth and prime,
at a time when the things we do
are true as is reason to rhyme,
as now I see great qualities in you
as life takes its course, as to life we bow,
and kindness you do bestow and as my wife,
you make me alive and in happiness you do glow
in a world that is at times full of strive.

Gert Strydom

I Wish You Could See The Cosmos (Refrain Stanza)

I wish you could see the cosmos in the veldt in the green
where they do flower in a pink, purple and white sheen
wildly do cover the grassy sidewalks in their abundance
do in the strong breeze everywhere in the sun dance
in one of the loveliest scenes that I have ever seen
where this kind of lustre must have been in Eden of old
or in unspoiled spots in nature of which I had been told
and to have you right here with me I am very keen
where they do flower in a pink, purple and white sheen.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder About How Christmas Should Really Be?

In the distance on a Sunday I hear a church-bell ring,
this Sunday is also for other people a season of festivity,
when the muezzin from the minaret in the distance calls loudly.
At night crackers and fireworks go off in the sky
and outside it's raining for a whole week long.
My beans push their tendrils up the reeds and flower white,
the peppers, brinjals and tomatoes are knee-high,
the pumpkins and Makataan-watermelons flower yellow
and onions push their thin green fingers up through the ground
when God in this summer gives new life to the earth.
The birds sing their songs of praise day and night
while humanity waits upon Christmas,
the shops overflow with all kinds of gifts,
Christmas-cakes finger-licking nice are to be bought
and still the hobo begs,
the homeless gum-sniffing disowned rejected child
and the unemployed white-man at almost every traffic-light.
A scorched young white-man
asks me for thirty Rand,
which does give new hope to him
when he can take bread and milk
to his shack in the squatter-camp.
I wonder about how Christmas should really be,
in a country where everyone lives only for himself
and hold the devil for the rest,
believe that people are too bad to work
and for that reason stand and beg
but do not walk in their tracks
where no work is available to them
and I do remember the God
that came as a human to this earth,
that brought Him as a sacrifice
to save all of humanity
and realise that each good word and act
is a gift to someone on every day of December,
that a person should not only celebrate Christmas on Christmas-day
and that God still does generously pour out His love and mercy.
l'Envoi
On Christmas-day I smell barbeque,

when the neighbours have a hubbub from early to late,
the grandchildren are overwhelmed with their gifts
and a four-year old girl says to me:
"a person should pray and pray again,
we should pray continuously without stopping
and that everything then will turnout to be very well."
I see tears and hope in the eyes of a rejected child,
see the man with the notice-board at the traffic-light smiling happily
and it's as if the hobo walks with a skip in his walk,
in the eyes of a broken person I see faith and new hope,
I notice a young white-man in jubilation as he has found a job
and there are balloons blowing away in the wind.

[Poet's note: In December it is summer in the southern hemisphere of the earth
where the seasons are opposite to those in the northern hemisphere of the
earth.]

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Gert Strydom

I Wonder About Humanity

When the sand-brown Ratel armoured cars
does burst through a village of mud huts
of the local population
in the middle of the night
with canon barrels and machineguns
are aimed carefully
and people do flee frightened
before the horror that is coming

then I do wonder about humanity
about being a Christian
when the chaplain
does read out of the Bible and do pray
and then I do wonder where the devil really is?

Gert Strydom

I Wonder How Far

I wonder how far
our relationship
in your heart is over,
when I still get nice kisses
from you

Maybe a little space
is all that you need
and contact
must only be in nice embraces.

To much lies between us
and ironically
my sacrifices make
that in a way
you become my girlfriend again
and still I do not know
where everything is going
and maybe
it doesn't really matter anymore.

Maybe we must let the nice being together
stretch longer
and draw a line
through all the painful things
and start every thing
all over again.

Maybe things will be better
where I now have to act
totally independent
and it's true
that in a way
you still have the capacity
to let me be a better man,
than I can on my own
and the feelings and emotions
that I read in your eyes
nothing and nobody

can make undone.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder How I Fit Into My New Country

Respect for other people
and self are missing
and while I go up the steps
of the bus
teenage girls are shouting
loudly to each other
and a ghetto blaster,
is playing very loud music
and it's much worst
than in a mad bazaar.

a Toddler pushes her fingers
one after the other
into her nose
and draws lines
on seats and windows
and her mother
wipes her nose against her jersey.

An overweight lady
sits down next to me
and there's a sharp smell
that hits my nose
and no other seat
to go to
and I wonder if she
bathed this week,
or this month
and are scared that head lice
are going to jump on to me.

The bus draws away
and misses a car narrowly
and jerks
while the driver changes gears,
as if he's struggling
to get the right one.

When I get off at the bus stop

there's a man relieving himself
and the urine smell,
hangs heavy in the air
and I wonder how
I fit into my new country.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder If All Men Long For A Girl... (Cavatina)

I wonder if all men long for a girl
who has some stay,
acts at time as a harpy, whore and mate;
as she portray
a woman of utmost consequence,
every day
an angel in her own beauty and wit,
and truly blessed is she that has it.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder If Time Does Exist Outside Our World?

I wonder if time does exist outside our world
or does the gear-work of the universe just go on and on
with a own kind of aloofness
that stands loose from all earthly things?

Gert Strydom

I Wonder If You Know How Much I Do Long For You

when the days and nights feel as if a dark cloud is hanging over us,
when winter becomes far too long and continually do linger,
when far too slowly life is taking its course.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder If You Know Today

I wonder if you know today
about the feelings I had
when last night we knelt to pray,
when hand in hand we were both glad?

Even the silence between us are whispering
telling romantic stories of selfless endless love,
suddenly there is something special in everything
while we know of deep things that nothing can remove.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder In What Season

God in His great grace
has made each and every season
with its own purpose and place

and I wonder in what season did life
with its intricacies begin,
was it in the hot summer sun
or during the winter chill?

Gert Strydom

I Wonder In Whose Arms You Do Awake

I wonder in whose arms
you do wake this morning
and who lies comfortable against you
and would have wanted just a moment

but time moves on
while my life
moves at full speed

and I wish for you to disappear
into oblivion and with you the pain
that our separation did bring.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder What A Bus Ticket Buys

The driver fights with a passenger
that she thinks sleeps at times
on the top level of the bus
and something must be wrong
in her life
as she climbs into a child
because he did not take a school bus

I wonder what
a bus ticket buys,
but it stays far better
to take a bus
than to have to walk a long distance.

I wonder
if it takes a special person
to drive a bus,
or what rights it gives
above that of other people
if you climb behind the steering
of a bus?

Somebody asks the white
bus driver lady
for what she is looking
this morning and suddenly
she's silent
and I can ride in peace further
while she swallows her tongue.

Bus drivers that are rude
I have experience a lot of times
and it has happened
that one stares hateful
at me
because I am white
and wanted to cut
every ticket of the coupon.

Still I am thankful
to use a bus
when I need one
and that some drivers
makes it a pleasure
to drive with them.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder What Has Happened?

Dear Lord, I wonder what has happened
to man, that he has lost the trust in You,
has lost the trust in Your word,
has lost the trust in Your existence

and have become a god
in his own eyes,
does like his mother Eve,
his father Adam
now believe the snake's lies?

Gert Strydom

I Wonder Where I Am With You?

Sometimes I do hope
that the feeling between us
will not be lost
as if I can catch moments
with old love.

Still change does come with time,
our days do run into years
and I do not know if you
do still love me.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder Where Is An Untouched Place That Firmly Does Stand

Was the Son of God ever seen aeons ago strolling on South Africa's farmland?
Did He take the fine red-brown earth in His omnipotent hand
where now are the factories, the furnaces and the concrete buildings of hell
and I wonder where is an untouched place that firmly does stand
while human beings are under money's evil possessing spell?
(Still life is just a brittle, wilting, decaying strand
while we do in technological palaces dwell.)

Is there anybody who still does God's countenance of love display
and who still does walk upon His righteous way
right up to the New Jerusalem
while the forces of darkness creep into the very day,
while God does keep the winds of war in check
or do I struggle alone along the narrow way?

Gert Strydom

I Wonder Where You Are In It All?

I know of signs
of stars raining down
from the sky
and loosing their glitter,
of the sun
that doesn't shine for a day
and the moon
that disappears for a time
and then hangs red as blood
and of the powers of heaven that shake.

I know about people trying to make peace
and how the world,
turns more and more to war
and how nations try to gain resources
from each other.

I know about famine
and deadly illnesses,
that spread unending over the continent
and about earthquakes that let cities crumble
and tsunamis that bring deadly waves.

I know people in cities
that despises each other in the traffic,
who curse in anger,
who find joy from loose girls,
who hang out in nightclubs
and sit self-righteous
in the front rows of the church.

I wonder where you are in it all
and if Christ,
has a place in your heart.

[References: Matthew 24: 6-7,29-30, Joel 3: 9-15, Revelation 6: 12-13,11: 18,2 Timothy 3: 1-5.]

I Wonder Why Each Woman

I wonder why each woman
does want to control, regulate
and order her man about
as if the marriage is something
that tells her that she can
but in moments of disaster and strife
she does return to be a normal kind of wife.

Gert Strydom

I Wonder Why I Am

Delimited as self, as man, as a person,
a human being
I see the steady passing of day
in its determined egress of escaping light,

I experience the falling, welcoming night
the solitude, the sparkling city lights
and wonder why I am
existing here, now?

Gert Strydom

I Would Again Want A Relationship With You

I would again want a relationship with you
try to wind time back
and with experience try to turn things around,
making something else, something much bigger out of everything

try to watch out for mistakes of the past,
try and dissuade you from painful choices
and wish that you could turn like a storybook through our lives,
Maybe things would have been better, but we are human and imperfect

and maybe time and again we would have made other mistakes
saying the wrong things to each other
and still know that we truly love each other,
however life goes through our humanity
while there are still tomorrows lying ahead
and I wonder when we can start again?

Gert Strydom

I Would Be Happy To Live In A Town Like This (Cavatina)

I would be happy to live in a town
like this, with houses,
a big old brick church with a high column,
girls in blouses
that are talking carefree, smiling at me;
some young spouses
are walking hand in hand as they do talk,
a hollyhock flowers pink on its stalk.

Gert Strydom

I Would Be Happy To Live In A Town Like This (Cavatina) [2]

I would be happy to live in a town
like this, with houses,
a big old brick church with a high column,
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that are talking carefree, smiling at me;
some young spouses
are walking hand in hand as they do talk,
a hollyhock flowers pink on its stalk.

Gert Strydom

I Write

I write and imagine
and create my own story
and what I think I write down
without anybody being able to stop me
and there's a knight clothed in steel
who's finished fighting and unsaddles his horse.

I write and imagine
and make everybody's story
of peace descending to earth,
children honouring their parents,
being exemplary and prepared to study,
but reality is cruel and naked
and I write and imagine.

Gert Strydom

I Write (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Kenneth Patchen, after Wessel Pretorius)

I write the Africa plain's vastness around you,
send the elephant-cow and grown male lion to protect you,
draw the cobalt blue high-veldt's sky as a curtain everywhere,
send a horde of the Zulu-impis against all kinds of danger.
I write about coots in the marsh
and a swarm of hadidah-ibises that fly past screeching,
along with eagles that do turn on the upper air-streams
to bring you days that continue with tranquillity.
Away from the concrete-jungle that wants to swallow everything up,
from people that in avarice want to destroy others,
I pray the Lord God back into your days,
that you do take all beautiful things into your heart,
that your days become holy like that of a temple
and that God do continue to pour out His love and mercy upon you.

[References: "There are not many kingdoms left" by Kenneth Patchen. "Nie baie koninkryke oor nie, my meisie" (Not many kingdoms left, my girl) by Wessel Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

I Write Because I Want To

I write because I want to,
I am going to wear my hair short in a military style
practise discipline to jog every day
to keep my life fit and balanced
and will write verses according to my beliefs
putting the government
and everyone that oppress my people
in their place
and if it wants to rhyme, I will let it rhyme,
I will use free verse if it wants to

and I will tell what is hurting me,
what is having disconcert,
what brings happiness to my life,
what I see as beautiful
and of everything
that leads to destruction or to a greater experience
and even in the darkness I will dig.

Gert Strydom

I Write Humble Prayers To God (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Governments have used and abused me as they came
the oppression of both white and black are all the same,
while sacrifices I was forced to make and action to take
where they acted within and without God's mighty name,

where in this life I am kept from a reckoning,
where unemployed the loss of a career does sting
where so-called men of God do trample my life down
I write humble prayers to God as if He is listening

and when my enemies' lives are covered in stone
their work and its impact will forever be gone
when God in His judgement everyone will meet
where even the effects of the past will be undone

and then I ask from Him who does everything see,
to judge them all in the way that they did judge me.

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Gert Strydom

I Write Hymns To You

(after Cas Vos)

I write to you hymns, psalms and songs of praise
about where you do fit into my life,
give them to you like clothes from a wardrobe,
my verses range over all kinds of territories
and like this I hold you constantly tightly against me.

[Reference: "Ek weef vir jou met rympatrone melodieë" (I weave with
rhyme-patterns melodies for you) by Cas Vos.]

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Gert Strydom

I Write This To You In Love (Italian Sonnet)

(after Christina Rossetti)

I write this to you in love and not in rebuke,
I love you true but my God the very most,
without Him in love and the world we are lost
and I can at no other deity as a ruler look,

were His voice is gentle like a bubbling brook
and His blessings and love comes without a cost,
where in righteousness He sends out His heavenly host,
daily He shelters me safely in His tranquil nook

and where I love God uppermost and first I do deem
that in sincerity I cannot love you overmuch,
while I do love you intimately as a man true,
where no love would I find for you if I do not love Him
and the love in principle and my heart is such:
that I cannot love and serve Him if there is not love for you.

[Reference:"Sonnet Trust me, I have not earned your dear rebuke"
by Christina Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

I Write To Set Thoughts And Feelings Free

I write to set thoughts and feelings free,
to struggle against the oppression's indignity,
to find answers and to expose those that trample,
to find a way to serenity.

I write things that I experience and see,
trying to make my own reality
comprehensible to anyone
as a way to connect with me.

I write and stand somewhat alone
against society, almost stripped to the bone
ignoring political correctness
of the in-crowd in search of a society that is gone.

I write because its time that someone does something
while the clouds of destruction is gathering
in the hands of murderers, rapists and their leaders
as for a better world I am searching.

Gert Strydom

I Wrote A Verse And Thought No More

(to the Afrikaans poet Louis Esterhuyzen)

I wrote a verse and thought no more,
will I write, not another thought to paper put,
and I will be free from petty critics, who with words do cut,
be free from elitist poets who my work deplore,

who claim that I write faster than they can type,
that no real expertise is found in my art,
that I have sold my soul to every reader in parcel and part
that I am the stereotype

of the rubble that are trying to become something
and when I put my pen down
while my thoughts were wandering,
You reminded me that I am Your very own,

that my talent, the words I do impart,
flow freely from my heart.

Gert Strydom

I Yearn For The Secrets Of Nature (Sonnet)

I yearn for the secrets of nature
where wild game graze next to the dust road
and I long for the veldt where it is silent,
silent from the bustle of the city,
where the sky has an own blue hue,
where the rain comes in the afternoon with thundershowers
and you can see interesting things if you look carefully,
can be astonished by insects, animals and flowers
but in the city I hear the turbines of Impala platinum singing continually,
are choking from the coal smoke from the squatter camp that is nearby
and on the highway people are angry and cannot restrain themselves,
at factories in the distance I notice pollution and vapour,
the money machines at Carnival casino jingle without end
and on Friday afternoons the whistling of the alarms echo
when poisonous gasses and dangerous things build up at the factories
and it is at these times that I want to leave the city,
go back to the veldt where you can find the works of God
and be able to believe in Him with the faith of a child.

Gert Strydom

I, The Unknown Soldier

The sun burnt down ferociously
when he stumbled
and on an unknown passer I laid my hand
giving my orders, on the way to His crucifixion.

The bloodthirsty crowd and I showered
our curses, slander and humiliation on Him
but His eyes cut into my very soul and He was silent
stoical with unsurpassable love

and when I took the big hammer, drilling nails through Him
planting the cross with comrades in a hole and hanging Him,
thunderbolts were unleashed, nature lost its laws
and I a soldier, a mere human was caught

to a deed crying to high heaven
where I crucified God Himself and He pardoned me.

[Reference: Ek, die onbekende soldaat (I, the Unknown Soldier) by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

I'm Astounded By His Strange Love

I am astounded by His strange love,
by the way He lived just as a mere man
where He the creator God chose
to Himself bore man's punishment.

I am astounded by His strange love,
by the way He wrote in the sand,
forcing the men who wanted to kill to leave
and forgiving Mary Magdalene.

I am astounded by His strange love,
by the way that He daily dwells with me,
being gentle like a unblemished dove
where I am a man full of sin and iniquity,

I am astounded by His strange love

Gert Strydom

I'm Going To Kiss Her (Parody)

Oh, I am going to kiss her,
my most beautiful flower returns to me,
in comfort I will wait upon her,
when she raises her arms, she is coming back
and then, with the woman in the morning glow
I will wave at my most lovely darling,
I will cut whirlpools against the blossoming first star
of the day.

Gert Strydom

Ibises

The golden cocker spaniel
tried to catch some sacred ibises
where they were pecking
the ground
for snails and earthworms

and they were flapping
their huge wings
and screaming in rage
while they got airborne

and the small dog
came back to me
wagging the stump
of its snipped off tail
as if reporting back
that it had done its duty.

Gert Strydom

Ice-Skating

They are one with the music,
the muscled man and slim woman
and every movement is smooth
in a combination of grace and power
as if they are doing a ballet piece on ice,
they move rhythmical as masters of balance,
become part of the story that they portray
and when they come to a halt
the crowd come to their feet to applaud.

Gert Strydom

I'D Rather Give All Of My Love (Persian Quatrain) (In Reply To Dorothy Parker)

I'd rather give all of my love and give it well
and have a heartbreaking story to tell
than act selfish, thin and wise
and land in the pits of another kind of hell.

Gert Strydom

Idyll

Sometimes there were days when the sun
hang hot in the summer afternoon
while carefree we could lay next to each other
with the fragrances of jasmine, gardenia
and lavender swishing in on the hot wind.

Sometimes there were days where we could hear
turtle-doves cooing in the great old acacia tree,
how the wind chimes on the porch
jollily played the refrain of the wind
when we lay together and looked at each other.

Sometimes there were days that your fingers
were in mine pressing my hand on your breast
while your auburn hair (sometimes naturally blond) were spread over my chest,
while you looked with the fire of passion moments long at me
before gently for an eternity we melted into each other.

Sometimes there were days when thunderbolts came down outside,
when scared the dogs fled into the house
when we could smell the rain
could see how the wild wind goes jerking through the rose trees
but over us a peaceful rainbow kept hanging.

Tranquillity, a deeper kind of rest was everywhere
and the garden was beautiful like Eden,
the noise of the city was somewhere far away
and when you loved me with all of your love
moments and days were happy, good and right.

Gert Strydom

Idyll [2]

Sometimes there were days when the sun
hang hot in the summer afternoon
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Gert Strydom

If

If I could be more than one person at a time,
I would follow the true God
like a religious fanatic,
would pray ten times a day
and live in a self-sacrificing way,

the other I would chase
every pretty skirt,
flirt with every sexy girl
and voluptuously insert
my member in numerous cavities,
mate with each and everyone
who offered the opportunity,
giving them a time to remember me by
and live a life of limitless passion
and indulgence

but now there's only me
the man who tries to live with integrity,
who seeks balance in a world of gray,
where truth and reality are twisted
in a mixture of white and black
who follows fidelity
and in sincerity
gets down on his knees to pray.

[Reference: If by Yahia Lababidi.]

Gert Strydom

If All Of Your Love Were From My Heart Ripped (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

If the world were of all flowers and trees stripped,
if all of your love were from my heart ripped
how gloomy and dull and lonely the world would be
as in it there would be no place of tranquillity for me
and to face future I would be totally unequipped
but here we both are with one another in love
where I do believe it's a blessing from God above
and even my humanity would be from me nipped
if all of your love were from my heart ripped

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Gert Strydom

If Birth (In Answer To Johan Steyn)

If birth is only the first part
of everything that is creation,
how did a world exist
when you and I entered it?

With other beings, people
things like plants in it
and although at times half twisted
it is as if everything reaches
and sings to a godly being.

If we in confusion reach for concepts
that we were at a time part of God
why then can we only with our bodies create life,
and not find the binding

that gives that energy to a dead thing,
and why do you use blasphemy
to renounce the Creator
and jeer along with the prince of darkness?

Or do you not realize
that a rock stays a rock,
and man is no god,
at times just an animal fool
who can propagate
and sometimes with integrity
and intelligence seek
a higher being who brings meaning?

[Reference: Die Evangelie volgens Valentinus (The gospel according to Valentinus) by Johan Steyn.]

Gert Strydom

If Ever I Can Travel On The Road

If ever I can travel on the road
that meanders the blue-green sea
it will be such a thrill that I would be happy
and I would probably see on the waves a passing boat
with sails billowing in the wind contentedly
but destiny has put on my shoulders an age-old load.

I would love to dance in the splashing rain
while lightning bolts thunders down besides me
like at a party with disco lights it would seem jolly
and I will see them flashing past again and again
while I felt from all obligations free
but my body is filled with a kind of terrible pain.

A rose opening in the morning at my door,
or a evening primrose welcoming the moonlight
would be quite a lovely sight,
would be something I could give to someone that I adore
but everything perishes as if cursed to death by the night
and so my garden is vexed forevermore.

Gert Strydom

If Ever That Which Is Between Us Dies

If that which is between us which is holy
shivers and dies and with me you are through
there is one thing, that I beg which only
I am asking, in sincerity of you

that about our bliss, our trust and about us
to no one you give any kind of absolution
and talk about many others if you must
but on me do not take this retribution.

Keep that which is between you and me
to yourself, as something not to be said
and give to my sincerity some dignity
if our lives go separately ahead,

let there be sanctity that our feelings retain,
which you do not to a lover have to explain.

Gert Strydom

If Every Thing Can Be Explained By Science

If every thing can be explained by science
and no God exist
then please explain
the human mind
and all the thoughts and emotions
that it holds
and why a human
wants to pray to a higher being called God.

Gert Strydom

If Everything That I Do Dream

If everything that I do dream
blows away to be nothing

then life devours me
and against destiny I am half-blinded;
in my body, soul and spirit a man
but in my heart I stay a child

that still does hope and trust on Your salvation
while I do try to keep myself on the right way.

Gert Strydom

If I

If I could grab
the heavenly blue
from the sky
and could place it
in a picture,
could capture the black
of the night on it
and stars hanging above
I would almost be
like the Creator,
or maybe it would have made
Vincent proud,
but it's only
a few blunt words
that I leave here.

Gert Strydom

If I Build My Life Out Of Magical Nights

If I build my life
out of magical nights
my room becomes a castle
where you and I share our dreams.

In the background there are violins
playing in a string orchestra
and the sound
that falls over us trembling
lies soft in our own small universe.

I see stars in your eyes
and maybe it's Orion
or the sun up above
and at dusk the moon hangs
as if caught in its own orbit.

There's a pearl around your neck
that's whiter than snow,
but your rosebuds bloom
before my lips reach them.

Outside the rain falls buzzing
against the window,
but we are lock off from every thing

and I hear you moan in ecstasy
while a thunderbolt rumbles far away
and you are soft and hot around me
and forever I can stay like this.

Gert Strydom

If I Can Have

If I can have the blazing sun, as company
from the time it blushes red face,
smiles bright and loving warm

if I can have the blue sky in different hues
enthralled with its serene silences,
as a endearing presence

if I can have the moon in different colours
of yellow, white, sometimes orange
and shapes from round to sickle
as a roving eye, an evoking presence
of romance and beauty

if I can have the lights of stars,
flickering, shining in a myriad of colours
as the glory of ever present entities
beacons into the unknown

I will need nothing more
to know that a loving God,
had constructed all of these
in their details and functions
from simple to complicated
beyond the scope and knowledge
of mere man.

Gert Strydom

If I Cannot Find You

If I cannot find you
as the ray of sun
among the splendours
that this world holds
then they are nothing more
than just empty colour and form.

If you are not there to love
then life has lost its meaning
and the world has just become
an empty place
and everything in it
has lost the essence
that it truly holds

If your love does not exist
then living is in vain
and the world
just a place full of pain
without any consideration
belonging or care.

Gert Strydom

If I Could (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

If I could catch the sun for you
I would have hanged it as a necklace around your neck,
if I could pick the blue sky for you
it would tell of my great longing
where I do remember your summer-laughter,
your smile that unfolds like stars,
how pretty you were and still are
but maybe I am still clinging to the past,
do try to cage in the things of years ago
but I cannot lure the summer-days back of long ago,
still less grab stars for you from the universe
and these are only words that I do hammer out
to say again and again to you
that my love for you still does lie deep.

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Gert Strydom

If I Could Catch You In A Verse (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Lina Spies)

If I could catch you in a verse
no beauty or depth would be able to express you,
then eternally you would hang for a moment in the universe
but my inability does pull me to humble words,
where you do make lame my reasoning and analysis
while words by them self about beauty do break through to heaven
but yet I do thank God, who does touch my words,
who does restrain me to light the fires of hell here on the earth,
where your name becomes for me something holy and noble,
where the rhythm does praise you as a companion and wife,
where God does pour out His blessings on words and on you and me
when you do keep bringing me the joy for words
and both of us stand naked before Him and each other
where our days go to the end of everything.

[Reference:"Beperking" (Limitation)by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

If I Could Get The Look In Your Eyes

If I could get the look in your eyes
out of my heart,
I will know
that you do not love me anymore

I will be able
to look away from your photograph,
I will probably be able to comprehend
the meaning to this life
and that love is not enough
when destiny rips with its claws

but you are only human
and whatever I am wishing for
can change nothing
about how our things are going
and to the course of life

and at night
you are with me
like a drawing
of your paintings
that hang on my walls,
you are bonded to me.

Gert Strydom

If I Could Have A Lodge At The Sea Somewhere

If I could have a lodge
at the sea somewhere
preferably at the south coast,
could lie in the sun

would you come along
and drive into my dreams
and paint the walls like a castle
where only you and I can stay?

We would make fruit salad
from our own bananas,
mangoes and papaws
and would fish every day,
fry barracouta on the coals
and there we might
fall madly in love

and you would paint and hang up paintings
while I try to catch a few words
on paper.

If I could have a lodge
at the sea somewhere
would you come along
come on... what do you say?

Gert Strydom

If I Could Know

If I could know for what reason
the whys and wherefores happen
and could know the reasons
behind all things,
I would have told you
and maybe it would have made no difference
or even matter.

Still there are things
that nobody can measure,
like the intentions
and message and feeling of a kiss,
but for the two that are doing it.

Gert Strydom

If I Could Make The Big Orange Sun

If I could make the big orange sun
hang forever
over the horizon
and the magic colours
that is light yellow, golden
and goes from orange to red
touch some clouds
and could also get
the blue of the sky,
it would have been
a beautiful painting
and I would want it like
Vincent van Gogh's
starry night.

Gert Strydom

If I Had My Way (Parody)

(with apologies to Roger Woddis)

If I had my way with communist men
I'd bath them all in oil,
I'd fill a pot full of tea with every vitamin
and make it boil
and serve it to every terrorist
even those that shelter him
and if I were a moralist
I would anoint every limb.

Fanatics are a civil-breed in great need
who dependent men gather for fun;
who beg them until they bleed,
yes, every single one, every daughter and son
and they probably go abroad
to do the things they are at,
but instead I love my cat
and not like that.

For we should love the human mind
as wisdom lead us to,
and those that don't are probably blind
or somewhere behind
and cannot see either black or blue;
who probably eat and do not pay the bill
and listen to the restaurant's proprietor shriek
and beg, rant and demand until
they pay the other week or he turn the cheek.

[Reference: "Down With Fanatics!" By Roger Woddis.]

Gert Strydom

If I Had My Way With You (Rubaiyat Sonnet)

If I could just have my own way with you
I would stick onto you like strong clear glue,
be accompanying you throughout the day
like some magic coming out of the blue,

as from my feet you have swept me away,
you come to almost every word I say
in and out of my mind your image dips
and continually my mind does to you stray

and I would be under your soft fingertips
be covering you, even your very hips
while you were busy driving your own car,
I would be looking, watching your sweet lips,

in the mirror and the black road of tar
while together we were travelling quite far.

Gert Strydom

If I Have To Think God To Be Female (Sicilian Septet)

(in answer to John Agard)

If I have to think God to be female
for all the beautiful things He did create
for big rainbows that are bright and not pale
for love that is something astounding great
then probably I would be drunk with ale
while to blasphemy Him I could not wait;
in the Word He declares to be male

[Reference: "Rainbow" by John Agard.]

Gert Strydom

If I Look At Light (Un-Wreathed Quatrains) (In Answer To John Milton)

If I look at light in this world of darkness
the starkness of a moonless starless night
brings nothing bright to my own consciousness
with only a flickering kind of strange sight,

the light is dim in a world of bickering,
existing is a bad reflection of Him
and the brim decline is in every thing
while we as is due act proper and prim,

in everything it still stays very true,
in what we do that the Supreme Being
who's everlasting somewhere beyond the blue,
does indeed from us not need a thing

and at His behest many thousands speed
in each deed, in nothing that we suggest,
but to His request even existence heed,
to bring constant joy, happiness and rest.

[Reference: Sonnet xix "On his Blindness" by John Milton.]

Gert Strydom

If I My God (Persian / Rubiyat Sonnet)

If I my God, do observe Your heaven above me at night
there are white, green, yellow and blue stars that shine bright
and then for moments that linger I am astounded, and breathless
and I do wonder at Your great omnipotent might

and more in wonder I am by the knowledge that You do bless
each human being and that You do address
each problem and worry that does him befall
where by our own fall to sin we live in this great mess

that does encompass, our own world and all
that we do, that we feel and are, even if we are great or small
does bare great importance to You
even if we do not initially do hear or even regard Your call

and still You are present in whatever we do
to lead us back to the way that is good and true.

Gert Strydom

If I Want To Think Straight

If I want to think straight
I will find something beautiful
in the things that lies between us
that comes out of the pain.

At times a flower blooms
at place where you
would not expect a plant at all
and I have seen trees flowering
in the middle of winter

Your tears break my heart
and I know that you know far better
about yourself,
than I can
and I hope that you rest well.

Maybe being away helps
for you to know
what we have got,
and that I truly love you.

Gert Strydom

If I Were Enchanted By The Look In The Eye

If I were enchanted by the look in the eye
which can as easily kiss, caress
as weep and hate
I would be blessed and cursed
as things go.

If I were captured in the grasp
of a alluring girl
who broke through
to the centre of my soul
I would have lost it
and she would be in control
and no cross, deluge or damned fire
would have a impact on me
as destruction has already set its mark.

If demons walked this earth
impacting straight from birth,
from mother to girlfriend and wife,
from the bite on the apple
right up to the tree,
where am I
when the drug connected to the womb
is addicting me in its rhapsodies of bliss?

Is destiny simply throwing out
its dice,
impacting on where the numbers fall
and every human playing for himself?

Or is love a cure to all of this,
love for the mother, girlfriend, wife,
the neighbour and the Lord?

Gert Strydom

If I Were Right There With You (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after John Keats)

If I were right there with you, you would hear my sighs
that for many years I have been under your sweet spell
and of this day and my love I would be able to tell,
by passion and sincerity be armed for love's enterprise,

be armed like a heroic soldier whose enemy dies,
or a ancient lord whose breast proudly do swell,
or a ancient farmer gathering his flock in the dell
who would be trembling by the look in your eyes,

yet still I do truly love you and to me you are sweet,
you are the picture of how the loveliest woman should be
and your smile, your lips and arms are no intoxication
where I do constantly long for you and want you to meet,
as you are truly wonderful and the likeness of an angel to me
but alas I have no rite or any kind of real incantation.

[Reference: 'To ***** Had I a man's fair form, then might my sighs' by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

If In The Early Autumn (Refrain Stanza)

(after Emily Dickinson, after Lina Spies)

If in the early autumn you do come to me
then days of summer it will again be.
I am lonely in everything that I do
when for months I do wait on you
and stupid I am with love constantly
as I long for things to be as it was
while almost in a moment weeks do pass,
but when on a whim you do come suddenly
then days of summer it will again be.

[References:"If you were coming in the fall" by Emily Dickinson."Wie die verlange ken" (Knowing the longing)by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

If Love Is Selfless

If love is selfless
without the meaning
of power-play or greed
but do exist out of the simple
taking and giving between two persons
and is not bound to time or pleasure
but comes unequal and does flower as something
is identified as coming purely from the heart
then its has got a bond that is more noble and holy
than any other thing.

Gert Strydom

If Loving In Your Eyes I See

If loving in your eyes I see,
as witness of the feelings between us
where you love selfless with nothing envious
then lucky among men I will be

as if like a goddess you were born for me
and everything will be glorious
while I am guarded by your love from everything heinous
while our lives from other lovers will be free

and every day the sheer beauty of your body and face
will fill my mind and heart
while your words and deeds fall like rain
we will live in amazing grace
will never part
and be happy even in pain.

Gert Strydom

If My Oppression Has No End

I

If my oppression has no end,
even if I am downtrodden when my life is spent
I will receive it as if from the hand of God.
If my oppressors take everything that I own,
not only the two cars, which they have already stolen,
if my oppressors by acts of law,
by affirmative action take away
all means to make a living,
I will still rejoice in the love of God
as everything is permitted by Him.

II

Lord God, see me in my awakening
when the sun rises every morning,
be my companion, that leads on the way
when all my dreams are shattered,
when my enemies gather
and are joyous over my destruction,
when I loose hope, then please have mercy
and show Your saving love to me.

[Reference: "From Prison" by Todros Ben Judah Abulafia.]

Gert Strydom

If My Years Are Drawing To Their End (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

If you in me behold, the time of year
when things are withering
when winter draws near
and winds are getting icy cold,
in me the years are drawing to their end,
as summer is spend, I am getting old
and the endless night, is fading my last light
and every breath is drawing me closer,
closer to death and still my eyes are burning,
with a yearning, a need for your love
then as always you are true
with love springing from you:
something that may last,
be passed to the world beyond.

Gert Strydom

If No Man Is An Island?

If no man is an island
and if every human being
has an impact on all others,
then why can man not find peace
and are the warhorses
still thundering by
and does the bell at the cemetery
keep on tolling?

[Reference: No man is an island by John Donne]

Gert Strydom

If On Visit In A Hospital You Do Lose Your Way

you will see professional people
that is doing their duty,
some that kisses each other goodbye, some who pray
to the God that they do serve
and there are things

that a person cannot express verbally, like the small happiness
that a single rose does sometimes bring,
the suffering of others that goes down to the soul,
that people do at times shake hands without being invited

that a parent does radiate
while being proud at the birth of a new child,
where you do see a smoking man coughing up blood
and a nurse does try and get him through the night

without getting any recognition for it, as if she is an angel.

Gert Strydom

If Only You Want To Be Mine

Will I remember your voice,
when silence has come to all your words?

Will I recall your face,
your lovely inquisitive gaze
when age has set its mark
and the look in your eyes is dark
and meaningless?

Will I yearn for the warmth of you next to me
when you can barely walk
and your body is bent crooked
by the passing of time
or will pain and utter silence destroy
that part of our love
which still does remain?

Will I remember your quick wit
when there is no more of it
and meaning has turned to senselessness?

Will you know me still
when at the doorway of death you are ill
and beat me futilely with both fists
and then wrap your arms around my neck
when in rage no answers come to you?

Or will you walk out of my life
and forget that you are my wife
and live on in emptiness
in a world without heartache and strive
while I do love you still,
do comprehend whenever you are ill
and even if others think that we are lost
I am willing to go beyond the bounds of mere will

if only you want to be mine.

If People Fabricate Situations (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

If people fabricate situations
where you want to fit in
the culture, values and norms
(like in the voortrekkers or army)
of the Afrikaner

as if we are people
in whom everything is noted to book
who destroy ourselves
to fit into the system

you are totally lost
and maybe it's in your own spirit
where the fear bites, bites
as if you yourself do not fulfil

do not know God, honour our serve Him
and systematically is busy destroying yourself
where you believe that Johnny has not died
from a overdose of drugs
and are just lying unconscious and you yourself
are existing half lifeless
as if you are standing at the forefront
of a new revolution
while really you are perishing like Johnny.

[References: voortrekkers: A youth organization like the boy scouts. Calvyn op hitte (Calvin on heat) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

If She Did Know About My Love For Her (In Answer To Sara Teasdale) (Roundel)

If she did know about my love for her
never again would my painful tears flow,
constantly we would still be together,
if she did know.

Like a great fountain our joy would overflow,
in all her longings there would be no other
always I would see her bright smile glow,

while daily she would small flowers gather;
even in times of cold winter and snow
we would kiss, embrace each other rather,
if she did know...

Gert Strydom

If She Do Not Love Me, Or Regard Me (Collins Sestets)

Will I over her be in some despair
as she is beautiful, in her looks fair,
like a blossom on a early spring day,
a fruit tree where all of the small birds play;
if she do not love me, or regard me,
what will I care, even if she is lovely?

How can she somehow come to my own mind
even if she is graceful, very kind,
even if she is tranquil by nature
and slenderness is of her a feature;
if she do not love me, or regard me,
what will I care, even if she is lovely?

If she cares for me true, her I will woo,
some pleasant things, all in my power do,
nothing to somehow cause her any grieve
while in her sincerity I will believe;
if she do not love me, or regard me,
what will I care, even if she is lovely?

Gert Strydom

If There Is Something More (In Answer To Edgar Allan Poe) (Novelinee Sequence)

If all we are, see or may deem to be
is smashed like drops of sand on the beach
while in nothing there is constancy,
continually for something more we reach.
where we play but trifle roles that are set,
if all of life is just but on a stage
then all things are just on chance a mere bet,
where destiny strikes with a sudden rage,
then for survival man does a war wage.

If to survive man does a war wage,
then any happiness is swept away,
man yearns for the divine in every age
while actually nothing is set to stay,
while we are just actors in a kind of dream
but I know and feel life is more than this,
that things come to much more than they do seem,
where we find meaning in the way life is,
with something more in every sweet kiss

If there is something more in a sweet kiss
than chemistry and passionate feeling,
if we find happiness in human bliss,
are not set to be constant away reeling,
then somehow something lives on, we are save,
even if but mere chance still does insist,
save from oblivion's decimating wave,
even if we see nothing, as a atheist,
as in the hand of God man does exist.

Gert Strydom

If There Is Something More (Wreathed Quatrains) (In Answer To Edgar Allan Poe)

If all we are, see or may deem to be
is free like drops of sand on the beach
and in each there is no constancy
in fancy for something more we reach,

what we teach are trifle roles that are set
even if we have met, we are just on a stage
where we wage just on chance a mere bet,
where what we get, destiny gives with rage

in every age we are just actors in a dream,
like a stream where happiness is swept away
and every day nothing is as it seem
even if we deem, nothing is set to stay;

be that as it may, we know how life is,
we enjoy a kiss and passionate feelings
we are healing in happy human bliss,
more than this we are not away reeling;

even in the sting of life we are safe,
even in if grave situations does insist,
we do persist against the decimating wave,
oblivion's rave, we do in God's hand exist.

[Reference: 'A dream within a dream' by Edgar Allan Poe.]

Gert Strydom

If This Is Not How Love Is

At a time in loving kindness you smiled merrily
but now you do not act that way and are not so
and it's as if you think I want your life to overthrow
and now it's as if you do not even regard me

and this is not the way that I want you to be
and at times some of your tears do flow
and sometimes away I want to go
but without you I am never really free

and are desperate among men
and you are in my heart wherever I might dwell
and when I am away I really miss you then
and this is what happens to you as well

and if this is not how real love is,
then I have never known its depths and its bliss.

Gert Strydom

If Time (Free Verse Sonnet)

(In answer to Louis Esterhuizen)

If time does like an airport race forward
where you and I and everyone never can stand still,
where it constantly just tell about coming and going,
while all things loop the loop in a mad hellish orbit,
then there is a pre-determined place where you await me,
where no suitcases, briefcases or luggage have meaning,
where with the return you laugh with stretched out arms
and we do only look upon the beautiful and wonderful of each other.
Where every flight first-class, midnight or return
do jerk me from across the world from everything,
do constantly bring me back to you and your love,
when you and I bring experiences and life to each other,
where mere moments come to great fulfilment
and in all of this you and God do turn my whole life around.

[Reference:"As tyd dan 'n stasie is, met spore" (If time then is a station with tracks)by
Louis Esterhuizen.]

Gert Strydom

If Tonight

If tonight I could grab
the golden moon from the sky
and if a crown of stars
could radiate about you,
you might have been holy.

If I could put the fiery sun
in your glance and could grab
the scorching lighting
in each tear of you that drops,
could grab stars from the sky
and make a necklace from them,
could hang it around your neck
you might have been a goddess

but now only empty words remain
to give to you as a gift
and the knowledge
that your love goes through all things
and I read God-fearing
in your humanity.

Gert Strydom

If We Could Bend The Hour-Work Back

could make events, deeds and words undone
then this could perhaps have been a better world

and everything would have been timeless and reversible
and heartache and pain would have been able to be bended right
and it would have been possible to create a heaven on earth

but we are caught to the thing
that makes everything older,
that bends our lives
to be trivial and but mortal.

Gert Strydom

If We Do Look At Things In History (Blues Sonnet)

If we do look at things in history
no kind of rescue comes from history
and that was just another old story.

.

Peace, the government had promised me
but to war, to death they had then sent me
to set mankind from all kinds of war free.

It was bad, I was under sniper fire
saw howitzer guns open deadly fire
and we moved constantly did then tire.

Every place looked the very same
the weather, the veldt just stayed the same
but to the generals it was a game

and soldiers were sacrificed as mere pawns
in the hearts of great men where evil spawns.

Gert Strydom

If We Give Our Own Hearts To Each Other (Stave Stanza Sestets)

If we give our own hearts to each other
then in love we are joined together,
as two distinct persons forming a whole
but each true like the compass to the pole
in togetherness we are no more alone
while we are going into the unknown.

There is nothing that love cannot quench
nor for its sublime ways can recompense
and never anyone can get of it enough,
of that great thing that we know as true love
when we make someone dear, our very own,
while we are going into the unknown.

Gert Strydom

If We Must Talk In Simple Open Honesty

If we must talk in simple open honesty
about the feelings between you and me,
then at times the senses draw on swarming quarrels
to reach a kind of sheer intimacy.

The intellect reaches for much more than language,
draws to the ultimate bond of soul and body
while in the aftermath we take courage,
while longing much more closer to be

but still we love in a proper way
while passion, love and our relationship
lingers very painful day by passing day
while we feel that we can just let slip

of decent morals and yet we stay true,
while waiting for the time that is due.

Gert Strydom

If What I Feel In My Heart Is True

If what I feel in my heart is true,
then I am honestly in love with you,
with a feeling that surpasses mere passion
in what I say and do.

If I am to know that you hold the same feelings too,
with the honest light burning in your eyes
that's more tranquil than the bluest skies
then even if out of the blue,

if I can just express what's in my heart
telling you about this great awesome thing
then whatever comes we will never again part
as we will be sheltering

in the blessing that comes straight from God above
that's only a slight reflection of His love.

Gert Strydom

If Words Could

they would have conveyed my meaning
as my love does glitter like the sun
but between us it did become silent
and now I am short of the right words

and sometimes when we are together I still do feel alone
as if not even my eyes, my mouth can pervade
and bring the right message to you:

that to me you are precious
and that I do love you endlessly.

Gert Strydom

If Words Could Kill

If words could kill,
then kill they will
without impunity
reaching out
and sucking in
and circle out.

Still a leader
prohibited by law
rages his hatred out
in a neighbouring country
and watch his words spread
by the media of his own land.

Now, a great man lies dead
who could have taken
his country to civil war,
but chose peace
and the Lord instead

chopped to pieces
with a Panga-blade
slaughtered without mercy
or conscience.

Where do we draw the line
and when and where
does the killings stop?

What will this government do
when civil war erupts
and military trained white men
take up the gun?

Gert Strydom

If Words Could Kill [2]

If words could kill,
then kill they will
without impunity
reaching out
and sucking in

twisting and turning
the truth to what
it could be
smearing with more
than mud
integrity

creating from lies
a own truth
to be believed
by those to where
it spreads
destroying the soul
without indemnity.

So how do I say
shush, be quiet
to those
who slander me?

I pray to God
to judge them
and He will
at His time
and try not associate
with them

believing that the blind whip
will at a time
come in to play
as sure as the wheel turns.

If You Are Near

As long as you
are with me,
eternal will my summer be.

Even when freezing rain
drizzles down from grey clouds,
your smile brings a summer's day.

Even when life tosses the worst at my door,
I fear no pain or death
if you are near.

As long as you
are with me still,
eternal will my summer be.

Gert Strydom

If You Ask Me To Define Love (Sicilian Sonnet)

If you did ask me to define love
I would only say that it's profound,
that truly words cannot it bound,
sincerely nothing could it remove.

It\ has the essence of God above,
are in the hearts of mortals found,
a mere smile can spread it around
from of old people did for it strove

and in you I see it in its full beauty
as its impact has something divine
where it fashions our lives to be
as your character closer draws mine
while I know you do truly love me
and even in a harsh world life is fine.

Gert Strydom

If You Come To Stay With Me

If you come to stay with me
I will share my secrets with you;
I will be showing you things that can stay with you in memory:

the black-collard barbet that get seeds from me,
playing around here in the window.
If you come to stay with me

you will see the breeze blowing through the pink hollyhocks
swishing them to and thro and caressing them with love;
I will be showing you things that can stay with you in memory:

like doves caressing each other in the pepper tree
charming each other undisturbed and breeding.
If you come to stay with me

and we get hold of each other
love will not be something that separates us;
I will be showing you things that can stay with you in memory:

I will build a world around you and me
where I can steal your heart
and if you come to stay with me
I will be showing you things that can stay with you in memory

Gert Strydom

If You Come With Me To Be My True Love (Collins Sestets)

(after Christopher Marlowe)

If we walk through the meadow and the field
a hat does your beauty to the sun shield
where we will sit on the gigantic brown rocks
see small rock-rabbits running in their flocks,
where nature does its abundant beauty prove
if you come with me to be my true love.

Bright cosmos flowers will bloom at your feet,
everywhere the smell of jasmine will be sweet,
a mountain stream will be refreshing cold,
while the sun on the cliffs glitter like gold
where nature does its abundant beauty prove
if you come with me to be my true love.

I will crown you with a wreath of flowers
while we dance among the spring rain showers
small birds will constantly joyously sing
the delights of every summer morning
where nature does its abundant beauty prove
if you come with me to be my true love.

[Reference: "The passionate shepherd to his love" by Christopher Marlowe.]

Gert Strydom

If You Had Been Mine (Roundel)

If you had been mine to love and to hold,
with great happiness my whole face would shine;
I would embrace you, kiss your hair of gold
if you had been mine.

Together we would sip the day as wine,
would live in joy until we are both quite old
while all of our days are glorious and fine.

Even if the winter days were icy cold
never would our love and loving decline,
our love would find its own joys manifold,
if you had been mine.

Gert Strydom

If You Hear My Voice

If you hear my voice
and acknowledge how much I love you,
know the sincerity that is in me

all the yesterdays and tomorrows
may be filled with time spent
and words and deeds to come
and yet nothing more is necessary

to tell you
how much you mean to me.

Gert Strydom

If You Imagine A Created Place

(in answer to Peter Levi)

If you imagine a created place
where God had never been,
then you imply that God is not God
and there is something that He has not seen.

If you imagine such a place,
then you do not acknowledge
God as the creator, you are no different
from scientists with human knowledge

who set off all things to mere destiny,
to a unknown energy that did not exist,
that exploded in a big bang
and have by mere chance become the world that is.

Where does God then in the picture
that you are drawing fit?
If God is not God,
and if He isn't in any of it?

[Reference: "I imagine where God has never been" by Peter Levi.]

Gert Strydom

If You Keep Straying With Unhappiness (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

If you keep straying with unhappiness
and take the beauty out of everything
are looking for evil in everything
your life turns into a miserable story

you are wandering through the desert
where your tears disappear,
you are scorched
while the sun is shining overwhelming for others

you find thorns on the most beautiful flower,
are already old, before age sets in,
as if you are cursed by a spell
that gives words even if your are dumb

and you break Afrikaans down to clay,
as if nothing have to remain of that language and people
and you take LSD and who knows what
to find life in something

and to you life is a lost dream
as if it is allotted to another man, another guy
and your trousseau and love is buried
where nobody can explore
and you are in your own whirlpool.

[Atlantis in jou lyf (Atlantis in your body) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

If You Kiss Me Like This

If you kiss me like this
we will find happiness
in tranquil devotion
and every day will be full of bliss.

If you eyes dwell in mine
in the way that you now are looking
every day will be a blessing
while it feels as if our love is something devine.

Gert Strydom

If You Know

If you know
how much I do miss you,
if you know
how deep your words at times hit me,
then every glance gets meaning,
is then you know how deep my love is,
if you know...

Gert Strydom

If You Look At A Mountain

If you look from nearby at a mountain
the peaks are hard and grey
but still it is as if the rough rocks hold a naked power
and you see the green plantation at the foot of it,
eagles that turn up high and suddenly decent
and when you look still near at such a place
then you see small animals clinging to rocks
and everything about you is overgrown and green
but from too near you lose the whole
that from a distance is picture perfect
and you do not see the peaks gleaming white against the sky,
how shadows play with the slopes
that now and then disappears in clouds of fog
and all of these things bring me back to the Creator.

Gert Strydom

If You Remember Me

If you remember me when I am gone,
when life is mine no more
then shut all bad things,
all unpleasant thoughts of me
like you will a closing door

and let it be like the first time
that we have met
when every thing between us was new

and let I be to you
the things and words that made you smile,
and remember me for just a little while
with no sadness or pain

and let things remain between the two of us
as it was when you loved me best
and then forget me
and let me rest and have tranquillity
while my words still live on
as parts of me while I am gone.

Gert Strydom

If You Take Any Love / Lover That You May

(in answer to Dorothy Parker)

If you take any love / lover that you may,
with whom to kiss and play
some will be insincere
even if for a time they hold you dear,

but if a poet / poetess
do you at a time impress
then run and flee if you can
as these people are different from the rest,

they view things in life in another kind of light
and that's the way that it is
while sometimes at night
you may find bliss and a kiss may be just a kiss

your love / lover may be impressed by his /her or its awesomeness
or have feelings about little things
as if a phenomenon they do possess
as if even the wind at a times sings.

[Reference: "From a letter from Lesbia" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

If You Think Of Me Sadly

If you think of me sadly when we part,
when there is loneliness in the heart
then remember how very happy
our days together had been.

Remember me fondly
as your own darling and counterpart,
how my face looked
when a smile would start
and on a bright sunny day
I will return

and heartache and loss
at times is only a condition of the mind
and on another day you will find
the sky to be bright and blue
when I come back to you

and now while you still do care
we have many happy moments to share
and everything that we say and do
stick to our souls like the strongest glue.

Gert Strydom

If You Walk With Me On The Promenade

If you walk with me on the promenade
and see the setting sun marvellous and red
while the night sparkles and the sun goes to bed
dipping behind the horizon,
it's last journey of the day being made

the streets will probably be half empty
and the evening a serenade
while the cloak of the day is shed,
the last of its rays have fled
to sparkle at other places
and the traffic lights shines in jade

and maybe you will let me persuade you
to walk to a restaurant
or no words between us will need to be said
and the wind will brush through your hair,
the night will be expectant,
blessed with a loveliness and even if you are afraid
I will tell you that you look beautiful and fair.

Gert Strydom

If You Want To Place Your Darling Wife In Words

If you want to place your darling wife in words
it's not with a sober eye that you look at her
and when you want to remember her face and even her eyes
you are time and again astonished by her character
and every word stays in the fog of the mind
when you wonder if her eyes are blue, green or grey
while you do realize that what you write is untrue to her
as part of a greater whole that you want to replace
and when you only look too near at small things
a hand is only a hand and an eye an eye
wherein character and intellect burn behind the viewers
which looks completely different in the whole picture
where character can raise a person to an angel
or from a still greater scope to only a speck in the sand.

Gert Strydom

If You're With Me

Yellow grass are growing
where it was green,
its icy cold
where the summer sun had been
and now a lazy winter sun
burns much cooler
and the wind cuts
still deeper.

There's just thoughts
that's left of yesterday
and the weekend
has passed much too fast
but you are here with me today.

Although the days rush
deeper into this winter
and time flies into years,
it does nothing to me,
if you're with me.

Gert Strydom

Illegal Aliens

Some people call them refugees,
but to me they are illegal aliens.
The gates from Africa
lies wide open
and they cross illegally
during the day
and in the darkness of night.

It is a interesting thing
that they stream south
as if they can not make a living
in their own countries.

They brave the wild beasts
of the Kruger National park
and old and young
men and women and children
flock from everywhere in Africa
to a land with some prosperity.

They cross a unpatrolled
and unprotected border
by day and night.
and come on foot
and in any way
that they can.

Some employers
take them at a cut throat rate
and Nigerian criminals sell drugs
on the streets
and at street corners
foreign aliens beg,
and women sell themselves
and some foreigners
rape, steal and kill.

Gert Strydom

Illegal Hunting

As a boy I had startled some black men
where they were hunting duiker antelope illegally.
One had a tjotsji-knife that he threw at me
but luckily he did miss and it went into the bark of a tree,
another raised his knobbed-stick to hit with it
but I was carrying a good old pellet spewing air gun
which I did raise to my shoulder to defend myself.
They all thought it to be a .22 rifle
and from their killed antelope they did flee,
leaving a sharpened bicycle spoke,
the dropped knobbed-stick
and the illegal six-inch switchblade
which I did retrieve from the tree.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Illusion (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Olga Kirsch)

Sometimes when I walk down the lane home
children do play hop-scotch were they are triple-trampling
while they do hop-bounce-jump on one leg,
others do ride on bicycles and skateboards around me
but at twilight a tranquil silence does come
and with the happiness of the young people I am totally astounded
when the rain does sieve down, do go through clothes in a wet gust.
In the silver-grey light everything is dark-green everywhere
where something is driving me on a light tread to fasten my pace
as if this weather, that does not belong here, do tell me something about you
as if unexpectedly suddenly you are waiting on me
and suddenly my heart wants to rejoice but it's also hurting
where I feel something ecstatic, wonderful in my blood
when you do come my darling, shining with happiness as an angel to me.

[Reference: "Illusie" (Illusion)by Olga Kirsch.]

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Gert Strydom

Images At The Chestnut Tree

I went to the chestnut tree
stripped bare by winter, where my mother
was gardening with potted plants.

While watering them
there were many shadows
that the swinging branches made
which formed images
of ghostly spellbound things
in my imagining creeping near

and in this autumn of my years
the power of destiny
was playing on my greatest fears
as if making it clear
that my last summer was spent.

Gert Strydom

Imperturbable He Is

Imperturbable he is
where his eyes become unfathomable,
where from the inside he is steeled
by the working of time,
even entrenched against loneliness
and yet in his heart does burn
the passion of youth, the desire to love.

Gert Strydom

Impulse (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Vincent van der Westhuizen)

For you this morning I wanted to do something radical,
I wanted to take you far away from your work and our home,
I wanted to kiss the catastrophe, anger and revolt out of you.
Here we live as lovers far too good neighbourly,
maybe today we can wake-up all of the citizenry,
we could ring the old church-bell thundering at sunrise,
we could cover the town hall's walls with bright red hearts
and do inane things in a jovial mood
or at midnight in the ungodly hour
we can sneak like rascals from place to place,
we can fire off fireworks with glowing radiance
or we can cover shop-windows with paper stars
and when we do meet right in front of the church
you are in my soul, my mind and in my blood.

[Reference:"Impuls" (Impulse)by Vincent van der Westhuizen.]

Gert Strydom

Impundulu

When in summer
stormy clouds gather
and chains of blue-white thunder
comes flaming down, sneaks nearer and neared
Impundulu is flying,
sourcing high into the air
with its blazing eyes looking everywhere

and something has disturbed its resting place,
in the giant tamboti tree
that roots in the cliffs,
into the very heart of the earth,
that branches into the clouds,
the place of the upper waters

and when the rain starts pouring
as if without end, the medicine man,
the witchdoctor, the Inyanga
puts secret herbs, magic spices
coming from the dark cliffs
in a cooking pot
that he applies to every doorpost
of the native village

believing that it has the ability
to keep the bird of thunder away
while it's exploding voice is drawing closer,
small bolts frizzles, fire erupts where it gazes
and the power of its claws and beak
shatters even the hardest rocks

and in the village huts the children
are scared to even breathe,
their mothers and fathers pray
to the Almighty God,
to Unkulunkulu, the Big-Big One
to keep the bird of thunder away.

Impure Mathematics

Let others consider pure mathematics,
I see a world
where reality leaves its mark
and the clockwork
gets shorter all the time
while time runs out.

Where no flowers remain
for the light brown bee
and everything pine away into a desert
and the greenhouse effect
covers the whole wide world,

the ozone layer burning away
and the sky full of grey clouds
shedding thunder and rain down

and waves
braking further over the horizon
in to the land
smashing in torrents

and man is dumbstruck
almost frozen
about the effect
of his own handiwork.

[Reference: Suiwer Wiskunde by N.P. Van wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Impure Science

There are things
that science cannot explain
and you can look at calculations
for hours and think about it

and still man's pure logics
stays a big joke
and we are far too stupid
to really comprehend God
and abnormal things

and there is no hour work
that gets snared somewhere
and make all things calculable.

Scientists do not want to believe
that a almighty God
could talk
and things could originate

and who can really say
how Jesus Christ
made wine from water,
healed the sick,
rose the dead,
multiplied food,
talked to the elements
when his disciples almost drowned
and the wind stops blowing
and the sea calms down?

Gert Strydom

In A Apocalyptic Post Covid-19 World (Villanelle)

(in answer to Edgar Allan Poe)

While time is no more
and death silently goes through the land
I stand on a surf-less shore

see all destroyed that I do adore,
every living thing is turning to sand
while time is no more.

The world is changed from how it was before,
amid an eternal silence I stand,
I stand on a surf-less shore.

My God, what has dammed man forevermore?
This is not a dream and I do not understand,
while time is no more,

a virus has brought death and gore,
while in vain trying to lead you by the hand
I stand on a surf-less shore

where all water is gone and no waves roar,
with destroyed dreams alone nothing is as I have planned,
while time is no more
I stand on a surf-less shore.

[Reference: "A dream within a dream" by Edgar Allan Poe.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In A Bar In Brakpan

(in answer to Koos A. Kombuis)

In a bar in Brakpan
there are men with bulging muscles
who look at every man that does arrive
as if something terrible can happen to him

and some breakers that at times
do fight and hit each other
are having some drinks at the bar
and there are three that stand near to me

when a cheeky girl
with a retroussé nose that she wrinkles
walks in with a water-line mini skirt
and I do realise that she is smiling at me

and she looks like an angel
with black wings,
have got high heels and stockings
and I am caught in the glance of her eyes.

She is perfectly built
with a French plait the swishes over her buttocks
does play like a tail beyond her
and I am really interested in her

and strangely odd every man there is looking at me,
every glance watches my face
as if on purpose they are avoiding the doll
and I wonder if someone else is here to meet her
or if she is unattached and I smile back at her.

She comes to sit next to me and looks picture perfect
and I look at her more closely
do order a Cape Velvet Cream liqueur for her
and another Hunters cider for me
and suddenly the glances do recede from me

"Oh my, he is straight, " one of the breakers do complain
walks to the snooker table where others do accompany him
and the girl lets my blood boil with eyes full of promises
were she is smoking a cigarette
and is playing with her foot with me.

[Reference: "Lucille" by Koos A. Kombuis]

Gert Strydom

In A Coffin

Hands folded over the chest
she lies forever stretched out
as if death out of the blue holds her calm
and nothing will wake her up,
from the last sleep folding coldly round her
and strangely changed from princess to rotting dirt.

Hands folded over the chest
she lies forever stretched out.
with no fingers clenching hot around mine
and drawing me nearer,
no arms embracing me to her body
and I am totally alone
and stare at hands folded over her chest.

Gert Strydom

In A Dark Night Of A Cape Winter

In a dark night of a Cape winter
fog rises from the plantation of pine trees
of which the scent is suddenly sharp everywhere
while the slight wind does not even stir the leaves,
or the sieving rain that is falling days without end.

Days later the southeast wind howls like an angry beast,
whipping trees to and thro, pulling even big oaks
right from their roots, throwing squalls of rain
splattering like continuous buckshot against the roofs,
against window panes and the coldness creeps in
and like a child you wonder when the angry beast
will again go to rest; go back to its hidden lair.

Gert Strydom

In A Dim Grey World (Persian Quatrain)

(for Annelize)

In a dim grey world you bring gladness
do drive away all of life's pain and madness
as you are the sun that shines on my day
the only that do take away all of my sadness.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In A Far Off Summer

These are the fields, bushes and trees
where a boy cried heartbroken
in a far off summer,

when the bull
swiped his darling filly
with its horns
while she was drinking
at the trough

and that horse fell twitching
on her back
with her guts ripped out
and she had to be shot
and his older brother
brought the .303 rifle
with only one bullet

and was determined
to take the shot,
but the filly moved her head
and the bullet went up her nose

and there was blood everywhere
while she neighed in pain
and he ran as fast as he could
while weeping
to get some more bullets

and without a word
took the rifle from his older brother
put a bullet in the slot and cocked it
brought the firearm to his shoulder
and took a deep breath
before squeezing the trigger.

His favourite horse was slain
and the pain was great
and almost unbearable for him

and his brother tried to comfort
but there wasn't anything
that he could do or say
to take that pain away.

Gert Strydom

In A Foreign Country At A Third Rate Hotel

It stinks; I know which food has been vomited-
some people call it junk food; others know that he is drunk
and is vomiting. Whatever happened, the food
has been burnt, about this nobody doubts or hesitate -

And I know about his well-being, he is overgrown:
He has been called an "animal." Avoid him
with all your might, he will jump when he gets angry
and will kill even the chosen -

At this place there is a frightened antelope and some vomit
that is now stinking. Can you believe this! Go and pray
somewhere on your bed at night, even in cold fever,
return to your full senses; start playing your part,
dress in your suit and bow tie and fasten your shoelaces
and full of melancholy
follow
the interpreter.

Gert Strydom

In A Hotel Room Across From The Beach

At ten o'clock some rain pours down,
outside the sea lies angry and grey
while larger and larger waves
continually crash onto the beach.

Below the tarmac glistens,
the car-guards are wet to the skin
while it looks as if a river is flowing along the road
and in the distance fog clouds blotch out the sun up to the horizon

while some brave men surf
where in the stormy weather they find gigantic waves
and when later I do awake you,
you glance with big eyes,

draw me down to your hot body
and further I cannot write about our escapades.

Gert Strydom

In A Place With A Bit Of Sun

I found you
in a place with a bit of sun,
where rays drew silky fingers over us
and I was covered by your body
when we bonded to something deeper
than I did know that we could.

Gert Strydom

In A Private Ward

The voices of talking nurses,
the sound of trolleys that are pushed
up and down hallways

do supplant the white,
do bring interruption to the colour
of the bed, the floor and wall

and I am caught as if captured in an unknown country
with a pipe that runs into a vein on my arm
on which a bag is hooked that continually feeds

drop by tiny drop,
I am busy through waves of pain
looking at the angelic face of a nurse.

Pain is a thing
that just does not want to disappear,
that comes back again and again.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In A Restaurant

The fascinating kind of girl
like whom I want a girlfriend to be
looks through a crowd face to face at me
smiles radiant and around she does twirl,

my eyes catch a slender figure and legs in hose,
shoulder long blonde hair that does catch the sun,
a retroussé nose, a mouth that smiles with promises of fun
and involuntary she waits in a model's pose
while I get some food at the carvery.

She is the kind of girl whose face
at times are displayed on a magazine's cover
and teenage boys wander over
to grin like idiots at a piece of paper's grace

and if it's a seedy periodical it is stolen or bought
with the only wish to see her without a dress.
She turns to me and her eyes do a message express
while her coffee is brought

and I follow her out and wonder to where all of this will lead.

Gert Strydom

In A Rural District God Has Created The Most Lovely Rose

In a rural district God has created the loveliest rose
where the hillocks in the distance touches the sky,
she sprouts out in the veldt
and skip springbok agile as if no man can master her.

In her kitchen there are batches of rusks
and the outer door is locked
until the last baking pan comes out of the oven,
where visitors then rush to get some as booty

and when you visit her you have to be watch your wits
or she will twist you around her little finger
as she's a vixen, who confuses every suitor
and her beauty leaves everyone dumbstruck

and her teasing overlooks nobody
as form far she has many visitors
bringing gifts and every kind of flower
that she takes at times or do not accept at all

and like a agile lizard
she's prepared for any eventuality
and knows her hiding places
but to beauty she brings new meaning.

Gert Strydom

In A Thunderstorm

In a thunderstorm with huge drops falling,
with thunderbolts lashing around me
I hurry to my car
near the entrance of the Spar.

Newspapers do blow around in the wind
and an old grey-headed man, a woman and small white dog
is walled off
in a small shack made from boxes,

they are busy calling a bedraggled child
and on the long porch of the shop
a black cat sneaks past,
where it's soaking wet and cold.

At the traffic light a beggar bends forward
and somewhere the city has lost its soul.

Gert Strydom

In A Valueless World

(in answer to Thom Gunn)

In a valueless world some people stand
and do create their own values
and act decently,
avoiding the throng
of the crowd ever rushing on

setting standards of integrity,
keeping to direction
like a compass
locks to the pole

and move only
when they are going
in the right way,
not becoming herded animals
that rush in for the kill,
to rob and plunder
or to run mindless over the abyss

but monuments to precedence
leading others through the dark night
to a bright sunny day.

[Reference: "On The Move 'Man, You Gotta Go." by Thom Gunn.]

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Gert Strydom

In A Vision Once (Cavatina Sequence)

In a vision once I saw a pretty damsel
as she did sing
with the purest mezzo-soprano voice
before the King,
while a multitude of holy angels
were listening
and there was divine magic in the air,
selfless love and tenderness in God's stare;

in utter holy dread, the living and dead
had been changed,
were in accompaniment rejoicing;
voices rearranged
they sang the song of Moses and the Lamb,
great and estranged,
that moment did feel as of the purest bliss,
nothing I had experienced as this.

Gert Strydom

In A Way I Know You Well

and in a way I do not know you at all
while things that is great and small
does tales of your personality tell.

and with you I do experience bliss,
and never knew that it could be like this
as if every touch has a own sanctity
as if there is something special in each kiss.

Gert Strydom

In A Way You Always Remain A Part Of Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the reflection of every window
it's your phantom that I continually find,
as if in all other women blinded,
I do not get you out of my thoughts.
with children that hop and jump over lines of chalk,
I see a kite sweep up high in the wind,
you smiling next to a child
and eagerly I do want to join you.
In thoughts you sweep me years back
but in the here and now I am remembering
and it's always lovely images that I get of you
where a virus is keeping us apart and you do bridge over this,
where there are so many things that are a part of you
but in a way you always remain in my heart.

Gert Strydom

In A World Apart From This

In a world apart from this
love stays true and ever kind,
are not blanketed by a changing mind
our bound by passing bliss

and there love brings no pain
is always sheltered against the dark plain
does not alter with circumstance or by choice
and remain

strong and true, forever unspoilt

and we, who cannot understand the power of a kiss,
the magic in bliss, in its pleasure
blindly go into darkness, wander into the world
afraid to miss something in all of this

causing unending pain and failing in our humanity.

Gert Strydom

In A World Of Agony And Pain

not only here and there
but the great kindness and love
of God does eternally remain
and the signs of his presence are everywhere
and nothing can His blessings remove

and wherever I look
new hope like flowers do daily arise
and from the plain to the brook
I see the tokens of His touching hand
and even when I do not understand
His decisions in my life are constantly wise.

Be joyful my heart
as daily God does His care impart.

Gert Strydom

In A World Of Darkness

In the striving to reach light
in a world of darkness
at times I feel completely lost,
damnation
at times hangs heavy like a cloak all over me
when missing
I want to find a way, want to bridge over problems
but still continually You bring me back.

Gert Strydom

In A World Of Evil And Good

Although what you uphold
sometimes stays,
are protected against decay,
still the balance remains wavering
as words and deeds
act as a counterbalancing thing
in a world of evil and good
where even integrity may be misunderstood,

but the Lord God sees into the heart,
knows everyone thoroughly,
to each and every part
and truths and values may be dear,
even to one to whom conceit is near.

Even Satan studies the holy bible thoroughly
but from sin he isn't free
and truth, knowledge, faith and a relationship
are important things in worship

and religious men sometimes act as if they are God
which they are not,
while their own evils
still does pervade
and they make as if they act in love
but in reality it's in self interest.

Gert Strydom

In A World Of Nothingness You Bring Bliss (Rondel)

In a world of nothingness you bring bliss
and smile with a strange kind of beauty,
with a kind of affection in every kiss
that brightens mere discipline and duty

as life changes, changes in the way it is
while you are more than just my deputy.
In a world of nothingness you bring bliss
and smile with a strange kind of beauty,

while a earthly heaven must be like this,
where affection comes without difficulty
and together there is joy in every activity
while your sweet kindness I cannot dismiss,
in a world of nothingness you bring bliss.

Gert Strydom

In All My Life

(after Bába Kúhí of Shiraz)

In the veldt among the birds,
wild flowers and trees,
on the hillocks
where I jump from rock to rock
to go to the top,

down in the valley with its tranquillity,
in the fields in the lands of corn,
between the cattle,
even when I am on horseback,

at the fruit and vegetable market,
at the shops in town,
in the chain-store,
in the shopping-mall

and in my greatest times of trouble and need,
at the work and at home,
at the local church congregation,
in my daily prayers,
even when in secret on my own,
even when I go on my knees,
only God I do see,
when I look back as pictures in my memories
God is in them all
as my close companion and my friend,
as my guardian and my guide,
as the one who knows my innermost secrets,
who I can depend on and trust
whatever life does bring to me.

[Reference: "In the market, in the cloister - only God I saw" by Bába Kúhí of Shiraz.]

Gert Strydom

In All Of Heaven And On Earth (Cavatina)

In all of heaven and on earth no one
can challenge
Your vast dominion, there's no other God,
in radiance
Your pure love outstrips any other being;
in deviance
mere men disregards Your great existence
Your endless, selfless love they do not sense.

Gert Strydom

In All Of My Life

In all of my life,
you are the most special person,
my companion, my playmate and my wife
and you remain the important one

even if at times in the living together there is strive,
when it feels as if everything beautiful is gone
and with you I know that I am truly alive
while through heartaches, differences, pain and joy we live on.

With you I want to challenge life, rise to every opportunity
and all that it has in store,
feel in your companionship that I am truly free
and with you I want to live forevermore.

With you in my life, nothing is as it was before
and you are the one that I truly adore.

Gert Strydom

In All Of This

I hear the call of the cuckoo
and in all of this I long for and miss you,
the afternoon's rain comes with thunder,
there are butterflies that leave me speechless
while the later sun is white-hot in the bright blue.
These are the things that I do remember about this summer,
I want to write great words to you but remain speechless,
where the sunny days do fold around me
and in all of this I long for and miss you.

Gert Strydom

In All Of This (English Sonnet)

In the lock-down living in the same town
deep in memory I am lost in you glance,
while outside the thunder and rain comes down.
Its strange how little things do your face enhance,

how a simple smile and the look in the eye
in all of this with longing eats on me,
as lonely day on day passes slowly by,
thought-struck your image comes lingeringly,

amid reports of far too many people dying
of a Chinese thing, deadly, much like flue
and even the sky is also crying
while man is doing just what he can do

where this deadly virus acts by its stealth
and daily I am praying for your health.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In All Of This At Times I Feel Lost Without You (Couplets)

Constantly I hold myself in the garden busy
and it's as if beautiful things just come to me,

I do notice seedlings appearing and autumn's dim light
and there are many more verses that I do write.

Where the virus does everywhere suddenly appear as if it does reign
a person does not want to think about suffering and pain,

on how it impacts life and do destroy bye and bye,
about innocent people that unnecessarily do die,

where the impact of it lingers far too vividly in the mind,
where to life it brings a merciless side, as scientists do no cure find

but in all of this at times I feel lost without you,
where only moments remain of our relationship that is true,

while I know that everything will come right,
as God still do destine each day and each night.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In All Of This I Do Really For You Care (Refrain Stanza)

A deadly virus does all of humanity scare
and in all of this I do really for you care
where life is now in an awful kind of state
and to stop the virus seems far too late
where particles of it hang in the air
but outside it's almost a new spring
and in joy doves and weavers sing
where of the love of God I am aware
and in all of this I do really for you care.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

In All Of This On Principle Our Feelings Are True (Sicilian Sonnet)

With eyes, words and acts you do communicate.
In all of these speaking things only you I do see,
know that you are lovely even when you are angry
where they do the depth of your feelings indicate,

that a hot hurting temper with you quickly does abate,
that what ever happens you do still truly love me
but life is not a joy ride going up and down merrily,
it rushes on at the insistence of fate which predicate

the essence of all future things that will exist,
even the way that I converse with and see you,
but nothing can, the sincerity of our love twist
and the same selfless love is present in all we do,
it does wordless on actions and situations insist
and in all of this on principle our feelings are true.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In All Of This You Did Astound Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

During the night and day I waited on you,
did not really understand the leaving,
I did yearn for times of love and tranquillity
and on your word just kept going on.
In all of this you did astound me
when you prepared the table with your bread and wine
and when I least expected it you turned around
where mercy came to some one in need.
Continuously you told me about your love,
I was resolute to not get hurt again,
you laid yourself down as the a offering,
with eyes full of grief kept looking at me,
you came into my world without me asking for it,
changed my times from night to day in the way that they do go.

[Reference:"Wag in Amsterdam" (Waiting in Amsterdam)by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

In All The Seasons (Octave)

Throughout all the seasons of my life
my love burns like a flame in the snow
where years pass with you as my wife
and in a modern age we do come and go,
where our summer does become something holy,
even when destiny comes with utter pain,
God pours out His blessing on you and me
in days where totally speechless we do remain.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In All The Things In Life (Sicilian Sonnet)

In all the things in life I do experience
it's touched by the whims of uncanny fate,
while it acts as if its impact cannot wait
but in my days you do make the deference

as you bring joy and fortune to my existence
and in acts and words you do communicate,
which do sincere selfless love to me indicate,
and about all of this I come to the inference

that although fate acts at its accord invisibly
causing people to cry, to laugh and sigh
your life does have a greater impact on me,
even if fate secretly at its will do come by,
a divine designed mate in you I do see
in whose heart an impression of God do lie,

Gert Strydom

In All The Times Between You And Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

In all the times between you and me
there is trust and great comprehension,
many words are written
as human to human where I really like you,
where in silence I trust on God,
do know the heat of your heart and lips
and when life with me goes up and down,
when it seems as even the sun wants to go dim,
there are days of beauty that comes again
where constantly God does predetermine and do walk ahead,
do pull all things again right in my life,
while constantly you do leave me speechless in life,
and I do remain very affectionate
although my life is jerked around.

Gert Strydom

In All Things That Are Lovely (Sonnet)

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

In all things that are lovely
that is noble and pure
my words did disappear
as if they do have no meaning.

In each type of flower,
even the sun arising
I could find no match
and I were almost dumb

as nowhere I could find something
to bind to your beauty
and in all of my verses and words
I am still too much blinded

but still I know that you are the one
over whom I do laugh and cry.

[Reference: "By alle skone dinge" (By all beautiful things) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

In And Out Of Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to André Letoit)

I do want to be brilliant and have conception of things
that people do not know that exist,
do want to marry a beautiful woman although she wears many rings,
one that does stand as a darling and friend at my side,
do not in old age want to come in front of cars,
walk around in underpants and believe that the cars have got to wait on me
where everything and everyone are already astounded about my gross stupidity,
I do want to live as if every day is the last and not wait upon a final chance to
rest.

I do truly want to know God in my heart, do not want to face battle,
be slandered, be insulted, treaded down and humiliated by a church
where the presidents, a minister and elders do not know what love does really
mean,
reckon that they can do and say anything as they are working for God,
do not want loose a whole career by people that do begrudge me life,
maybe I have got to mention that church domination and doom them forever.

[Reference:"in en uit" (in and out)by André Letoit.]

Gert Strydom

In And Outside Worlds

When I was small
we had a green carpet
in the living room
that like a lawn
stretched out wide, thick and luxurious.

The ceiling was the sky,
big fans made wind
and lights came on at night
like suns.

The shower was
where you make your own rain
to be cleaned
and every tap a small fountain.

Sometimes a bird
flew into the house
and was cordoned off
and flew everywhere
and completed the picture
of man's inner world
to me.

Still man just copies
the Creator
and outside the sky is stretched out,
every night full of stars
and day after day the sun appears
and the wind blows
as it find it necessary
and all the birds fly free
and the grass spread by itself.

Gert Strydom

In Angola

In Angola I wondered
how the land of the free
had the power,
to launch soldiers
from another country
into the arms of eternity.

How could
the sly foxes of the CIA
find a way,
to sway
a country into it's war.

What fools
had the politicians
of my country become,
to rise and let boys
of eighteen bare the brunt
for the most unpopular war.

Although the victory
was sound
more was lost than gained
and coming back from war,
I will never be free
from the demons
that torment me.

War kills hope and joy
and leave it's scars
in every soldiers soul
and the innocent
pays the highest price.

From history
and into posterity
the USA does not
fight it's wars alone
and at times

let others pay the toll.

In Afghanistan and Iraq
some allied soldiers
still fall and die...

Gert Strydom

In Angola (2)

Where at a time there had been civilization
buildings now stand in ruins and in strips of grass
with pock-marks of bullets, grenades
and mortar bombs and a dried puddle of blood

where wild flowers do rise,
nature with thorny trees do disguise these places
and the umbrella-thorn bursts through everything,
while red sand, buckets full comes into every dwelling

that later only here and there walls do skeleton,
a hamlet that has its own story.

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Gert Strydom

In Another Time Of Year

There are autumn leaves
creaking under my shoes,
some of the trees are stripped bare
and the wind has a chill
that cuts right through all my clothes.

It is as if the whole of nature longs
for leaves to be hanging on branches,
for a bright hot sun,
and for rain to come at the right time

but when I am with you
it's as if we
are in another time of year
where no cold winds blow
and you cuddle me in your sunny world.

When I hear your heart beat
through your bare body,
your skin clings possessively against mine,
I see suns living in your eyes,
you lead me to a magical garden

and I wonder what has to happen
to make our spring
a summer?

Gert Strydom

In Beauty She Does Walk (English Sonnet)

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

She does outshine the stars of the night
her eyes have specs like the open skies
they are sunny, warm, understanding and bright
their aspect is not like mere mortal eyes.

Picture perfect day and night she looks at her best
where on this earth she walks in heavenly grace,
while silky smooth falls her hair in each tress,
with soft expression on a almost angelic face,

with serenity almost holyness over her brow
full of character and personality and eloquent,
her sun-filled smile does with understanding glow,
reflects her mind in how her time is spent,

she glows innocent with true sincere love
in a distinct fashion that nothing can remove.

[Reference:"She walks in beauty" by Lord George Gordon Byron.]

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Gert Strydom

In Darkness

I

The twilight is framed and covered in black,
drawn closed on the one side,
when suddenly it carries blue-white thunder
that burns sparking, it's deadly risky,
where no sign of any moon
rise up against the closed night sky,
there are only thunder flashes hitting flickering
without a sign of the Southern Cross
and still the earth waits on drops of rain
to start their irrigation
when a shower continuously patters down,
seeping into the deep ground,
thunderbolts reports constantly
while twilight falls silver over the beach.

II

While twilight falls silver over the beach
the neon lights of the night glitter,
cut-off from the whole universe
as if each one is waiting for discovery
and it's as if the backwash wants to
pull you deeper into the sea,
in the space where the great ocean stretches
and there is something in each dream and wish
like that Wide Ocean unlimited
that waits free without any bonds,
as if each day and night
works together in a perfect balance,
as if the darkness keeps you for moments,
here where the dark night now folds around me.

III

Here where the dark night now folds around me.
I hear your steps coming closer
the wild wind jerks some of the windows open,

in thunder I am stripped from you
and grief will after years have an impact
that still strips me down roughly
from reason and all kinds of hope,
to keep you against me once more.
The much deeper pain of only being human
does not want to subside in my heart, in my soul,
and sometimes like now with full fury
it becomes real in each thought, in fear,
outside purity is in everything,
as if the white street light shines with sympathy.

IV

As if the white street light shines with sympathy
the city lies stretched out in the distance
as if it is a gigantic spaceship
that continually draws people to it
of which the lights flash on and off
when travellers in their cars come near,
bright lights are seen from a distance
while people gather at many places.
At places the lights are blinding
where people revel at each kind of place
or as if it wants to takeoff with a wild wind
while the darkness of the city stretches out wide,
I wonder where people go soulless;
it's night with a very small crescent moon.

V

It's night with a very small crescent moon
that hangs somewhat shameful in the darkness,
at places shadows catch my eyes,
with popular branches swishing about,
I can swear something is following me for a while,
somewhere something hisses like a cat or snake,
I stretch my steps and am far too scared
to look back or now to stop walking,
it's as if something is suddenly blowing in my neck,
now I am afraid, my arm hairs raise
and I hear the churchyard gate moaning shrilly

while I am in a much greater hurry,
against my back there's a cold shiver,
with open eyes I pray for God to protect me.

VI

With open eyes I pray for God to protect me,
see some old tramps standing around a fire
when a black cat suddenly moans next to me,
while I see coals with flames rising.
It's only a big cat moving next to me
and I bend down and stroke it gently,
it's no unearthly kind of thing
as I had imagined,
above us stars are blazing the night full,
prostitutes triple on like display-dolls,
on the horizon lights are red, yellow and white
one whistles at me while I pass them,
three stand astride arguing with each other,
one girl draws up her blouse and I walk past.

VII

One girl draws up her blouse and I walk past,
I see breasts in their finest detail,
wonder how people live in this godless city,
every thing is getting worse than it had been.
I am alone and almost late
to get bread and milk at the Spar
and I cross the busy street,
hear them call in a choir at me
where one of the girls pulls her skirt up
showing her legs and a white panty,
trying her best to arouse desires,
I catch the smell of vinegar, chips and aniseed
while she begs: Come along with me;
the twilight is framed and covered in black.

Gert Strydom

In Dry Namaqualand

In dry Namaqualand, in the stretched out paradise,
there are pretty flowers showing their faces
that rise after the first rain in that semi-desert,
appearing for days long in colourful splendour
when the sun shines over the hillocks.

Early in the morning tourists come when the sun is out
when wild flowers year after year sprout again,
to leave in their busses in the late afternoon
in dry Namaqualand,

in this way farmers are visited without any sign of respect
are trampled upon by every jolly John with a vehicle license
and later the visitors become a pain
while the local farmers wish for the flowers to languish away
rather than to have to point them out
in dry Namaqualand.

Gert Strydom

In Each And Every New Day

In each and every new day,
even when I have feelings of gloom
when life takes loved ones away
You are still visiting me in my room.

When I see the morning sun rising
over fields where wild flowers bloom
in a hot sunny day
I know your hand is at play.

Gert Strydom

In Each Day's Silent Need (Italian Sonnet)

In each day's silent need
I do love you to the capacity
that the love of a man for a woman could be
and in every word and deed

far past the utmost places where feelings go, indeed,
far past earthly yearnings with sagacity
you are far more than just dear to me
and I love you with a child's kind of creed

with the kind of hope and faith that you
do notice that with every breath
and every thing that is in my might,
in all the things that I say and do,
even beyond the limitations of death,
I do love you even when all things are out of sight.

Gert Strydom

In Each Event (Crystalline Poem)

In each event and sad great omen,
you are completely a woman.

Gert Strydom

In Each Other Our Love Has Find A Home (Villanelle)

(For Daleen)

Though we do not know each other many years
in each other our love has find a home
as if by God determined through the spheres

where not in sorrow but in joy come our tears.
that separately we no longer must roam.
though we do not know each other many years

and while we share our cares we have no fears,
what a happy time has come
as if by God determined through the spheres.

With songs of jubilation in our ears
all of nature suddenly seems wholesome,
though we do not know each other many years

the most beautiful splendour flowers wears,
in a world that at times are gruesome
as if by God determined through the spheres

it feels as if these blessings are in arrears
and to me the only one you have become
though we do not know each other many years
as if by God determined through the spheres.

Gert Strydom

In Each Raindrop There Is A Kind Of Magic (Enclosed Triplet)

In each raindrop there is a kind of magic,
magic in the falling blue-white thunder,
the thunder that in a flash downward flick

the flick of something about which I wonder,
the wonder that again brings fresh new life,
new life to where seeds are turned under.

The bright rainbow has a own kind of spell,
a spell of time when the hot sun blazes,
blazes in brilliance as all is well,

while the deep well suddenly amazes,
amazes with water that is clear and pure,
pure to the taste as heat hangs in a haze.

Nothing can the power of rain remove
as overnight the grass and the crops jumps,
proving the great power of divine love.

Gert Strydom

In Each Season (Crystalline Poem)

In each season that I do you miss
I know how deep the longing is.

Gert Strydom

In Every Dream You Are With Me

In every dream you are with me,
when I open my eyes I am longing
and nights fly past far too quickly.
In every dream you are with me.
I see the birds fly away just as free as you,
while time stretches almost endless.
in every dream you are with me,
when I open my eyes I am longing.

Gert Strydom

In Every Man And Every Girl

In every man and every girl
there's a part
of the divine
and a part of darkness
that twists into each other.

Even people who are considered evil,
have got some good
and greatness in them.

Today we cannot understand
how thousands chose to follow Hitler
and how they thought
that there lives would become
still better yet beter
and how he could have been
good and great to them.

What we choose to do
and how we act
and the words that we say,
either displays the traits
of good or evil.

Even if we chase the good
by evil means,
no real good can ever
come from it
and just like real love
good is either really there
or not at all.

Gert Strydom

In Every Thing

In every rock, mineral, sand, wild animal, flower and tree
There's a urge to be free, planted in from primordial times

Under the earth's crust in granite, basalt, any instance
there's a build in resistance, from primordial times.

In drops in any water stream
you cannot bridle the inert scream, from primordial times.

to be part of the clouds, the sea, to them to draw near
without any confinement or fear, from primordial times

Every antelope, bird of prey or wild animal
every lion, tiger and mammal, seeks liberty from primordial times.

in grass, the restless wind that blows wild
there are hope and trust like that of a child, from primordial times

Strydom, to where do you want to flee,
for a free existence? You are planted in this country from primordial times.

Gert Strydom

In Experiencing All Beautiful Things

(to Minette)

In experiencing all the things that are beautiful
you were part of me
and I saw your loveliness
when your tears and laughter were a part of each day
and now that you are a part of the earth
no consciousness of you is left.

Gert Strydom

In Far Too Many Forms We Do Have To Complete (Rondeau Redoublé)

In far too many forms things we do have to complete
while the government sees it as only fitting,
to try the deadly Corona virus to defeat,
as if against it all the measures are hitting

and restaurants are not open for a normal sitting,
where there is almost nowhere for a loved one to treat
but people think that for control hairs they are splitting.
In far too many forms things we do have to complete

and some regulations do freedom of choice mistreat,
while other measures people do not follow unwitting
and it seemed exempt is the some of the ruling elite,
while the government sees it as only fitting,

view alcohol and cigarettes almost as death emitting.
Together people cannot gather or anything eat
and no one can be anything spitting,
to try the deadly Corona virus to defeat

and again the government do it's measures repeat,
as if someone will miss of it a tiny thing,
while they close holiday destinations and each retreat,
as if against it all the measures are hitting

and far too many grannies are baby clothes knitting,
while secretly they do children and grandchildren meet
but against being human the state control does sting
and new music and the drums of liberty do not beat.
in far too many forms.

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Gert Strydom

In Far Too Many Numbers They Rise (In Answer To Maya Angelou)

There are many facts in history
of people both ignorant and wise;
at times I look with incredulity
at how people multiply to rise

having as many children as they can do,
with diarrhoea, living in gloom,
with blown up bellies where food run through,
living in the very red-brown dirt in doom

without a look of hope in their eyes
where president-for-life dictators govern
with an iron rod, not hearing weakened cries,
while for civilization, for food they yearn;

where platinum, gold and copper mines
are sold to the Chinese, are from the country apart,
while parts of Africa goes into total decline
and to make a living is extremely hard.

Does this poem of mine offend you?
Unfortunately I do not deal in lies,
unfortunately these facts are very true
and to some people it's no surprise

as AIDS, poverty, pestilence runs as a black tide
that comes in unstoppable waves of pain
from which very few of the poorest people can hide,
as far too many deaths happen again and again

and from this destruction very few get clear
while for something better they constantly crave
as their daily lives are always lived in fear,
as far too many go to a very early grave.

Still people multiply to rise under blue harsh skies
in far too many numbers, to never be free,

from lives that many of them do despise,
from lives lived in constant poverty.

Gert Strydom

In Fifth Avenue

In the mornings I see Jane passing
and how she walks away,
in the street
and gets smaller and smaller in the distance

The lingering afternoon hours
slowly past
and the postman
draws the barking dogs,
before he rides leisurely
away with his bicycle.

When the sun gets low in the late afternoon
and I park behind the house,
I hear a gate opening
and she greets while she walks by.

Gert Strydom

In Flesh And Blood

In flesh and blood
you continually smile at me,
in flesh and blood
at times you awake a kind of glare,
you walk past as a picture
that brings a kind of joy,
in flesh and blood.

Gert Strydom

In Front Of A Firing Squad

Japie almost burns himself
when he mess some coffee
and it's still dark,
when at four o'clock one morning
British soldiers arrive
at the Greyling's farm.

There's an Afrikaner farm boy
standing against the wall
of a farm house
and English Captain Jack Seeley,
wants to know to where
his father's Boer commando is going?

Japie Greyling refuses
to say anything about it
and Jack Seeley
order his men,
to aim at an Afrikaner boy.

Six British Martini Henri rifles
are pointed at a ten year old child
and he hears gunlock after gunlock
closing behind a bullet.

I ask you a last time
says the relentless Englishman
and a Boer boy
looks into death,
but still there's nothing
that he lets out about his people

The British Captain keeps
walking nervously up and down
and the blue eyes
of a Boer boy,
cuts right through him
and the child says
let death then come,

but talk I wont.

All the British soldiers
are astounded by the courage
that comes from an Afrikaner child
and on command,
the rifles are lowered
before they ride away
and Japie Greyling
is left alive.

[References: Historic heroic story of Japie (Jacobus Johannes Cornelis) Greyling during the second Anglo-Boer war. The poem "Japie Greyling" by J.F.E Celliers. The book "Fear and Be Slain" by Jack Seeley.]

Gert Strydom

In God's Always Time (Sonnet)

(after Charl-Pierre Naudé)

In God's omniscience
where He is outside of the scope of time
everything that had been, that is and that is coming
does bare meaning to Him as it is continually in His understanding
where He does wander in the darkness of that which does not yet exist
where innumerable planets, moons and star systems do come from His
omnipotence
where He does get meaning out of the unreality of that which still has got to
come
and nothing, but nothing is inaccessible, unseen, unknown and inconceivable to
Him
where the archetype's potential into which it is going to turn
for Him do almost become history,
where the extend of the universe almost is all that does betray his omnipotence
where nobody and nothing can curtail His works,
where He does cross through the endless eternal vast extensiveness for His own
will
and do not squander an unnecessary second, measure and moment or even His
love.

[Reference: "Altydheid" (Always-time) by Charl-Pierre Naudé.]

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Gert Strydom

In Gordon Bay

There's a light breeze blowing
and the waves
have white horses,
where they splash on the beach.

I can smell the freshness
of the sea
and hear it breaking
and breathing,
on the other side
of the street.

The chef is frying
some sea-pike on an open grill
and is chilling
a bottle of JC Le Roux champagne.

The sun is falling hot
next to the cold blue pool
and your body shines,
from the sun tan lotion
and you tan reading a book.

I splash into the pool
and you look up annoyed
for a moment,
before you slip into the water.

I feel free with you with me
and even the beach
and the sea
can wait for a better day
and everything is really great.

Gert Strydom

In Hazy Moments (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to T. T. Cloete)

In hazy moments you do glide over me
while the earthly scope do to me cling,
you do set me from all things free
when I am a part of you and fill your being,
while you and I do accept each other in all things,
do complete look and trust each other,
mere words are saved in the inter-text
while intense intimate you do cling to me,
where we do know the true truth of each other
when comprehension, forgiving, bliss and being human leaves us speechless,
where we do forget every other thing in the universe
do come to the scope of flesh, spirit, soul and mind
while love selflessly do go to the Perfect One
and in nakedness we do stand before the Creator.

[Reference:"uiteindelik nag" (finally night)by T. T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

In Heaven Exalted Angels Are Awestruck

In heaven exalted angels are awestruck
by Your love, your righteousness and power
where they bow down in utter respect
singing praises to Your holiness

and here on earth there are mere men
who disregard your laws,
men who disregard Your existence,
who view themselves as being divine,
with the ability to reincarnate, to be forever living

while they trample on others,
live in sin, as followers of the devil incarnate
and their own will,
to all other men hold evil
bringing everything that renders ill

but at a time You will return
to hold a reckoning, return with Your angelic host
and to destroy and burn
everything that renders pain,
and as saviour and redeemer to those that are true.

Gert Strydom

In Heidelberg

In Heidelberg we stayed in a white house
against the ranges
and there were always
sweet yellow corn that Mom had planted
and nice juicy green beans
that crept up the canes
and I planted rows of onions
and pulled orange carrots
from the ground
and washed them at the tap
and bit pieces from them
and the trees
were heavy with peaches
and we had to
chase the baboons away
that came to strip the them,
but those times
has long passed
and I wonder what is left
of that old white house?

Gert Strydom

In His Heart

In his heart,
his mind,
he had never been a soldier,
he found killing offensive
but to carry on living
he was forced into it

and would have preferred to be left alone,
not to be part of the bloodshed,
to pray to his God,
to live a righteous life,
but he was extremely good
as soldiers go

forced to be deceitful to himself,
making the best
in a world where there was no possibility
of anything grey
and everything was drawn
as in pencil
in black and white.

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Gert Strydom

In His Study

In his study sometimes
my dad did Afrikaans poems read
while he was busy with graduate studies
at the University of South Africa
while he was a Afrikaans and history teacher
and as a little boy
the great words,
the tone of his voice
and his sincerity did speak to my heart
but in my subconscious
all of those wonderful poems do still remain
as if they had been etched into the depths of my soul,
as if there is something great to very great words.

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Gert Strydom

In Holy Days With You (Rondel Prime)

When the beauty of spring do into summer fade
I do live in holy days secure and tipsy with you,
when days are full of sunshine and the sky is blue,
the dogs chase butterflies on grass as green as jade,

the sheer jolliness of school children do on me abrade
and through all of this, lovely woman, you are true.
When the beauty of spring do into summer fade
I do live in holy days secure and tipsy with you,

this life full of passion and pain for nothing else I will trade,
there is an unspoken kind of love in everything that you do
and how to really fathom love I do not have a clue,
I only can say that my days with you are heaven made.
When the beauty of spring do into summer fade,
I do live in holy days secure and tipsy with you.

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Gert Strydom

In Its War-Chariot The Sun Rides (Refrain Stanza)

In its war-chariot the sun rides through the blue sky
and every day at a hellish-speed he passes by
leaving scorch marks that do remain
while its wheel-tracks leave an impression on the brain
where after every dark night he hangs high
or satin-smooth his face radiates on those that he does love
where upon biological life he does glow from up above
while radiant he smiles and the hours do fly
and every day at a hellish-speed he passes by.

Gert Strydom

In Itself It's A Strange Kind Of Thing (Free Verse Sonnet)

You are mythological my equal and my twin,
as if we are so very similar where we look at each other
and together do turn the whole world around on its head,
so near we are in thoughts, taste and contemplation
and in itself it's a strange kind of thing
as we do get closer to each other and you are very pretty,
moments are loaded with almost static electricity
and to my life you do bring intense immediate change,
where time and again I have got to avoid every Amazon luring-trap,
that you almost careless all around me set
and this is no kind of game but how my life does go,
where you do take care that I once again am in contact with you,
as if every moment with me are important to you
and we are both in love and so very vulnerable.

Gert Strydom

In Life The Only True Wife I Have Found In You (Hybridanelle)

Far too long locked-down from you I am away,
while a virus do bring only death and pain
and daily for humanity and you I do pray

and I believe to me you have been destined from birth,
where in this life we do for each other exist
and to me you are an angel dwelling on earth,

where you do bring happiness and bliss day by day
and when I loose in life with you I do still gain.
Far too long locked-down from you I am away,

and when other people despise me you see worth.
In the act of love moments are eternal and we feel immortal,
as if in the past, present and future together we exist

and locked-down so very much with you I want to stay
but the impediments of stringent measures do remain
and daily for humanity and you I do pray,

where we like all of mankind we are only mortal,
and I beg God to lives and situations around to turn.
In the act of love moments are eternal and we feel immortal

where here I do holy intimate things to the world betray,
and living without you my life is totally in vain.
Far too long locked-down from you I am away

and I remember Balito's beaches and on your skin the sunburn,
I recall how that holiday did both joy and pain at times bring,
and I beg God to lives and situations around to turn,

as in all of life He does know the very best way,
that He will our love and all of humanity sustain
and daily for humanity and you I do pray,

where I do need Him and you in everything.

In this life the only true wife I have found in you,
I recall how that holiday did both joy and pain at times bring

and want to go with you again away without delay,
I do beg God to your life and existence to maintain.
Far too long locked-down from you I am away
and daily for humanity and you I do pray,

that God will accompany you in everything that you do
and I believe to me you have been destined from birth.
In this life the only true wife I have found in you
and to me you are an angel dwelling on earth.

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Gert Strydom

In Life There Is A Time (Stave Stanza Sestets)

In life there is a time to either say
on a very particular kind of day,
yes or no, to love someone or let it go,
that choice may look insignificant, even so
have consequences which bind with conviction
might be of love at a time a true depiction.

Who refuses might not be really loved,
might full of some selfishness be stuffed
and yes and no, or to live for the moment,
might sound insignificant as a measurement
of being just and true, but no contradiction
might be of love at a time a true depiction.

Gert Strydom

In Love God Did Give You To Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

In love God did give you to me,
all at once left impression of you with me
as a small klipspringer in the bush of my heart,
where I watch you with every step and shake of your head,
when tranquillity exists like the serene cobalt blue,
as if like the sky it comes from the hand of God,
while in innocence and love you stand pure before me,
when your faith and trust do leave me speechless time upon time,
where that which love really is do get meaning
and in this world is something strange and holy,
where I cannot avoid my feelings for you,
as between us there is the most wonderful bond,
when like Eve through Eden you wander through my heart
and I together with am lost in the garden.

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Gert Strydom

In Love I Have Lived With You For Years (Villanelle)

(For Daleen)

You are my beginning and also my end,
and in love I have lived with you for years,
with you I have the best part of my life spend,

To my life and existence you are a godsend
although we have know both joys and tears.
You are my beginning and also my end,

the one who do all other women transcend
and now we live with expectations and fears.
With you I have the best part of my life spend.

Absolutely special you do make each weekend
do live with great expectation as it nears,
You are my beginning and also my end,

my wife, companion and also my friend
at times you are the only that really hears,
with you I have the best part of my life spend.

You do me truly know and also comprehend
and locked-down being with you is in arrears.
You are my beginning and also my end,
with you I have the best part of my life spend.

Gert Strydom

In Love She Does Me Without Words Serve (English Sonnet)

(in answer to Thomas Wyatt)

She drives me away that did me once seek,
then again sneaks secretly into my chamber,
becomes once more timid, as if tame and meek
while like a wild cat her eyes do burn with amber

and totally puzzled I am at this new kind of guise,
I wonder if she does want to devour me in bliss,
where now suddenly the situation is otherwise,
she does give me a passionate kiss and another kiss,

where this is stark naked reality without any forsaking
and I wonder is this her kind of strange new-fangleness,
where in loneliness for her months my heart was aching
but in all of this I find goodness and some gentleness

with which in love she does me without words serve,
as if some pure intimate happiness I do deserve.

[Reference: "The lover showeth how he is forsaken" by Thomas Wyatt.]

Gert Strydom

In Many Of My Dreams You Were

and I did wait
while the days almost endless
was passing me
and the spring, the summer, the autumn and winter
covered me
before you came suddenly into my life
and it's as if my life started anew again.

Gert Strydom

In March When The Summer Is Worn Out

In March when the summer is worn out
the new autumn gets new meaning
when plovers call to each other
while it feels as if the sun is saving its last summer heat
and it seems as if this summer will last forever
like the love that I read in your golden eyes.

When the leaves suddenly fall everywhere
every tree is stripped on the hillocks and in the vale
when the winter cold comes
and stripped off and away is each wild flower

but almost unexpectedly new blossoms appear
and everywhere flowers are in abundance
in the veldt, on the hillocks and at the marsh
and I hear new birds singing their praising songs
as if new life has come to everything

and I also do want to believe that love does the same
when in difficult times
we become closer involved with each other.

Gert Strydom

In Margate

The curtains in the bedroom
are drawn close
and you lie
in semi-darkness.

Through the open window
I can smell the sea
and hear waves breaking
beyond the road.

The wind pulls at the curtains
and every now and then
the white beach
and the blue ocean peeps in.

We came to Margate
for a holiday at the sea
to bathe in shallow waters
to swim with the surf,

to have some fun
and tan in the hot sun,
but darkness hangs
like a shroud over you

while the white beach,
the bright blue sky
and the dark blue ocean waits
on us to come.

Gert Strydom

In Memoriam To My Grandfather

My granddad carried the same name and surname as I.
was a hard-working and God-loving man that did build
and developed houses and he also was a carpenter
but later we will get back to that.

With his own hands in Brakpan he build a church,
all the members including my father converted people
to fill that church up as they took religion seriously.

I just started to walk and grandfather seemed huge,
hearty and ancient to me and in his workshop
everything was tidy and had a right kind of place
but time and again before him open was his bible.

Granddad was friendly and never said a harsh word,
I was following his huge steps as I did walk behind him.

The pastor and the congregation has sold that old church
and wants to build a massive sanctuary seating thousands,
where the head-elder (bless his soul) have underwritten it
with all of his businesses and how they are going to fill it
I do not know.

On a fateful day in hospital that kind old man lay.
Coming back to his carpentry: a door had fallen on him,
it had caused internal-bleeding and at that time
the hospital and doctors were not fit to treat such a thing,
or to operate on him.

That church was his legacy and now it's gone
but the memory of that old man to me still lives on.

Gert Strydom

In Memories Our Times Together Are Bright (Sicilian Sonnet)

On the chessboard of destiny I feel like a pawn.
Although to follow the true God I do daily strive,
it's as if life and living do us at times apart drive
but by sincere true love we are together drawn.

Outside doves and a hoopoe pecks on the lawn
and without you more than empty is my life
while I am truly missing you, my dearest wife.
Outside I glimpse I think a lingering fawn,

it is much cooler outside (it has become twilight)
with some tiny stars twinkling high up in the skies
and in my memories our times together are bright,
there is something of the expressions of your eyes
that stays in my memory and an aspect of their light
a sense of how deep our love is that no one denies.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Memory Of A Certain Rsm

The band was already playing
a marching song
and officers, non-commissioned ranks
and troops spotless
in berets, browns and shining boots
marched and halted in perfect unison
on the parade ground.

With a flat hat like a chauffeur,
or maybe like the baggage man
at the hotel
with visor just above his eyes,
dressed in step outs

he drove the Mercedes Benz
through the gate
to the parking area
next to the parade grounds
bringing it to a elegant halt,
jumped out and walked
right to the back door
bended double and opened it
to let a lady and younger woman out.

Then with pace stick
swinging to and fro
on he came like the leader
of the band
but in control
of the whole parade,
set over officers outranking him
waving the stick in his hand,
walking up and down
like a huge red faced clown.

[RSM = Regimental Sergeant-Major.]

Gert Strydom

In Mere Moments

In mere moments the blue sky
is wrapped in the black blanket of the night
and I feel your hand searching mine like a small animal,
while the sunset paints her colours
glorious on the canvass of the night,

and in the distance lights are twinkling suddenly,
the night is full of stars that are white, blue and glittering
and your lips burn on mine like a fire
while that moment becomes the most precious to us both.

Gert Strydom

In Moments Like These

It's late night with the stars hanging blue-white speckled
and one or two that suddenly do jump
where the moon hangs full and golden-yellow
before many do fall or jump
in a meteorite rain
as if somewhere they do fall from the stomach of a comet
and it's in moments like these
where a human does know about the awe of the universe,
do know how dust-particle small a person is
against the omnipotence en magic power
of a Creator
that loving do prepare the universe
like a lover for a bride.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In My Childhood Days I Pick Lilies In The Marsh

In my childhood days I pick lilies in the marsh,
I pick lilies, the most beautiful that I can find
in colours of red, yellow and white
but now a tar road cuts past.
The highway runs almost to eternity,
I wonder where the dilapidation did start
see no coots, plovers calling
broken lies the marshland that I love
and I have to search into the bright blue
to cling to the untouched
while smoke clouds of white, yellow and grey hang
like a blanket that is folding over everything
while wealth increases, nature becomes distorted,
and the plain has offices that is encroaching it.

Gert Strydom

In My Childhood Days I Pick Lilies In The Marsh [2]

In my childhood days I picked lilies in the marsh
where the highway now runs almost into eternity
while only cars do pass on the road.

Laid dry, barren and destroyed is the marsh land that I did love
and selfish gain circles out wider while nature is distorted
where the highway now runs almost into eternity

and the plain is full of offices and factories that pushed it aside
and I search for something that can keep the untouchedness
and selfish gain circles out wider while nature is distorted,

there is smoke that like a blanket folds from above over everything
while on the sidewalk there is a marigold
and I search for something that can keep the untouchedness

and notices a flower that grows wild right through the concrete,
and I see no coots or plovers calling
while on the sidewalk there is a marigold

amongst the crowding of people of the one or other group.
In my childhood days I picked lilies in the marsh
and I see no coots or plovers calling
while only cars do pass on the road.

Gert Strydom

In My Dream

In my dream your photo frame memory
did not want to bring you back to me
and somewhere the forgetting did sneak in
as if continually you were hiding
but still my heart was full of affection and glee
while my own thoughts were jumping as if to be free

and they would go back to a day on the beach
when you did disappear and were out of reach
when the afternoon cannon thundered in the distance
and there was pain in that remembrance
as if I could not comprehend this breach
and we were away each to each

but of the depths of our love I did know
when from my anxiety my awakening was slow
while you were sleeping peacefully
and to my heart came a kind of tranquillity
while on the wall sneaked a shadow
and outside the streetlights did glow

Gert Strydom

In My Heart Joy Remain (English Sonnet)

In my heart the greatest joy do remain
in the true words a long time past spoken
with some beautiful memories and pain,
are still lingering as a kind of token

are vivid from the last time we parted
and your face with its sweet serenity
in my mind is glowing warm hearted
and I do love you and I want to see

into the depths of your soul and spirit
look past the lovely outer covering,
I want to examine your mind bit by bit,
do want to know about you everything

as in my blood, soul and heart you remain
as my wife in times of joy, bliss and pain.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In My Heart There Is Firm Knowledge (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

This morning the sky is again cobalt blue
where I see Your handiwork around me,
while the grass grows knee-high past my calves,
I know that You do have humanity in Your hands.
In my heart there is firm knowledge
that Your love is much more than just decrees,
You know every person and me just as we are
and against our nemesis you fight fiercely.
The corral of Your arms do include all people
where You have been sincerely loving from the begin,
did sacrifice Yourself as the pure holy lamb
and such wonderful love no one can fabricate.
Now where a virus do deadly spread,
it's with you that every human being do find salvation.

[Reference: "Keuse" (Choice) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

In My Heart You Are Ever Present (Italian Sonnet)

While time carried on in its unperturbed ticking pace
the knowledge of just how our lives together will be
in the mind, the heart and flesh touched you and me,
deep in my heart lived the image of your kind face,

by the Lord's love and ever abundant kind of grace
ever present like in a shell the sound of the stormy sea,
untamed unperturbed our love was always free
nothing could its impact or its traces ever erase:

I loved you through the nights and through the days,
loved you true through all seasons and the years,
I loved you while I was weak and while I was strong,
loved you in the labyrinth of so many different ways,
knew you in my pleasure, pain, joy and in my tears
and I adored you while together our lives went along.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In My Life My Words Have Lost Power (Novelinee)

True in the hearts of other people sings
my verses when they early do arise,
when love to them are newly awaking,
when life sparkles suddenly in their eyes
but in my life my words have lost power,
rather causes pain, disrupting emotion
that over my humanity tower
and somehow this severe commotion
leaves me with a lost kind of notion.

Gert Strydom

In My Lifetime I Have Seen (English Sonnet)

(in answer to William Shakespeare)

In my lifetime I have seen governments defaced,
a world turned on its head in a new unruly age,
in flames twin towers I have seen down razed,
primitive natives plundering I have seen in rage,

with tsunamis I have seen gigantic waves gain
in rampage as man with HAARP destroyed the shore,
in the Netherlands the soil reclaimed from the main,
the loss that comes from continual time of war,

after victory to natives the changing of state,
where lives, the set structure and government decay,
where now about these things I do in life ruminate:
as people do kill, plunder and want to take all away:

but yet in all of this I do not you, my love, which is still true loose
where back to my career spoilt by affirmative action I cannot choose.

[Reference:"Sonnet 64 When I have seen by Time's fell hand
defaced" by William 's note:"HAARP is the High Frequency Active
Auroral Research Program."]

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Gert Strydom

In My Loveliest Memories

The most beautiful times with you
in that which we both say and do,
is part of my loveliest memories,

where you do fold your hand around mine,
at times do embrace and kiss me with joy.
The most beautiful times with you,

where I entrust my secrets to you,
where we leave each other and are reconsolidated,
is part of my loveliest memories,

and how at times you do cling to me,
your eyes do change to gold and sometimes green.
The most beautiful times with you:

how I view you as a woman,
how you look in your dress of pure cotton,
is part of my loveliest memories,

especially the day that you did marry me
and I know your body's form and curves.
The most beautiful times with you,
is part of my loveliest memories.

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Gert Strydom

In My Short Life I Have Seen

(in answer to R. K. Belcher)

In my short life I have seen that professors of religion
and clergymen do not hold the Bible holy,
that they sit in churches and at universities in their own ability,
that they do want to talk about God but do not believe in Him anymore,
do not comprehend that a human can only trust in Him,
that they want to make the sacraments trivial by their science
and then like this are lost in their own thoughts,
where daily God does fold His hands around my own life,
while professors of religion and clergymen do not hold the Bible holy.

[Reference: "Die sakrament dis die Here se tent" (The sacrament it's the Lord's tent) by R. K. Belcher]

Gert Strydom

In My Silent Desolation

In my silent desolation where I am broken
You do still walk through the wide paths of my soul
and even if I do feel defenceless and the world inaccessible and evil
it's Your presence that does constantly carry and comfort me
and at night I see the lights of Your starry-wheel
while You do bring to my own words new meaning

where You are the God that silently and softly does talk to me,
the One that never leaves me admit the struggle.

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Gert Strydom

In My Sorrow I Want To Greet You Tonight

(after Paul Éluard)

In my sorrow I want to greet you tonight,
do want to say hello and goodbye to you my sweetheart,
where your eyes full of love do burn constantly,
where mysticism and mystery in darkness hangs around you,
when I glance at your name and sign in the stars above me,
where the pain of my words give stature to you again,
when the power of destiny do again takes us away from each other,
where through love we find each other once more
and your beloved body become a part of me again,
where disillusionment bring us back to each other
and bridges over that which wanted to divide us eternally,
where I am sad before your pretty face
but full of hope are glad to find you once more.

[Reference: "À peine défigurée" by Paul Éluard.]

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Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts And Dreams You Are (Persian Quatrain)

Like a ghost in my thoughts and dreams you are,
you are part of me like an intimate kind of scar,
to pieces I do long for you when we are separate
and in my heart you are close when from you I am far.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts God Stands

In my thoughts God stands with a chart of stars in His hand,
He knows the endless places where the stars burn,
eternity is His scope when He covers space with stars
and everything that does originate and that does exist comes from Him.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts I Have Got To Stand Still

In my thoughts I have got to stand still
at the place
where my footfalls as a small child
in the veldt at a fountain
went to fetch pure, clean water.

There I must go and find words,
as now I am blinded by life
and it feels as if it wants to devour me.

Maybe I will see Your face there,
when the blue sky does draw open
and the water of that cool living pool
does lie mirror-smooth,
maybe You will lay Your hand of mercy over me
and I will receive holy, great words,
maybe I will see Your shadow and know
that You are still near to me.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts I See You

lying stretched out on our bed
with pyjamas clinging to you,
curtains drawn shut
and the big duvet is somewhat blue
and you are covered from your toes to your breast
when the sun goes dim
and inside are you and I.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts I Walk The Route

In my thoughts
I walk the route
that leads to your heart, to your love

that place that you have got for me
that loosens my humanity
and make me larger than myself

and thought struck
I put my feet down easier
and walk below the golden moon
and it's as if I am going
nearer and still nearer
to you

and somewhere
the place lies
where your eyes
shines golden like suns.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts The Image Remains (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

In my thoughts the image remains that I do hold of you,
where continually I do miss you more and more
and I have entrusted our love to the Lord God,
know that His time is for both of us the best.
In my thoughts your voice and fragrance stays familiar,
where from the past I have memories that do come to mind,
daily my heart gambols when I send poems to you
where you continually stay in the deepest part of my heart,
in your sunny eyes I do see continually a sparkle,
the light of God Himself in your lovely design
and you do support me when my world does stagger,
it's as if continually your image is enhanced,
as if like an angel you do radiate my world,
where I do repeat the lovely memories.

[Reference:" hart, wat wys geword het, vra nie weer" (heart, that did become wise do not anymore ask)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts We Sit On The Veranda

In my thoughts we sit on the veranda
of the big old house
in fifth avenue
and we see the setting sun
with colours that no person is able to paint
and the smell of flowering jacarandas
is heavy and sweet in the air

we are drinking sweet wine
from a bottle of St. Anna
and your smile and the short happiness
between us, I cannot catch here

but now there are only tears
hanging heavily on my eye lids,
I am scared for every new morning
as without you my life is meaningless

without you my life is like a watering can
from which the water of life
is continuing to leak out
as if I am caught in a world
where my destiny is already set
this is only another helpless daydream
that is disillusioned in the brightness
of every new morning
and the reality of life.

[Reference: Sonder jou ('n liedjie) (Without you (a song)) by Mandi Engelbrechth.]

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts You Are Wonderfully Lovely (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's such a clear open hot summer-day
that every beautiful yesterday is present,
as if I can see your green-brown eyes laugh
where I am missing you terribly,
laughing-doves descend with their fluttering,
hazy the early morning is already full of sun,
the redbreast and the weaver do twitter time and again,
bushes of daisies and verbenas covers the ground,
where in my thoughts you do look like a glorious angel,
every bird do twitter-sing love-songs to its mate,
fluttering the butterflies land on the flowers,
the weaver and wagtail gambol from dawn to dusk,
in my thoughts you are wonderfully lovely and big-eyed
and the sun hangs in the cobalt blue sky heavenly high.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts You Keep Unfolding

(For my wife, Daleen on our wedding anniversary)

In my thoughts you keep unfolding
with your white image that I keep remembering
and as always you are far past beautiful
as my companion, my beloved and wife,
the one to whom I do cling in life
and constantly you are true
as the one with whom I in love I do live
without a moment of consideration or contrition
and I can trust you with my deepest secrets,
keep depending on you while other people do make a hash
as to me you are far past unusual
and all of my best dreams I find in you
as the one that I want to love more
far past time and even past death.

Gert Strydom

In My Thoughts Your Smile Is Bright And Soft

I wonder if you are also chilly like I am,
where reports do bring bad news about the virus
and untouched or intact no place remains,

where death brings to humanity lamentation
and locked-down you and I are both alone
but in my thoughts your smile is bright and soft,

while I pray that God's protection do cover the world,
to descend on every person and on each thing.
I wonder if you are also chilly like I am,

where we do not know what the future holds,
I do adore you to the depth of my spirit,
while people are apart and remain separate

before God and the universe and everything is in His scope,
where nothing can surprise Him, or jump into His way
and untouched or intact no place remains,

but you are own to me and are of my flesh,
you remain my wife in everything that destiny can bring.
I do adore you to the depth of my spirit,

do know that you will be dressing in your pretty hot clothes,
that the doves at our house will sing about my love.
I wonder if you are also chilly like I am?

Where this pestilence leaves man speechless,
you do remain the one that I want to draw closer to me,
you remain my wife in everything that destiny can bring,

but winter is icy and in almost every room,
where I feel that God is near and it's not just a premonition
and untouched or intact no place remains,

where I do tell you of the depth of my love
and you are past precious and noble as a woman to me,
you do remain the one that I want to draw closer to me,

you are the one that brings the greatest expectations to me
and I remember each word and caress.
I wonder if you are also chilly like I am,
and untouched or intact no place remains,

where I pray that God will constantly be with you,
where death brings to humanity lamentation
and you are past precious and noble as a woman to me
but in my thoughts your smile is bright and soft.

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Gert Strydom

In My Youth Nature Was Very Intense (Cavatina)

In my youth nature was very intense,
I could then find
the smallest insect, the tiniest bird;
in my own mind,
all things were great and quite beautiful
but left behind
that world has long gone into some decay;
if in another life, another day.

Now summer is just extremely hot
some weavers a pest,
the grass far too long after the last rain,
a fallen nest
now unnoticed is trodden upon
and at its best
the year bring some new opportunities
in some assets and liabilities.

Gert Strydom

In Nagasaki

When the sun fell from the sky,
dropping as something man made
from a high flying thing
the eye can no longer see them

where they were,
but their shadows are burnt
right into concrete
and linger as dark cold impressions

of men, women, children
and some animals
as only ghosts
of living vibrant beings
that are forever looking on
from their anonymity.

Gert Strydom

In Natal's Midlands

Green maize fields, the Drakensberg in the distance,
streams past and the smell of ripening corn
is sweet in the air and this rural aria
is well known to me from my childhood years.
Suddenly a truck with a trailer jack-knifes
in front of me, blocking the highway
with its body and braking wheels
making smoke rise from the tar.
The dirt track on the left
is the only option to stay alive and at speed,
gearing down while braking I hit it
with the motorbike shuddering
thorn bushes and grass flashing past
before coming to a halt totally unscathed.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Never Ending Skill (Cavatina)

In never ending skill is manifest
God's supreme will,
He plants the brightest flowers in the dale
and on the hill,
is present in my happiness and when
I feel quite ill,
in His love I have a firm confidence;
daily I experience His providence.

Gert Strydom

In No Big Perception

In no big perception
I want to string sounds together
and nowhere I want to force words
to construct something artificial

but my verses must be natural with something
from the heart and knowledge coming together
where everyone that reads them
can live along with them; can have an own discovery

and even my own memories
have got to have something universal,
piercing past the superficial,
letting another realization, place or world unfold

being totally free from copying or envy,
in a type of unique art.

Gert Strydom

In No Poems I Can Find Something

In no poems I can find something
to describe that which is between us,
to bring the wondrous experience
on paper to words

and when I look at you I am half blinded
in contemplation as if in the darkness
and have to come to the confession:
my thoughts are devoured

as if I myself cannot get words
to catch the light in your eyes,
the loveliness coming deep from the soul,
to let hang that which is between us
in a few words
and about it I feel wordless and mute.

Gert Strydom

In Our Dark Bedroom

In our dark bedroom
where I am laying awake
you do creep into my prayers,
as if I only want you to be with me.

All of the other things
that I do usually tell to God
are suddenly gone out of my thoughts,
when I do bring you to His care.

The night passes cold
where peaceful you do sleep next to me
and I do know that God is present,
do come unexpectedly with answers
when I do discuss my day with Him.

Gert Strydom

In Our Room

In our room I lie close to you on my left side
while the moonlight falls yellow-gold through the window,
the dancing lace-curtain lets the evening wind in,

in the distance a train rattles past rumbling,
still further at the horizon a thunder does report
when your sleep starts soft sweet with your equal breathing

and you are the picture of beauty to me:
stretched out I see the nightdress falling from your upper body
and I realise that I love you because of the person that you are,

rhythmical your heart beats while this peaceful moment does remain,
cosily you are but also uncovered but wonderful above all things
and this exceptional moment with you feels far too short

when you do pull me closer in your arms.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Pretoria West

Years ago my car
was in for repairs
and I had to work overtime
and the work's small bus,
took me home one night.

We first had to take other people home
and in Pretoria West
I saw a place,
where very poor white people
lived together like in a commune
in houses
with asbestos thin walls.

.
I could hear a drunk
and his wife argue
and somewhere a baby
cried disconsolately
and thin dogs,
sneaked around the building
afraid of being kicked.

There where teenage girls
chatting with boyfriends
at the windows of cars
and a mother screamed angrily
at one of them,
to immediately come home.

Still there were other people
who were driven there
by life and fate
and I saw people,
sharing the little that they had
with each other.

Gert Strydom

In Remembering (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the silent remembering
all the days and nights are lingering,
where continually I am lost
in my beautiful memories of you.
As if all of life is unfolding,
only the loveliest impressions remain,
of how you do love me and I love you,
how we entrust everything to each other.
While here I pour my soul and heart out
I want to tell you that love is something eternal,
that all my verses are dedicated to you
but right here I am curtailed,
where I do miss you while a virus runs amok
but my feelings do remain intimate and sincere.
© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Remembrance Of You On The Beach At Balito

(in answer to Philip Larkin)

1

You were like that girl that laughs in the poster,
with eyes that look right through a person's soul,
who says come to sunny Diaz-beach in Mossel Bay

Where you knelt a minute small cute dog
struggled over the sand to come to you
with him in your hands stretched out arms lifted your breasts,
being the focus-point
but a endless white beach
flowed from your thighs to the horizon
with the foaming sea touching your toes
and behind you a hotel with palm trees and the sea
that looks like paradise.

2

That smile that lure and glitters can swallow a man
but of you I have got a much deeper impression:

the beauty of your face and your nose that retroussé wrinkles with a frown,
your glance that speechless made my heart to beat faster,

your blonde braided hair hanging past your shoulders,
the soft red blush of each womanly cheek,

how your voice like an evening-breeze has magic,
your lips that tempt asking for more kisses,

you are more soft, kind and friendly than anyone that I know
and it's things that to eternity I cannot forget,

where your curves remind me of Aphrodite coming out of the sea,
as a fairy, a girl and a woman you kept me speechless,

as a tigress against any other one protected and claimed me,
you were true to whatever destiny demanded.

My love you still leave me speechless
and what I am writing will make others blush.

3

That summer stretched out almost endlessly
and I was convinced that you are mine in any time and place,
did know your character to its depth,
with you did loose everything and also did win
but destiny had drawn its line with a virus through all of this,
did too suddenly and unexpected change life to be upside-down
and now only parts of you are disguised in my memory
where you are missing from each day's endless scope
and I was convinced that you are mine in any time and place.
[Poet's note: "Come to sunny Prestatyn" by Philip Larkin.]
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Gert Strydom

In Sheer Beauty My Mistress' Eyes Exceeds The Sun (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

In sheer beauty my mistress' eyes exceeds the sun,
her lips is more pretty than it's rising,
her breasts are tender and pure, each one
with a pink fragility, rose tipped, quite amazing
and no wires or even wheat or corn is apt to the hue
of her fair hair, or as tender as its strings
and her breath, her odour outshines that of her retinue
and in its freshness reminding me of new awakenings
and some coy innocence is in the blush on her cheeks
when alluring she is passionate and ready for my delight
and almost hungrily, reaches seeks
for my company, my body as a lily of the night:
spreading her petals, unfolding, drawing me into her embrace
in sheer magic, using almost divine grace.

[Reference: Sonnet 130 My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

In Six Days (In Answer To Ina Rousseau)

In six day from nothing, only darkness,
He constructed light, solid mass, water and the earth
caused things to come into existence perfectly as if it was everlasting
and his gaze had fallen constantly

on this world,
a place where love was ruling without strive,
a place in the universe
where people were created in His image

and by own choice man himself brought destruction
listening to a obscure being,
letting ruination circle out much wider into posterity
and where hiding from God whispering to each other

and that which was once holy, noble and perfect
had fallen changing to dust and ash.

[Reference: Genesis by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

In Some Fields Of Grass Under The Hills (Sestina)

This afternoon the peaks throw a big shade
with the black cliffs shining up on the hills,
while we lay together in the long grass,
I look in your eyes that are amber-green
while under my head there is a small stone
and you smile at me like the prettiest lady.

I had once known another charming lady;
that part of my life is now left in shade,
bad churchmen were casting stone upon stone,
while I had to flee from them to the hills
to pastures where everything is green
to find the Lord in divine fields of grass.

Under your head there is a crown of grass
and your mother is a gracious, kind lady,
around us everything is lovely green
while we are still resting in the cool shade,
we are softly chatting about life's hills,
about walls of very hard granite stone.

Your eyes are much brighter than emerald stone
while all of your words are softer than grass,
reaching higher and beyond all the hills,
the high mountain which is dangerous lady,
while from our pain nothing gives any shade,
nowhere is a place of rest that is green.

Your summer dress is lovely, is bright green,
suddenly all our ails have turned to stone
I follow you further; see your small shade,
I am seen as one that woos any lady,
we walk past some flowers growing in grass,
climbing up higher into the foothills.

Bright streams are splashing down some of the hills,
with water transparent, sometimes cold and green,
love and lust burns like in a youthful lady
while I at that moment feel cold as stone,

we notice a deer feeding on lone grass
while our garments lie under a tree's shade.

Far into the hills you want love till dusk's shade,
where you peep like some green moss from the grass,
are tossing me with a stone like no lady.

Gert Strydom

In Some Of The Passing Days

we were both busy in the garden,
which seemed like a kind of Eden
and there was something in your cheerful gaze

a kind of wonder as if by Godly grace
for a time we were separate from all other men
was save against every kind of omen,
but with thunder and rain nature had its ways

which made the flowers constantly bloom.

Gert Strydom

In Some Ways (Italian Sonnet)

In some ways the world we live in
is no different from the world in Christ's day.
Today just like in the time of Rome people dance and play
and chase after pleasure and sin,

try at almost any cost to win,
do each other mock and betray,
are set on monetary value come what may
and without thought with the next evil we do begin

while some people live by human laws,
believe that the word of God is an outmoded tale
and do make own specific rules
as if an omnipotent God is full of flaws
and yet in life they do not prevail
while they act like renegades and self centred fools.

Gert Strydom

In Spite Of What Life Brings To Me

God, in spite of what life brings to me,
in spite of how much money I earn, of what work I do,
in which residential area I live, what car I drive
and if I have to walk or drive by motorbike
on the road that I travel, it is still at Your door
that I stand each day.

In spite of the words that I do write,
how bad or great they may be,
it makes me nothing else
than the human being that gets all things from you
and still I am bounded to You
for my light in this life's darkness.

Gert Strydom

In Spring

In spring flowers bloom
in welcome during that season
that is filled with sweet scent,
birds, butterflies and bees
rollick somewhat innocent
as if the coming summer
is filled with fruitfulness and life.

In spring prostitutes parade
up and down in the street corners of Hillbrow,
in Johannesburg
of Sunny Side in Pretoria, in mini skirts,
t-shirts without wearing any brassieres,
and without any panties

while black men delight
in their legal polygamous pleasures,
while their wives
suffer the pain of their betrayals,
painting their faces
to camouflage away the pain,
to disguise the marks
of domestic violence

while in the streets prostitutes
are dancing displaying their wares,
ensnaring some men,
women will try and find solutions
to infidelity, four letter words of disrespect
and daily domestic violence.

Gert Strydom

In Spring And Summer You Were Mine

In spring and summer you were mine
and we dwelt in great felicity
drinking champagne and wine
the world was beautiful and free

but when your beauty was sure and sweet
when my life was at its prime
you did with destruction meet
and I was lost in time

as if forever wishing
to live a part of life over again
to have that summer and spring
just like then

as if chance did me remove
from the one I was destined to love.

Gert Strydom

In Springs

Sometimes they walk around in parking areas,
with old hard beards, blue and sometimes days old,
usually they smell of smoke, leaves and ground
some of them do beg for their survival
with eyes, heads stiff, sometimes here and there
a weak dirty joke or still a half smile
but their eyes are without courage, sombre
they are jobless from laws of government,

at the mine, at places pushed from work,
very willing to do any kind of thing
with some stories that they tell each other,
not at all reconciled with their new lives
and most of them are a little older
not elderly, but stripped from self-esteem.

Gert Strydom

In That Bewitching Summer (In Answer To Wium Van Zyl)

In that bewitching summer
when we were together, darling,
I remember the beaches stretching out pure white
as if they were drawing roads next to the ocean

and the sun hanging cheerful and golden,
not setting yet at eight o'clock,
the wind sometimes throwing grating sand
against us both

but especially how magical our love had been,
how the fingers of your hands were reaching for me,
the taste of your soft lips under mine,
how perfectly we fitted into each other

and where my life now draws lines in open spaces
I wish that I could draw you deep into my arms.

[Reference: "Uit ons saamwees" (Out of us being together) by Wium van Zyl.]

Gert Strydom

In That Cape Town Days (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In that southeaster Cape Town hot summer sunny days
the city was Mediterranean as its weather sky and sea
and all of life seemed simple and lovely in many ways
although windswept and crowded it had tranquillity.

All of Table Mountain was covered by a white cloud,
but on Africa's edge on the Atlantic it was magnificent
where in that great wind many people did walkabout,
with its many wonders that summer was munificent

while I did love you dearly and you did really love me
and memories do come back about our time together
about the sun in your eyes, how you did smile openly
and it was very ideal in how a person wants life to be,

where now while you are far away I do love you still
and probably to the very end of life and forever I will.

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Gert Strydom

In That Church I Am The Only One (Rondine)

Bright light shine in, not much is going on,
I open an old door that behind me thud
when I am sure that all people are gone,
my eyes catch a single red rose bud
beneath my knees the floor is cold as stone,
I chew my prayers again like cows do cud.
Bright light shine in,

while my life feels dirty as the black mud
and in that church I am the only one,
feeling in the great world totally alone
while my own sins pierces like a sharp stud,
bright lights shine in.

Gert Strydom

In That Night

In that night we learned
what pain and joy is
and silently we lay in each other's arms
in the darkness,
until the new day burnt the bright blue open
we were missing
as if we did exist in every moment
and were caught and trapped in each other.

Gert Strydom

In That Which Words Say (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In that which words say in language and meaning
I did want to uncover my whole world for you,
wanted to tell you how my love really is
but for comprehension and mere words it's too great,
greater than the sun that hangs in the heaven,
more deep than the sky's bright blue hue
and like a vista between us is the great longing
that day after day does come with decades of memories
and love is like an inexplicable thing
that in its depths does fill a person with pain and happiness
of which the heart does overflow and sing,
which I cannot express in mere words
but I know that you do make a difference to my life,
that I want to protect with my life that which are between us.

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Gert Strydom

In That Winter Season

Praise the gods
and blessed I was,
when I found you
in that winter season.

Chill and coldness
was around us,
but your touch
was hotter than fire.

When I found you,
I found everything
that I wanted
and your love,
turned my life
from winter into spring.

Gert Strydom

In The Afternoon The Light Was Blinding (Rondine)

In the afternoon the light was blinding
the sun had a bright belligerence
and to it I had some indifference
as on the white beach I saw a strange thing.
I saw a girl every now and then watching,
there was no kind of interference
in the afternoon.

To a female friend she was whispering
and they both did bring some inference,
had a kind of modesty, a deference
but did I find them both very striking
in the afternoon.

Gert Strydom

In The Afternoons (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the afternoon countless lightning bolts do bash into eternity
when in the summer days rain do fall almost every afternoon
and poems of my memories of Heidelberg do begin
where I smell the blue-white intense air when the thunders roar,
remember the farm with maize, sometimes sunflowers and cattle,
how partridges and guinea fowl, sometimes warthogs do destroy the fields,
how a farmer does lift his eyes to the sky and knows how to serve the Lord God
and almost everything do depend on a big successful maize crop,
how soft en very hot the red-sand can be on feet,
how menacing geese like guard dogs can keep people away from a yard
but as a child I feared almost nothing in life
and knew how dog-tame horses, sheep, goats and cattle looked upon man
but everywhere God did accompany me while I climbed the hillocks
when in the distance the dam did gleam tempting and muddy.

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Gert Strydom

In The Aloe Covered Hillocks

In the aloe covered hillocks I saw nature have her way
with orange primal naked flowers among the rocks
while proteas bloomed on sunny day after sunny day;
small miracles caught the eye, under a cobalt sky

while you smiled at me with an inner happiness,
you radiated something more than just tranquillity
had softness, a serenity and a type of kindness;
your soft lips I wanted to kiss with you I wanted to be.

Gert Strydom

In The Back Garden

Where children try to catch peach beetles and butterflies
there faces are radiant and red cheeked,
the fragrances of the peaches and apricots are in the orchard
and there is a peaceful tranquillity hanging over the whole garden.

Everything that is sweet they press into their mouths,
exuberant they run up and down
to find new discoveries
of the most beautiful flowers growing on the ground.

Gert Strydom

In The Backyard A Cock Crows

In the backyard a cock crows
from a plot surrounded by walls of steel
while a dog lies in the sun where he is making a din.
In the backyard a cock crows
half astonished the hens peer at him
where in the early afternoon they how and peck.
In the backyard a cock crows
from a plot surrounded by walls of steel

Gert Strydom

In The Beginning

In the beginning
God looked at the dark void
and His voice structured
the universe and the sun, moon,
stars and the earth appeared.

There was no more void
and the breath from God
went out as His voice
that cleft the waters
and the deep
and there was no more continual darkness
and light broke
the everlasting night
and the waters parted
and sky and land appeared.

God created plants and vegetation
and animals and all
living things,
but with His hands
God formed man
and his mate
and build them in His image
and gave some
of His own breath
to them
to make them living.

Gert Strydom

In The Being Together Of Each Day

In the being together of each day
there is sunshine
that comes from your humanity;
you know the pain
that loneliness brings, the change
when light disappears
but you have to be a kind of angel
as you love past all flesh and blood.

Gert Strydom

In The Bleak Winter

In the bleak winter
when water is ice
and hard as rock,
God still rules supreme.

When the shadows
of life fall over me
and I see darkness appear,
it's still the voice
of my Lord that I hear.

When great illness
and trepidation comes my way,
still will I stay
on the narrow road
and pray my prayers to Thee.

What ever befall me
no fear I will know,
but just the light
of Thy word
will set the way
that my life shall go.

Gert Strydom

In The Bright Summer Sun

Sweet is the juice of Hanepoot grapes
where they hang golden in bunches in vineyards
when the Cape summer catch this world
when the hours move on to the late afternoon
and high in the air a dove flies
where it turns caught in the clear sky
and in this summer I get an urge
to move my life to Cape Town,

where I want to find You in the beautiful nature
in a world that astonishes and does blind.

On a military camp I heard from a grape farmer
who lived near to Stellenbosch
that the children of his workers are bewitched,
that his labourers were addicted from before birth and he was adamant,
as if with wine generations of farmers did exist in this way
and somewhere he had lost his humanity
did not want to hear of any complaint about this kind of thing,
but this wickedness moved me deeply.

Gert Strydom

In The Bushveldt

A crow flies croaking in the game park,
indignant about vultures that descent,
where they act out their antics, pecking,
at remains left by the lions.

I stay detecting through the open window,
and drive a day's journey past gigantic trees of teak
drink ice cold cool drink while we talk pleasantly
and I notice zebras, elephants, a leopard and then this:
three lion cubs that eat voracious, unhindered,
and they look as innocent as small kitten
with the sun touching their fur with patches
until the male roars, makes its presence known.
A crow flies croaking in the game park,
at remains left by the lions.

Gert Strydom

In The Car Park At The Mayville Mall

On a Sunday morning
I went to the Mayville Hyperama
to buy food for the dogs.

I cross the street
and am almost on the sidewalk
when a small blonde mare
drives past in a new silver Audi
and hangs out of the window
swearing me out of the road

while she throws vulgar signs
and on her side of the road it's open,
the woman is pretty and blonde
with two teenage children in the car with her

and I restrain myself and see her parking,
how she opens her car's door
against a new blue BMW,
does scrape the paint from that car
and when a black man to whom the car belongs
have an argument with her,

she lets loose and slaps him that his ears do sing,
he loses control and that man is big
and he does slap her with one hand from her feet

that she does crawl on her knees,
that her nose does bleed like a river
and I want to hit the black man
but do restrain myself

and the black man notices me, ignores her
and in a hurry he does walk away
but when I get near to her she cries and says:
"please do help me"
and I wonder who has taught her English?

In The City

As a child in the afternoons
I walked home
barefoot along a sand road
with a short sleeved shirt and short pants
and the red brown sand
burnt my feet
but the air was bright blue,

I smelled the Lucerne of the field,
sometimes took a short cut through the stream,
birdcalls were like music
and the whole world belonged to me
and in everything
I could see the Lord's works
and knew that I was serving
a loving Father.

Envoi

Now I walk with hand made shoes
in a designer suit
on concrete streets
from my car to the lift
then on thick carpets
to my office
and in the background
I can hear the air conditioner
and somewhere life
has lost its soul.

Gert Strydom

In The Clockwork (Free Verse Sonnet)

In every beautiful flashing memory
there are pieces of recall,
as if again moments want to unfold
while they do return to my thoughts.
In every intimate and sincere thing
moments are intense and sometimes raw
as if I do always do retain parts of you.
In days of great change
your footsteps boom constantly,
tatters flash of every moment,
as if everything in the clockwork comes
with a own kind of insight
while the course of life ticks,
do only limit us to each other.

Gert Strydom

In The Coffee Shop I Have A Tramezzini

In the coffee shop I have a tramezzini
and a big jug of coffee-latté
see some strangers passing
avoid eye contact, read the local paper

before walking to the queue
when a buss pulls up and I take
a blue plastic covered seat, sitting alone,
opening a notebook, starting to write poetry.

At the next stop a pretty slim blonde
takes the seat across from me
and I get a view of a long leg
clad in pantyhose

and she pulls out a book
from her big handbag
and she gets lost
in Shakespeare's sonnets

and she must be the romantic kind
and suddenly she looks up
with the most beautiful blue eyes
and blushing asks in Afrikaans

the meaning of:
"his compeers by night giving him aid"
and before I know it
she's sitting right next to me

and I explain that compeers
are usually seen as equals
or maybe nightly companions
but it is probably referring back

to the line "by spirits taught to write
above mortal pitch." She then notices
the leather-covered notebook
and pick it up, opens it and reads

and are astonished that it is poetry,
maybe more by the words
and the lines
and suddenly she's engrossed with me.

Gert Strydom

In The Dale Of Death (Crystalline Poem)

Away in the valley of death
it is You that do give life and breath.

Gert Strydom

In The Dark Night I Load Rockets

In the dark night I load rockets
and stand away
while they are fired against the enemy
and I see them drawing red lines
with long flames
burning beyond them

and its like as a child
when I went to the drive-in
and saw how they shoot men off
into space,
on the way to the moon

but these rockets are aimed
at T55 tanks and BTR armoured cars
and soldiers of the Cuban and FAPLA enemy
that burn in unquenched flames

when at a distance the deadly arrows rain down
and I can smell the fragrance of death,
gunpowder and prosperous
on the evening breeze
while I watch the fireworks.

Gert Strydom

In The Darkness (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Cornelius van der Merwe)

When everything around me and in my thoughts it's black,
You do bring to me words and phrases and their meaning,
You are the light that finds the way to where words do go
and even if all of the world is held in a kind of darkness,
You do help me to look with other eyes to everything around me,
where I notice how all things do look against each other,
where affinity and separation lies in all of this,
You do fill my heart when my own spirit and will wants to die
and even if I stand at the abyss of the endless naught,
there are still stars gleaming over me into the distance,
while You with absolute truth go straight to the core,
You do bring joy, happiness and love in my sorrow and distress,
where hieroglyphics suddenly are deciphered and gets stature
as You do give all of the words, lines and thoughts to me.

[Reference:"Witsig" (White-sight)by Cornelius van der Merwe.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Darkness I Got Up

(after Breyten Breytenbach)

In the darkness I got up
saw you in the rays of the moon
while the gulls was screeching endlessly outside
with some flying to the endless ocean

and the yesterdays disappeared with every morning,
night fled away before each day's sunshine
with our being together
that came as a kind of healing for any previous pain

and on the far road that we have been travelling on
things were now wide and open,
while I read true love in your eyes,
healing for every fear and endless hope,

we went pass every horizon
with days going on and on
and your dreams also became mine
while nothing could hinder us

with the milk white beaches that stretched out around us
you told me your deepest secrets,
your tongue braided intimately around mine,
continuously we courted each other

while my verses went through to your depths,
each new morning brought hope and more love
that captured us again with each other,
with joy that we found in the smallest thing

while the sea threw out shells endlessly on the beaches,
the wind and sea everywhere scattered sand
it felt if every day was summer,
you were suntanned, far past being only lovely.

[Reference: 'the cup of words' by Breyten Breytenbach.]

In The Darkness Of The Night

In the darkness of the night
you sneak over the wooden floor in the passage
while you are careful,
taking careful steps to avoid it creaking
avoiding it telling the other people in the house
about our escapades
and when the door of the room suddenly opens
I see you standing there
in a transparent night-gown
while the rays of the moon
falls silver-white over you
through the window
and to me you become a goddess
that brings unspeakable joy.

Gert Strydom

In The Darkness You Sneak By Along With The Corridor

and when the floor creaks

I wonder if the people in the house are listening.

Away is the tiredness

when the early morning sun caresses me softly

and awakes me

when you are dressed and looking lovely

and still I am struggling to drive my dreams away.

Gert Strydom

In The Depth Of The Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

When in the night sky I see Arcturus high above
I know that the Bushmen see a woman that cries over a baby,
where blindly she tries to find him to embrace him again
and patiently still does wait to find that child,
where the Milky Way to them is a woman that wanted to grab the stars
but had to throw them away as white ash everywhere
and somewhere far away do hide for this deed
but every now and then she does again peep out.
I read in the Holy Word how God does bring out the zodiac
where through time and eternity He does find His own way,
do unravel Pleiades where that far off star does constantly orbit,
do set the nebulas with pulsars and do lead out the Bear
and where with all of this in wonder I do stand,
there is nothing in the entire universe that does slip past my Lord.

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Gert Strydom

In The Depth Of Your Heart It Is (English Sonnet)

In this world where there is constant decay,
we mortals search for an immortal thing
while illness and age sweeps life away
as if in science it's somewhere hiding

and yet as something we cannot measure,
the immaterial thing called love
we at times find as our greatest treasure
which when it's true nothing can remove

or even its great power totally subdue
and today with your hand in mine
when we are together and I glance at you
we have found something divine

and have both never felt just like this,
in the depth of your heart it is.

Gert Strydom

In The Depths Of A Grim Winter (Cavatina)

In the depths of a grim winter when life
felt desolate
there was a fluttering, a twittering
at the front gate
when chilly the wind rocked the big trees;
I could not wait
to go to look and see what made that sound
and a little weaver sang to all around.

Gert Strydom

In The Depths Of A Grim Winter (Cavatina) 1

In the depths of a grim winter when life
felt desolate
there was a fluttering, a twittering
at the front gate
when chilly the wind rocked the big trees.
I could not wait
to go to look and see what made that sound
and a little redbreast sang to all around.

Gert Strydom

In The Depths Of My Mind

In the depths of my mind
emotions and feelings I do find,
also memories of every intimate embrace
and the times where we flew together on the wind,

the times when we touched each other in pure bliss
and I thought that eternity should be just like this,
when your lips were hot upon mine
and sweet and moist was every lovely kiss.

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Gert Strydom

In The Depths Of Your Lovely Sunny Eyes (Sonnet)

In the depths of your lovely sunny eyes
at times I see pain and sometimes joy
and there's a strange kind of grace
when they twinkle like stars in the skies
and the usual feelings between a girl and boy
seems small against what I see on your face,

from the message in your smiles and cries
and it's as nothing can destroy,
our love, our commitment, as if no menace
or whatever anyone tries,
or any kind of evil trapping ploy
can act against us while we do still embrace

and the feelings that we do possess, seems divine
as if it's God's will for you to be forever mine.

Gert Strydom

In The Distance Lightning Is Falling

In the distance lightning is falling
while you lie close to me
and on the wind
blowing into the room
I can smell the rain
and see in the distance
how the flashing light looks pure white
but we have tranquillity,
where in you maybe a new person is originating
while the storm sneaks nearer and nearer,
bringing new life to the dried out yellow grass.

Gert Strydom

In The Distance The Small Church Does Lie

In the distance the small church does lie with the weather vane,
the fishing boats in their dark patches on the beach,
the white bleached houses
in a chord with dried Cape herring
on porch after porch
while in the waves we do go up and down,
feel how the water do wash against us,
while children do frolic on the beach,
do build castles and do watch the girls secretly
and women streched out shining
do face the sun.

Gert Strydom

In The Distant Past

In the distant past the waters did spread
and the raw earth came forth
and for some time everything on this world was free,

after the Spirit of the Lord hovered, gave life to everything,
covered the earth with grasses, seeds and each flower.
In the distant past the waters did spread

and a friend and acquaintance of man He was
when man was astounded by all of the marvels
and for some time everything on this world was free.

Tired Adam went to sleep on the soft grass
and wondered if there was a better half for him?
In the distant past the waters did spread

but the evil dragon envied man,
did disguised himself as a talking snake
and for some time everything on this world was free,

but the words of the snake stayed with the woman
and her choice led to old age and death.
In the distant past the waters did spread
and for some time everything on this world was free.

Gert Strydom

In The Distant Veldt I Saw Him

In the distant veldt I saw Him
where He holds His hand over the wild flowers
and there was a colossal hillock
on a summer day with the sky another kind of blue

when I tried to find holy moments,
when I walked back in the footprints of a child
and free from the blackberry-bush
under the weather and wind

I devoured some of nature's treasures
and I was blind for my Lord
while I only saw the works of His hands,
when I went back to some of my childhood places.

Gert Strydom

In The Doves That Flutter Down (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

In the doves that flutter down around me tranquillity I do see
and sometimes I want to be like the Hadedah ibises that are free,
yet more beautiful by far are the blue jays that do each other woo
but in all of these wonderful things I see God's love that is true
but greater still is the redbreast that dances and sing in the oak tree
the yellow barbet, the black-collard barbet and yellow weaver skip
until the hot summer sun does away beyond the hillocks dip
where in this lovely world together with you I do want to be
and sometimes I want to be like the Hadedah ibises that are free.

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Gert Strydom

In The Early Afternoons Like Morning Glories

In the early afternoons like morning glories
I flourish under the sweetness of your sunny eyes
while in the blaze of your pretty smile my solitude
reaches out to you in a kind of invisible embrace

as if I am always flourishing in your blazing presence
drawing, continually drawing your radiance to me.
Sometimes there is only darkness when your soul
drops to the depths of a kind of sheer depression.

In the early afternoons like morning glories
I flourish under the sweetness of your sunny eyes
see a myriad of butterflies fluttering nearer
that visits me gently like the way I love you

and as the night sets in my life is ever folding,
closing and waiting for the sunshine of your touch.

Gert Strydom

In The Early Day (Roundel)

In the early day there is some beauty
while the breeze in grass and bracken plays,
up high a lark is soaring wild and free.

In the early day

there is something joyful and something gay
with a kind of grace in everything I see
while over the hill a rider gallops away

and it's as if something is calling me
to awaken you, to kiss you if I may,
together to find some serenity
in the early day.

Gert Strydom

In The Early Morning

When a god in the early morning
descended from the east
he wanted to find
a farm girl
and to get a Afrikaner girl
as a mate,
but no Afrikaner farm girl
liked him.

He got really angry
and went to the old Orange Free State
and there he scorched the earth open
with lightning bolts
and blasted every thing flat
to be able to see miles far
when an Afrikaner farm girl passes.

He farmed as well as he could
and fetched his sheep
from the fields
and one day
when he was standing in the field
between the blue bushes,
he saw an Afrikaner farm girl going past

and on his horse
he rode as fast as the wind
with dust hanging
twisting behind him
to get his girl.

¶Envoi

With time a nation
emerged like giants
out of that dry earth
and they work
before the sun rises
farming in that arid region
and here and there

a boy
watches a girl...

[Reference: The Orange Free State is province in South Africa, which is very arid with a flat landscape.]

Gert Strydom

In The Early Morning (Free Verse Sonnet)

With the sun's first orange-red
it climbs graciously out of the window frame,
we see the day flirting
while the neighbour unlocks his doors,
we open the curtains of words
while the twittering-weaver gambols around,
the wind strip leaves from the old oak tree,
while love gleams in your eyes like the sun
and we do prepare tea and breakfast
while the dogs yelp a welcoming
and to be together there is time
while we thank God for His great gifts
where you are enrapturing and my heart does bounce
but in a while the tasks of the day will grab us.

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Gert Strydom

In The Early Morning [2]

In the early morning
dew covers every piece of grass and flower
and I see green sprouts in the soft ground

that appears after the first rain,
some grow luxuriant and others are slender and fine.
Some dew covers every piece of grass and flower,

and new buds appear
on long green stems,
some grow luxuriant and others are slender and fine.

in an aromatic existence.
At dark red roses and pink hollyhocks
on long green stems,

butterflies appear new from there metamorphoses
while the sun spreads its yellow-golden rays,
at dark red roses and pink hollyhocks

bees and butterflies fly to and thro
in the early morning
while the sun spreads its yellow-golden rays
and I see green sprouts in the soft ground.

Gert Strydom

In The Early Morning Light (Sonnet)

In the early morning light
where the light is hazy
the house in the street stand trembling
between jacarandas that flower purple
and on this Sunday morning
men in black suits walk
to where the church bells are chiming,

a young couple stand hand in hand
where they are drinking some Coca Cola
on the porch of a café,
there are dogs barking in the street
where newspaper sellers are shouting loud,
while families do enjoy a weekend
that gives rest after a busy week.

Gert Strydom

In The Early Winter (Roundelay)

A covering darkness of blanket blackness
with loneliness and no feelings to express
while rain sieves down for days without end;
in this winter it's as if my life is spent.

The nights are chilly with an icy wind
searching for something that it cannot find,
as if the presence of death still is recent;
in this winter it's as if my life is spent.

Gert Strydom

In The Faintly Lit Restaurant

(After Chris Lombard)

In the faintly lit restaurant there are moments that couples do share
when a pianist plays ballade pour Adeline,

an immoral night is the memory of an elder
when in lust he looks at a lonely woman,

two old ladies with purple hair gossip about the pastor's wife
where they do trust her with no man,

a love-struck girl plays tickle-toe with her boyfriend
and her teeth do gleam whither than pearl,

a widow cries in her sorrow,
in this life she and her love is apart.

[Reference:"'n Aand met Daniele" (a evening with Daniele)by Chris Lombard.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Forgetfulness Of Darkness

In the forgetfulness of darkness
I keep on spending time
as if my words can write away the insignificance
in one or other method,

can argue with the forgetfulness,
as if I can bring a context to the past,
as if there is great power in my words
and in the reality of the presence,

as if I can send every fiend and falsehood
straight to hell
and yet it does only remain words on paper,
the wasting of hour upon hour.

Gert Strydom

In The Fruit And Veg

Knocking you listen
to the sound
that a watermelon makes
to test if it is ripe

and I wipe the smile from my face,
trying to look sincere
and the whole of Fruit and Veg is filled
with shoppers, adoring ripe fruit and vegetables
crowding around some places with special offers
like a great vast congregation
gathered in the temple of a god

and tonight you will again
make your great fruit salad
with chopped and sliced mangoes,
papaw, sweet melon, some squeezed orange juice
and grapes
and maybe this afternoon
we will eat the watermelon
in the shade next to the swimming pool.

Gert Strydom

In The Game Of Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Ina Rousseau)

Where each one of us stands on the stage of the world,
where our own lives are a scene before the universe
on a earth full of great darkness
Your bright searchlight does cut its own way,
each person's turn does come to go on
and the great secret of the spectacle
brings to everyone a unique meaning
where some do loose their lives for You,
like a player in a leading role or just a figure
do play out their roles for the last time,
others do unexpectedly disturb the lives of others,
do lead them off the road running to the other side
and the time is running out before the curtain does fall
while You do still perform as the big director.

[Reference: "Kwatryne" (Quatrains)by Ina Rousseau.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Garden

In the garden a honeybee spins urgently
around and around a flower,
white butterflies glide on the wind
when they come still nearer
but I am caught by your loveliness
are at times speechless
that someone so wonderful does love me
while you are busy planting small seedlings.

Gert Strydom

In The Garden (2)

In the garden the woman had to guard against the snake
and then on his insistence she did take the fruit and did bite into it
as she did find Lucifer's tempting game glorious and good.

Unobserved he did bite into her soul
while darkness did stretch around them
and then on his insistence she did take the fruit and did bite into it.

They did cover their nakedness,
did hide away from the presence of God
while darkness did stretch around them.

God did promise to dirty Himself with their sin
where they were scared and did hide,
did hide away from the presence of God

and the love and mercy of God did come to life
while they did not regard the commandments and love of God
where they were scared and did hide

and they did not expect his salvation.
In the garden the woman had to guard against the snake
while they did not regard the commandments and love of God
as she did find Lucifer's tempting game glorious and good.

Gert Strydom

In The Garden (Abecedarium)

Annoyed the small girl turns to him and says: "Oh no."
Bees do fly around her in the garden.
Caesar stands in front of her
dangling a wooden sword in his hand,

eager to come to her defence.
Followers to come to their aid do not exist.
Great numbers of vicious bees want to sting them.
He hits a few as enemies down.

Ibises fly up frightened and screaming
just when a whole swarm of bees want to sting them.
Keen-witted he drags her away by the hand.
"Leave us alone you demons," he screams.

More and more bees fly venomously nearer,
nowhere there is any escape
"Obviously we are going to lose this battle," his princess says
anxious.
Pacify they cannot the enemy. Who is the wretched

quisling that have betrayed them to the foes?
Racing, their hearts beat and they cannot guess while the enemy swish nearer
sting and buzz and they have got to
take defeat and fall back.

Unarmed against the enemy they flee to the protection of the
villa with its huge windows
where no bees can reach them and like a real
Xanthippe mother yells at them to get out of the

yard where it has become very dangerous.
Zulu, the Maltese poodle continually does howl outside.

Gert Strydom

In The Garden (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the garden Eve had to guard against the snake
but his frisking game she found glorious and good,
on his insistence she picked the fruit, took a bite of it,
did suddenly get overwhelming courage
to take the fruit to her husband
where for a moment he did stand astounded
and then he did notice the beauty of that peculiar fruit,
did bite into the flesh of it with his all of his teeth
and when darkness did suddenly come
they did cover themselves with leaves,
did hide away beyond the thick green shrubs
were confined to a naked human body and sin
until Jesus Christ did Himself compensate
did make reconciliation with His blood.

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Gert Strydom

In The Garden [2]

In the garden a honeybee spins urgently
around and around a flower,
white butterflies glide on the wind
when they come still nearer
but I am caught by your loveliness
are at times speechless
that someone so wonderful does love me
while you are busy planting small seedlings.

Gert Strydom

In The Garden Irises Are Flowering (Novelinee)

In the garden irises are flowering
in colours of yellow, purple and blue
as if something to them are happening
some are mixed in yellow and purple too
and some are mauve, or some are somewhat brown,
I wonder if other flowers I will see
where magnificent they grow on their own,
while the weavers are singing constantly
in a kind of solemn serenity.

Gert Strydom

In The Gardens Of Margaret Robberts

In the gardens of Margaret Robberts
white roman pillars runs
in rows down a lane
and there's a green domed roof
that throws a long shadow.

Between the plants there are fairies hiding
and their homes are forsaken,
camped off with silver wire
and as if she has escaped
one blows on a copper magical flute.

There are red roses
blooming beautifully
and a citrus odour
coming from the lemon trees
and three boys are proud
of the lemons that they are carrying
and I wonder what is going to happen
when they eat some of them.

In the small chapel
I take my hat from my head
and there are beautiful verses
on the walls
and a round stained glass window
with a golden cross
and points pointing
like a white compass
in all directions
that is possible to determine.

We say a silent prayer
and walk to the bell tower
where you hold the chain
for a photograph
and you pay for cool drink,
chicken pie and spinach quiche
and we are exhausted

from the summer heat
and everything becomes peaceful
and I look at you
while you scatter pink rock salt
over your food

l'Envoi

Later we walk to a place
where angels hang on fine strings
and you sit and relax
on a bench with one painted
against the wall
while I try to catch
everything with the camera
and you smile more beautiful
than any angel,
with rays shining out of your golden eyes
and there's a cute sunhat
on your head
and your locks fall in auburn strings
past your slender shoulders.

Gert Strydom

In The Greatest Darkness

I look at the sky
and in the greatest darkness
see the brightest stars appear.

In life at the time of calamity
its greatest heroes rise
to point without uncertainty
the true way to go.

At times of persecution
more people turn to God,
than times was everything
goes well.

In times of destruction
and where people are travailed,
something in the human spirit
rise above inhumanity.

In the depth of night
the sweetest words are written
and from the cold dark earth
seeds come to life.

Gert Strydom

In The Grey-Land Of A Wasted World

(after T. S. Eliot)

I In the winter of life

To me no other month is as cruel
as August when the winter wind
blows away everything,
when the air is full of dust
and it feels if never again
there will be another spring
when the lack of rain
has turned the grasses dead,
when like skeletons
the trees stand reaching up to the sky

and the black frost has killed
the rest of the flowers and plants
that was still living
and there is an icy chill in everything

where you come to me girl
with the laughter, the sureness of a woman
that is bringing with her the new life of spring
with your hands brown of the dust of the garden
where you were planting new seedlings,
do come to me with lips raised for many kisses
and I neither here nor there
was a part of life but also as if dead
unconscious to it
as if you were only a part of a dream.

II About the things in the past and that are to come

In a caravan in the open park
to where the circus does usually come
I found a gypsy woman in a caravan
who wanted to tell me the truth,
as she does see it

about the past and about what
the future does hold,

she wanted money of which I did not have a lot,
took both of my hands in hers which were soft
turned them over, traced the lines on both of my hands,
talked about love that has come and went,
about the joys of a sexy female companion
that was on the verge of the future,
about poetry and the depth of it,
about travel to distant lands
and her words to me was mere probability
about things that could and could not be

and suddenly the magic ball,
the lamp through which she does see the future
did light up on its own
and started flashing as if it
was calling her,
insisting her to look at it
and to see
but she ignored it as if
it could wait to later,

took out a pack of Tarot-cards
and shuffled them again and again
while she said to me to draw some out of the pack
which was upside down

I drew out six at different places,
gave them all to her
and the first, which she turned over
was death
and she stiffened talked about the death
of the leader of this country,
about death of people in the world,
next was the Day of Judgment
and I did think nothing of it
while she smiled at the lovers
as if her previous prediction was coming true
but shook her head at the fool (also called a madman)
where I did only believe in reality and logic

and nothing could bring madness to it,
the cards of the tower and the sun did follow.

"This is very interesting. It's about a future that goes out
to the leader of this struggling country,
to the entire world, " she said while she was concentrating.
"The end of the world, the Judgement Day and the new City
with a place for everyone under the Sun of righteousness, "
I did joke along and my words did greatly trouble her.

The moment that I had left the gypsy
that visit did really begin to trouble me
as I did remember stern warnings
that my mother did give me as a child
which she got out of her old black Bible
about not visiting a person who does divination,
or an observer of times
as this is an abomination to the Lord God.

III A attack on the United States of America

Later in September it was if some truth had come
to some of her words:

Shocking is death where it comes almost by chance,
where it has an impact in man's normal existence
and where people that did only want to travel,
others where only busy with there normal work,

while sly plans did bring everything to a hellish destruction
with aeroplanes full of normal people
who against their will do fly crashing
into two tower-blocks,
at other places do just plunge to the earth,
do burn and explode
and two buildings do on too many people
burn, crumble and disintegrate,

where these buildings were skyscrapers
made out of glass, concrete and steel
and they do become a gigantic burial ground,

where these things do disconcert the entire world
and it does change from what it was
as if it never again can change back

and the whole world
does slowly but certainly get a aversion
to every Muslim,
as if everyone is responsible for the acts
of those people of the same faith
who do kill innocent people

and somewhere religious fanatics do smile
where they are wishing each other well
over the unbelievers that had been annihilated
in the name of a god called Allah
and do forget that they did ravage,
break and destroy totally innocent people

and the people who did die
were faithful children
of the omnipotent Lord God,
that they did not want to bring harm to anybody,
that the Lord God holds His hand over the earth
and that every act is recorded
for His great Day of Judgement that is coming.

IV The great chess game

Leading riders on black motorbikes swish past
with flashing red lights
over the crossing of Arabat street
where rows of lamp-poles
tower with golden round lights,
small black Powédas
with men of the Federal Security Service
follow short on their heels
before the bullet-proof Zil
that is big and black glides past.

Men from the CIA in two black

American Chryslers
follow at a distance
while they make jokes
about the people in the Zil
who in their opinion
is on the way to a dacha
to enjoy bodily pleasure
with each other
and the two cars take an off ramp
to drive back to the American embassy
from where they did come.

In the background the big Kremlin palace fades away
along with a building of which the golden domes gleam
while the small convoy takes the ring road,
and the general does sit smiling backward,
the skirt of his young companion
does shift up to her lovely upper leg
and the glance in her dark-brown eyes
are dedicated to him,
(as a person would expect)
and yet somewhat amused.

The man suddenly smiles at that,
although the people in the West think
that they had drawn the tooth of Russia
the chess game does go on,

submarines do still sneak through the depths of the ocean,
with their nuclear explosive heads aimed as previously
on New York, Washington, Los Angeles
and other cities of the American continent,
at cities in Europe
and even on the Southern point of Africa

with aircraft standing ready for a attack,
missiles of which other countries are unaware
and day after day
the game is set anew
and the waiting does continue
for the attack command.

The small convoy
leaves the highway,
disappears into a secret military base,
into a place where the end of the lives
of billions of people
could start within moments.

V Drought

In the hot sun
the blades of three windmills turn
like beggars crouching
on their knees to the ground
praying for another drop

and on top the wind
is pillaging the earth
blowing up huge
clouds of dust
ripping the last leaves from trees
that stand like skeletons
on the plains of the great Karoo

where thirsty sheep, are frail,
thinned out and bleating
for something to drink,
for even thorny shrubs to eat

and in the church the local farmers
are praying for rain
while the godless remain
at the local bar
and are drowning
the heat with countless numbers
of bottles of beer

and the sky remains a darker hue of blue
until some of the animals smells it
and light is flickering in white stripes
in the distance on the far horizon
and suddenly the sky

is covered with clouds
and buckets full of rain
start pouring down
and religious men and the godless
dance cheering in the streets.

VII If you are a real romantic

then you do believe that someone special does exist
and within a five minutes you can meet, look at and glance at
a special person in a crowd, can experience something indescribable
when you do make eye contact in just a mere moment,
when that other person's soul does open to you
in only a tiny bit of a second and this is not flirting,
just an experience between the two of you
that is irreplaceable and true, and you do know that destiny
can hold much more in the unforeseen future
and within a half of an hour you might know that this is love
and although you may never see that person ever again
or know him or her or even a name or address
you do cherish that perfect untouchable moment
and it takes a lifetime to forget that person

but here you and I are
two people that have come to love one another
and all the moments that we do share
are just as special and wonderful as this
while we together want to venture
into the unknown future
do want to cherish our love,
do want to experience
the sheer magic of a single kiss
do want to have sexual bliss
and while we do live far apart
our love and friendship does daily
go stronger and stronger
while a life of sheer tenderness
and flaming true-life passion does wait.

VII The destruction of the black bull

The time will come
when the great black bull is killed
by own behavior,

the time will come when the black bull
do self-destruct
where by many coupling it is infected,

without ancestral ghosts appearing
at the fire light or a demon
walking in the dead of night

and no one will be
like a tikoloshe or a zombie,
like a walking idiot doll

when that bull does crash thundering down
and its last breath will fall
being nothing more than a puff of air

and a chilling silence will then
envelope the continent,
will be falling from end to end

and the dying will not be caused
by any white people
or the power that they no longer do hold

and no betrayal will cause this destruction,
but it will be self-inflicted, from its life style
from the culture that it cherishes and holds.

IX The wilderness

No falling of the bones of witchcraft,
no thunder that enchanting does come down

can bring rescue
from the tide that circles in like the sea

as chaos has been loosened
without anybody worrying about the cost of it

and thousands maybe millions
of foreign shoes

do stream in constantly
to start a new life right here

and foreign criminals are on the street,
do everywhere stand talking in small groups

where overnight I and my nation have become third rate citizens
and the government do rape our rights

where the black foreigners are rated higher
and they try to bring us to poverty with all of their power

to the place where I am on my knees,
where my prayers do go up to the omnipotent Lord God

to bring salvation in a time of oppression,
for His works to circle out over all of Africa

as my country has become a wilderness
in which my people and I are not welcome.

X On each and every day

On each and every day
I call on God to hear me,
to listen to my pleadings
and try to find Him in the silences
where I am struggling
as if against a solid wall of rock
and it sometimes feels as if my prayers
do not go any further than the ceiling,
as if my life,
my daily struggle is in vain
and yet daily sunshine, thunder and rain
comes falling over me and still I am wrestling,

struggling with the Almighty One
who is always here and never gone
as if constantly I am only living in my iniquity,
yet daily I do some of his blessings see
do turn back and do fight the struggle against sin,
and open my heart where He does enter in.

[Poet's note and reference: Winter in the Southern hemisphere is in opposite months from that in the Northern hemisphere of the earth. In the Southern hemisphere winter is in the months of June, July and August. "The Waste Land" by T. S. Eliot.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Grey-Land Of The World God Does Govern Alone

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

There is no root or anything out of a dove
that does find roots in the human soul

or anything that a human can find in the night
to protect against the power of Lucifer

and alone no one can stand against supernatural power,
only the Lord God does guard against this kind of darkness

that in the depths of the soul does find a place in loneliness
and against each demon He does protect each child

that does accept Him as a father and He does even straighten eternity
where outside of space and time over everything in the universe His reign does stretch

and even in the deepest silence there is no bleak chilliness but only tranquillity
where God Himself and His angels do surround His children in vigilance

and in a world of ultimate chaos man does reign as an orphan
but the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent One does forswear all kinds of fear.

[Reference: "Wildernis" (Wilderness) by D. J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Heat Of Your Body

In the heat of your body
in this winter I do find
warmth, escape and fulfilment of desire

and when the morning light somewhat shyly
falls through the windows
you are the sun in my universe.

Gert Strydom

In The Here And Now I Think Of You Who I Do Adore (Couplets)

Outside the pea-seedlings are ankle-high where they grow,
while in the April-autumn the sun much more dimly glow.

Days do come where the heat with vapour rises from the tar
but I know that to help against this deadly thing God is not far

and in this time there is pain for all people and love in my heart,
where no one can look past the sorrow of another and you and I am apart.

I know that everything will turn out well while God's love do abound
as He do life, times, years and also seasons turn around

and now that the shadows do come and are stretching longer
my longing and missing becomes in moments much stronger,

but as I see the evening-star and the moon hanging in the cobalt sky,
I do know that even if the fears of humanity are very high,

there still is omnipotence in the things that God do
that He does act on His word and do always remain true

and in the here and now I think of you who I do adore,
ask God to protect you and humanity and His love to remain forevermore.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite
to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

In The Highveld

(after Toon van den Heever)

I

In the Highveld with the sky cobalt blue and open
where rock rabbits, steenbok and baboons revel,
you see the wind skipping through the long grass
and you can still believe in God and His angels,

the rain gathers with thunder
where through the open spaces you can see far into the veldt,
you are astounded by the beauty of flowering proteas
and you still can realize your dependence

but when the city's rumbling becomes too much,
the jacarandas start flowering in the streets,
buildings of steel and concrete start to curtail you,
you dream about wild flowers appearing everywhere

and it's the places of a child that you miss,
in the Highveld where the veldt stretches out into the distance.

II

In the Highveld where the veldt stretches out into the distance
and the wind rollicks through the grass
the sky is pure blue and you can look for hours at it,
there you can find freedom from the city's imprisonment.

When the wind rustles through the march you loose all sadness,
you see the African red-knobbed coot gathering her chickens,
you can hear the finches' caper, branches full together,
you see every great small happening,

how wild flowers of every imaginable colour
grow as if planted in secret
(and I will go back if I only could)
where I can find some serenity, can have peace
where I will know about God's heritage;

there the sun shines.

III

There the sun shines
where proteas and aloes flower wildly,
bright up to the horizon
coming out of the earth by themselves

with violets growing purple-blue right through the marsh,
with daisies stretching white over the veldt,
with long tailed widow birds flapping their wings
and the earth is covered with long green grass.

To this piece of ground I am trapped
even when my days are drawing to their end,
it goes even to my heart's deepest yearning,
with every plant, bush and flower

as it's bought with sweat and blood,
nobody can strip it from me.

IV

Nobody can strip it from me,
I have to go back to where the sun hangs golden
in the sapphire heaven, I have got to strip the city from me
(but if I only could)

the big desire stays and out of the town I must go
away from the ambulance and police sirens that cuts through everything,
trains whistling almost endlessly,
I have got to go to where only the frog choir and crickets sing.

Again I have got to get the smell of sugar bushes,
smell the rain, spring, summer and even autumn
I must get away from a world where tinned pleasure seduces,
where people use other people for their own pleasure.

I want to stand in the green fields of grass,

when the day dies.

V

When the day dies
letting its last rays fall,
with the birds flying to their nests
darkness comes to this part of the universe,

the doves at dusk still call to each other
as if their voices bind them in the darkness,
you can see the moon sailing golden-yellow through the sky,
you are sometimes blinded by the bright rays,

the city lights glitter far away
in all the colours of the rainbow,
here you want to bond your life to a loved one,
catching her moments long in your eye

when people come together here,
the madness of the human existence is exorcised.

VI

The madness of the human existence is exorcised
even in later years past your own youth,
when you are in the world that your heart desires,
you want to invite the new spring to stay with you

shaking out that which bothers and torments to the early summer wind,
feeling the effervescence of new life,
blinded by the sun you want to find healing
while the whole of spring washes through your life

with the light, air, the flowers, birds and sun splashing down
as if your autumn is only in your imagination,
you want to wash yourself clean from old age,
you are searching for exorcism from the darkness

there are still flowers sprouting out everywhere,
when the colours of autumn smoulder in the trees.

VII

When the colours of autumn smoulder in the trees
with branches being full of coloured leaves,
the sun is still heating as in summer
before the first biting winds begin to whine.

I see opened pod upon opened pod
that lays brown scorched without any signs of seeds,
the dull blue sky has clouds in milky white,
trees become a wild watermill

that is halfway skeleton, halfway still carrying leaves,
afternoons are still drawn out
and even when days earlier end in winter
it's a time without equal,
as if the summer can last forever,
in the Highveld with the sky cobalt blue and open.

Gert Strydom

In The Highveld [2]

Sometimes I visit in absence the Highveld
and in my thoughts
are jumping from rock to rock
where aloes flower orange,
where I smell the fragrances of the Proteas,
are walking in knee-high grass
and I am there in lingering moments.

Gert Strydom

In The High-Veldt I Want To Walk With You (Couplets)

In the High-veldt I want to walk with you,
see the lightning flashing down from the blue,

on the red ground smell the rain falling,
hear the wild birds in the bush sing,

at a klipspringer through the branches peep
and all of this in my memory for later days I want to keep,

like children in the Lord God trust
while barefoot we do walk in the dust.

Gert Strydom

In The High-Veldt Of My Heart

I want to hold you in my arms, my wife,
and build your homestead in the high-veldt of my heart.

When the thunderstorms come
then you do turn my life around in your little house,

notice the redbreast of my heart singing its song,
where it frolics to bring you joy,

where you glimpse the sun breaking through while it rains
and in all times you do enrapture me,

our lovely times lie still in my memories
where you look at life through my eyes.

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Gert Strydom

In The High-Veldt Of The Heart (2)

I

With brand-new high-heels that break,
flowers that do not want to come out of the rocky ground
where we did stop at a patch of beautiful wild-lilies.
that place left us both speechless,
while in the distance a thunder fell blue-white,
the high-veldt after summer rain stretched out green
and much later we did hear that bang
while I drew you deeper into my arms
and once again with my fingers I started digging,
at last had that orange flower for you,
you silently in wonder for moments looked at it,
and I saw the glittering in your green-brown eyes.
You were there barefoot on holy ground,
the thorns of the lilies did wound me.

II

The thorns of the lilies did wound me,
you my summer-bride with blonde hair blowing in the wind,
wanted to find some more treasures from nature just there
and still our wandering tracks lie all around,
while you are pictured: happy, sparkling and healthy,
as if all of paradise were around us like a mere child
and it's with that human being that I do constantly bond.
You are grounded with love for nature and rocks.
In the distance another lightning-bolt came down slowly,
you long-legged were busy looking at beautiful rocks,
where we both stood in the high-veldt of the heart
with life and all of nature that leaves us speechless,
where in my thoughts you do still look picture-perfect
and in the here and now we do live in a world full of sorrow.

Gert Strydom

In The Hospital

All of the cleaners
are dressed in green,
comical alike,
up and down the corridors
trolleys are pushed
when small pipes full of blood
does flow in and out.

Gert Strydom

In The Hospital I Saw Her Living

(for Minette)

In the hospital I saw her living
on the pulse of the machine
and air another device was giving
while the sight was surreal and not serene
and with every breath
she was taking
brought her nearer to death
to be never again waking

and the time of smiles was gone
while the days into weeks moved on
and to me life did its hurt bring
while my heart turned to stone.

Gert Strydom

In The House Of My Father

In the house of my Father there is a place
for each one that comes to Him
and constantly I am astounded by His love and sacrifice
but sometimes I want to hide my life and cover it
as I am stained by my own conceit
and now in my years of old age
I am longing back to the days spent with Him
while time is drawing a line through my years
and I realise that I want to embrace Him
but sometimes I do not know where to lie down my head
when I walk along the dark road of life
but my hesitation is only for a short while
before I want Him close to me
and wherever I am His house always stands open for me.

Gert Strydom

In The Inner Square

In the inner square
just outside the police station
a little group stands around a drum
in which coals are burning
and flames are shooting up
in the dark night.

Between them a man is standing,
holding out his hands
to get them warm
and above them the stars are bright
like lights in the night
but the moon
has a strange colour that particular night.

A woman constable walking past
stops and asks the man:
"Are you not one of those wild men
who are following the prisoner? "

It's as if the eyes
of every policeman around the fire
like search lights fall on him
and he shakes his head decidedly
and draws the cap lower over his head
to get hot and avoid their stares.

"I really do not know him. Do not even know
the reason why you have captured him. Just came
to get some heat from the fire
and what injustice lies in this? "

The woman constable frowns
and walks away with swaying hips
and he remark about the way
that she walks,
which makes the other men around the fire laugh

and through the open door

of the police station
he notices how somebody inside
hits the prisoner through the face
and it's almost
as if he feels it in his own face.

"Friend, you are not from here
and looks just as ruff as him, "
one of the constables says jokingly
and his tooth glitters white
for his own joke.

This time the man is much more definite
and worry is eating at him:
"No. Constables, if I would know him
by this time you would know me too?
You probably know
his accomplices? "

A constable that was at the arrest
comes and stand at the fire
and the flames flares up more brightly
causing him to see the man
between them clearly.

"You talk in the same dialect as the prisoner?
Were you not at the arrest? Surely you were there? "
Every policeman and even
some of those in the police station
is now staring at him.

"Truly, no. He is totally strange to me!
You cannot lay the guilt
of that man's deeds onto just anybody.
Just because we maybe comes from the same place.
I can say under oath that I do not know him."

His gaze catches that of the prisoner
and he sees love
and no condemnation
and on that hour, minute and second
a cock crows

and pain rips through him
that he has just betrayed the Son of God

and the man walks away from the fire
into the night, just blindly
and he cries
while rain is falling around him

and he wonders what it takes
to stand for the truth
while lightning bolts hits blue-white around him.

Gert Strydom

In The Late Afternoon Your Words Did Become Silent

In the late afternoon your words did become silent
and your movements were curtailed
as if you did not want to get up from the chair,
as if you did not want to leave me later

and outside the August wind stopped blowing
while we did say no words to each other
and outside the sun did shine
in a moment of great joy and pain

while we were clinging to each other
and the afternoon sun's radiance did weaken
when it felt as if time poured into that moment
while time did linger but it was much too short

when everything for both of us came to a standstill
and in ecstasy we looked at each other
but in me this fear does remain
that no moment will ever again be like this.

Gert Strydom

In The Late Night Rain Falls Whispering

In the late night rain falls whispering,
blossoms on branches move in the wind
and I am aware of the smallest sound
as if in the darkness I can find something
and for moments the night becomes dear to me,
while I again feel innocent like a child
but still life outside stays dark.

Gert Strydom

In The Longing (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

In longing to give the best that we have and are
we go with faith, hope and great trust,
on impulses we follow instinctively without seeing
when God do make stronger bond that are unbreakable
on the new or old ways
and so our intimate wonderful relationships do stay intact,
where like Adam and Eve we do love and find each other in age-old ways
or do return into the past,
where we do constantly find God in our struggling,
when He makes our days silent and holy
and with Him we start each day anew
when He brings us to what we do long for,
where all things between us become wonderful,
where everything that we are and do constantly draws us close.

[Reference:" is God self wat ons vind in die oue" (Sonnet. It is God Himself that find us in the old)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Mad Schizophrenia Of How I Am Missing Your Love

(for Annelize, after Vernie Plaatjies)

With thunderbolt upon thunderbolt
the rain falls with sun in this day,
where I do notice the sky cobalt-blue
and in all of this do heartlessly long for you,
do remember the sound of your voice and laughter,
are surprised that the longing do yearn for you,

do smell the fragrance of water on the earth
that is like poured out love,
do remember your lips and the taste of your mouth
and suddenly everything has deep and great meaning

as everywhere you do accompany me in my thoughts
and I do taste the sweet taste of your name,
are in wonder with the cloudless bright rain
and with lightning bolts it now does pour down,
do touch the depths of my heart
where for three decades I am living without you.

In the mad schizophrenia of how I am missing your love
my heart is sometimes healthy
where for years I do feel loss and to me you are missing,
at times I am wounded,

and where you are away over the horizons
my whole life long I am a without you lonely
while constantly I am longing for you,
now do notice a vague rainbow hanging in the distance,
do wait upon God for his great mercy and promises
and sometimes I do want to laugh and sometimes I do want to cry,

do want to pour myself out in the depths of you
as I cannot tell you any better about my feelings
or I will have to be reborn at another place and time
where love is more than an endless hurting game,

where the great joy, pain and memory of that which had been,
which is and is coming
do bring people that do truly love each other again together
as if the first starry-light and sunlight of your eyes will come again,
as if your glance and fragrance and soft lips once again will astound me
but this is only for my heart a kind of unsteady intuition
of a eternity that in a gigantic circle always do turn

where my reality here and now
is chained to my love of you
which is without any end
and I do remember you as the only wonderful woman
that does exist.

[Reference:"Gedig vir S" (Poem for S)by Vernie Plaatjies.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Magic Of Your Enchanting Love (English Sestets)

Somehow I am free from the whims of youth,
from some vanity, from some recklessness
are living a life with serenity and truth
away from the sheer pains of faithlessness,
in the magic of your enchanting love
that no other woman can now remove.

Our love and happiness always burst out
like small branches on a pollarded tree
as together we both do bring about
a change to life, to how things are to be,
while we do both hate being apart
as we are joined right up to the heart.

Gert Strydom

In The Memory

(for mother)

I try to honour the people
that went before me and now are in their graves,
to from the sand-castles of my childhood-days
build fortresses to the hereafter,
to follow the same God as my ancestors
and when death comes then I will see Him

but in my memory
there are albums that continually fold open
through which I page
and notice the days of hardship of you, mother,
who with selfless love did care for us
and still are helping me,
where the going of my life
is full of destiny
and with people turning it upside down.

I wish I could do more in your days of old age
to make the world easier for you,
to let it be carefree
but maybe the being together
is all present that I can bring to you.

Gert Strydom

In The Middle Of The Week You Did Come To Me

In the middle of the week you did come to me
the sheen of your hair, your glowing eyes
sparkled like a sudden bolt of thunder
and for moments I was speechless.
You did astonish me with your beauty
and suddenly you jumped into my heart,
caught me unaware like a spectre
in the early years of old age,
you were suddenly in my arms,
volcanoes of a life lived wanted to burst out
and my heart did not want to calm down
in joyful amuck I was happy
and suddenly my life was new and fresh
and all of my sorrows were gone.

Gert Strydom

In The Midlands Of Kwazulu-Natal

In the midlands of Kwazulu-Natal
the grass roofed Zulu huts stand white
just where the meadows at the Drakensberg Mountains do fall
so as if they are present right across the landscape
with farming goats grazing everywhere,
you boys looking after the cattle,
this small world does remain
as it had been through the ages
and in the distance there is a waterfall
that like from the beginning
does splash down the mountainside
while spiral smoke clouds rise into the sky
while people do dance and sing around the fires
that the ancestor spirits will bring good harvests.

Gert Strydom

In The Million Eyes (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In the million eyes of my memory
your face is not clear as if it is tonight adrift
are somewhere floating away from me
where you are far away with a rift

between us of a thousand miles
but in my heart love burns for you,
yet still I do remember your smiles
as if they do always stay true

where over decades some memories bare thin
and usually I do not see you like a blur frozen
where they come from deep within
as in my mind you are always brazen

while still to my world you are the core
as love does stay forever more.

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Gert Strydom

In The Moonlight False Bay Looks Untouched

In the moonlight False Bay looks untouched
still the sweeping water is ice-cold,
in love we are obsessed with each other
and at times our feelings feel age old
as if in our own self-preservation
we do continually reincarnate, know each other
in a great and magical simplicity
(something that I cannot properly write down)
maybe out of a mythological recipe
in which our true love does recreate itself.

Gert Strydom

In The Morning (Persian Quatrain)

In the morning we say goodbye while the birds outside do sing
last night lays rooted deep in the beautiful remembering
and we do know that another time of being together comes
while for a moment I look at you without saying anything.

Gert Strydom

In The Morning (Roundel Prime)

On the carnations that are yellow, red and white
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew
and the garden draws attention as if it's new
while the flowers in it are for people a tranquil sight,

for the neighbour's cat, birds scream in their flight
and the day is hot open and sunny and bright.
On the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew,

mynahs scream like terrible things from the night
while from a safe distance, other birds do them view.
Children laugh and walk past with their bags hanging skew
and to live in this time and place is a sweet delight
and on the carnations that are yellow, red and white,
like sparkling diamonds hang drops of dew.

Gert Strydom

In The Morning When I Draw My Eyes To Slits Against The Bright Light

In the morning when I draw my eyes to slits against the bright light
there is magic
that the new morning brings
while I know that I am really living
and I see the butterflies already fluttering on the breeze,
hear birds of which the songs of joy penetrates the soul
and every bee, even the smallest thing
are busy with a praise song.
When dew on the branches are still shining like diamonds
and the sun glitters with every ray in filigree
there are flowers opening their cups
and even though my life at times feels bitter
and this kind of living feels like only a curtailed existence
I do know that I serve an omnipotent God.

Gert Strydom

In The Murk

I know that the Apies River
have a high sewerage content
and there they were
sitting beneath a willow tree
fishing kurper and carp
and from the brown black water,
deep slime and mud,
where you couldn't see anything
in the thick murk
they pulled out
big healthy fishes
that twisted, frisked
trying to get away.

Gert Strydom

In The Night (Old Germanic Ballade)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Silent, tranquil and cosy my darling lies next to me,
as if she wants to entrusts to me her whole life
and in thoughts there are only moments that are happy
where I look at the peaceful sleep of my dear wife.

What will I from God for her pray
where she goes into life with me in the next day?

What secrets will unfold between the two of us
in the memories of life as we do each other trust?

Where she is wonderful and charming
I realise how I have missed her more than anything.

While the stars shine above us of her love I do know
and I wonder about Your care that come and go?

In the fragile picture that I now take in,
I wonder about our joy and about our sin?

Softly I do feel against my cheek her breath
and I wonder about life and death?

I wonder why life cannot be like this while she is near,
without cares and any kind of fear?

Still I wait where You do reveal Your will,
in a world full of happiness and ill.

Silent, tranquil and cosy my darling lies next to me,
as if she wants to entrusts to me her whole life
and in thoughts there are only moments that are happy
where I look at the peaceful sleep of my dear wife.

My love, at times you do drive me wild
but at night you are pretty and innocent like a child.

[Reference: "Die eerste nag" (The first night) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Night With You

Last night I saw the full moon
hang yellow-gold through the window,
above your shoulder over the bed.

Your big eyes
mirrored the starry lights from outside
and your beautiful face,
looked soft and full of rest
and peaceful.

The smell of jasmine
from the garden
glided into the room
and while I laid and looked at you,
I knew that I am really living.

Somewhere from one of the trees
a bird called to its mate
and in the night
and for hours,
I laid and waited
for the red morning light to arrive
and for you to awake.

Gert Strydom

In The Oasis Of How You Are (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the plains of your eyes
flamingos dance at a saltpan,
in the ocean of your body
dolphins do jump through the waves,
the sun of your smile
remains the shadow of my memories
and the ripple of your voice,
washes out your thoughts to me
as if in your humanity,
I find a whole hidden world
where the redbreast sings in your tears,
the bush-shrike frolic in your walking away,
where butterflies do flutter away from your lips,
in my remembering of how your kisses are.

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Gert Strydom

In The Oasis Of How You Are (Free Verse Sonnet)(2)

In the plains of your eyes
flamingos dance at a saltpan,
in the ocean of your body
dolphins do jump through the waves,
the sun of your smile
remains the shadow of my memories
and the ripple of your voice,
washes out your thoughts to me
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I find a whole hidden world
where the redbreast sings in your tears,
the bush-shrike frolic in your walking away,
where butterflies do flutter away from your lips,
in my remembering of how your kisses are.

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Gert Strydom

In The Old Painting Something Was Living (Rondine)

In the old painting something was living
displaying dead men in eternal youth,
it had some deeply hidden kind of truth,
about the evanescence of everything,
about the spirit, integrity that was rising
always conquering shattering untruth.
In the old painting,

as forever in life's own awakening spring,
with their eyes on the point of azimuth
and among them a heroic kind of Ruth
with feelings of a strange awakening
in the old painting.

Gert Strydom

In The Paradise

While Adam sat under a tree
the sun did rise hot
as it does every morning,
the sun kissed his skin

and he was not aware of his nakedness,
he did look
at the world around him,
did realise how very lovely each thing is,
but was lonely
in the place where everything was perfect

and when he did awake from a deep sleep,
did open his eyes
the sky was still cobalt blue,
the wind loving on his skin
where it rushed through the leaves
of a big old mulberry tree,
the stream nearby did jingle
like it always does

but next to him
there was a pretty lovely thing
that looked at him
with bright noble eyes,
his own woman
of whom the smile
did cut deep into the soul
and for her,
he was glad to the creator.

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Gert Strydom

In The Park I See Him Sit

In the park I see him sit,
an old man half bedraggled
with a candle in a bottle
where it does burn in the cup of his hand

and it looks as if that moment
has something holy in it
where he is reading from an old broken Bible
do fold his old hands in prayer.

Gert Strydom

In The Prime Office (Cavatina)

In the prime office in that African city
people did pray,
brought their nation to the almighty God;
now on each day
the utmost citizen only heads on,
do as he may
while the walls of the new Jericho shakes
and in many small pieces the country breaks.

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Gert Strydom

In The Rain Forest We Were Blinded By The Spray

while we walked together to the waterfall
and in the rumbling we wanted to find His voice
when a bright butterfly fluttered past,
your smile was far beyond beautiful
while we walked to get a better view,
to take photo's of the great scene
and at this place without any other humans near
there was great tranquillity and illustriousness
when something buzzed on the wind
and we both were certain that it was Him,
as the horizon gleamed just before the coming dusk.
Now that the days do stretch out long before us
and you lie sleeping next to me, I am wondering...

Gert Strydom

In The Rays Of The Moon

In the rays of the moon
I suddenly see you standing, with pain
before the sun starts shining
red like blood, or maybe wine and open
the day was full of hope,
when you walked away,
when the twilight came,
I wanted to reach out, to kiss you
when you went
into the big hill's green wood
and you were quite naughty,
the morning was still cold covered in fog
when you were already gone
and I realised, that you were going...

Gert Strydom

In The Region Of My Great Longing (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

In the mirror image, the reflection, of glass
of my memories I do look back at many hours,
where I do notice your sunny eyes just as they were
where you are still wandering among the walls of my thoughts
where your humanity and your carachter are holy to me
but in the region of my great longing
the twilights, the clouds and fog do hang
where the sun is setting against my hearts mountain walls
as pain had at a time cleave open valleys,
but more real is your beautiful face
as we had at a time promised love to each other
and it had been very intense and intimate
where you do look through the windows into my soul
and half confused I am still kneeling at your feet.

[Reference:"Van 'n skilder" (Of a painter)by Ingrid Jonker.]

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Gert Strydom

In The Sandy Desert We Were Silent

In the sandy desert we were silent;
where white and brown sand lies next to each other
we saw aloes and lilies growing together,
a sand-grouse or maybe another bird
and still we did not say anything
but thirstily did not spill a dropp of water.

The vastness, the intensity,
the sun that burnt scorching
brought us nearer to God
whose love pierces through all things,
even in places of dry rock and sand
and total forsaking.

Gert Strydom

In The Shadow Of That Which Was Love

In the shadow of that which was love
there is a river of tears that do flow,
where raw pain reaches like the feelers
of thunder on a rain night,
when eyelids do bleed out their own pain.

Gert Strydom

In The Small Hours

In the small hours the last train does past,
it travels with a lot of noise,
with a hooter that scolds shrilling
while it does gnash past
and the sound travels far,
sounding if that massive monster-like thing
will suddenly burst through your bedroom.

Gert Strydom

In The Sombre Times I Think Of You (Free Verse Sonnet)

When winter eats past the densest clothes
there is rain pouring down in the high-veldt,
while people know about a deadly virus,
are aware of the presence of God
but in the sombre times I think of you
and in the loneliness a person do at times feel confused
but right now I want to hold you close to me
as you are still in the beating of my heart
and maybe we will have to wait for a lifetime
for humanity to get an answer
and everything may be in hell's deadly power
but still you do remain far past dear to me
where God still with omnipotence do set all things
and my feelings for you are sincere and eternal.

Gert Strydom

In The Summer (Sicilian Sonnet)

In the summer sun glowing is your skin,
while on the white beach in comes the noontide,
behind sunglasses other females hide,
and you are glad as our holiday begin,

do with a lovely smile my heart win,
your locks are under a hat that is wide,
we do by the lifeguard's red flags abide
as the blue sea rushes out and pulls in.

"Shark! Look out! " A scream does our nerves test.
In fear we do quickly the water leave,
see no sign of it, to avoid it seems best,
I wonder, did somebody us deceive?
Everyone on the beach is in distress.
Later the sun sets in a lovely eve.

Gert Strydom

In The Summer Of Our Lives

I viewed you in the summer of our lives,
I did trust on our love and on the Lord God,
hoped with my heart and mind without fear,
on the summer-sun that would stay in the years,
with you in times of prosperity and sorrow
where you are a part of my blood, marrow and flesh
and both of us are one in the soul and spirit,
and I wished to together with God build a fruitful life,
I did trust on our love and on the Lord God.

Gert Strydom

In The Sun, Joy And Pain Of All My Summers (Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after D. J. Opperman)

My girlfriend is gardenia, jasmine and lavender,
sometimes she is a rose and rosemary
and I find her in the sun, joy and pain of all my summers,
in a sun-baked bunch of grapes,

even in my winters my heart does not want to let her go,
even when the sun's last rays do disappear behind drizzling fog
she still does twilight into my consciousness
and I have got to love her at whatever cost.

When yellow-gold grapes do taste delightful
it does take me back to summer-days in the vineyards at Helderberg
where her lips was sweeter than cherry,
even in my later years where the leaves are getting coloured,
eternally her beauty en humanity do dwarf other women
and every bunch of grapes does hold a bit of her essence

[Reference: "Sproeireën" (Sprinkling-rain) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

In The Tempests Of The World (Stave Stanza Sestets)

In the tempests of the world bring tranquillity,
in all be Thou the only guide to me,
lead us the right way, when darkness comes,
to our great eternal and happy homes
guard, keep, love, cherish and do protect us
while we on the way, learn in You to trust.

While we stumble and on the wrong way go
protect us from every kind of foe,
lead us while we learn to keep You in sight,
to be like You, who are our eternal light,
help us to Your kind of loving to adjust,
while we on the way, learn in You to trust.

Gert Strydom

In The Tempests Of The World (Stave Stanza Sestets)

[1]

In the tempests of the world bring tranquillity,
in all be Thou the only guide to me,
lead me us the right way, when darkness comes,
to our great eternal and happy homes
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while we on the way, learn in You to trust.

While we stumble and on the wrong way go
protect us from every kind of foe,
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to be like You, who are our eternal light,
help us to Your kind of loving to adjust,
while we on the way, learn in You to trust.

Gert Strydom

In The Time That It Takes To Park A Cream Coloured Car

On a autumn day in the time
that it takes to park a cream coloured car
a devastating ball of fire, of flame
detonates shattering
in Church Street, Pretoria
on the twentieth of May nineteen eighty three

causing shrapnel to fly down in the street
splintering, scattering
flying, piercing glass
from all the buildings facing the street
in a deadly shimmering rain

murdering, maiming blowing to bits
the innocent civilian men, women and children
passing by in the street

for a political cause
giving a loud hell of a bang
of a applause
as if the whole of humanity
has gone insane
leaving blood, guts, body parts
and the survivors in terrible pain.

Gert Strydom

In The Vastness Of The Desert

In the vastness of the desert
the landscape disappears in the distance,
while the sun roasts everything,
while continually its shines bright and mercilessly.

Gert Strydom

In The Veldt A Spitting Cobra Is Suddenly Onto Me

In the veldt a spitting cobra is suddenly onto me
and before it can strike or spray poison
there's a rock that comes to hand
and I smash the head of the spitting snake

but where it lies toppled jerking
the grass, bushes and veldt trembles
there's a curse that it says with its last breath
as if the dying of it mentions something unheard.

The vast earth grind and boil
as if rock banks gnash on each other
when the leviathan with its smoking breath
bursts from the depths

where suddenly sinister it peers at me
and seven snakeheads spit fire.

Gert Strydom

In The Veldt While On Military Patrol (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

When sleeping in the veldt, the bush
while on military patrol
even if you are in control
out of your boots a snake may rush
and a crocodile you may meet
snapping its jaws at your feet
while toward the river you push.

Gert Strydom

In The Winter Morning Mist

fat and tame as a chicken
next to the overgrown tree
out came the plover chick
and for a moment I looked at it
and the tiny speckled bird looked at me.

A car passed by with its lights
burning like rays of the sun
against the fog's canopy
and on the sidewalk
the little bird came still nearer

and drops of dew glistened
on its feathered coat
and in the wide world
limited to each other's company
was the little plover and I.

There was something to that moment
as perhaps Adam had wandered in the wild
as the bird was at ease
and around us was a kind of tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

In The Words Of God

In the words of God that are written forever
there are promises
and that book has got a type of bright light,
it is full of Godly vows
that always satisfies all of my needs
and it is not devoured by either moths or rust,
for all my sins He carries all of the costs,
there is nothing that can destroy His words,
His great loves stays selfless and sincere,
every omen is absent from what He says.

Gert Strydom

In The Years Of Old Age

To in your years of old age
discover your real life partner
leaves a person without words
when the work of God astonishes.

Gert Strydom

In The Yellow-Brown Grass

In the yellow-brown grass
a herd of buffalo are penetrated
when female lions pounce onto a big bull,
catch the herd offside and surprises them

the herd immediately changes their pace,
as they gather with horns in a circle.

In the yellow-brown grass
a herd of buffalo are penetrated,

the wounded buffalo is full of pain
while the other buffalo protect their calves
and the lions are caught in horns
that hit them merciless.

Gert Strydom

In The Yellow-Brown Grass [2]

a herd of buffalo are penetrated
when female lions pounce onto a big bull,
catch the herd offside and surprises them

the herd immediately changes their pace,
as they gather with horns in a circle.
In the yellow-brown grass
a herd of buffalo are penetrated,

the wounded buffalo is full of pain
while the other buffalo protect their calves
and the lions are caught in horns
that hit them merciless.

Gert Strydom

In The Zoo (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after A. G. Visser)

Bended the gorilla does grumble and growl in the iron cage
and is terribly annoyed that humans are dumbfounded by him,
that some do stand and tease him where they are passing
and with eyes flaming with rage he folds his arms close
where the higher ape defenceless look upon humanity
and for humanity he looks stupid and very silly.
That the ape and man comes from the same primeval parents annoys him,
where he tears everything apart and does watch everyone around him
and everyone looking at him he does also want to push into a cage,
also wants to make entertainment, a hell of a joke out of each one,
do want to deprive them of their lives and living-place,
do want to jerk them eternally out of their every day lives
and when the wardens wonder why he is getting so angry,
he remembers the plains that do stretch on almost endlessly.

[Reference:"In die dieretuin, Pretoria" (In the zoo, Pretoria)by A. G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

In This Bright Hot Summer

with its clear blue sky
where the sun shines like an eye
that is full of glory

I want to pray to You
who brings all things to maturity,
who makes the plants flower,
who brings trees to their fruit

and with each hot ray
that continually falls upon me
it's as if Your love
endlessly circle out wider and wider to me

and when the first leaves fall
it's as if your Spirit also does observe the colours,
as if You have got even the paltriest things
in your omnipotent hands.

Gert Strydom

In This Broken Hurting World I Do Love You (Sicilian Sonnet)

Everywhere I come across a kind of pestilence
and there is AIDS and Corona just to name two
but in this broken hurting world I do love you
and do pray daily for God's lingering presence,

as in my life you are to happiness the essence
the one with whom everything I want to do,
as you do bring joy even when my day is blue.
When all around me people do act in violence

there impudent rage at life does not on you fall.
You go to the task at hand and brightly smile,
are respectful and hospitable to one and all
as if you know tranquility will come in a while,
that what looks like unsolvable is rather small,
it's as if you know that God do peace beguile.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In This Cold Winter

In this cold winter
the evening wind cuts merciless
right through clothes
and in the early morning
frost lies like fallen snow
and covers the lawn
and every flower bud

but still the doves coo
their song of romance,
still a flock of wrens and sparrows
twitter their thanks
as they peck on bread crumbs and seeds

and your hand is hot in mine
and together our bed
is a cosy and lovely place.

Gert Strydom

In This Distant Country

In this distant country
everyone wants to find
An own place in the sun,
and some people want to use force
to get a piece of earth
and want to drive away others
from their farms
and lives

but I do wonder where
a person can find recourse
where there is a place
in all of this
for you and me?

Gert Strydom

In This Fierce Winter

In this fierce winter I got you a coat
to stay constantly hot
but the rain falls far past days
while the wild wind does cut though everything

and I realise that only love can heat up the heart
but all around us lays the streched out white.

Gert Strydom

In This Fierce Winter (Couplets)

When the frost in a white sight around us everywhere does lie
you do love me while it seems, as the plants in the garden will die,

the setting sun has a soft glare
but there is chilliness everywhere,

at midnight you open a window and talk
when in your sleep to the kitchen you do walk,

I do pull the feather-blanket close to me
and a few moments later I do you see

as you do in the moonlight like a angel glow
and like this our days and nights do go.

Gert Strydom

In This Hot Sunny Summer (Free Verse Sonnet)

I live unhindered in this hot sunny summer
with the mornings being so hot that they are humid,
and in the afternoons flashing blue-white light bashes down
while the sky leaks as if the rain wants to wash everything away,
all of the trees in the garden are full of different birds,
that do twitter, coo, tweet and chirp about the joys of life
and during this lovely time you are gardening with me,
we plant gazanias, our wild lilies bloom and arum lilies appear,
like Eve took Adam by the hand back there in Eden,
you lead me through our garden to the most tranquil spots
do show me the new flowers that do appear
and the sky is blue or its hue is grey or darker blue
while we both know that never there had been
a summer just as this.

[Poet's note: in the southern hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to those in the northern hemisphere and December, January and February are the summer months.]

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Gert Strydom

In This Life All Around Us There Is Night (Stave Stanza Sestets)

In this life all around us there is night
and at times we do not know wrong from right,
even if God's light we are able to see,
even if true to Him we have iniquity
and as we do as we wish or we may
only God lead us true on the right way

His angels are sentries posted at our side
and to His glance our sins we cannot hide
while at times we loose every kind of sense
His love does continually recompense,
brings us back to the loveliness of day,
only God lead us true on the right way.

Gert Strydom

In This Stretched Out Country

many an Afrikaner is stranded
and we are all bound to the ground
to a place that at times wound us deadly

but daily we do still see the sun shine,
do notice how the late afternoon does disappear
and at night the stars glisten in their beauty
before the next sunny day.

Some people still live with integrity
in love, sadness and in joy
in a world where murder and robbery
reach each one at a time,
where every silent word and deed do reach out far

and people also want a place in the sun,
want to rest in peace at night in their beds
but still every day is full of oppression and violence
and nobody is free of this.

Gert Strydom

In This Time (Couplets)

In this time almost all of humanity is afraid
while over all people death does hang as if it cannot wait,

where the figures of infection and demise do this confirm,
there is a sense of something unseen that does infirm,

where people are uncertain about what is waiting in the next day,
do daily keep active; try to joyful and full of hope to stay,

and people are perplexed by the intentions of God,
with His love and mercy they feels it odd

but He and His angels are set against the forces of death and hell
battling to death, destruction and this viral thing to expel,

and in all of this we are included, and here it's you and me,
where His omnipotence is covering us in our insecurity,
where I do only want to remember the best things about you
do trust on you love and friendship as we do go this through

while we are waiting on the end of a pestilence,
do still trust in God and His great omnipotence.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In This Wide And Wonderful World (Persian Quatrain)

In this wide and wonderful world there are nobody like you,
where to me you do constantly stay absolutely true
and I want to make you truly happy throughout life,
want to know you in every little thing that I do.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In This Winter

In this winter
it is as if it's spring
when I get on my motorbike
and in a flash
drive down the road to Pretoria

and even if the cold folds around me
there is a sun
coming out of your arms
and your perfume
has a noble fragrance
like a garden
full of jasmine.

Gert Strydom

In Those Late Cape Summer Afternoons (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In those late Cape summer afternoons when at seven
the sun did still hang high and the day was bright,
at half past seven night suddenly came with twilight
when fading the blue became much darker even

and as a student I did watch the big open heaven
for the biggest star, the planet, to come into sight
as if in seeing it something special came to the night
and most of those days ran for me to half past eleven

while I was working on assignments and seriously studying,
saw the moon hanging very high above dark Helderberg Hill
where the Hottentots Holland Mountains ran north to south,
where to me still as a lovely woman you remained everything
but at the time although separate you still held to me a thrill
and although apart I still remembered your eyes and mouth.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Thoughts Today... (Rondelet)

In thoughts today
I prayed for your happiness,
in thoughts today
all your cares were swept away
I loved you with eagerness,
I dreamed of each sweet caress,
in thoughts today...

Gert Strydom

In Three Weeks A Great Change Has Come

Joshua, the man that helps me with my garden
says that my garden this morning
is jumping around with joy
and is dancing around with beauty
as there is something in the early spring
that draws a person to want to sing.

In three weeks
a great change has come
after the last grip of the grim winter
has been expelled
by the hot sun
and the first rain of spring.

There are blue, yellow, brown, turmeric coloured,
purple and pink irises that are flowering,
everywhere there are white, purple, yellow and deep red daisies
and marguerites
and the scent of white jasmine is right through the garden.

Geraniums in red, orange, pink and white
and some with mixed colours
are flaunting more beautiful than the other
and violet and speckled pansies
and pink, orange, white and yellow gazanias,
white, red, yellow, pink and orange roses
are luring bees, butterflies, doves, weavers
and even starlings
to visit the garden.

Gert Strydom

In Times Of Solitude (Cavatina)

In times of some great kind of solitude,
the veldt, the bush,
catches me in living great memories,
a tranquil hush
brings back a new kind of awakening,
in does then rush
the trees, birds, bees and many wild flowers,
like some thundering life bearing showers.

Gert Strydom

In Times Of The Shadow Of Death (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

I know that my own Germanic blood
did come to this rough South Africa
long before Hitler did astonish humanity
but do feel guilty in my own mind
over the spilling of blood and a war that rages
but I cannot and do not want to disguise my heritage
and still in my days the menace of violence is around
where my own country does speed to the abyss
where names on rocky hillocks, on the border, in Angola,
on farms, in Langa and Soweto, on a Jerusalem-stone
in concentration-camps and on other places are chiselled in,
do still carry a witness to violence and death
and God does write down the intentions, the acts and words
where our government does act in an own darkness.

[Reference: "Die dal van doodskaduwee" (The valley of the shadow of death) by Daniel 's note: I refer to the concentration-camps of the British in South Africa where between twenty to thirty thousand women and children did perish and to the concentration camps in Germany where near to six million Jews did die.]

Gert Strydom

In Tribal Dress Some Smiling Girls Pass Me (Cavatina)

Their bare breasts shake,
there is something natural in their gaze
like cats that wake
to the world around, predators moving;
a small keepsake
swing on a golden chain in the valley
of breasts, I am caught in the small alley

while in a throng they pass with sweet laughter,
captivating
like big prowling kittens they move along,
they are eating
me up with their huge gleaming dark brown eyes,
are debating,
are sneaking up with a wild innocence,
yet with a clear mature insistence

Gert Strydom

In Viewing The Temple Of The God Of The Moon (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Where man perish like ancient gods without adaptability
where he stands at the portals of eternity,
even the temple of the moon does stagger in fear
while from the world the cultic rituals disappear
and there are stories that do tell a history
but mere lust had died like the night
and a new generation do it now again incite
but God does make us of these abominations free
where he stands at the portals of eternity

[Reference:"So swaar die geheim" (So heavy the secret)by C. M. van den Heever.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Water Tray (Dectina Refrain)

Look
at the
bird splashing
in the water,
in clear rainwater,
bathing while slapping wings,
chattering telling others
how nice it is to be washing,
inviting them nearer, splashing them wet.
Look at the bird splashing in the water.

Gert Strydom

In You I Find The Beginning Of Each New Day

In you I find the beginning of each new day,
like the early wind rustling through the trees,
you come constantly, visiting me with happiness
like the first golden rays of sunshine bringing light

giving a kind of freedom to our love,
that rises as if with wings up into the blue,
while in your absence comes a starless night
without any tranquillity or kind of rest.

Your voice has a sparkle to it that out sing
the many birds, even the rustling sad wind
and I am lost in the depths of your words,
when in loveliness you hit some high notes.

You draw people to you like a mother hen,
with nostalgic, longing voices yearning for your joy
are like a road that I continually travel on,
where I find new kinds of things in your loving.

Gert Strydom

In You I Found A Woman That Is True (Swannet)

In you I found a woman that is true,
you possess kindness, charm and beauty
do sincerely from your heart love me
there is love in the way you act and do

react to each word and gesture that I make,
just a mere glance makes my heart sing,
your love has become the greatest thing,
you are in every breath that I do take

and I love you sincerely without any fear
do before you speak your meaning catch,
to me your personality is without a match
and I am enchanted when you are near

In you I found a woman that is true,
there is love in the way you act and do.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In You I Witness A Kind Of Grace(English Sonnet

Together you and I do the world tonight view
where lovely is this evening like none other
while with you I want feelings or love to renew.
To some people this night may be just another

but to you and me special is this moment in time
where to me you are exceptional in how you are
where sincerely our feelings are at their prime
and of all nights this is the most lovely by far

where we do look moments at each other face to face
and there is wonder, love and beauty in your eyes,
in you I do witness a kind of unspeakable true grace
the kind of feelings that heartfelt and very deep lies

while this night, this very time is full of tranquillity
and in you the beauty of a radiating angel I do see.

Gert Strydom

In Your Dreams You Do Come Into My Thoughts (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Stephan Bouwer)

You now lie with an arm intimate over me,
your snoring sounds as if you purr next to me
where you make the hairs on my body rise,
in your dreams you do come into my thoughts.
You turn around against me
draw me still nearer in your sleep,
where your head come to rest on my breast
and tired I also want to rest like you,
there is bliss in the cosy nearness,
I can feel your breath blowing sweet against my cheek,
disappearing in a world away from what is real
and the intensity of our love does amaze me
as everywhere in everything I do find you time and again,
and even our thoughts do synchronize.

[Reference:"jy slaap nou" (You are now sleeping)by Stephan Bouwer.]

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Gert Strydom

In Your Eyes

Your lips tell me things
about your reality
and where you want
your life to go.

The soft touch,
the sweet embrace
makes my body glow,

but in your eyes lies meaning
deeper than anyone else
will ever know.

Gert Strydom

In Your Great And Wonderful Omnipotent Will (Free Verse Sonnet)

In Your great and wonderful omnipotent will
my love have never been as honourable and without fear as now,
where it's sincere, holy and almost speechless silent
like no other love is wonderful,
where You do constantly protect my darling and her humanity,
every day do enfold her with Your benevolence and care,
now every day is wonderful, the hours holy and right,
while we do trust in each other and constantly do trust You,
where joy keeps coming by itself,
like this Your will is fulfilled when big-eyed
we are dumbfounded by each other and by Your wonderful ways,
while we do humbly love each other and attempt to follow You,
where that which is truly sincere love comes
in days full of unique meaning.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

In Your Pickup Truck You Do Pray Your Prayers (Free Verse Sonnet)

(In answer to Johannes Prints)

You ask God for the rain to come,
in your hot pickup truck you pray prayers,
do remember the beautiful days of the past
and are astounded about here where we do now live
but you do believe that God does turn our days around
and to you it's very dark here in the present,
you smile at your wife and to live she is your reason
and I wonder about farmers that are being killed on farms,
pray that the same hope will also carry me forward,
witness the blue-white thunder coming down in the distance,
know that God do still hold his hand over us
and do wonder about the future,
where each one of us stands full of sin before Him
but He does constantly witness the pain and suffering.

[Reference: "koggelram" (mocking ram) by Johannes Prins.]

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Gert Strydom

In Your Smiles And Gleaming Eyes

In your smiles and gleaming eyes
there is a land of wonder that begins
and you are mine like the winds whispering
at the blooming flowers in the garden

and on your soft lips even beer is sweet,
the voices of birds die at the sound of your voice,
while I am captured by the tunes that you sing
which brings unknown joy and tranquillity.

Now your essence is much more than memory,
while your dark eyes are still swallowing me.

Gert Strydom

In Your White Satin Dress

(for Annelize)

In your white satin dress I do you see,
lovelier than an angel you came to me,

from your father's golden Mercedes big eyed
under a white veil for eternal knots to be tied

and on that sunny day we were both so very happy,
where still in you I do the woman of all women see

and now maybe that day is decades far gone
but to me you still do remain the only wonderful one.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Incredible The History Remains

The incredible history remains
of men taming a wild harsh land
of murderous, plundering tribes,
of burning homesteads, slaughtered livestock,
of years of rifle fire,
of wars fought in order just to survive
and now in the black government's schools
the history is twisted and distorted to fit into their culture,
to fit into political views with lies becoming the new truths
where they, the Cubans and Russian generals were the sore losers
but they think the great victory they had won
where a white leader and the whole white nation at that
had given away this country to them as a gift
expecting a kind of gratitude
and some righteousness to function
but got oppression, chaos and fraud instead,
while slowly the past reality is turning into myths,
even the great black book of eternal truth
called the Bible
is also by some seen as this.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Indelible Imprints

The lives of great heroes,
stars and true leaders
leave indelible imprints
in our thoughts each day.

Though there is something that integrity
and passion and compassion and duty leaves,
that makes much deeper impressions

Still more everybody battles,
with the I and self
and with light and darkness.

Like prisoners in a jail
everybody searches,
for a way to be forever free
of the calamities of the flesh.

Gert Strydom

Indescribable In Black On White (Couplets)

Like a sketch of black upon white
a moment is put on paper in the dim evening light

but that you do really love me
of that act no single sketch can be

to really note such a concept down.
Hollow all words do seem although they are my own

and you do truly know how I do feel about you,
that every word and poem to you is true,

that no words can catch the feelings, emotions as they are
not even the moments that lingers, as words are inadequate by far,

and invisible like the wind that pass with its waves high above
no one can find the real words for true and sincere love:

the surge ebbs and time moves on and still further on,
through the years our love remains although moments are gone

and people do only witness the signs of a woman and man
of a couple that hope, believe and know that love can.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Indian Minors

Deadly like ravens, are the ever pecking
Indian minors on the lawn
with yellow beaks, legs and feet,
camouflaged brown with sharp black eyes
ever inspecting, single-minded killing
all insects that they find,
walking around like soldiers
that landed from the air,
looking for the enemy
as if it can be anywhere.

Gert Strydom

Individuals

A seagull swerves over the bay
where it flies slanted against the wind
and turns again away to the sea,
it screeches and around my feet
water flows continually in and out,
waves do slam over the big rocks
and fine spray is tossed high into the air
while I walk alone and smell the sea
and here and there find some more people;
the waves sudden carry me along
as if there is a kind of living thing to them
and all along the beach you are missing
as if you are gone to another place
and out of the water you walk gloriously beautiful.

Gert Strydom

Individuals [2]

A seagull swerves over the bay
where it flies slanted against the wind
and turns again away to the sea,
it screeches and around my feet
water flows continually in and out,
waves do slam over the big rocks
and fine spray is tossed high into the air
while I walk alone and smell the sea
and here and there find some more people;
the waves sudden carry me along
as if there is a kind of living thing to them
and all along the beach you are missing
as if you are gone to another place
and out of the water you walk gloriously beautiful.

Gert Strydom

Infatuation

I remember your green-brown eyes
innocently finding mine,
how your mouth noticeable did twitch
and how totally blinded
I thought that you were an angel
and unaware of the church
for half an hour looked at you.

Gert Strydom

Inferno

(in answer to N.P. van Wyk Louw)

I have heard an urgent message
that with the coming of the great creator God
planets will loose their light,
even in the outer universe that lays far off
and on the power of the omnipotent command
all of the stars will loose their light,
that love will exist to eternity
when God comes to lead his people,
that a sea of flame will cover this planet
and will come from the omnipotent Lord,
that all under the power of darkness
will admit that He is righteous and honourable,
that the universe will know of the judgement of the almighty God
and that a great crowd of people will gather with Him.

[Reference: "Inferno" by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Inhumanity Still Like Before, Marches On

The killing of six million innocent people,
did not make the world stop turning,
it was hardly comprehended
and the inhumanity and the deeds

of Adolf Hitler, Paul Joseph Goebbels,
Adolf Eichman, Franz Stangl, Franz Murer,
Erich Rajakowitsch, Hermine Braunsteiner,
Karl Silberbauer, Josef Schwammberger
and many more people,
today is only a postscript in history

and wherever war rages, where bombs rain down,
the innocent pay the price,
where nations die of hunger
inhumanity still like before
marches on.

Gert Strydom

Iniquity And Jealousy Came To Be In One Of The Seraphim (Villanelle)

(in answer to A E Housman)

God had been full of love in all of His ways
but iniquity and jealousy came to be in one of the seraphim
and still now it does affect all of our days.

At that time the sky and planets were ablaze,
while angels followed the destroying will of him.
God had been full of love in all of His ways

and still a myriad of holy beings do Him praise
but in rebellion demons target the earth rim to rim
and still now it does affect all of our days.

In their mercenary calling fallen every good thing lays,
while still the righteous sing to God hymn upon hymn.
God had been full of love in all of His ways

but savagely, beastly Lucifer did his own hellish ways upraise,
jerked the earth's foundations down, initiated evil to its brim,
and still now it does affect all of our days,

while humankind do in longing for a better life gaze
but right here with pain demons do all of life de-limb.
God had been full of love in all of His ways
and still now it does affect all of our days.

[Poet's note: "Epitaph to an army of mercenaries" by A E Housman.

I view it as important to quote this poem right here:

"Epitaph to an army of mercenaries" by A E Housman

"These, in the days when heaven was falling,
The hour when earth's foundations fled,
Followed their mercenary calling
And took their wages and are dead.

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;
They stood, and earth's foundations stay;
What God abandoned, these defended,
And saved the sum of things for pay."]

Gert Strydom

Inner Man

Once I knew a chap
who could parachute, drive his motorbike
to the limit and back,
who lived life as if tomorrow
would not be around,
who feared no enemy
and to whom life was planned,
set out from A to Z,
but somehow, somewhere I have lost him,
have lost him with the passing of time
and destiny changing every thing

and when I walk sometimes
I see his shadow following me
and in the mirror
it's a strange face that I see
and I wonder what have happened to me?

Gert Strydom

Innocent White Civilian People Were Slaughtered (In Answer To Don Mattera)

Innocent white civilian people were once walking
on Church Street in Pretoria; they were men,
women and children
busy with their daily lives,

some just having gone shopping,
some meeting a loved one in a restaurant
others returning from school
and they were doing nobody any harm.

By orders of Nelson Rolilahla Dalinbunga Mandela,
without any kind of alarm or warning,
a car bomb was set and exploded thundering
throwing shrapnel, making glass fall like rain

and black people took pride
at the sheer slaughter, at the falling,
the maiming, the decimating and dying of innocents
and that day remains a bitter thing.

Gert Strydom

Insertion (Enclosed Triplet)

With the bright moon that is tonight missing
as if it has suddenly strayed somewhere
the stars dimmed out, the air is rushing

while almost like a machine I am falling
from very high while breathing pure oxygen,
an exploding lightning bolt makes my ears sing

while the altimeter I am watching;
with each enemy guard, guard-tower primed
against penetration, in I am fluttering,

at terminal velocity it's terrifying,
while life comes to a standstill around me
but that moment is but very fleeting

before a device is reminding
that the rushing ground is almost too near
and the jerking parachute is opening;

right after the equipment bag I am landing,
snatching off the chute, cocking the weapon,
with the bright moon that is tonight missing.

Gert Strydom

Insertion (In Answer To Pieter Strauss)

With the moon that is tonight missing
as if it has strayed somewhere
and the stars dimmed out
by dark clouds
and just now and then
a bolt of thunder
that hits bleak white downwards
I am let free from very high
and are almost a machine
that breathes through a mask
where a tank is attached on to my back
and from higher than the horizon
and with every enemy guard, guard-tower
radar station primed
against foreign penetration, intrusion
I fall hyper-quick, as if I am passing time
while life, the whole world
comes to a standstill around me
until I am mechanically reminded
that the ground is almost too near
and the parachute jerks open,
pulling me back into time
with the ground almost touching my boots.

Gert Strydom

Inside You And I Dance

The flames in the fireplace make tongues
and we are dancing slowly
while the candles are burning intimately
and are throwing long shadows

and your eyes glow large,
you look innocent
and it does feel as if the whole world
is laying open before us

and I feel the artery
beating in your neck,
your perfume fills my nose
and there is something very deep
that I do read in your golden eyes.

Outside the branches of the avocado tree
Is beating on the roof
and time is busy
growing its own wings
but inside you and I dance
as if free from all things.

Gert Strydom

Insignificant Are The White Clouds That Pass

(after Toon van den Heever)

Insignificant are the white clouds that do pass
as they are driven by strong winds without any solidity
and are build high like towers
without any guards watching.
Forever the winds and clouds do swish forth
and for me and you a time is set
to build a life like we should,
to have time linger with each other
and to be lost in the depths of love

[Reference: "Haelwit gestapelde wolke" by Toon van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Inspection

Military service in the holiday city
is a strange thing
with troops shining
the bungalow's floor
preparing for packing out inspection
with sheets, t-shirts
and beds squared,
uniforms ironed crisp,
boots polished past bright
and in the early morning light
the air has a slight chill
uncommon for this time of year
and as the RSM and I draw near
boots slam to attention
in one solitary thud
while the first visitors go to the beach
on the other side of the tar road
opposite Natal Command.

Gert Strydom

Inspection At A Unit Near To The Bluff

From wall to wall
beds are lined up in rows,
with polished shining floors,
grey metal cupboards of which the doors
shine clean in the dim light
and troops come to attention
in exact unison
while packing out inspection commences
with the clock at four a.m.
and on the beds everything is square
ironed to neat perfection
and every uniform with pleats ironed in

and outside in the stark early morning light
a gull cries from the sky,
the waves crash thundering at high tide
on South Beach, North Beach
and even at Country Club
while the RSM's eyes are razor sharp
and like laser beams
cut through the troops in front of us.

Gert Strydom

Intense For You Remains My Longing And Missing (Free Verse Sonnet)

Of an icy cold winter there are signs
where some more reports about the virus keeps coming,
while dove do leave me speechless with their songs
as if the peach tree is full of peaches past capacity,
where I am hanging-up wet clothes next to some bedspreads,
near to some peas that flower white in the chilliness
and I know that God do turn all things around
but the peach-trees are stripped full of scars
for you remains my longing and missing
where love at times do ask for being together.
As if everything continually hangs in the scale
every person outside does have to wear masks,
people everywhere are scared of this deadly thing,
for something that unmasked batters humanity.

Gert Strydom

Intensely I Do Love You

to the portals of heaven and hell
and my life I want to trust to you
with that which is in the depth of my heart,
I want to know you in all of my secrets,
daily experience small things with you,
and together I want to be in each event,
while I want to protect you love in my heart,
see you on each new morning,
and embrace you tightly against me.

Gert Strydom

Interests That Lack Potential Anguish

like hunting, parachuting, motor-biking
takes precedence as we go everywhere,
when together all fear we do vanquish,
and sometimes we are in tranquility hiking,
while still the great thrill of danger is there.

Gert Strydom

Interview With A Captain Of Industry (Cavatina)

You can tell that power oozes out of him,
that this office
is a battleground of victorious meetings,
like a orifice
that issues blue-thunder his mouth opens;
a sacrifice
as a lamb to the slaughter I am led,
that some of the howling wolves can be fed.

Gert Strydom

Interviews At Employment Agencies

The appointment can be at any thing
from a shack, house, palace
or office block.

You respond to an advertisement in a newspaper,
or from the internet with jobmail, pnet and career junction
that stands in the front line with available positions.

You have to drive to somewhere in Pretoria
or Johannesburg, Midrand, Randfontein or Krugersdorp
to find work in Pretoria or Midrand.

At times there's something wrong with the directions
and if you do not know the place,
you drive at your own cost totally lost.

At the place a receptionist makes you fill in forms
and let you wait in a very small office,
where the heater behind a closed door tries to fry you.

a Girl with just a metric certificate interviews you,
about your degree/s and experience
and you try to impress her.

At times your photograph is taken
and at times they demand your fingerprints
and you have to sign that Kroll may look at your business.

The agencies demand that Kroll verify
your qualifications, credit worthiness
and see if you have a criminal record.

Certainly people like doctor? Carl Niehaus
that finds doctor's degrees in lucky packets,
is probably responsible that a person have to go through this hell.

Sometimes lies are told about the available position
to build a data base,
or you have to wait until the client wants to see more people.

If you are lucky a appointment is immediately set,
or your Curriculum Vitae is emailed on
and you are called
for an appointment with the employer.

Gert Strydom

Intimate, Intense And Sincerely I Do Love You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

Intimate, intense and sincerely I do love you,
you do turn my life and thoughts upside-down.
When I find myself it's you that I do notice
and you make me awake and faint.
When I see you in the morning and at night
in rapture I want to look and stare at you
and sometimes you do not keep hurting words in check,
you are the thief of my heart and my woman full of thunder,
you are my barbet and the one that I do love,
you are my red weaver as you do sing every morning bright,
my dove who coos throughout the night to me,
the one that loves me through all resistance.
You let my heart jump wildly and do drive me mad,
you are the woman who wants to carry me away in tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

Intimations Of Immortality (In Answer To William Wordsworth)

I

Love is something that we see
in a eternal light
with a own illumination in the darkest night
and its goodness is more than mere charity

as if immortality comes to it
when it is true and sincere,
when we really hold someone dear
and it fills our souls bit by tiny bit

and where our lives are only fleeting
we long for some perfection,
something more to our affection,
something that goes beyond each meeting

of the human kind
something of the divine,
something rare past fine,
that we try to define in the human mind.

II

We notice the sun that hides during the night
but returns daily with a kind of celestial light
and view it as necessary to maintain life,
we notice the ocean stretching beyond mere sight

and even at times the hills seems eternal,
the seasons that comes and go
the falling rain, the winter snow,
volcanoes that seem infernal

holds to us a special place
are all things that we view as being constant
and for life on some of them we are dependant

but we only live by amazing grace.

Yet everything is fleeting and transitory,
stars explode; their energy at a time is spent
and it is this earth's story
that all things are evanescent.

III

Only God is eternal and immortal,
and His power with which He sustains things
while to us who are merely mortal
by His grace there are daily awakenings

and with every new birth
His unconditional love is expressed
as involvement from the divine on this earth
and continually we are blessed

while rainbows hold a own secret message,
while there is life in every meadow, grove, and stream
and His power and presence isn't just a dream
but is expressed from eternity and still acts in this age.

[Reference: "Intimations of Immortality" by William Wordsworth.]

Gert Strydom

Into A New Millennium

The world was falling apart
with war, poverty and incurable disease
and some had too much
and others nothing
while we counted down time
into a new millennium,
I wondered if the next thousand years
would be much better
or still worse?

Would man find it in himself
to help his fellow man,
or would he use technology
to end all life?

Only time would tell
and I would not be able to know,
when time stretched pass me.

Gert Strydom

Into My Thoughts Your Face Do Sneak (Free Verse Sonnet)

In my heart your lips remain kissing,
and into my thoughts your face do sneak,
where longing for you do things to me,
the next thing I know I find you in a poem
when the days and dates sometimes pass me,
sometimes through life there is uproar,
it's you that stand before me in my inner-eye
as if from somewhere you are always peeping at me,
when destiny tells me about transience
and I am scared that you are only in my memories
then I find you again in reality,
where I hear from you or see you for a day or two,
momentarily you do bring to me great meaning
and I know that you are deep in my heart.

Gert Strydom

Into Permanence Of My Mind (Trijan Refrain)

Into permanence of my mind
I do want to place you
with everything great, good and kind,
that's honourable and true
as you make me complete and real
your love does me from all pain heal
as you make me,
as you make me
selfless feel, while with life we deal.

Into permanence of my mind
I want save each new day
and your dear face I want to find,
when you are far away
as your dear love does never fade
never does it have any shade
as your dear love,
as your dear love
do all of my errors abrade

Into permanence of my mind
I want to put your face
and I want to leave far behind
each blot, imperfect trace
and eternal is our great love,
which not a thing can remove
and eternal
and eternal
are our feelings from God above.

Gert Strydom

Into South West Africa

It was on a summer day
that a pair of camouflage coloured
Mig-21 fighters sneaked from Angola,
into South West Africa
and one turned back
and the other continued at 36000 feet
heading southeast.

Although they were tracked by radar
no Mirage or Cheetah fighters
intercepted them
and running out of fuel,
Lt Domingos José de Almeida Vinez
made a dead stick landing
on a farm near Otjivarongo.

The uninjured pilot
surrendered his pistol
to the Police
and in minutes,
was a prisoner
of the SADF.

This incident happened
months after the Cuban Mig-23 attack
on the Calueque dam
and to this day I wonder,
if Vinez and his wingman
was sent on a mission
to check the SAAF's
interception abilities?

Gert Strydom

Into That Dark Night

If fate compel me
to be alone when time's end calls,
let my hand rest in Thine.

When the last light of earth
passes me by,
let me cry to only Thee.

Lead me with Thy pure light,
into that dark night.

Gert Strydom

Into The Dark World

In the café I wait on a Mega-Coffee
while the hours become late,
a cleaner with a mop chews on chewing gum or a toffee
and time and again stops working to stretch out

when my eye catches the glance of a beautiful waitress
with a cross hanging on her neck,
she brings my coffee; later do serve me with stake,
asks if anything else does suit me

where I ask her to join me

and I am searching for God; do ask her about her faith
but she is infatuated
and do invite me to her apartment where she tells me
about her life and she does provide me with pleasure,
promises so more pleasure if I stay longer
and it is my lot that I am still searching for God.

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Gert Strydom

Into The Depths Of You I Fall (Quintella)

The small candle flickers on the wall
while shadows make us somewhat tall
your eyes gleam shining in the night,
outside it is golden moonlight,
into the depths of you I fall.

Gert Strydom

Into The Happy New Year (Catena Rondo)

There was some rain earlier in this dark night,
outside rockets again do whoosh and thump
in through the open window the cat jumps,
there was some rain earlier in this dark night;

outside rockets continually whoosh and thump,
crackers go bam, bam, ka-boom and ka-boom
dogs bark in fear, howl hysteric outside my room
outside rockets continually whoosh and thump,

crackers go bam, bam, ka-boom and ka-boom
and it is old year's day that's almost gone
while the brand New Year is now rushing on,
crackers go bam, bam, ka-boom and ka-boom

and it is old year's day that's almost gone
at half-past eleven the neighbours celebrate
a new message my cell-phone indicate
and it is old year's day that's almost gone,

at half-past eleven the neighbours celebrate
while they jollily loudly dance and sing
and with their music my ears do ring
at half-past eleven the neighbours celebrate

while they jollily loudly dance and sing
as if the New Year does hold something great
and not a moment longer they can wait,
while they jollily loudly dance and sing

as if the New Year does hold something great;
very later things quiet somewhat down
and in sleep I am coming to my own,
as if the New Year does hold something great

very later things quiet somewhat down
until at three a car hoots across the street
as if it wants the neighbourhood to meet,
very later things quiet somewhat down

until at three a car hoots across the street,
as if all my resolutions and patience to test,
the dogs, the cat and I get some rest
until at three a car hoots across the street,

as if all my resolutions and patience to test
before a thunderbolt crashes electric blue,
blazing at my eyes with its terrible white hue
as if all my resolutions and patience to test,

before a thunderbolt crashes electric blue
there was some rain earlier in this dark night,
people laugh at the car's bright lights
before a thunderbolt crashes electric blue;

there was some rain earlier in this dark night,
outside rockets again do whoosh and thump,
in through the open window the cat jumps,
there was some rain earlier in this dark night.

Gert Strydom

Into The Unfathomable Abyss

At times I dream
that I fall and fall,
into the unending abyss
without finding any place
to stop the fall.

Darkness folds
over me and I fall,
still deeper into it.

It's much worst
than parachute jumping
and feeling the material
braking your fall
and to see the earth
rushing to you in a blink.

It's like a black hole
which opens its mouth
and sucks you in
and swallows you alive
and make you go
to the end of all things.

Gert Strydom

Invictus (A Reply To William Ernest Henley)

While the night stretch black over me
and in the dark sky I see countless lights
burning high,
I thank the God that made me free
to choose which light to follow as a guide.

In dark circumstance and whatever fate brings,
destiny and chance do not conquer
and I still rise wiser
to life and its things

and my will remains free
to decide where my words
and actions belong
whether they are right or wrong
and to no human I bend a knee
and in all things I only answer to Him
who Captain's me.

[References: Invictus by William Ernest Henley and The Soul's Captain by Orson F. Whitney.]

Gert Strydom

Invisible But Yet Right Here (Italian Sonnet)

Invisible but yet right here Your power
is working where in secret it's visiting
doing its actions in this early time of spring
and very slowly in secret hour by hour

it brings the awakening to every flower,
give to the birds a joy, which they do sing
while at the core of things You are caring
and in all this I am just an observant follower

and transitory like all living things on this earth
is the loveliness of the wild flowers in the veldt
and not from demon kind but by Your hand
where you do care into fine detail from birth
and in Your omnipotent hand everything is held
while beyond the realm of time you do stand.

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Gert Strydom

Invocation

(after Lina Spies)

My Lord God, as creator of all things
the whole stretched out universe
galaxies in their rings,
lies open before you as a piece of canvas

where You do know the names of each sun, of each starry system,
do command a multitude of angels, beings without number,
You that in Your omnipotence do calculate the destiny of every living thing,
please do hear my call: I have won the heart of a woman

did love her unequalled
out of the depth of my heart
without reason or calculation

and she did tell me
that I am the light in her life
and between us
was Your image

I ask that our love will stay like this,
here where our lives are but a fleeting light
in a world that does try to devour our humanity
where darkness tries to come constantly.

Lord, do know about our love, before everything is extinguished,
Lord, rescue and help her and me.

[Reference; "Aanroep" (Appeal) by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

Invocation (2)

In childhood days Your miracles did to circumstance fit,
where just a word can enact life from death to reality
as things that do surpass all human science and wit,
the God that helps in dire need you still are to me.

The Prince of horror, darkness, evil and the air,
with his legions are active, busy and do dare

while unseen, hidden like a devouring spell,
to earthly life come havoc and a kind of hell

and the terror and horror by night and day,
do now with chaos with your people play,

where Lucifer acts as if he is You,
to turn mankind to him in all that they do.

I am but a sinner that does call on You the Lord of Lords,
to as Michael let every angelic being un-sheath their swords,

send Your legions to shield each person below, around and above
do come unseen to a devastated, evil, stricken planet with love.

Call upon Your heroic heavenly host to against Lucifer fight,
I pray that You will stand for righteousness and for what is right,

that against expectation You will act as You did in the past,
please do bring an end to this deadly virus that will last.

I have already lost someone that to me stood true to the end,
one whose love and friendship did not just pretend

but if this does not really fit into Your true plans and design,
Your knowledge, wit and intelligence by far surpass mine.

In childhood days Your miracles did to circumstance fit,
where just a word can enact life from death to reality
as things that do surpass all human science and wit,
the God that helps in dire need you still are to me.

This deadly virus do many people very much appal,
while Your love eternally goes out to one and all.

[Poet's notes: Psalm 91: 4-11 "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh at noonday.7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."]

Gert Strydom

Is There An Eden Somewhere? (In Answer To Ina Rousseau)

Is there an Eden somewhere,
where flowers stand in glory
or did it perish into the naught
or do we rather have to be silent

about that place and is it nowhere
to admonish man against sin?
Or does God still have His eyes on it
to give it again

to the residents of a new earth
as a place of joy without anguish
where fruit constantly hangs ripe,
where people will walk on glorious tracks,
will be able to live to the satisfaction of each heart
with eternal joyous bird song?

[Reference: Eden by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

It Cannot Last

(for Annelize)

Last it cannot,
the way that she does look at me
as if she is really interested,
the sun in her eyes,
her smile
that goes to the darkest part of my soul,
as if our meeting has been destined to be,
not only is something that does perish in a moment
like the lightning bolt that flashes in the distance
that is exceptional in the Cape
and I know that in minutes it's going to rain

where I am at her car on the soccer-field,
where it is boiling,
do take the electrical cord of the fan into my hands
push the power connector in deeper
and suddenly the fan starts blowing,

again she smiles as bright as the summer-sun,
the sound of her voice goes into the memory bank
to eternally be recognized immediately
and that moment does suddenly come back from the past
as still after all the years it does remain precious to me,
like it is with the meeting of someone wonderful,
of someone that can change your life
as if it was destined that we would meet

but that day suddenly fades away beyond decades of years
and lightening has an eternal enchantment to me
as if those rays do not just bring rain but also happiness
but still the wonder does remain
of that woman that can make and break me
who is not mine anymore
but still do believe in my poetry,
who still knows me for the person that I am

and I do wonder about happiness and if it's fleeting like a thunder-flash

that burns into the back-eye, into the memory and into the soul
with the thing that people do call love
and if somewhere you do really find it after many years?

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Gert Strydom

It Could Have Been Eden

Let me tell you something that I remember
from so long ago
but it seems like only yesterday to me
and is still fresh in my memory.

A dusty sand track meandering
past a hillock and a great oak tree
and in the early morning ripe lying like snow
and a spring flowing with clear sweet water,
the freshest that I have ever tasted,
the sun glowing as a huge orange ball
the sky bright blue

and you swimming in the stream
totally naked without concern
as if it was the most natural thing
and that winter could have been spring
and I couldn't stop looking at your body,
your big breast and aroused nipples
while I was feeling perverse, wicked
and you smiled at me gently.

How old had we been?
A boy of thirteen, but grown to full size
and a girl of sixteen with the body of a woman
and you were the most beautiful
delightful being that I had ever seen
and on that first meeting

totally nude you led me by the hand
to the barn, to the haystack
that we used as a bed
where you laid with me,
laid on your back
learnt me the pleasures of your body

and the taste of your lips,
the touch of your fingertips
I remember, but much more

the sheer rapture
of making love to you

and then suddenly, unexpectedly
the angel with the flaming lantern
and weapon in the other hand
stood in the barn door
which led almost to our capture

and while he was looking,
trying to see if anything
had crept into the barn
we lay totally motionless
and you demanded another kiss
and when he walked out
you were aflame with even more passion.

Gert Strydom

It Did Rain For Days

sometimes hard and at other times soft
and the thunder flashed blue-white
while all of nature was waiting on refreshment
but in our home we were sheltered comfortable,
we smelled the rain, heard the birds sing.
Together we did spend that time,
found something wonderful in each small thing
and the lawn was suddenly green
while new flowers were rising everywhere
and others did bloom in the new season of spring,
did astound us with their smell and beauty
and between us there was a tighter band
of love that goes deeper than feelings and the mind.

Gert Strydom

It Feels As If I Am Waiting On God Himself

It feels as if I am waiting on God Himself
and like the park outside He stays invisible,
somewhere in the distance cars collide with a bang,
in the darkness some danger lurks
and then in the silent evening a star jumps in beauty,
it's as if I am aware of His illustriousness.

Gert Strydom

It Feels As If This Summer Can Last Forever

It's the last part of summer
and the day is hot and bright,
cloudless with a perfect clear blue sky
after days of drenching rain
while I can smell the fragrances
of frying tomato, green and red peppers,
spring onions, chili and some pasta
from the kitchen
while the radio on the table
plays a song by Eros Ramazzotti.

She talks about hot summers
in Tuscany, Normandy
and about the Riviera in France
of which the song reminds her.

I ask her if she had holidayed there
or if she still want to go to visit
and she tells me that she is dreaming
about a holiday along the French coast
and of visiting Italy, about wandering
in fields full of lavender
and of painting the Eiffel Tower
and Paris after dark.

The sun is still scorching outside
and on the walls pots full of gardenias flower
as if it's the beginning of spring
while a swarm of sparrows, weavers
and some doves peck up the seed
that was scattered for them on the grass
and I can feel her soft body against mine
as she embraces me from behind
and when I turn around to kiss her
the moment lingers
and it feels as if this summer
can last forever.

It Had Been A Hell Of Spring With The Sun Hanging Scorching

It had been a hell of spring with the sun hanging scorching,
with nature longing in the flowering season
for the rain that had not come and the days turned over and over
while everything did dry out in record summer temperatures,
while the heat did daily creep higher and higher,
while in the yard flowers and vegetables did continually wither
and on the plains cattle and sheep did die of the drought
while I was still praying for rain to fall
to the God of the universe
and at times the rain did pour down before the heat did come again
in a exhausting summer and I am astounded
that everywhere there still is life,
that buds did appear out of the earth
so as if God was secretly active.

Gert Strydom

It Had Been A Miserable Day (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

It had been a miserable day full of drizzle
and you wanted to go to the beach at the Strand
to walk in that shivering-weather
and the Southeaster died down
but when the sun was setting on that beach
the rain did stop,
while the sun did draw a line up to the horizon
and you and I were there alone
like only two people in the entire universe
and you were far past pretty
but it was if God did walk along with us
where He keeps His hand over all seasons
and also over the winter-weather
but in my recollection I remember a wonderful kiss.

Gert Strydom

It Had Been At The Time (Refrain Stanza)

It had been at the time of the equinox
as you watched a butterfly on the snowy-white phlox
while bunches of roses I did pick like in my younger days
you were jubilant and lovely in the sun's rays
I saw the bright orange-pink geraniums in the flowerbox,
at the gift of the bunch of flowers you big-eyed and lovely
the greatest of all women in the whole world to me,
while this beautiful thing had been a worm seemed a paradox
as you watched a butterfly on the snowy-white phlox.

Gert Strydom

It Happened To Me

It happened to me
that a car salesman,
or a policy vendor,
or even family or friends
just tell a part of the truth
about something.

At times I wonder to where
has people's integrity gone,
when people talk
as it looks the most prosperous
for them and cut on the truth.

Still the truth
sets you free
and I want to gain
much more freedom.

[Reference: "Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8: 31-32.]

Gert Strydom

It Has Come To The Time (Chiasmus)

It has come to the time
where everyone that follows Jesus Christ
must ask not
what can my faith, my church,
God do for me;
rather must ask what I can do as a follower
of Jesus Christ
for my faith, my church,
in service of Jesus Christ?

Where we must not only ask
where can I make a contribution
to them who are poor and unemployed,
but by our goodwill give food,
clothes and encouragement
to those who are poor and unemployed.

It has come to the time and place where Jesus Christ
must be the centre point of my life,
where I as a mere human being
must have Jesus Christ as the centre of everything.

This is the time where we
as followers of Jesus Christ
and of every good thing
not only must praise
integrity, honesty and sincerity as a way of life
and follow those whose lives are indicating to Him
like the compass to the pole,
like the pastor,
but where we in our own lives,
we must come to the full right,
where we as men and women must stand firmly
to that which is right, which is honest and good
like the compass needle to the pole
and by ourselves indicate the way
to Jesus Christ.

It Has Rained All Day

It has rained all day
with water pouring from the sky
after the Southeaster ripped at our tent
causing the canvas to flap about
and the rain came sieving in,
in this grey July Cape winter.

It's chilly cold with snow
falling on the mountains
and being called up for this camp
as a citizens force special force unit
being accountants, lawyers
and doing whatever job

we are tented in the middle
of a marine base
(whom we see as sea-rats)
and we talk about our girls,
our wives
and it feels as if the morose weather
will never end,

the wind howls day and night
and nobody has seen the sun
in a week
and when the rain ceases to fall

we shine our boots,
polish our step out shoes
iron uniforms, are drilled
like new recruits
up and down through the base

with a RSM keeping pace
to keep the officers in line
and we are issued with rifles,
clean them
have to shoulder arms,
practice the generals salute a million times

to send the President on his way,
to say goodbye to P. W. Botha,
a old bold man
who presses a black hat
against his chest,

whose soldiers gave the Cubans
much more than a bloody nose
and he has been disposed of,
removed from his job
by F. W. De Klerk and his cabinet.

[Please note that in the southern hemisphere the month July is in the depth of
winter.]

Gert Strydom

It Is A Bright Beautiful Summer Day (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

It is a bright beautiful summer day
but my love is a thousand miles away
and this longing lingers with pain
like the drops do from last night's rain
where the drops fall as splashing spray
while in the berry-bush birds do frolic
twitter joyful do to and thro rollick
and the sky is cobalt-blue not grey
but my love is a thousand miles away.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

It Is A Pitch-Dark Night

It is a pitch-dark night
as if sky is filled with tar
and just here and there I notice stars
and we cat-sneak around
in a dark enemy camp
right through some thorn trees.

The moon is not yet out
and I am freezing before
I pass through a bare open piece of veldt
and it's as if the backpack
does not sit right
and the web belt is scraping against me.

Around us there are guards
that we have difficulty noticing
until one of them lights a cigarette

and the blue flame
does suddenly brighten his face
and he is just a few paces away
from where we are.

Suddenly we do notice
other guards, lights
and vehicles
that drives up and down

and when a light
suddenly is switched off in front of us
I can hear my own heart beating
in my ears

and we try
to melt
into the long grass

and are aware of a vehicle
that leaves a road and are driving into our direction

and we want to cock our weapons

but we are too near to
the enemy guards
and between two of them
when that vehicle
does drive up to them.

We leopard crawl
to the shelter of few bushes
to escape the light
of the vehicle
and we can swear
that they did notice us.

Carefully I draw the knife
out of my boot
and when the vehicle does stop
between the guards
we both we both cock our rifles
which we aim at the enemy.

One of the soldiers
who climbs out of the vehicle
walks right into our direction
and the lights of the vehicle
lets him look like an apparition
in the way
that he walks closer
and we both do know
that this is trouble.

The man gets still closer
and I can hear
his boots crunch
over the small bushes and sand
where he stops
between the two of us

and he has got to be a Cuban
as I smell a Havana cigar
on which he sucks enthusiastic

and the knife feels cold in my hand
while he does unbutton his pants
and he has got to be night blind
as he is not aware of us
while I smell the salty odour
of his urine.

It feels like an eternity
before he turns around
and talking in Spanish walks back
and the vehicle
does depart a while later.

Gert Strydom

It Is Accomplished

When He hanged tortured and exhausted on the cross,
when the eyes of a crowd of people was on Him,
when He was scolded and cursed,
He longed for His Father

and when man harassed God
He wanted to only bring forgiveness to them
with a kind of love that pierces everything
as if He did view them through other eyes:

with 'Father, forgive them, '
He reconciled God and man.

Gert Strydom

It Is As If God Is Present

where we stand at the pulpit,
Corinthians has got meaning
as a holy command,
as something far past human knowledge
that God commences with us
and our love comes to meaning,
becomes a kind of principle.

Gert Strydom

It Is As If She Is Lost

It is as if she is lost,
while on the piano she plays a fugue
and sick of arguing feeling like a rogue
she plays on as if she's at an outpost

where living cost
do not matter and every colleague
do not scatter away, as if she has the plague
and she's near to the end, almost

finished, when the phone starts to ring,
with its consistency shattering her peace
and she answers and listens to the chattering,
looking through the window to find quick release
from the building tension, she notices that it's spring
and the voice trails on and on, like a spreading disease.

Gert Strydom

It Is As If You Are Here With Me

You forgot your green jersey here with me
and the perfume that is clinging to it
makes me long much more for you

and it is as if you are here with me
tonight you will walk in,

but when you called just now
I could not tell you
this kind of thing

and I am here and you are there
and I wonder when
you are coming to get your jersey?

Gert Strydom

It Is Icy Cold

It is icy cold and a man
with a short sleeved shirt passes
and it doesn't look
as if the young girl
with a blouse
are getting cold.

There's taxi's
and picking people up
and a few vagrants
sleep in front
of the doors of buildings
to hide against the wind.

People stand with their hands
in their pockets
to fight the cold
and some are lighting
their first cigarettes.

The talking of the schoolgirls
has disappeared
and they are looking at papers
and I wonder if
they are writing a test,
or is it the head girl
that stands near to them
that causes them this morning
to behave.

Gert Strydom

It Is In Provence That We Are Dancing

It is in Provence that we are dancing,
when I drink the first whiskey,
while the lights of the Riviera glitters,
a star jumps in the sky;
with you I take a wild chance.

When you smile draws me and teases,
I see your face in my glass
while more liquor is splashing in
and your laughter with both joy and sadness,
suddenly gives life to my heart.

When you follow me
you invite me to your apartment,
where I count off money for the taxi,
you embrace me
with your arms around my neck,
when we stand in the foyer.

A young couple walks past
when you look mischievously lovely,
look with bright blue eyes at me,
before you take my hand
and we walk up the stairway
while your hips sway inviting.

When we reach your apartment,
your lips sudden find mine,
just there I know no more pain,
outside there are lights flowering,
above us stars that glitter
and your body is sweet and bitter.

Gert Strydom

It Is Like New Love For Life

It's like new love for life
are in your golden eyes
and I see happiness
burning in them
and your hand
that is soft in mine
is icy cold,
but love is busy
to get life anew
and your heart is open
and you kiss better
than I can remember.

Gert Strydom

It Is Love

It is love that brings deeper feelings,
makes a smile jump into the eyes
and when the days of trouble do come
it's got the power to overwhelm the darkness.

Gert Strydom

It Is Not That God Has No Pity (In Answer To Yehuda Amichai)

It is not that God has no pity
on adult soldiers, who crawl
on all fours
and that He only cares
for small children and much less
for children at school,

any fool could believe this gibberish,
but when bullets whistle past your head,
you see comrades and the enemy dead,
how rockets penetrate through
the thick steel armour of tanks
and armoured cars

how grenades, landmines and bombs
explode shattering
you know that mere men
are doing and continue doing
these evil war things

and when you live through
this kind of hell
and come out unscathed,
still living
when you should have been dead,
you know that you are really worshipping
a loving and pitiful God instead
of the merciless one
that some are painting Him
as He has accompanied you
right through the dread.

[Reference: God Has Pity On Kindergarten Children by Yehuda Amichai.]

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day

It's only one day
and I see you again
and the weekend
passed much too soon
and on this Monday
life continues
like always.

The wonderful time with you
of yesterday and the day before,
is burnt into my soul.

I still feel your hand
folding over mine
and the touch
of your silky skin.

It as if a new summer
has already arrived for us
and the sun
and the blue sky
Let's the winter disappear
and it's difficult
wait for tomorrow
to have you with me.

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day[2]

It's only one day
and I see you again
and your big golden eyes,
are burning in my mind.

I miss you near to me
and your perfume of yesterday,
still rises from a handkerchief.

It's nice when life
is so full of promise,
but much better
to have you with me.

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day[3]

It's only one day
and I see you again
and I can't stop,
the beating of my heart.

Now time drags
slowly on the minutes,
as if tomorrow is very far.

My airtime is finished
and only tomorrow
there's money in the bank
and tomorrow
in a lot of ways,
a special day
and tomorrow feels far
and I can almost not wait
for it to come.

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day[4]

I wait on tomorrow
and I wonder what you are doing
in that place,
while my thoughts
becomes silent in me.

If you could wait
on every tomorrow like this
and get the potential
from every day
to be a really great day,
life would have been
truly wonderful
and you would have tried
to make the very best
of every day.

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day[5]

It's only one day
and you are with me
and it's just one day,
before I have my blue motorbike
and it's only one day,
before a permanent job
may be mine,
but always
it will be only one day
before a new tomorrow comes.

Gert Strydom

It Is Only One Day[6]

It is only one day
before tomorrow comes
and on the other side of tomorrow,
there lies another one
and I wonder how many tomorrows
still wait for me?

Who really knows
what the next day brings
and if it will be great,
or bad or sad,
or wonderful
and how long
life still stretches on
before destiny
draw its last line?

Still people wait for a morning
when the Creator
and Redeemer
of the universe comes,
or if the morning suddenly disappears
you might be with Him
much sooner after
that last sleep that comes.

Gert Strydom

It Is Quite Clear That Winter Is Near

It is quite clear that winter is near
with yellow, auburn leaves on the stripped trees
and somehow my mind is quite clear
with the absence of butterflies and bees

that death is lurking ready to arrive
as naturally things do expire
as destiny at its time contrive
plans, to act as a consuming fire.

While my life is slowly turning to ember,
the twilight is drawing close
may it be that when you remember
our love that it do not lose:

the things that we hold obvious,
the clarity of that which is between us.

[Reference: Sonnet 73 "That time of year thou mayst me behold" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

It Is Said [1]

It is said that when a husband and wife
together in prayer trusts on the power of God
they find a kind of tranquillity
and that He holds His omnipotent hand over them.

Gert Strydom

It Is Said [2]

It is said that life is gift
that God borrows to everyone for a time
and what we do with it
opens the portals of either heaven or hell.

Gert Strydom

It Is Something That I Cannot Just Remove (Roundelay)

Far too easily did I you once trust
and it is very difficult to adjust,
as you did my whole life improve,
it is something that I cannot just remove.

Seasons and time passes too quickly
and still I am stunned by your iniquity,
your cheating acts I do not approve
it is something that I cannot just remove.

Far too many days are filled with pain
and I might never see you ever again,
while feelings do linger as does true love;
it is something that I cannot just remove.

Gert Strydom

It Is Strange To Be Single

I walk past vineyard of grapes,
see the struggle that the small avocado tree
has against the ripe
while a string of doves
on the telephone wire
looks cooing at me

and feel like the fallen tree
over which the hollyhocks, geraniums, carnations
and ferns are growing rampant and trailing
as if I am laid down dead as well

but still shoots
is reach high into the air
past the roof
like fingers to the sun.

It is strange to be single,
not to catch the view
of your sun filled eyes
and the dogs are following me
and the cats await me
and I am really lonely.

Gert Strydom

It Is Two Days More (Novelinee)

I watch the early morning blood-red rays,
its two more days before another kiss
while I am missing her in many ways
am yearning to see her, for pure bliss
to feel her soft curls like some times before
her golden soft hair now coloured dark,
each day I love and miss her even more;
on the depth of love I can just remark,
about its significance its joyful spark.

Gert Strydom

It Isn't Winter

It isn't winter that brings out
the brazing energy in me,
but the summer sun, the summer rain
the fresh earth that I wallow in
with fingers, with spade, with pickaxe
and rake scalloping the earth
in lines like a huge shell
in the womb of which is buried
the treasured seeds,
that will soon be sprouting
some into vegetables,
some into pretty flowers
giving back life and tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

It Must Have Been At The End Of January

It must have been at the end of January
when the sun hanged high at seven in the afternoon,
when we walked together on the beach
and just before we kissed my eye caught a ship in the distance

Suddenly the ship disappeared
in beyond the blue ocean
but it was white and red
and the sun shone cobalt-blue in a bright sky.

That day has disappeared into oblivion
with the remembrance that constantly dwindles
and even that blonde girl I have forgotten,
even the expression on her face,

how lovely she had been,
how her lips felt and tasted,
even the hue of her eyes
I cannot bring back to my thoughts

and that woman has long been married,
with maybe a string of children
but I keep remembering that ship
as it rocks up and down on the waves.

[Reference: 'Erinnering an die Marie A' by Bertolt Brecht.]

Gert Strydom

It Must Have Been In Early Part Of Spring (Cornish Sonnet)

It must have been in early part of spring
that bees and butterflies were still around
I saw small things fluttering on a wing
some small deer were threading through the dark wood
leaving tiny tracks all over the ground
while silently, looking, grazing some stood

while some did disappear in the mist
sadness was in my heart on that bright day
while of them I got not a single gist
as some wildness did suddenly sweep in
before that old thick fog did burn away
and my sightseeing really did begin

It must have been in early part of spring
while some did disappear in the mist.

Gert Strydom

It Seem As If The Attacks On Commercial Farmers Will Never End (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Bernard Odendaal)

It seem as if the attacks on commercial farmers will never end:
on a summer-day a farmer was killed and his wife raped,
his death-cry in the homestead did cut through her heart,
she tells that in the kitchen she does remember her powerlessness,

where two black men did surprise her and did kick and hit her,
did curse upon her and dragged and carried her to where the bedroom is,
did scream at her: "you boor whore, " stood with their faces against
her,
pushed themselves into her and during raping broke her hip.

In the hospital she says: "I feel misused and so very dirty! "
Over her plans for the future she was for moments speechless,
did cry over these events and was still terrified and in pain.
"They have everything: my husband's life, my possession and the
country."

"This severe pain keeps hurting and hurting"
she said angrily where in innocence she was raped and hurt.

[Reference: "Van ons korrespondent" (From our correspondent) by
Bernard 's note: This event appeared on 15-10-1998 in the newspaper
"Volksblad" and I do write on this as this kind of thing still keeps
happening as if without end in the new South Africa and the current government
wants to dispossess the farms from the commercial farmers.]

Gert Strydom

It Seems Just Like A Form Of House Arrest (Couplets)

Patience I have got to learn
to handle a lock-down that I did not earn,

where without you meaningless it seems especially,
as if all of life is stopped officially,

where both you and I try our best
it seems just like a form of house arrest

and people that do not follow the rules through
get with the police to do,

where the government longs for people homeward to head,
while life and making a living now hangs on a thing thread,

where I did not know that a person could miss
somebody just as much as this.

The worst is that I do not see you
and to no one this kind of thing is due.

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Gert Strydom

It Seems No More (English Sonnet)

It seems no more can our true love further increase
where its lovely ways and impact will never die,
while our desires for each other will not decrease
the time does in years past us and far too quickly fly,

where sunny and bright full of love are your eyes,
where constantly they do burn with a hidden fuel,
while in them character and more than feeling lies
and at times to your lovely self you are far too cruel,

where all of my life I do want only with you to spend,
while outside the trees do blossom in the new spring,
where birds do sing and frolic to their great content,
being with you is far greater still than merely existing

and in your face I do much more than mere beauty see,
you are more than the entire great lovely world to me.

Gert Strydom

It Seems That Everything That Is Good And True Does Not Last,

that the present and future is just a continuum of the past,
that even love at its best does come undone
and that every person is to him or her self the only one.
that even perfect situations is deemed for disaster
and that the clock of life is running faster and faster
as if this life is just for those that are lucky or strong
and that in everything there is something that is wrong
that life is only a mere spectrum of contrast
and that evil and the darkness of it is vast

and yet there are times that I still do want to believe
that those that love and dream and are brave are to receive
blessings from the very hand of God,
that even if we do have pain or at times feel odd
still life is worth living as if its great and good
and that even incomprehension at time can be understood,
that true happiness is just waiting to come into being
as if there is something special to each and everything.

Gert Strydom

It Took Eight Parades To Say Goodbye

It took eight parades to say goodbye
and there were fighters in the sky
and we wore battle clothes
and drove our armour
through the streets
and saluted every time,
that he stood with his hat
clenched to his chest.

We marched with a military band
and everyone had step outs on
and as we passed
the man in the dark suit,
rifles swung up high
to a generals salute
in order to say goodbye
to the commander in chief.

I remember him waiting with his arm
on his chest
and hat pressed there,
while we crossed the border
back from war
and there was something
on his face;
when I saluted
as the Ratel IFV drove past.

[Reference: Ratel IFV=> Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle.]

Gert Strydom

It Was A Dark Day Afternoon

It was a dark day afternoon
with the sky brooding met die lug
and at s time when
it would be night soon
and lighting flashed down and. then
fell the first rain of spring
and after a slumber we were awakening
and saw bolt of lighting after bolt of lighting
come crushing down
and our intimate joy was our very own
and there was great comfort in being home.

Gert Strydom

It Was A Hot Sunny Day (English Sonnet)

It was a hot and clear open sunny summer day,
as if sent from up high from beyond earthly skies
on your face a ray like a token from heaven lay,
as if we were both like Adam and Eve in paradise,

where we stood in the pine filled fragrant wood,
with a lingering tranquillity a kind of silence there,
a lonely woodpecker pecked among needles at its food,
two doves fluttered down cooed as if love was everywhere,

in the distance the ocean did glow with a serene blue
as if forever everything was unperturbed calm in the deep,
while right there our love was true and beautiful were you
and it felt as if into eternity our sacred vows we would keep,

where yet now separate from each other apart we are
and the distance between the two us is so very far.

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Gert Strydom

It Was A Living Guard (Parody)

It was a living guard
I think, when reality
started. That walked off his piece of lawn
feeling affectionate,
laying down his head and wordless
against the tree,
became friends with it.

A first tree
from which he as a guard
paced off his way,
while it screamed next to him,
he pulled
and the stem was stripped off to the top,
until he saw:
the awakening of a young branch
that after the first pruning
carefree
started flowering.

But when the tree started to shake and offspring
started budding into the corner of the garden,
growing under the tablecloth,
to the woman, nobody in that summer
thought
to tell the guard
about the meaning. It was a living guard,
if I do not have it wrong,
that walked away from his piece of lawn.

Gert Strydom

It Was A Small White House

It was a small white house
near to a hillock
with a red painted plate roof
and it felt somehow
as if I had been there before.

The red steps onto the polished porch
shone as if it had just been polished
but there was something
in that glowing sheen
reminding me of a day in childhood gone
when I was cornered on that veranda

and cold water from a hosepipe
splashed all over me
from where my smaller brother
was spraying me

and I didn't want to go into the house,
much too scared that he would follow me.

Gert Strydom

It Was A Winter Bringing Despair

It was a winter bringing despair
when the black frost kills wherever it falls
with a killing coldness in the air
and even the doves stop their intimate calls,

where water in streams freeze into ice,
the grass of the veldt rather turn brown than yellow
and old men live out their last fantasies of vice
before the winds of death starts to blow

A time when people put their children early to bed,
where even the chimney fire doesn't bring heat
while few words among people are said
and coldness creeps up through icy feet.

Yet it was a time of love and making love
while couples did fit into each other like a well made glove.

Gert Strydom

It Was An Icy Winter Afternoon (Roundelay)

It was an icy winter afternoon
when I heard a bird crooning a cheery tune
and suddenly although feeling quite old
its song came as barrier against the cold.

I saw branches of naked stripped trees
like skeletons rocking in the strong breeze
while quite happily that bird sang quite bold,
its song came as barrier against the cold.

Gert Strydom

It Was Fun

It was great fun,
to be with parra bats
in a camp.

Those men
know no fear
(and any reason)
and every one
wanted to take a beret,
to claim fourteen days furlough.

Still cooking water runs
and glowing irons hit
the attacking parras back,
and chains fly
twisting through the air.

Gert Strydom

It Was In A Light Blue Sky

It was in a light blue sky
on a cloudless day,
that images with great speed.
swept out of the sun

We cheered as the war planes
passed overhead
and waved at Mirages,
but they were enemy Migs.

Missiles and bombs dropped
and a destroyed buffel apc burned
and my ears resounded,
while I rolled into a ditch and saw the planes
turning and pitching away.

Gert Strydom

It Was In The Darkness Of The Night

(after William Wordsworth)

I

It was in the darkness of the night
when first we met for just a moment
and there was something mysterious present
with stars hanging high and bright

when in the lights of her car she came into sight
as if somehow divinely sent
nothing could this chance meeting prevent
as she brought me joy when she smiled to my delight

and she was very lovely and somewhat fair,
acted with her own free liberty
but was also sincere and serene,
with flowing locks of curly hair,
a vision of delight and more than beautiful to me,
as if walking out of a movie scene.

II

There was something familiar to her
and I had to catch my own breath
when for moments we were together
as if she had come from ages past, past death,

as the one to be my darling and my bride,
as if our lives had been secretly set
and my feelings and surprise I could not hide
at that moment when we met

and to her I was immediately drawn
while we shook hands in goodwill
on that late starlit dawn
and today I remember that night still,

the brightness of her sweet smile,

how her eyes did me from all other girls beguile.

[Reference: "She was a phantom of delight" by William Wordsworth.]

Gert Strydom

It Was Just There

It was at the dance floor
under the Neelsie,
where I saw her sokkie
and every movement
was perfect.

When she walked to me
her long blonde hair,
was made in a French plait
and I was captured by her bright blue eyes.

There was something especially beautiful to her,
but suddenly my feet were made of lead
and I could almost not speak
or even move.

From somewhere she knew,
maybe out of another life
or another time,
that we were destined to dance.

Of sokkie I knew nothing,
but along with her
every movement was just there.

[References: Neelsie=> Stellenbosch University's Neelsie student centre.
Sokkie=> "a Sokkie is a social dance with a partner. The word sokkie refers to the way people dance in their socks, without shoes. This is not always the case, but this type of dancing is always called sokkie. Folklore has it that this type of dancing was taken from the American style: Sock-Hop"]

Gert Strydom

It Was Much Too Hot

It was much too hot
in that Pick-a-Pay shopping centre
in the middle of a Pretoria summer
and something went awry
with the air-conditioning
which was blowing hot air.

We had two trolleys full of groceries,
bought our budget for the month
and your face was red pink
covered in gleaming sweat.

Two girls passed in the aisle
holding hands
and looking as if
they were much more
than friends.

You bended down
to get some coffee
and the first
that I noticed them
was when one cursed
at you and then at me
to get out of their way.

There were a million things
that I could say back,
but it occurred to me
that they could pass anyhow
and that their manners
were totally lacking
which I made clear.

At the row at the cashier
you spotted them again
and realized that you know one
from somewhere
and gave her your mind

and she didn't know
what to say back
and blushed tomato red.

We passed the Wimpy
on our way to the car
and I herded you there
where they had
bottomless Coca Cola,
burgers and fries.

Our money was tight
but we enjoyed ourselves
drinking one glass
after another

and a father, mother
and two children
came to the neighbouring table.

He was unsteady on his feet
and his speech
proclaimed him being drunk
and he had probably already
started drinking brandy and beer
long before the afternoon's rugby match

and he had a lot of patience
with their children
and they didn't notice his state,
but embarrassment was written
over the face
of the poor woman
who could have faded away
while he loudly
made a fool of himself.

Gert Strydom

It Was My Thirteenth Year

It was my thirteenth year
and we fished with our friend
from Rhodesia
and he taught us
to make our own sinkers
from lead.

Three boys casting
lines into a dam
and watching the policeman
and when it stirs
or give a small pull
whipping the rod.

At times we used floats
and watched if the red and white
still drift on the water
and it was peaceful
at the dam
with the smooth water
stretching out in front of us.

Crabs crept skew
along the shore
and at times we sailed
a old leaking row boat
and use a big tin
to empty it.

The fishes easily took earthworms
honey or curry dough
and we caught strings
of bream, caper, yellow fish
and catfish.

It's a great thing
to fry fish on the coals
and there's something in the smell
that makes you hungry

and we watched the stars
that hanging bright and big in the sky
while we kept on catching
deep into the night.

Gert Strydom

It Was Needless

In the pepper tree
the birds waited this morning
on you
to get seed and crumbs,

but it was needless
since you were away for me
and for them too

and I have left
and nobody is left over
to care for them.

Gert Strydom

It Was On A Dark Night

It was on a dark night
that the Lord of the ages
was born in a stable
and placed in a trough
wrapped in clothes

while the rulers
were in their palaces
and wealthy people
were staying in the inn

and a bright star
was hanging in the sky
marking the place
of His birth

and the creator God
had become man
to be with His people
and to lead them
back to Him

and in the field
shepherds saw an angel
appearing in glory
and they were afraid of him

and he told them that in Bethlehem
the Saviour was born
and praised God
saying that peace
had come to all men.

Gert Strydom

It Was Pretty Amazing Grace

It was pretty amazing grace
when I saw you
walking to me
through the garden with a quick pace

and there were butterflies
in our large garden
and a few bees turning around,
a few doves cooing in the trees

and you smiled at me
the same beautiful smile
of years before, with your dazzling eyes
burning deep into mine
and this moment was everything
as if all of life do come to a single kiss.

Gert Strydom

It Was Silent And Peaceful (Free Verse Sonnet)

It was silent and peaceful where He did lie in the grave
where God as a human was slaughtered as the Son of God
and He did pay the price for man's iniquity,
did rest on His own creation's Sabbath Command
but when He from His own power, the power of the Spirit
and of the Father did come to life again,
on the next day the Sunday did rise early in the flesh
the Roman soldiers were dumbfounded and astounded,
the bright glare did blind their eyes,
holy angels did descend to the grave,
the giant stone did crumble to pieces of gravel,
when Jesus came forth and the light of the Father surrounded Him
and before man stood spotless the Lamb of God,
the Son of God and the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

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Gert Strydom

It Was Somewhere In July

It was somewhere in July
that I first met you.
and that winters day,
felt like summer to me.

The sun was not too hot,
or cold and set in
a cloudless sky.

Emails and poems turned to reality
and your smile and the hug
that you gave me,
felt as if it was meant to be.

It was the best. and greatest thing
and still although you
are part of me,
you stay new
and first and last on my mind.

Gert Strydom

It Was The Kind Of Summer Day

It was the kind of summer day
when the sky's hue
has a certain eternal blue,
where children during the afternoon play

when it feels as if all cares are swept away,
when love seems lovely and true
and lovers stick to each other like glue
and in my arms you did lay.

There was the rejoicing of the birds, the bees,
wild flowers blooming waxen in the veldt
under the hot summer sun,
children were climbing the popular trees,
it had something glorious that it did hold
and it was a time of frolicking and fun.

Gert Strydom

It Was The Last Day Of May

It was the last day of May
and winter was creeping,
in to every thing.

Dew had turned
to ripe and a chill,
was in the night air.

Brown trees were stripped
from leaves
and the yellow grass,
waved in the winter wind
as if dead.

Even the contract
was drawing to its end,
but I did not want to give away
knowledge from my speciality
that was acquired through studies
and by the experience of years.

How could any employer
expect the sun
of intimate knowledge to arise,
with a job's demise?

Gert Strydom

It Was The Way You Were (Terzanelle)

It was the way you were, Woman,
your beauty, your laughter, your smile
distinguished you from every other human

and only for a little while
your heart was mine,
your beauty, your laughter, your smile

filled my heart, my head, my soul like good wine
and I experienced perfect moments when
your heart was mine

and the whole world was beautiful then
with your eyes smouldering into my soul
and I experienced perfect moments when

you made me feel whole
and truly knew me inside out
with your eyes smouldering into my soul

and our feelings for each other were pure and devout.
It was the way you were, Woman,
and truly knew me inside out
that distinguished you from every other human.

Gert Strydom

It Was The Worst That Life Could Do

(after Charles Dickens)

It was the worst that life could do
and yet the best came from it too
when life was one huge struggle
but in all of this I again found you.

Like children we were again in love
as in some strange foolishness
but strangely our lives fitted perfectly like a glove
and wisdom from the years was in our consciousness

and the sure belief in each other's sincerity,
a strange incredulity in the thought that love fails
and in great humility
we found light to all the details

of that which is great about one another
while darkness fell on that which had shattered us
and despair and fear did not really anymore bother
while hope was in every thing that we did discuss.

Gert Strydom

It Was Too Dark To Notice The Flowers (Cavatina)

It was too dark to notice the flowers
of early spring,
the stars were out in their bluest white blaze
they were shining,
moments were more intense in that black night,
doves were cooing
while your lips soft warm sweetly did find mine
the very moment was somehow divine.

Gert Strydom

It Was Whole Year Summer (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In 1985 it was whole year summer
when you came into my life
and as a romantic and a dreamer
I was in love with you and with you astounded
where I was studying business administration
and the Cape days did sunny stretch into the night
when I learned from you the happiness and pain of true love,
wanted to cover you from head to toes with kisses
where weekends at your home in Brackenfell
(my words are here curtailed)
did tell me about another world
and in my heart I did love your mother and father
as you and your people were far past precious to me
which makes those days to remain special to forever.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

It Was Yet Another Bright Sunny Summer Day

It was yet another bright sunny summer day
and the sky was pure blue as if only just created by God,
up and down sparrows and weavers flew and nothing was odd,
butterflies fluttered and bees buzzed and it was if all was at play.

Your eyes were golden and bright like the sun
and in them I read messages of love,
there was a kind of beauty that nothing can remove
and around us the entire world was having fun.

Your smile was happy and the dearest thing,
something beautiful that caught the eye
and all around us different birds did fly
twittering and cooing and praising some did sing.

Since then I have learnt that all of life is ephemeral,
moments may deceive or be true,
even if there is something special between me and you
nothing in reality is eternal

and yet that day remains with me constantly.

Gert Strydom

It's Almost As If You Are Hiding Here Somewhere

The dogs are restless
as if they are waiting on you
and is lying looking at the road
with long eyes
and every now and then
get to their feet.

It's almost as if you
are hiding here somewhere
and just now
will sneak in from the dark.

Outside the streetlamps glow golden-yellow
and I hear the wind
blowing leaves against the window,
but your car keeps staying away

and the rain is now falling harder
and the cold locks around me
as if I can nowhere find a hot place
without you.

Gert Strydom

It's Already In Vain

I know that thunder at times fall from the sky,
I know that ants crawl when their nest breaks,
swarming ready to bite
but it's already in vain.

I do not care when the sun shine
and it rains in broad daylight
if I get wet or not, if you get wet or not
but it's already in vain.

I smell the fresh tea that you are brewing
see how the wind is blowing the curtains
as if it's crying over a lost soul
but it's already in vain.

Will you come along when I dance in the rain?
I know that there's something indispensable
to dance when the sun shines and thunder is falling
but it's already in vain.

When Gert Strydom is caught in rain at church,
some old men are thinking about the sacrifice of God,
there's a impact when a pretty women is wet
but it's already in vain.

Gert Strydom

It's April

It's April and the autumn rain
patters down for days long,
the Magalies Mountains are covered
by grey-black clouds

and later there are summer days
where the sun still hangs white-hot
and I long, want the summer
to last forever

but the years are already
leaving their marks on my face,
are drawing through my hair
and like some of the trees

in a winter I will also turn skeleton,
become stripped from my better days
and then at a time
will be part of the cold earth.

Gert Strydom

It's Dark

Its dark and the one light of my motorbike
cuts through the night.
In the distance traffic light upon traffic light
gleams a set red colour
and the dark night sky is clouded,
is torn open
by a bolt of lightning falling silver-white,
somewhere far away I hear a cannon shot resound.

Gert Strydom

It's Dark In Here

While I am walking
inside a cave,
it's rather dark in here

I wonder how people
could have lived in this place
and in my mind's eye
I see them gathering
around hot fires
with bright red and yellow flames
leaping into the air
and blown higher by the slight draft.

They must have fried
some of the antelope
sketched in yellow, red, brown
and black on the wall
and although the stalagmites
and stalactites on the floor
of the cave are rather beautiful
there's a chill in the air.

Without light I cannot see
were to go
and in ancient times
bats must have nested
against the roof
and somehow people
made this dark place
their home
and still it's dark in here.

Gert Strydom

It's In The Grey Land

It's in the grey land
that I am caught like in a labyrinth
and while life passes by

I am looking for direction, for a place
to come out of the marsh

and everywhere around me
there are flowers growing in the swamp,

rain showers down like kettledrums
and thunderbolt after thunderbolt falls nearer and nearer to me

and I am searching for a star, a light
or even steadiness

when I realise that You are with me everywhere
and know of everything that happens,

that You rather rescue, love and help
than being bent on measuring out damnation

and that You bring answers
when it seems impossible

and it is then that I see Your Southern Cross
which leads me out
from where I was blinded by city lights.

Gert Strydom

It's Night

Its night and up ahead I hear a loud bang
of metal upon metal and breaking, falling glass
when in front of me the cars suddenly brake
and somewhat macabre a horse grazes on in the field.

The lights of an ambulance and of the police flash
while their sirens shrilly shout out their warnings
and somewhere in the distance flames appear,
while a woman and child cry now and then on the wind.

Gert Strydom

It's Not Much Fun To Be Alone

"Its not much fun to be alone, " said she
"but two who stick together can help each other
out of all kinds of jeopardy,
but then I am silly and why would you bother? "
Suddenly with her the whole world looked merry
as she was smiling at me and I thought she was lovely.

Gert Strydom

It's Not The Fault Of Summer

It's not the fault of summer
that the heat at a time does depart
and that it's only limited to a season
but love that does continually burn high
like the summer sun
does endure against the timid mouldiness
of each season

and when the days of autumns comes,
when the coldness of winter slowly sneaks nearer
then the days turn around again
and in the years of old age
love still is strong

and when you and I are lost to each other
then there is a time and place
where our love finds us again
and brings us back to each other
as if our love has got an endless summer.

Gert Strydom

It's Pressing Hot

It's pressing hot
and the air begs for rain
and in the distance
thunder bolts lights up the horizon
while grey black clouds
are pressed together ominous.

Suddenly the first drop
hangs on your cheek
and meanders down
with some friends
and drops become
pouring rain
that falls in buckets full
and now there's thunder
that reports everywhere around us.

Still you stand amazed
as if stuck to the spot
to catch the cool embrace
and I run
to the shed
to stay dry.

Gert Strydom

It's Quiet, Very Quiet In The Veldt

It's quiet, very quiet in the veldt
even the crickets and grasshoppers
are without sound

and the chopper drones away
leaving me and Johnny
and a few other men

with a Bushmen tracker
to follow a enemy spoor
and suddenly we walk straight in
to a ambush, right into a trap

and Johnny is dead, shot through the head
and three others as well and it feels as if I am in hell
and I am talking to myself

trying to get my bearings while firing at the enemy,
killing some and throwing two grenades
to advice them of my serious intentions

and the enemy shooting stops, as does that
of me and my men and I smell death
and are nauseous to the point of retching

and it's quiet, very quiet in the veldt
even the crickets and grasshoppers
are without sound.

Gert Strydom

It's The Forth Day

It's the forth day
that I am at my new work
and the elevator is broken
just like my life
And I have to walk
to another entrance

The people are friendly,
but it's a hell of a thing
to have only a contract
for a month.

Gert Strydom

It's The Second Day That I Visit

It's the second day that I visit
on the farm near Reivelo,
just past Vryburg.

They farm with cattle, goats,
a few sheep, muscovy ducks, turkeys
and chicken.

The scrambler bumps up and down
right through the field
and go past rocks and bushes,
while we drive along the rough field
and the hot wind
cut across my face
and there are places
where it cannot go.

It's time to transform
young bulls to oxen,
to brand cattle
and to cut their horns
and I get a black stallion
to ride into the field.

My cousin rides in front
with a brown Arabian mare
and there are bushes
and flat slabs of rock
and small hillocks that we past
to try and round up young cattle
to the corral.

It's nice to be a cattle herder
for a time
and to use legs and heels
and reigns,
to round up cattle in the field.

Every thing goes well until

I chase a young black bull
just to the entrance of the fold,
where it stops stubbornly
and doesn't want to move
a feet further.

I jump out of the saddle,
fasten the reigns
to a small branch
and rush to the obstinate bull.

It stands and snorting
and stamp its feet
and when it sees me,
it rushes confused
at the horse.

That faithful horse stands firm
while the bulls horns swishes
onto the reigns
and the horse
stops that bull in its tracts,
that a piece of the bridle
breaks right off.

Then I am at the bull
and pull the reigns
out of its horns
and it walks meek
into the corral,
while in astonishment
I stand and look at that animal.

With a knee-strap
and pliers in the nose
we draw the bull to the ground
and when we shear it,
it moans like a heifer
and there's a burning smell
that goes up from the branding iron
and I see the horns
dropp at my feet

and it's another beast
when it stand on its feet.

Gert Strydom

It's War In My Yard

It's war in my yard
and the ginger Persian cat
lies stretched out
gazing at the trenches
where some gecko's has disappeared
as if the golden eyes of it
can draw them out of cracks.

A little later the two dogs sniff under a bush
and chase something out of it
that draws a grey stripe
over the grass
past my window
and both cats
fly up with arching backs
and paws out deadly
to capture it.

Gert Strydom

It's A Hot Sunny Summer Day

(in answer to Heinrich Heine)

Outside it's a hot sunny summer day
but gentle vivid lively spring is of you a part.
Against autumn and winter this season will not stay
but filled with flowers and alive will be your heart.

In cold and chilly winter still joyous you will be with me
and true to your own lovely nature in any season you remain,
do not set your sails to the whims of what destiny is to be,
where you do love me truly in times of joy and in pain.

[Poet's note: "Es liegt der heisse Sommer" by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

It's A Rainy Day

It's a cold, cloudy rainy morning
with the street outside lonely
while I am dressing,
twilight moves to day
and in this spring it feels
as if winter have not yet left
and outside everything is as empty
as the feelings in my heart
and although I know true love do exist
I do wonder at the heartaches
which had come my way.

Outside in the garden
some red and white roses,
purple, blue and yellow irises
and orange, pink and red geraniums
are flowering bright
and are happy with the falling rain
while I am adjusting slowly
to not being married
to be able to write poetry
whenever I do want to
and to be friends
with any person that I do like.

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Gert Strydom

It's All That There Is

It's a man and a woman
that does meet each other and do later marry,
have children and after being years together
there is one that alone does mourn at a grave.

Gert Strydom

It's An Honour To Call You My Wife

(For Daleen)

Above all you are charitable to others,
others in need is in your will
and it's as if you want to embrace the whole world,

even out of our food cabinet you act generous
but in reality you do not waste a moment.
Above all you are charitable to others,

you view everyone as repairable and I as broken,
it breaks you heart when people are extradited and have to beg
and it's as if you want to embrace the whole world

but always your decisions are sensible,
from your childhood precaution has been drilled in to you.
Above all you are charitable to others,

you look at your fellow man with great mercy,
you hasten near when someone screams from pain
and it's as if you want to embrace the whole world

but always your actions are effective,
you smile at times perplexed when without cause people do you jeer..
Above all you are charitable to others,
and it's as if you want to embrace the whole world.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

It's As If I Do Experience The Daybreak With You (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Where I stand at the breaking of the new morning
the end of night rolls into the dawning,
it's as if I do experience the daybreak with you,
as if together small miracles experience we do
and away is the night's dark awning,
where before us both wide open the world lies
and at the beauty we do look with amazed eyes,
where in the water small fish are spawning,
the end of night rolls into the dawning.

Gert Strydom

Its As If My Country Is On A Different Planet

It's as if my country
is now somewhere on a different planet
and early in the morning I see the poor black man
where he sits with hair like strings
covered in a blanket
against the wall of the ABSA bank
where people at eight o'clock
stand in a very long queue
while they wait upon the bank to open

and the friendly police captain
(who sometimes wear plain clothes)
and has a shining bald head
greet me and he wants to know
where my motorcycle is?

There are a group of jobless white people
twisting tobacco from cigarette butts
where they beg for leftover food
at DJ's restaurant

and I wonder what is happening to this country
while a minibus taxi
stops in the middle of the road
and drops people in the traffic

and the traffic light is green
when I cross to the shopping centre
and the minibus taxi ignores the red light
and barely misses me.

Gert Strydom

It's As If Only Of You I Am Thinking

Outside the cooing of the doves does resound,
while the sun hangs orange on the horizon
and it's as if only of you I am thinking.

At the window a yellow weaver twitter and flutters
and another one hangs in the distance on a reed.
Outside the cooing of the doves does resound

and a hungry starling on a branch that gleams black-green.
I wonder if you are enjoying this hotter day
and it's as if only of you I am thinking

that it's a deadly time I do realise
and that the entire world is filled with sorrow.
Outside the cooing of the doves does resound

and in a mere moment life has changed,
that the virus constantly has an impact remains implicit
and it's as if only of you I am thinking

while children do frolic around in the neighbour's garden
and without you life seems worthless and in vain.
Outside the cooing of the doves does resound
and it's as if only of you I am thinking.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

It's As If The Sea Is Confined

It's as if the sea is confined
where it breaks and hits in front of us
and just as unobserved
you keep standing next to me
where the sea stretches into the blue
and in silence we are watching each other
where the sea stretches,
where the sea stretches
and I enclose you in my arms.

It's as if the sea is confined
in this small bay
and outside of it we notice a shark
but no meaning
but our love remains,
just nothing but you and I
but our love,
but our love
makes any kind of sense here.

It's as if the sea is confined
always washes in and out here
and it keeps drawing us nearer,
while we feel great and deep things
it's as if God Himself is among us,
and is watching us with big pity
as if God Himself,
as if God Himself
brings us here to new meaning.

Gert Strydom

It's As If The Swallows Test The Air-Streams (Persian Quatrain)

It's as if the swallows test the air-streams in their circling-flight
and twittering they fly up and down and back and again out of sight,
when the redbreast sings its song until the rain begins
and weavers eat a rip fig and twitter from their delight.

Gert Strydom

It's As If This Season Is Ever Changing

It's as if this season is ever changing
between winter and spring
and there are some secrets in your eyes
as if something is lurking, maybe a big surprise
and I wonder if something will rearrange
the way life is, to something strange?

Gert Strydom

It's As If You Do Hop And Jump Like Klipspringer (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's as if you do hop and jump like klipspringer,
from rock to rock up a small hillock
where in front of the television you sleep next to me,
are fleeing for something when your legs do suddenly kick,
the lightning bashes down next to the window
with a very loud bang and spray blue-white,
away at the power lines another comes down,
the lights go out and you jerk awake and your eyes are white,
sparks fly hissing and go in all directions in the distance
where that cables lead to Impala Platinum
and there is darkness all around us
but you do keep looking at me,
come lay with your arms around my neck,
do pull my head down towards yours.

Gert Strydom

It's As If Your Breath Whispers Declarations Of Love

It's as if your breath whispers declarations of love
and next me you lie naked and stretched out,
while you bring warmth to the cold darkness

and when I listen to your breathing
I notice your back, arm and slender neck.
It's as if your breath whispers declarations of love

and my certainty about us, about you becomes a fact,
when your breathing continually covers me like kisses
while you bring warmth to the cold darkness

and at a time my life was shackled in,
when days moved quickly through the calendar.
It's as if your breath whispers declarations of love

as if at times I listen to the secrets of the night
until the sun licks over the distant hillocks
while you bring warmth to the cold darkness

and although at times in life I loose my way
nothing can violate the love between us.
It's as if your breath whispers declarations of love
while you bring warmth to the cold darkness.

Gert Strydom

Its Autumn (Decastich)

It's autumn and while leaves drift down
from the big old pepper tree
you sit on a bench in our garden
with a distant look on your face
while you are far beyond lovely
in a loose white robe,
are swathed in the bronze light of the setting sun
while a flock of sparrows and weavers
peck at the crumbs that you have scattered
from a piece of white bread

Gert Strydom

It's Better To Trust And To Hope

It's better to trust and to hope
than to fall into worry and despair
and it's better to truly care,
to say and to do the right things
than just to leave things to be.

Gert Strydom

It's Clear That There Is Something Vulnerable To Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(In answer to Louis Esterhuizen)

It's clear that there is something vulnerable to love
like exposure to blue-white thunder
but still it has a deep secret
that lets a person wonder about the scope and impact of it.
I realise that love is like the morning totally open
where passion and principle comes forward,
are stripped of all self-conceit and retrogression
and with skin on skin I am constantly dumbfounded
where moments keep hanging in eternity,
transforming the being together to something more,
where you capture me into your humanity and body
and in all of this we keep respecting and adoring each other,
while the rain falls for fourteen days without end
and every thunder in darkness bashes down around us.

[Reference: "Drywend, agterna" (Drifting behind) by Louis Esterhuizen.]

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Gert Strydom

It's In Such Times That I Come To You (Couplets)

That on his very own man does live
in this time becomes self-conceit that do no answers give,

where through a deadly virus we are living,
human beings are full of mistrust in the reactions they are giving,

but it's in such times that I come to You
and pray turn our days around in what You do.

You can think, speak and act and it is,
words have to You omnipotent meaning, You can dematerialise this,

The yesterday, today and tomorrow You do now already know,
You know where every person will go

and nothing happens that You do not see,
for every person You know what the best will be,

only the very best is in Your love's scope
and I ask from You these things and do trust and hope.

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Gert Strydom

It's On Days Like These

(For Daleen)

It's on days like these that the summer sun
does get a own glory, where purity is
in the bright blue sky, where birds sing
as if they do truly love each other.

This morning I wanted to tell you immediately
how dearly I do love you
but when we talked my words was gone,
that moment was suddenly much too great

but the duties of both of us are calling,
the here and now becomes important
and I wanted to keep you with me,
as if these few hours could be everything

when feelings, love like butterflies
do constantly flutter around everywhere.

Gert Strydom

It's Only Mere Words (Refrain Stanza)

It's only mere words that I write to you
when in each poem I claim love that is true.
What do remain when everything becomes transience,
when words are lost, even from my conscience,
but through darkness in my heart you leave every clue
as you are more than just in my memory,
you are my wife and forever dear to me,
you are my ray of sun when my days are blue
when in each poem I claim love that is true.

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Gert Strydom

It's Only Reality That Does Remain (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's only reality that does remain,
where we do adore each other like before,
and I wonder if a person could love more than this,
as constantly you do climb back into my life and into my days,
compulsive I want to embrace you when we do meet,
do want to kiss you as if your lips are burning for me,
and do look into the past and into the maybe of the future,
do want to take you and lead you away by your soft female hand,
I catch your laughter into thoughts when away it wants to butterfly flutter,
where we are with each other without any kind of resistance
and these kinds of feelings do become active and not less,
where decency does want to stop me from you,
but your laughter does resound clear as a bell next to me,
where it stops all resistance and decency.

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Gert Strydom

Its Presence Was Here With A Faint Glow (English Sestet)

Its presence was here with a faint glow,
if it was a godly or demonic messenger
I did not know and to act I was quite slow
as on this earth I am only a passenger
and am alone as life goes on.
but the strange visiting envoy is now gone.

Gert Strydom

It's Silent Right Through The House At Daybreak

It's silent right through the house at daybreak
and only the songs of the birds comes through the windows
but we are closed to the outside
when the sun only peeps with its head over the horizon,

later just here and there breaks through the clouds,
our lives are tied to earlier decisions
and in the distance there are dots of boats,
the beauty of the coastal region

and a ray of sun falls over your face,
the wind rustles through the curtain and whispers
as if it's bringing a love song to you
and I see a small vein beating against your neck,
the room is still dark with twilight
and eternally I want to save this moment.

Gert Strydom

Its Spring And Outside New Flowers Do Appear

Its spring and outside new flowers do appear
the sweet smell of jasmine hangs on the wind,
a sparrow moves at the window
and for long moments I am blinded by your beauty
and you are in my bed, my lovely bride
when we find ardent passion with each other,
moving for moments to the edge of eternity.

Gert Strydom

It's Strange (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's strange that you do lay stretched out next to me
where moments ago together we were just one,
where like a fountain that bubbles you keep saying things
where together we do fit into eternity,
but right here you are less than the cosmos
and the earth and city are gone from us
where you are special and do bring meaning to me.
Maybe there is more that we do attach to moments
when in love you and I do bond with each other,
as if past the stars we do reach further,
maybe there is more than a person searches to find
when a person ask questions as words in a conversation
and you are ravishing and lovely when I look at you
where I keep remembering our being together.

Gert Strydom

It's Strange That Some People

It's strange that some people
as adults
are still puerile
and do strange things,
that impacts on their whole existence
when according to their whims
they do spend hour after hour
and do expect others to rescue them
as if in their own abilities
they do not have any trust.

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Gert Strydom

It's The Shade

(for Daleen)

It's the shade of our being together
that daily do in the hot sun make shadows,
it's the camp-fire of intimacy
that at night do bring the heat
in the darkness where the whole world
is full of strangers that are not peculiar to us,
it's the sitting and praying together
that do make God a part
of the love between us
but now everything of this is lost
and we are two individuals
that do not really understand each other
or do notice the unsaid words
that do drift between everything
or do comprehend them
and the heartache and pain
of that which was love is overwhelmed
and I cannot conceive
why all the things have happened
of which I did not deserve the punishment
that was constantly doled out by you and especially by your children
in utter inhumanity
and now no one can say that I am overreacting
where we are apart
and are being divorced forever.

Gert Strydom

It's Then That Here With Me I Do Sense You (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Tonight the stars glitter and the night is full of tranquillity
when thoughts of you do refreshing wash over me,
of what you are doing at this moment I do not have a clue
I cannot reconcile myself with a life without you
it is then that I do sense you and want my life different to be
that I wish to see you face to face on such a night
want to talk to you over the horizon in the starry light
when our love is concrete, real and it feel as if it's lasting to eternity
when thoughts of you do refreshing wash over me

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Gert Strydom

It's Winter And Icy Cold

Tonight the hobos do flee, quickly do find shelter
under the roof
at the Palm Springs shopping centre,
while the dogs howl
against the wild stormy wind and pouring rain,
when the branches are jerked up and down
and it's winter and icy cold
and suddenly I feel anciently old.

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Gert Strydom

It's With Ice That The Winter Comes

It's with ice that the winter comes
and with sadness the wind is blowing
when just an empty loneliness remains
and I do not anymore hear your beautiful words
when just before daybreak the dew changes to ripe
that even makes the bigger plants wilt,
the tracks in my heart are blown away
and even when we are together I do miss you.

Gert Strydom

It's With Mere Love

It's with mere love that I look at you
and still do this come as the absolute truth,
calculable I tell about every beautiful thing of you,
and the depth of my love to you is undisguised
where I do entrust you with my deepest secrets,
where I see more and more of you
and as a human being your remain to me matchless,
where I view you like an angel
and still do this come as the absolute truth,
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Gert Strydom

It's With You That I Find Shelter Against Every Thing (Couplets)

There is severe chilliness coming suddenly
when with rain winter does surprise you and me,

It's with you that shelter against every thing I find,
you are my nurture place against the rain and wind,

even in times of great darkness you do bring bliss
and true sincere intimate love is juts like this,

as you do turn my days around back to the sunshine
to my life bring delight and you are mine,

it's as if a summer's day is in every smile
and cosily you are against me and also so very fragile.

Gert Strydom

Ivy (Novelinee)

Seen by druids as have magical properties
as dark green woody vines upward it grows
it covers walls and climbs up upon trees
and to where it is growing no one knows,
its fruit are poisonous small smooth berries
and it protects walls from some weathering
make children ill if they eat them like cherries,
but this plant makes some great green covering
usually looks delightful during spring.

Gert Strydom

Jacob Wrestles With God (Free Verse Sonnet)

At last light suddenly there was Someone with him
that grabbed him in a terrible wrestling-grip and forced him down
and with all of his power Jacob did face Him,
did force Him away from him with might and a cry
and it was so terrible strange as he did recognize Him
but could not really place His face, His body and stature
and he did use all of his effort against the know stranger,
at the beginning of the struggle was very astonished
but later he got tired and struggled for his own survival,
did not really know but did suspect that it was God that was standing against him
and time after time he did think that he was getting the upper hand
when unexpectedly the stranger did hit him on his thigh
and now somewhat maimed he did not want to let go of Him with the pain in his
leg,
did tighten his grip and did beg for the Stranger to bless him.

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Gert Strydom

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy

How many times I do see pain in your eyes,
but yet you have got the capability
to look heroic, pretty and noble
even in hours of terrible tragedy

in a country's greatest distress
as the black headed woman
that in loveliness, humanity
certainly do stand above the most women.

Gert Strydom

Jakobus Le Grange Marais (A Reply To Christopher Hope)

One early evening while waiting for a train
I walked into an old station bar,
to buy a cold cider to kill a thirst
in the sweltering
thirty degree Celsius summer heat

and saw a very old cripple man
who nursed a glass of white wine
and he was talking to himself
and sometimes stuttered over his words.

When he looked up at me
there was fire in his eyes
and it was almost as if
he recognized me, from a dream
or a prophecy of something

and suddenly his face was calm
while he called me over for a chat
and I ordered a bottle of brandy for him
and another Hunters Gold for me.

He complained that the times were cruel
with one hand motioning to his missing legs
that he had lost in a train crash
and complained about Afrikaners
ignoring each other
and only living for themselves
while the nation is being led astray

and then suddenly said but my boy,
you know this,
have experienced it yourself
as a learned man without a job

but let me tell you something
about days long gone

even before the Boer war
(where the British killed
women and children in concentration camps) ,
many Afrikaner farmers
were executed at Slagtersnek
and it had been a terrible, terrible time

and then that holy Englishman John Phillip
meddled in our affairs
and now he haunts us again
peering in at the window panes

and I shook my head, did not understanding
exactly what the old man said
and heard something about
English people being in cahoots
with the current government
and ladies ruling as bosses
while educated Afrikaner men are jobless

and he swayed on his stool
and I rose to steady him
when he said to pour more brandy with ice
and complained that now nobody
is keeping the impis at bay
and pointed a finger at me

and I thought that he said
but you will do, or maybe
you haven't got a clue
and leaning forward
strangely his breath was clear

and I heard him stuttering something
sounding like even uncle Paul
in church square knows
that soon all Afrikaner men
will be poor

and I said to him:
"My man we already are
with the new black regime,

but most Afrikaners
just do not realise it yet."

He smiled at me then
and steadily held his glass, in a final salute
brought it to his lips
and faded into the naught
de-materializing in front of me.

[Reference: Kobus Le Grange Marais by Christopher Hope.]

Gert Strydom

Jeanie

With a brown snoot en golden-brown eyes,
my Labrador jumped into my heart
while waving her tail.

Her dark brown pelt glows
and it's like something primitive wakens in her,
when Hadida birds land screaming on the lawn.

She inspects while I plant
rows of roses and in a short while,
she shears them off at the ground
and digs out the roots.

At work my phone rings
And the main waterline of the house,
has been gnawed off by her.

I am cross when I stop at the house
and usually she waits
and howls of gladness,
but when I get out of the car
she's waiting at the garage
and sails on her stomach
to where I stand at the hole.

I take my financial mail,
and fold it tight
and know that I am going to hit her today.

But I see the pipe
that has been fixed by the plumber
and when I look up she gives her paw
and cries sadly as if to talk.

Gert Strydom

Jeopardy (Rubliw)

Pests like

Ebola, Aids, do strike

and crime is running rive

while in jeopardy is each life.

The great Day of Judgment must draw near

on the faces of people I see fear,

some do still live in bliss

the future is

unclear.

Gert Strydom

Jerusalem

Your old city spreads up to a hill,
where you lie shattered,
with your temple brought to ruins
by the power of Roman legions
and still you are the place
where God at a time was crowned with thorns
by a multitude of sinful men,
that did not see Him as their own
and now you are divided
between Arab and Jew

and I await the descent
of the New Jerusalem,
a city build by the hand of God,
paved with streets of gold
and much more glorious,
that the one of old.

Gert Strydom

Jesus

When in an act of satanic might
the earth was plunged in to eternal night
and the Lord of the universe was crucified
to the demonic delight

then as sin separated God and His Son
and the demons carried their evil work on
Jesus did the ultimate sacrifice make
and His salvation for mankind was done

and on a Sunday morning
the brilliant light of an angel the eyes did sting
when the Lord of Lords and eternal king
from death's tomb was arising
and through the universe all living beings
and angels did sing
of the perfect love
that nothing can remove,
of God who became mortal man
and with each morning's red glow
the entire universe does know
that daily God does His love and kindness bestow.

Gert Strydom

Jesus And The Children

(After A. G. Visser)

The people, the crowds are astonished
and everyone that is ill, poor and weak do come to Him
those that are deaf, blind, have leprosy and those that are cripple
where He do stretch His hands out and do turn their lives around

and every person that does suffer in a way
do hear that He is passing
and in crowds they do gather just where he comes
where His work on that day just become more.

Where He finds no time to rest or any silence
and some are hungry and others glad,
where He stretches His hands out to the sorrow of the world,
where everything do cut into the depth of his heart

and by His words and deeds His Father is honoured
but concerned His disciples realize that He is tired
and Jesus do stretch His hands out and do open His arms:
"Do not hinder them, let the children come to me

as out of them the kingdom of heaven is build, "
he says where widely He holds His arms open for the children
where they do run to Him, some do skip and jump
as the God of the universe a person can trust with anything

where others hop and dance in joy
and from the later afternoon sun a golden glare falls
on the heads of Jesus and all of the children
that do gather together with Him

[Reference:"Kinderkrans" by A. G. Visser. Mattheus 19: 14.]

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Gert Strydom

Jesus Christ

He knows the precise wandering of stars,
of every planet in the universe,
have power and the insight to create
things from the nothingness

speaks of the beauty of love
and his whole life is filled
by personal sacrifice
and the virtue that He brings

that goes beyond human mysteries,
while He gives power to the weak,
talks about another kingdom
than that which the people

of his generation did seek,
but in Him everyone does see
the perfect love of a creator God,
of a sinless human being.

Gert Strydom

Jesus Christ (Italian Sonnet)

As a prince He gave up His Godly life
when man to temptation in sin did fall,
did come right into the middle of it all,
did in poverty as a mere baby arrive

and did not even have a house or a wife.
In my mind and heart He still walks tall,
do not force His ways and truth but does call,
does help in my own turmoil and strive

and He taught the essence of selfless sincere love
but mentioning Him nowadays makes people angry
where believing in Him is out line and I find this odd,
where He does men from evil to great goodness move,
where daily He sets me free and His love does fill me
and His grace and mercy urges me to honor Him as God.

Gert Strydom

Jesus In The Suburb

There's a strange man
standing outside at the garden gate
on the other side of the mailbox
and he is dressed in a uniform
and looks somewhat familiar
but I cannot place him

and funny enough
the dogs are quiet
and so peaceful to my fancy
as if they
know him from somewhere

and I wonder what a traffic cop
is doing outside at the garden gate
and I am half irritated
when I open the front door,

but his uniform is somewhat strange
and looks like a flying suit
that a pilot would wear.

I wonder what he wants
and without talking he asks
do you know me?

There's a bright light
shining like the sun
out of his loving eyes
and His hands have the marks
of old wounds
that have healed

and I wonder what He is doing
at the door of a sinful fool like me
and I open the gate wide
and He walks in.

Jesus, Saviour Of Us All

Utterly busy people pass me in the street
with faces full of worry and some do glow
and there are tokens on everyone I do meet,
signs of hardship, of misery and woe

and I hear babies for their mothers cry,
this country's leaders words and acts appals,
and hapless people over their lives sigh
with corruption even in the city halls

and at churches still songs of You I hear,
but how teenagers and grown up children do parents curse,
people rush on into self loving bliss are unaffected by another's tear,
barely do notice the AIDS pandemic's hearse.

Yet You are present in the heart of every man
and in the greatest trouble You are near,
even with the people that others do avoid and ban
who are manacled by their lifestyles and by great fear.
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Gert Strydom

Job

My name is Job and pain and suffering
should rather have been the meaning of it.
In the evenings I look up and search for meaning, even any kind,
and try to read the stars,

try to see Him from whom all things come
while I am still remaining in His service.
The festering wounds on my hands and feet break open
while in pain I walk along a dark road

and in a dream I see Him stretching out His hands to me,
hands on which painful scars are present.
Something breaks right through my thoughts
and when I awake above me the stars are glittering white,

in the moonlight the stars lie winking up to the horizon
but it's as if a light falls down upon me
from the heavens,
as if in an embrace He draws me tightly against His chest.

Still I keep on trusting Him,
and continue to keep Him as the light that I strive after,
as the light of my life
and one morning when I awake all of cares suddenly disappear:

I see that my wife is pregnant when she walks up to me,
my friends bring me presents and flocks of live-stock,
I am cured overnight, with princes waiting to consult me
and then I become really prosperous.

Gert Strydom

Job (2)

(after Johan Steyn)

An angel and his followers do infect the entire universe,
Job's festering swears do open with pus running out of them.
His heart and body burns and everything whirls past his mind.
That everything is coming to nothing bothers him.
It's night while he waits upon God for answers.
In front of him God does appear in bright light.
In his vision He stands glorified and wounded
and Job is restored and healed.

[Reference:"Job" by Johan Steyn.]

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Gert Strydom

Job (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

As a person that does not understand life, God and destiny
where he continually scratches with a potsherd his wounds
Job do not comprehend the ways of life, his sorrow and God
and time remains indestructible where it passes too slowly,
it's as if stripped he stands alone in life,
his limbs are tired and wasted away,
he has too much pain to walk out of this misery
and day after day rolls on into his pondering
and without answers stays his many questions,
where he wants much more than just relief,
while his mind wanders between himself and God
where he is caught in the progress of many days,
where nobody can truly tell him why
but later God does astound him.

[Reference:"Job" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Johanna Brandt

To me Johanna Brandt is a prime example
of such a person, who were clinging
to her integrity and bravely lived
to what she thought was right.

She was the daughter
of the well known reformed minister
Nicolaas Jacobus van Warmelo
who played a leading role
during the first Anglo-Boer war

that came to an end
with the Boer victory at Majuba hill.
Johanna had a beautiful
soprano voice and got music instruction

from a Mrs Uggla,
(a Swedish music teacher) ,
and used to sing the solo parts
at choir performances.

While living on a prime estate called
Harmonie in Pretoria, the family
were friends with President Paul Kruger,
general Piet Joubert and his wife
and dr. W.J. Leyds (the secretary of state) .

On Harmonie there was an abundance
of willow trees where it was situated
near to the Apies River
and Zuid-Afrikaansce republic
government buildings.

During the Jameson raid,
Johanna was visiting her uncle
in Florida (near to Johannesburg)
and at the time when this trouble

was at its worst

she by herself rode by horse
all the way back
to her home in Pretoria.

While studying music in Germany in 1897
Johanna fell in love
with the reformed minister Louis Ernest Brandt
whom she met in the Netherlands

who was a rowing champion of Holland
and a well build good looking man,
but Johanna returned to live in Pretoria
and was there
when the British invaded that city
living on the Harmonie estate.

Thousands of British soldiers
marched hungry and tired
into Pretoria, dressed in kaki
and were dirty from the travelling.

The British soldiers came to a halt
in front of the open square
near to the government buildings
and on command sat down on the ground

Some started eating the rations
that they were carrying along,
some immediately started sleeping
and one looked up into the face
of the young girl saying:

"Thank God, the war is over, "
but with a voice full of feeling
Johanna replied:
"Tommy Atkins, the war has only just begun! "

There were some soldiers camping
on the grounds at Harmonie,
Lord Kitchener had his headquarters
right next door

and till the end of the war
she never had a moment of peace
but this did not bother Johanna
as she and her mother

became spies for the Boer leaders
and by love letters to Louis Ernest Brandt
Johanna was sending coded messages
to President Paul Kruger in the Netherlands.

Johanna even smuggled explosives
and explosive fuses
into that part of Pretoria
which was occupied by the British
that was concealed
in a lady's hat box
and the British officer
did not even realise that the hat case
was quite heavy for such a slender girl.

A message to the paper "Review of Reviews,"
about the inhuman conditions
in the Irene concentration camp
where Johanna was working as a nurse
was smuggled in a cacao tin
all the way to Great Britain.

On her way to be married
in the Netherlands Johanna travelled by ship
and while the British people aboard
were celebrating and partying after their victory
and the peace of Vereeniging

Johanna kept to her cabin,
as she only felt the bitterness and pain
of a nation whose farms, towns
and women and children
were destroyed.

She could not shake off
the wasted children,
in the Irene concentration camp

the cruelty of the British doctors,
the cold bloodedness
of the British soldiers.

She got married to Louis Brandt in Arnhem,
convinced her new husband
to come to South Africa
where her country, and people

after war was living in poverty
and where he was a reformed minister
and eventually for about twenty years
the moderator of the reformed church.

Johanna was diagnosed
with stomach cancer
from the results of X-rays
and in 1917

the doctor wanted to do an operation,
but Johanna decided not to have the operation
and to stick to her principles
of a natural cure by eating grapes,
drinking only water and milk
and trusting in the power of God.

The doctor gave her only weeks to live
but she kept to what she did believe
and was totally cured living
another forty-seven years.

While her husband was moderator
of the Dutch reformed church
Johanna claimed to have been visited
by a angel from God
and by the Lord Jesus Christ himself,
she did believe to have had some visions
about the need of her Afrikaner people

to convert from their sinful ways,
that the second coming of Christ
was drawing closer

and that He had chosen

the Afrikaner people,
and was coming back
to establish his kingdom
right here in South Africa.

She prophesied about a coming
world wide time of great tribulation
and the Dutch reformed faith
ignored what she was saying,

publishers did not want to publish
her book called the millennium,
which she published at her own cost
and she was mocked

by the newspapers,
by the political parties
and her warnings
to the South African tribal people
which she translated
into their indigenous languishes
was totally ignored by them

and although she did not know
visionary Nicolaas Van Rensburg
while they were living
at the same time,
some of her predictions
run hand in hand to his.

Gert Strydom

Johannesburg

There are mini-bus taxis everywhere
hooting, swerving, stopping anywhere
and people on the street
shouting to each other
as if they are not
in talking distance,
but as if everybody is deaf.

Some hawkers are selling
sweets, cigarettes and newspapers
while others are cooking maize,
porridge and eggs.

Youngsters stand next to
parking meters showing
open parking spaces
and demanding money
to watch vehicles parked there.

Some hobos sleep
in tattered blankets
and smell of wine
and liquor and the sick
sweet odour or retching.

Prostitutes walk up and down
street corners in mini skirts
and t-shirts
with nipples showing through
and have hello smiles
plastered across their faces.

Some gum sniffing children
beg at traffic lights
with twisted arms and legs
and other beggars
have posters wishing you well
or telling you to go to hell.

People queue in lines
waiting for busses
and some stand smoking
while they talk
and businessmen, lawyers,
soldiers, secretaries
are walking quickly past
with briefcases, satchels,
and handbags

and on the sidewalk
there is urine,
blood, vomit, some rotting food
and smoked cigarettes
and everywhere signs
of a city in a country
that is falling apart.

Gert Strydom

Johannesburg 1965

As a baby barely able to walk,
I walked in the long corridors
of the apartment block that belonged to us
pulling-pulling on the big collie dog

that was smiling at me all the time
and wanted to lick me in my face,
taking a broom
I held the handle against my head

and when I slipped and fell
my whole forehead was cleft open
with blood pouring out
as if from a fountain.

One afternoon I got hold of the shoe polish
smearing my face full of Nugget
and I looked like dear old Sofie
and she laughed with white teeth
while cleaning my face,

carried me to the top floor
where we looked out on De Bergen Street
seeing trams passing hopping on the tracks
and the passing people dumbfounded me.

Some of the Portuguese tenants
called me "bambino, "
giving me Marie-biscuits
and green, purple and black olives

while they stroked through my hair
and still I am wondering
if they were longing
for their children and wives in Portugal?

Gert Strydom

Johannesburg In 2013

In every face that I behold,
I see a certain chill, a certain cold
and in the distance white mine heaps glimmer
light flash over tall buildings, glass windows shimmer
and it is not the Johannesburg of old

and everybody fits in,
the gum sniffing beggar children
with faces becoming obscure
and wagging limbs now miss-formed without a cure

the street whores, displaying their wares
smiling as without a care, with a cheap kind of glamour
calling out obscenities

along with workers from manufacturing industries
walking in rubber boots
in blue overalls

and even the people in ties and suits
who are in cahoots
with the moneymen

fit perfectly in to a heartless city without a soul
where the value of money is the criterion
that turns men and women into carrion,
in a place that imprisons, like a huge enormous gaol.

Gert Strydom

John Phillip

Forever the wandering ghost
of that meddling interfering missionary John Phillip
is haunting, and he is bellicose
and in the highest ears he again lets his words slip

and once again he acts the same
as at Slagtersnek where rebellious farmers did hang high
(were hanged again when the ropes broke)
and once more he slanders the Afrikaner's name,
while innocently he tells lie upon lie
and here and there a funny joke.

Gert Strydom

John The Baptist At The River Jordan

I see them standing in their best clothes as holy people
at the market square, the threshing-floor and the well
hitting with their fists proudly on their breasts,
even where rich old men doze off at the city gate

as if they want to shout, that they are children of Abraham
are saved as his descendants,
are free from their lineage but as a brood of vipers
they rise around me with love missing from their hearts
where they only wait for a moment,

are waiting to strike and backward to rob, plunder
and they think that they are saved
and where I am baptising
they stand and gossip backwardly,
are coming with questions set as traps

and I wonder if I have to walk up to them,
have got to drive them away
and have to rub in their sins
in front of the people, the city, the whole world?

Gert Strydom

John-Henry

(After Elisabeth Eybers)

John-Henry is sixteen years old
and fatherless his mother did spare the cane
and insolent and impudent he uses the word damn
in almost every sentence.

Every time that fists does fly at school
John-Henry is the one that is first in the ring,
in the afternoons there is a cigarette in his mouth
and he blows rings with the smoke.

Girls do follow him continually one after another
and sometimes there is a circle standing around him
where he wears a cap that is turned around
and sunglasses do compensate for his lack of manners

but there are times that he does play sad songs on his guitar
when he shares his own melancholy with the world
and he drives his new scooter up and down
as if the street does belong to him
while all neighbourhood dogs do bark.

Just when I expect peace
and do yearn for moments of tranquillity
John-Henry does arrive at my neighbour's house
where he does brake sharply while driving at speed,

does hoot until the gate is opened for him
and then does stand boldly with his big chest
until the children go and call their sister
and together they sit and chat on the porch.

[Reference: "Terugkeer van Klaas-Hannes" (The return of Klaas-Hannes) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Johnny Everyman

Johnny surfed on the waves,
till on the day,
that he got his call up papers.

Johnny new the sea and the waves
very well
and girls filled the beaches
and live was good and free.

Things were really great
until five gigantic Mp's,
waited at his front door.

Their hair was trimmed very short
and they got hold of him,
and pulled him to and fro.

Johnny left home
in a military capture wagon
and had to choose,
between going to the army and jail.

In the army his hair was stripped
and like a prisoner
he was chased up and down
and drilled all over the place
and told that he was worth nothing.

Time after time
they tried to brake him
and took him on private busses
and at times his buddies
also went for the ride.

To run with ammunition chests
and buddy pt
and pencil and rubber
and other similar exercises
was learnt to him.

He was shouted and cursed at
and he learned to kill
in several ways
and to handle different weapons
and to live from the field.

Johnny went to Angola
and came back shell-shocked
and there were blood on his hands
and nobody wanted to know
and cared and could understand him.

[References: =>Mp's=> Military policemen. private busses => Personal
punishment and punitive exercises. Buddy pt => Exercises while running with a
soldier in your arms. Pencil and rubber =>Exercises with poles and lorry tires]

Gert Strydom

Johnny Everyman [2]

In George uncle P.W. Botha are staying in his house
and at seventeen Johnny is too young to get a car
when his call up instructions indicates Johnny to a camp

and life is really terrible,
Johnny is taught about his holy rifle
and he notices how people really loose their heads

and in Johnny's life nothing happens by accident
and he is old enough to ride a troop train.
In George uncle P.W. Botha are staying in his house

and however Johnny tries
time ticks off too slowly,
Johnny is taught about his holy rifle

must cross the camp from side to side
and if he doesn't want to he has to serve a jail sentence of three years.
When his call up instructions indicate Johnny to a camp

Johnny has to face Ovambo's, Cubans and Russians,
he is far away from his home and his people
time ticks off too slowly,

and are delivered to enemy soldiers, vicious animals and every kind of tick
while uncle Botha and his cabinet are free to make a living.
In George uncle P.W. Botha are staying in his house,

a new jet is bought for him
and Johnny and everybody with him is bomb happy
he is far away from his home and his people

out of the veins of some comrades there are blood foaming red
and of enemy rifle shots nobody is free.
When his call up instructions indicate Johnny to a camp

lies are being told to most of the country,
the army is nice and madder than nuts
and Johnny and everybody with him is bomb happy

constantly in the field and out of doors
and only a number without any respect
In George uncle P.W. Botha are staying in his house
when his call up instructions indicate Johnny to a camp,

enemy shots resounds right around him
and life is really terrible,
the army is nice and madder than nuts
and he notices how people really loose their heads.

Gert Strydom

Johnny Goes To War

At the age of eighteen
just after writing his final matriculation exam,
Johnny is called up to do military service
and when the pickup on the farm
have two flat tyres
and Johnny cannot get to the station in time,

he is fetched by three broad shouldered
military policemen who initially
want to arrest him
and shove him into a waiting military pickup van.

In the army he receives food
that gives him stomach flue
and for the first week
is almost stuck to the loo
and the mash potatoes
coming from a packet as powder,
runs into everything and has no salt in it

while the Colonel, the officers
and non-commissioned officers
have a feast in their mess,
having roasted beef and chicken
and eat as if they are truly blessed

and his hair is cut just above the scull,
he's forced into an overall,
feels and looks like a criminal
while the instructors, the officers
and commanders wear normal uniforms

and he is chased up and down,
has to run to some trees
three kilometres far and back,
to bring a leave
and every time it's not the right one

and the passing black citizens

at the railway tracks and on the road
shake their heads
and think that white men are nuts.

Day and night the instructor
slanders and curses at him,
he is put on duty
to guard armoured cars and trucks,
forced to run with poles and truck tyres
and to be just like his fellow military men,
even his girlfriend's love letters,
are read by the instructor to the rest of them

and he is given a rifle and taught to love it,
while the instructor makes sure
that he knows the difference
between his rifle and his gun

he is forced to sleep with it like a fiancé
while movement and fire tactics
is being drilled in,
while life bullets whistle past him
and a bit later he knows about hand grenades,
mortars and rockets

and then he is shipped out
by train, truck and helicopter
to the war on the border
to meet the enemy
who is waiting for him

and while on patrol with some Unitas
he faces Cuban armour, a huge battle tank
and fires a rocket propelled grenade
at point blank range straight at it

and the trooper next to him,
looses his head, it's blown off
and Johnny is scared out of his wits,
wishing to be dead
but forced into another firefight instead.

When after two years of being a soldier
he gets home
Johnny is totally nuts, bomb happy
and nobody knows him
when to his mother, his girlfriend
he is is somewhat strange
while life in the town goes on
like it did before

and Johnny becomes a farmer
and trusts in the Lord,
cares for his cattle and sheep
and not one night he can sleep right through,
without having a nightmare

and the president PW Botha, his whole cabinet,
the military officers have a great life,
ignores his mothers letters,
doesn't care about her tears,
about Johnny's state of mind

and before long
he is called up for a military camp
and when he doesn't appear
he is fetched by the military police
and sent back once more
to war, to killing and death.

Gert Strydom

Johnny Mamba

More than five years back
that white Johnny Mamba came to visit me,
that NI-spy
as a so-called friend of Francois
who wanted him to buy his innocence
(to let a docket disappear)
but luckily I did convinced Francois
to keep away from that unrighteousness
and he was found innocent
as in this country innocent people are at times charged

or was that blighter from the Bureau of State Security
or whatever they do now call themselves
(his name under which he does hide I will not mention here)
to find out who is telling me what to write in my poems,
first with a neat brand-new eight cylinder Ford car
but later with a jalopy that was falling apart

and then he wanted my mother to prepare for him
kidney and liver stew as a breakfast
(not something, which I do really like)
but she does make it very well
and every time when we were praying for the food
or are having vespers
then mister Mamba did disappear
and he was busy talking on his cellular phone

and when I told him that my poems do come to me by themselves,
that I am sure that the Lord God does give me the insight
and the words
that mister
who was talking all of the many official languages
did not want to believe me

and after his investigation and his unlawful visit
for which I did not invite him
eventually was finished
he did shake his head and say:
"man, you are actually a very nice and good person

but just be a little less strict
as at times you are very severe"

and he left with a hand full of my spanners
that he is still borrowing until eternity
as it at times do go in this country
with his broken car that ran with a huge noise
and lots of smoke
when he did leave.

It made me well aware that the government do not like
some of the poems that I do write
and especially those that I had written
with the murder of Eugene Terreblancé:

that every white man just like him is extradited
and in a way does stand in his shoes.

[Poet's note:NI is National Intelligence.]

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Gert Strydom

Jonah

We sail into a calm sea
and are far away from land
when that heavy storm unleashes
with its fury,

but below in the hold I am sleeping
and when I wake
I hear men running up and down

and then one bows over me
with a bright oil lamp in his hands
and the ship jerks with every wave

that slaps against it and others breaking over it
and a hand is stretched out to me
and I am pulled to my feet.

On deck I see thunderbolts
falling everywhere around us and the wind
howls as if it's mad

and the tiller man shouts pray man pray
and maybe your god will hear you
as we have already prayed and pleaded

and this ship will just now
break under us, into pieces
and the ship creaks, shudders

and tumbles up and down
when the captain asks for a dice
and the lot falls on me

and with the howling wind
and lightings resounding
and the sea that foams wildly
I am thrown into the water

and while I sink and think that now

I am going to drown, I pray and beg for help
and a big fish swallows me,

a really big thing
and then I think that now I am in real jeopardy,
then God takes his decision

and it chucks me out
at Nineveh
I see the light.

Gert Strydom

Jonah (2)

The storm is fierce the ship wants to sink
and of my own rebellion and sin I do think
when the sea almost swallows it, the bow wants to break,
as if everyone is going to drown with me,

the men reach with their hands to the lot
it falls on me and the moment of truth does come
where I am thrown into the depths along with my possessions
and I had thought that I had hidden myself from God

but I am praying where I think that here now my end has come
and in that dark water I still do believe in Him
where I do not have breath and the chill does eat into my soul
when that gigantic fish do suddenly astound me

does swallow me with a huge open mouth
and I do experience some more misfortune
where its stomach acid wants to devour me,
where I just wanted to die in the ocean and to my luck

after many prayers that monster spits me out at Nineveh
just there on the dry earth where water in a jet washes over me
and I do know that my Lord and God even in calamity do notice me
in such times do accompany me.

In rage I go to those hellish people to preach about redemption
and to witness how God does burn their whole city down
where after I had told them about their sins
I wait at a distance to witness their last day coming

but still the Lord God does look down upon them with great mercy
and against my will each one does repent.

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Gert Strydom

Judas

How eager he was to make Him
king of the world,
trying to force him to get involved politically.
But the Son of God remains silent

do not call on angels to come to his assistance
and in that dark night watch
torches burn bright while Judas fulfils his task,
soldiers gather around Christ

and suddenly Judas knows that He has another kingdom,
that He causes his love and sacrifice
to circle out to a newer deeper meaning,
bringing it as His greatest offering
and He looks at him, at Judas, with deep compassion
while His love goes through all things.

Gert Strydom

Judith Delivers The Israelites

(after Eugene Lee-hamilton)

Holofernes welcomed Judith in his tent
with in his eyes a kind of lustful gleam,
somewhat as if in a incoherent dream,
smiling, unarmored as if his power was spent.

Drunkenly he pushed her down and over her he bent,
a jewel on her scimitar had an ominous red gleam
as powerfully she beheaded him, made his blood stream,
heard his guards laugh in the tent adjacent

while she drew in her own breath
and in his heart there might have been a kind of love,
but away from the opening she did his body drag,
smiled after she had put him to death
and she believed her mission did come from above,
as she did put his head in a leather bag.

[References: Judith and Holofernes by Eugene Lee-hamilton. The apocryphal book of Judith.]

Gert Strydom

June Of The Heart

When winter finds its impact
and binds itself
in your depths

the blossoms are past
and the glory of summer
are long gone.

When you look into the cold
dark depths
everything there
is empty and void.

At places rain falls
in the winter
that brings new life to the cold

but these tears
do not wash away the deeper pain
and nothing ever
repairs dead love,

¶Envoi
nothing can mend
a broken bond
like it once was,

still it's sometimes rare
that love hibernates
and with spring
rise up again
with new power and glory.

[Reference: June discussed here as in the Southern hemisphere, where it's wintertime.]

Gert Strydom

Just Another Flight

At the wind blown, dusty
and cold De Brug that is full of tents
we get into lorries
and at Bloemspruit air force base
near to Bloemfontein
airborne soldiers armed and equipped
at sixteen hundred hours
get onto aircraft

and the Hercules is hardly in the air
(like it is with soldiers
most start sleeping)
as if this thirteen hundred kilometres
is just another flight
to Grootfontein air force base

and I see the sun setting
stars moving past in the sky
and the big yellow moon
while we cross the airspace
of Botswana
and the coming action
is already gnawing at me.

Gert Strydom

Just As The First Light Falls Through The Window

Just as the first light falls through the window
I am already
on my knees
when my prayers go to the God of the universe

and I can already hear the joy of the birds outside,
while I carry my people, my country and my own things
to the loving Father,
and I try to whisper like a child in His ear.

Gert Strydom

Just Before The Demoniac Hurricane

Just before the Demoniac hurricane
clouds in Durban
darkened the whole sky
and horizon.

I saw black water stretching out
with just here and there
'a light dancing
on the surface of the sea.

Like a giant water monitor
that prepares to shatter
with its tail
the sea hissed menacing
about the coming chaos
and with rain and giant waves
I knew that destiny
somewhere else is hitting people mercilessly
and are even killing some.

Gert Strydom

Just Before Twilight

I could smell the heat of the sun on the wind,
the garden looked beautiful through the window
and I did long for you
when the first star appeared in the dark sky,
car lights passed in the street,
the bright moon appeared
and for long moments I did wait
on your return home.

Gert Strydom

Just Beyond Gordon's Bay

Just beyond Gordon's Bay
where arum-lilies bloom
I had dropped her,
and look with wonder for a moment at nature
but she walked back into my arms again.

Gert Strydom

Just Beyond Gordon's Bay [2]

where arum-lilies bloom
I had dropped her,
and look with wonder for a moment at nature
but she walked back into my arms again.

Gert Strydom

Just For A Moment In Time Or When Mathematics Becomes Pure

The hour-work becomes rigid
with no second hand that ticks on,
are caught up in an eternal moment.
The bee stays confused and puzzled

at a flower that is now lifeless and stiff
that does not open its buds and does not know where to aim
but still the flower remains attractive
and does never become a fruit, jam or ketchup.

Its eternally day
with rays falling from a sky that's cobalt-blue
and on the beach the drops of the wave that is breaking shattering
remains in that thundering moment,
are caught in spray as if they cling to the pure air
as if never the wave could drench the rock.

Gert Strydom

Just For A Moment It Is There

Just for a moment it is there, the lightning bolt that falls
and the smell of something that burns and melts next to a puddle
from where the blue spark bright blinding touches and reach
and with a terrible thunder suddenly roars

with fear on the faces of my child, my wife
that just where I am standing
that lightning bolt does menacing fall.
In that moment's blinding blue light

while a terrible rainstorm pours down
and I do shake like a reed
I do know that such moments does not linger
but you can take them out of your thoughts again

just like moments of bliss and happiness
where the touching, the colour, the sound and smell does remain
and etched you can find that moment again
from where like old letters you do fold them up and keep them in a small box.

When more lightning bolts slam down my ears are tingling and ringing
while I run to where the woman and child is waiting on the porch
and in the garden its twilight, almost night
where the woman and child are both crying from emotion.

Gert Strydom

Just Give Me A Reason To Tell You (Sicilian Sonnet)

You are in my heart, spirit and soul
and now I wonder what did you and I
before we knew of love that cannot die,
that nothing does its magic control,

that it makes two broken persons whole,
carries the same intense serenity as the sky.
Together with you past our weekends do fly
where days go as if to life there isn't a goal.

You look at me and I look back at you
and between the two us there is so much
that stays unspoken and I have not a clue
and it encompasses this, that and also such
but there is perfection in the things you do:
you heal my brokenness with your touch.

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Gert Strydom

Just Like Adam And Eve

we both stand in amazement
while you are noting the small treasures
of everything that we find;
there are insects jumping here and there
and everything has got a own story and a purpose
even the screaming crickets and the birds that are singing
and it's as if we feel like Adam and Eve
where you swim naked in the cold pool
while the river washes against my feet.

Gert Strydom

Just Like Silly André I Always Wanted To Be

Just like silly André I always wanted to be,
who was bold and straight with his number three haircut
that at times was blown skew
when he knocked at our backdoor,
and we in mischief
had to lookout for the principal
when he wanted to catch us in his peach orchard
and André continually played him the fool,

he sometimes setoff matchbox-bombs
while we stayed away from class.
I read 'the phantom' and he 'the horseman in black'
and we disappeared into the hillocks and bushes
until the stars appeared,
without the chaos that today is present
we were without fear,
just like silly André I always wanted to be.

Gert Strydom

Just Like This Love Comes On Your Way

When you walk vulnerable
without a coat or umbrella
in the rain,
then you do notice a lightning bolt
that flashes blue-white blinding
down to below
and you do smell the fragrance of it
which almost like exploding gunpowder
gets caught in the back of your throat
so that you can almost taste it
and you do feel the drops that at first patter down
and then a bit later
pour down like buckets upon you
and just like this love comes on your way
as something that simply does happen.

Gert Strydom

Just Like When You Were Present (Couplets)

Just like when You were present in the column of cloud,
to come to man's rescue You are still about.

In Your omnipotent glance the universe does open before You lie,
especially in this time where humanity is at risk and do die.

In devastating and affliction You come as man's only hope
and still You do rescue man and help him to cope.

In a relationship You do Your own character reveal
and from all kinds of slavery do mankind heal,

Everything in the universe is in Your scope and grace,
also here where a virus comes to this insignificant place,

as Your loyalty and omnipotent words are still fixed today
and as eons back You are the same in what You do and say.

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Gert Strydom

Just Like You Want To

If you stay away from work
just like you want to,
there is a price to pay for it
since no man lives without duty.

If you act in life
just like you want to
and do not consider others,
there is a price to pay for it
since no man lives alone.

If you say just
what you want to
and do not consider others,
there is a price to pay for it
and nobody will be your friend.

Gert Strydom

Just Once More I Want To Stand On My Knees In Front Of You

Just once more I want to stand on my knees in front of You
and take all of the problems of my country to You
and maybe this suppression is necessary, Lord,
maybe now my people will now convert themselves
but Lord, some of my people die a cruel death
and many are jobless and in great need.

Lord, You do appoint leaders and governments,
You do determine the lifecycle of every human being
and of everything
and I beg that Your salvation will come
before I die in my years of old age.
My Lord, think of me, my nation and my country
and keep us continually in Your omnipotent hand.

Gert Strydom

Just One More Summer

At times I want to ask God
for just one more summer,
but when I think back
my winters also bloomed.

Nobody would want to pass up
the summer sunshine
at Gordon's Bay and Margate
with someone smiling at you

but I will also be happy
to have another winter
in the Drakensberg mountains
at Alpine Heath
or to stay at Little Switzerland
with soft arms around me.

Gert Strydom

Just One More Time

Just one more time
I must love again
and know that she
wants me against her

and let my eyes
cut into the soul
of somebody.

Once more I have to feel
how hot lips
burn passionate and soft
under mine,

how the touch of a hand
causes sparks like electricity
to originate between us.

Just one more time
I must feel
the hotness of the dew
fold around me
and say to somebody:

"I love you"
and really mean it

[Reference: Ek moet nog eenmaal weer bemin by W.E.G. Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Just Past The Park In Park Street

Just past the park in Park Street
there are people
that squat around a small fire
and the flames burn orange yellow
and the heat attracts a small group of people,
that does not bother about the smoke smell
that is drawn into their clothes.

Gert Strydom

Just Sometimes

Just sometimes I do write poems that do use parody or satire
that does draw comparisons and do sometimes make a mockery
when poets do touch God or me
hurting unfairly and unjustly
but normally I say things straight as they are
do jump out with words like with a Moses-staff,
do shoot like in the army from the hip,
do feel like W H Auden at the beginning of his poetry
where he believed that poems could bring change to the world
but still my people and I
are severally oppressed in South Africa
with affirmative action, which is actually, black racism,
but still commercial farmers are being tortured and murdered on farms
while everything is treaded down systematically and slowly into the ground
and this is so offensive that I am actually calling on the Lord God for help.

Gert Strydom

Just The Existence Of A Man And Woman (Italian Sonnet)

You lie bent and spooned very cosily against me,
do tightly hug the white sheet and the one duvet
where comfortable in your deepest sleep you lay
From all of the other bedding you are totally free,

you sleep drawn open, naked, with your face happy
while now and then something incoherent you do say
outside it is silent as the nearest neighbours are away
I find you and the same expression on your face I see.

On the bed the blankets and sheets in a heap is tangled
I hear the house creak as a car pass with its bright lights.
The doves in the oak tree outside do sing a love song
there is no change and our life is not new-fangled
just the existence of a man and woman in days and nights
where in this life it does feel that together we do belong.

Gert Strydom

Just The Same

(for Daleen)

Just the same my love stays in these months,
you are picture-perfect like a real angel to me,
where locked-down I see you in my thoughts,
while the most beautiful things between us stay

and I pray that you do not come in contact with the virus,
that God do keep you save in His omnipotence,
that these humble words will make you happy.
Just the same my love stays in these months,

while I entrust all of humanity to God,
I pray that every person will avoid this deadly thing,
while constantly I do cling to dreams of you,
you are picture-perfect like a real angel to me,

Everything has changed and yesterdays slip away,
where I do not know how to build a future again.
Far too slowly hours, days and months do pass,
where locked-down I see you in my thoughts,

Even-though things and times cling to me
where the world do now constantly struggle for survival,
you do are the one that I do remember over and over,
while just the most beautiful things between us stay,

and that which is for me the most important remains you,
where this terrible virus now constantly unfolds,
where too many people die or in pain suffer from it,
and where I beg God to retain you like you are,
just the same my love stays.

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Gert Strydom

Just The Two Of Us

Your smile is the summer sun
and just as hot
as it shines at high noon
and your eyes do sparkle
the open blue sky
when for moments I am lost in them
and maybe are looking much deeper than I ought to
and I see a lifetime lying in their depths
when your lips do flame of aloe
and an unsaid moment hangs between us
and in that short time that lingers
it's only the two of us in the whole universe.

Gert Strydom

Just Think (Rictameter)

Great
it would be
without pain, heartache
if love was sincere, timeless
if every yesterday could turn back
if good deeds did replace each word,
we did know each other;
such a place is:
great.

Gert Strydom

Just To You Deeply I Have Bound My Heart

Just to you deeply I have bound my heart
and then I did trust you
with personal things that can destroy my life,
and I do hold onto you
as if you are a barrier against every danger.
You are my wife,
my companion, my friend – more than this -
the one in whose hands I am placing everything.

Gert Strydom

Just Touching Your Hand (Cavatina)

Just touching your hand is overwhelming,
blazing passion
runs through us both like an electric stream,
the sheer emotion
have depths that to us are always unknown
with affection
that goes far beyond any boundaries set
blazing from the very day that we met.

Gert Strydom

Just Yesterday

Just yesterday I did shoot stones with a catapult,
saw flat stones
jumping over the dam,

the smell of Lucerne
did sweetly rise in my nose,
I did stand between rows of corn in the fields,

did play with my dinky-toy cars
and did build a dam at the stream
and as a child in innocence
I did like you a lot

but now my days are measured out
in the office,
in the city's tumult
and life does set obligations

and I wonder what does lie
in the chasing of a career
and even when the financial world
does lie at my feet

I do want it again
as in my childhood days.

Gert Strydom

Just Yesterday I Was Wealthy But Now I Am Poor

Just yesterday I was wealthy,
but now I am indigent.
I was rich in my youth,
rich in my dreams and hopes,
rich in a selfless kind of love
and rich in the women who did love me.

I was rich in my trust and faith
in my omnipotent loving God,
rich in His miracles
from my childhood days,
I was wealthy in an education
and a career that comes with it.

I have lost more than one family,
have lost children that I had raised as my own,
have lost grown-up children
whom I did love
but they were never really mine.

I was rich in my spirit
but now I am getting old,
have lost my best friends
by the wiles and whims
of the women that once did love me,
by the gossip, slander and backbiting
of employees of a worldwide religious domination
by the stench of unemployment
and the poverty that it does bring.

I was wealthy in possessions,
in the cars and things that I did own
but I was robbed in a fortnight
from a job,
from two cars and one was parked at a church
while my wife did drive her own,
from a wife,
from a family and the children that goes with it

and I was robbed from again getting a new job
by maybe some own mistakes
which I do not really know about
but mostly by the lies of one of me my references,
the lies that a religious employer gave
about me being unfit to be employed,
about me being a utter womaniser
who did even whore around,
that I could not keep my hands off the women,
about me not being able to work under authority
which in reality means that I had been rebellious
which I had been not
or which means that I did not complete or do
the orders that were given to me,
which I did do to my utmost best ability
or did my job in such a backhanded way
that my work went to ruin

but for eleven years while I did work
as a senior-accountant for that church
the auditors could not find any mistake
and did constantly give
an honest reliable good report.

Now I am poor in the trust that I do have
in the religious leaders of almost every church
as chaplains from other denominations
during my time in the military
tried to walk right over me,
in the religious leaders of that church,
in bad experiences that do range
from the very top level of it
down to the local congregation

but yet I still believe in the supreme power of God,
in His selfless love and His care,
do believe in the power of love,
that somewhere I will find someone
who really do believe in me,
who will love me for the person that I am,
who will be my trusting partner,
my girlfriend, my companion

maybe later my wife
and that somewhere such a beautiful angel does exist.

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Gert Strydom

Justice (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Lina Spies)

I wish like with Mary You could stand next to me,
could write words that do jerk a church organization to black silence,
softly press with Your comforting hand on my shoulder,
when hypocrites without regarding of my rights went further than the law allows.
I wish like with Mary You could admonish them to silence
but then my office keys were jerked from my hand,
where I was pressed into a hearing without preparation or any defence
I wish You had hit their barrister in that office with Your fierce light,
as before You nobody is without sin
and each one of their sins I I can write down right here like You did on the
ground,
in a circle around me they stood and said that they are accomplishing Your divine
will,
that I do fornicate and rebel against authority other employers are warned in
secrecy,
where I followed their commands to the letter and did not know one woman at
the office:
nobody can after a decade turn a career around and only You can bring a
judgement.

[Reference: "Vryspreek" (Acquittal) by Lina Spies.]

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Gert Strydom

Kamikaze

(after Jan Swanepoel)

Behind me the sun shines blindingly bright
and the stormy wind devours along with me.
When I pull the lever to full throttle, my thoughts are clear as crystal
and I am not blinded by glory, patriotism and the will of God.
When I bind myself to the last moment of my life
it flashes past me like a movie in a bioscope,
the reason for my existence comes together in one endeavour:
to baptise the hellish enemy in destruction
and down I dive out of the cobalt-blue
past the crackle of heavy ordnance, past canister-shot
while I keep the aeroplane aimed precisely on the target
but for a last moment like the drawings of a great artist
my life is caught in a flaming death
to which all meaning does cling.

[Reference: "Kamikaze" by Jan Swanepoel.]

Gert Strydom

Karate

Two people dressed in white
take steps around each other,
and around their middles
black bands are tied.

Like lightning bolts feet shoot out
are averted fast as thunder,
a fist is folded deadly
and held in a striking blow.

Shapes move like spectres in a dangerous dance,
eagles get wings with speed and course
and four eyes measures courage, measures speed,
measures soul, body and craft.

Gert Strydom

Kariba Lake

Really happy, at the brink
of the big Kariba lake
like the great Livingstone,
we were pioneers
viewing that stretch of water
swallowing the river.

Growing up on farmsteads
we had never seen
fresh water meeting the horizon
and falling into depths
like at the edge of the houseboat.

Your blonde hair falling in waves
catching the sun in its sparkle,
blue eyes clearer than the deep blue sky,
face glowing with anticipation,
body tanned to mahogany brown,
firm breasts swelling
with every breath you took,
you looked like a goddess
at the face of creation.

Every pace measured to perfection
in movement still the gymnast
you danced on that deck
free in the fresh breeze
enjoying the sky,
the cool water
that made your nipples
hard and showing through
the white bikini top,
but on that deck
were only you and I
and we loved each other
as if there was going
to be no tomorrow.

Fishing rods with reels,

Hooks, lines and sinkers
found their way into the water
baited with earthworms, maize
and the cook's secret dough
and we caught buckets full
of the biggest carp
that I have ever seen,
and you were in your element
and we were really alive
and that holiday
felt like being in paradise.

Maybe the gods
were not happy with our offers,
or those lazy days
that at the time
seemed almost endless,
was given as a last goodbye.

We were hardly back
still on a high
of being really happy,
when your life was taken
snapped out in a split second
and the reality
of being human
pierced me.

[Reference: To Minette, of whom there is just memories.]

Gert Strydom

Keep On Trying

(in answer to Gabeba Baderoon)

I have not been able
to learn to love failure,
and see no truth, find no fulfilment
in almost having, almost succeeding
and keep on trying
until I have success at last

and the wild black-and-white housecat
arches up its back and purrs loving
at my stroking hand reaching out
turns into the most adoring pet

and the pecking black-collard barbet
at the window
is framed clear
where it's eyeing me
becomes part of the aperture,
becomes part of my life,
becomes my early morning wakeup call.

Gert Strydom

Kemp Owyne

As a small child her mother died
that sorrowed her in her heart,
when her father married again
a wicked cruel lady

and almost like a slave
she beckoned to the woman's call
and did every task
big or small, she did them all

until one moonless night
the women send her father to bed,
and in darkness without any light
said strange things casting a spell

and carried little Isabel
to a cliff above the sea
and in glee cursed her sorrowfully
until Kemp Owyne
who lived in a far off city
come to the rescue
and with three kisses set her free
and into the waters she threw the child
laughing wickedly

and covered Isabel was
in scales from tail to fin
and tales of a hideous beast
with long hair, breathing strong
was told by the people that came across her,
even to those across the sea
and to her it was a great calamity

and immediately Kemp Owyne
sailed with his great boat,
from the far off city
to see for himself
and she begged him for a kiss
and still hideous was she

and a magic belt fit for a king
would be his
that would protect against any enemy
but warned him to only kiss
and not to touch,
the rest of her body
or the belt would bring him death
would cause his last breath

and gallant Kemp Owyne
gave her a kiss
and the belt was his

and she begged him for a kiss
and still hideous was she
and a ring fit for king
she offered him
that would protect against any enemy
but warned him to only kiss
and not to touch,
the rest of her body
or the ring would become a deadly thing

and gallant Kemp Owyne
gave her a kiss
and the ring was his

and she begged him for a kiss
and still hideous was she
and a mighty sword fit for king
she offered him
that would protect against any enemy
but warned him to only kiss
and not to touch,
the rest of her body
or an enemy sword would pierce him

and gallant Kemp Owyne
gave her a kiss
and it was sweet bliss,
full of passion was he
and the sword was his

and transformed was she
with hair short,
more beautiful than any queen
and she was free,
walked on to the beach
right out of the sea
and gallant Kemp Owyne
begged her to accompany him.

[Reference: Kemp Owyne by unknown poet.]

Gert Strydom

Kenosis

In His emptying from God to man,
where his cloak was bright white like light
He came to be tortured and cursed,
He came against sin as the balance
and His whole humanity was something reverently sincere
when He hanged sinless on Golgotha
with all of us accessory for His death
and the Roman soldiers were scared
as mere men they were caught
like followers of the dark snake.

Gert Strydom

Keulen 1948

I

In wire, poles, concrete and pieces of steel
Keulen is disfigured and almost theatrical,
torn open by bomb after bomb
and broken into pieces where people do come,
in the Second World War as a story
and hungry people wait right through the night,
where in a queue they wait for fresh bread
and the whole country must pay a price for Hitler,
Keulen is disfigured and almost theatrical

II

and happy teenagers stand and joke and laugh,
Keulen is disfigured and almost theatrical
and everything is stripped bare and bleak, stony and cold
where people do take out their last cents for survival
and all of Europe expected a better life and world
but the people are hollow-eyed and tired of life,
there are some that search in the rubble,
as if they can find something precious in the ruins,
Keulen is disfigured and almost theatrical.

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Gert Strydom

Keys To Your Heart

There's a painting of a beautiful shy girl
with a bunch of rust brown keys,
that she holds
and I know that her painter
can always unlock my hart.

When I walk into our bedroom
she watches me
with her dark eyes
and at times I wonder
if her cheeks are naturally red
and if she is blushing,
because I am looking at the pink brown hard nipple
of her perfect breast.

Her beauty stays with me
and at times I look at the fine detail
of the two violet roses,
that is fresh in her auburn hair.

No person can ever
get her away from me
as she belongs to me
and I hope and pray,
that it stays like that
with her painter and me.

[Reference: Keys to your heart. Partly nude by Mandi. Look at the picture on my web page:

Gert Strydom

Kiffa Australis

From the time that you died
I have looked for your sign
and at times it's dull and distant,
but now it's bright
as if you are near
and it's ruling the night sky.

How tough is it to know
that true love does not perish,
nor fade with time
but lives on
though you are gone.

I have endeared the things
that you loved
and have got new meaning
from life for your sake,
but every thing is hollow
while I live in another time
and place from where you are.

I do not know if your sign
is a token of what destiny holds
or just another omen
of what's going to unfold
and yet, I feel so near to you
as when you were here
and maybe in the end
every thing will be well.

[Reference: Kiffa Australis (a double star) is the brightest star in the constellation Libra.]

Gert Strydom

Killed Is What Had Been Between Us Once

Killed is what had been between us once,
when you left me suddenly,
leaving without it really making sense,
I was shattered, full of pain, without hate
you disappeared without us talking things through,
when I lost the essence of our love,
all feelings faded away with nothing remaining,
past is all memories and even sorrow,
without me being able to find anything of you,
like a star you suddenly brightly shot past.

Gert Strydom

Kimberley

The earth is torn open
in a gigantic hole
with green water below in it
and it's a big wound.
When you do walk past
it does reflect the hope of prosperity
of a generation of diggers
that did dig over a time
where almost world wide
it did lure fortune hunters
and further away there are rows of houses,
cars that drive to and thro,
people like anywhere else
that does try to lead a life.

Gert Strydom

Kimo's About Nature In The City

The thunder branches, crackling down blue-white,
on the inner eye the power
of God is lingering.

*

At the old pond each raindropp circles out wide
before a fish gleaming gold
brake through the calm surface

*

With the first cold rain shower that is falling
steam hisses in snow white clouds
reaching up to heaven

*

No croaking frog or cricket that screams shrill
can be heard above the noise
of a train and lorries.

Gert Strydom

King David

The women sing
David has defeated Goliath of Gath

and the Philistines flee
when David is king
as they are scared that he is going to obliterate them
and David and his Israelite army is formidable

as a omnipotent God is guarding him
with whom at times he deliberates
and God says to David: "you cannot build my temple
as on your hands there is blood"

and ten thousand men fall before him,
ten thousand men and many more
but David has got remorse over his ways
and stays trusting the decrees of God.

Gert Strydom

King Menelaus About Proteus

When I stood on Pharos
and locked my hand on Proteus,
he changed from man to snake to dragon
and terrible fear went through my thoughts.

I first sneaked up to him
and crawled to the place
where he was sleeping
and were nearly drowned,

when he changed into a gigantic octopus
and stuck on me with eight sucking arms
and drew me into the waves
and water went foaming over me.

When eventually he got his own form
he was finished with his illusions
and did forecast the truth and still,
nothing could make pretty Helen stay with me.

Gert Strydom

Kiss Me Softly As If In Make Believe (Novelinee)

Kiss me softly as if in make believe,
lips fluttering like a flower in spring
as if every feeling is caught in this eve
while intimate arousal is rising,
kiss me as brightly as you were today
with your body to mine rendering up,
while you are extremely happy and gay,
tears of joy running over your make-up
and passionately your breast I cup.

Gert Strydom

Kiss You In Moments I Might (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrains)

Kiss you in moments I might,
while the depth of my love is out of sight
and the dawn breaks red
shattering the dark starry night

and there is something great to first light
as the morning comes open and bright
while we both lie comfortable in bed
and the sun becomes hot and white.

Gert Strydom

Kisses, Girlfriends, Women And Me

I believed in my youth
that the kisses that I receive
were the way that destiny
holds its sway over me
and that every woman
that was interested in me
was destined by the gods

and still I chose
with whom my passions was spent
as if only one was made for me
and did not care where the others went
in rebellion to a eternal plan
and did not take every one
that I could

and now I must admit
that I am displeased
over the purity of youth
and that I did not plough the field
and sow the seed
wherever I could.

[Reference: Kiss as kiss can by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

Klara Majola

(after D. J. Opperman)

For her blind father Klara searches and do get lost
and like anything on earth it's a story of heartache,
of people finding the poor child frozen to death
with her body the next morning ash-grey.

[Reference: "Klara Majola" by D. J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

Klaus Drowsy (Free Verse Sonnet)

When the night does come dark with patches of shadow
and the tiredness so slowly are sneaking up on me,
then there is something that sneaks in at the window
a gnome with a striped bag and he is bended
and outside I hear the two big dogs growl
but they both do walk away with drooping tails
go lie down and groan at their kennel at the water-barrel
and then there is no sign of him
where the golden-yellow streetlight does alone burn outside
but there is no kind of danger
and then I wonder why so slyly he does sneak in,
my eyes do feel suddenly itchy and heave as if full of sand
when almost out of vision I notice a vague movement
but there is nothing just the streetlight gleaming.

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Gert Strydom

Klipdrift Basic Training Camp

The sun inspects
rows and rows of trees
and at night
the moon is at ease while every thing freezes

and when as a citizen you pass the gate
you become part of the machine
that hurries up and waits
and even if you have a brazen soul

some idiot with two chevrons
and crossed swords on his sleeve
makes you run to and fro
as if there is nowhere else to go

and you will not leave
this hell of a place
before he has made you run, leopard crawl
carry the pole and pee in the hole ten thousand times

and with the morning chill
a rascal with a red moustache
who drilled his son to death
and has nobody to bequeath

plays the leader of the parade
makes you stand for hours
on attention in the hot sun
while he waits for who knows what

before detonating in curses
while walking stick-straight
up and down
with a big ugly frown

and then bored to death
a fat giant appears
wearing two castles
and last night's beer on his breath

and later from the rear
the brigadier general draws near
with gyppo guts, dysentery
and commands every new recruit

and sometimes even officers
in neatly pressed military suits
at times group together
like sheep in chilly weather

and later you get your new best friend
and carry it along, even to the loo
and sometimes to the shower
and into bed

and its name is rifle
and certainly not gun
since you came with one
from birth

and in this place as things go
this was just the fun and games
before they teach you what you need to know
and running with your mate in your arms,

running with poles with swinging truck tires,
crashing up and down through rubbish holes,
running with ammunition chests while under fire
and learning to shoot to kill and not to expire,

to throw hand grenades, launch mortar bombs
and rockets and sometimes to heal the men
is only the beginning
of what others call boot camp.

[Reference: Heartbreak camp by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

Knysna-Turaco

Out of the twilight of the Tsitsikamma-bush
the call of a turaco resounds
where it sits camouflaged olive green
in the fork of a yellowwood tree
and it spreads its crimson wings open wide
before it draws a spark against the sky.

Gert Strydom

Kotze Park

While walking in the park
we followed a road
twisting past a old green battle tank,

a plaything for the kids,
parked near a row of dilapidated swings
and a missing seesaw

walked past a old windmill somewhat like castle
of which the water was missing
and when drawing close saw some rubble around it

and we walked up to the top of a small knoll
where a dam once was,
with furrows meandering down

in trenches like little rivulets
but now only a patch of empty concrete
was left there

and up in a tree a green snake
gazed down at you, down at me
where it was coiled around a branch

with little gleaming black eyes
watching intently,
but I did not say a thing just kept walking on.

Gert Strydom

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

Every day she unfolds leave on leave
drawing fascination from everyone.
Every day with greater beauty,
she spreads her life force
giving herself, giving all of her
without a leave withering or wilting.

So without scar,
without blemish she appears
and still she carries to eternity
the signs of her time
and still she can attract and charm so much
that you and I
fall under her spell.

[References: La belle dame sans merci by John Keats, La belle dame sans merci
by AG Visser and No red rose by Gert Strydom]

Gert Strydom

Ladies Bar In The Voortrekker Hotel

In the ladies bar Johnny takes one drink after another
while he is pinching the upper leg of a girl,
does notice her lipstick on her beer glass
feels her hand fine and softly taking his,

moments later do walk with her
up the stairs,
notices her slender legs her fishnet hose
but barely does notice the Nigerian

who comes out of her hotel room
and the fist of the black man
knocks him out cold
and they take every single cent out of his purse.

Gert Strydom

Lady Anne

I

Dear lady Anne
I had you once
and then had you lost
as if you were never meant to be
only mine.

II

Sweet lady Anne
how you could
make your lips glow
and bind your auburn hair
at times in a bow.

III

And, lady Anne
who else could make sparks jump
between the two of us
and knew me better
than I myself.

IV

When, lady Anne
your lips met mine
they were much sweeter than wine
and passion raged for much more
but life swept you away
sweet lady Anne.

V

Ay, lady Anne
how swift has life passed us bye
and years is spent
and time just went on its own way

and you were a fine wife
to someone else,

VI

but lady Anne
the things that lie between
the two of us
remains as long
as our lives last.

VII

Dear lady Anne
my heart still in a way
belongs to you
and at times I dream about
days long gone
and I wonder if you
remember me too?

Gert Strydom

Lady Godiva (Free Verse Sonnet)

I hear hoof beats
coming through the cobbled street,
where a beautiful lady
rides her white horse nakedly,
with her hair waving in the breeze
and although unclad her long hair is everywhere
but tailor Tom is peeping at her
through the shutters of his house in Coventry,
before sudden blindness comes over him
and I wonder what got into her husband
to demand such a extraordinary thing,
before reducing taxes
but Leofric, the Earl of Mercia, was a strange man
and his wife very brave and not shy.

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Gert Strydom

Lady Whom I Do Love (Italian Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

To you in body, soul, spirit and heart I am knit,
an inner tranquillity through your eyes does shine.
When I am away from you my heart does pine,
in sincerity I do bring the absolute truth in wit:

where a lack of income may barely make it,
only faithful labour and duty to you is mine,
where by acts and words I do my duty define
and all of this does into the way love is fit.

While to this very day I do truly love you,
of your selfless humanity I do truly know,
of our true relationship in every aspect
where love is in what you do say and do.
To me in every word and act you are true
with a kind of understanding and respect.

Gert Strydom

Lady, I Cannot Strip Your Soul From Mine (Collins Sestets)

(after Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

How will I explore the depths of love,
through its difficulties to the shore move
on the pathways that to me are not trod
if our sincere feelings is not from God?
Lady, I cannot strip your soul from mine
or live without you, this bond is divine.

Love sincerely binds together evermore,
cause two people to together explore
the days and wonders and the pains of life
both in happiness and in times of strive.
Lady, I cannot strip your soul from mine
or live without you, this bond is divine.

Between us there is ample evidence,
that our feelings are grounded and intense,
daily with each other feelings are dear
past hope, past joy and pass all kinds of fear.
Lady, I cannot strip your soul from mine
or live without you, this bond is divine.

[Reference: "Heart's hope" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

Lament

When I was but a primary school boy
I would play with a girl
as my mate
and she had freckles
close to her nose
and red hair swishing
in a neat ponytail

and I would blush
when she gave me
a innocent kiss
and my heart
would miss a beat
and we would share our sandwiches
or eat each others
and to me that girl was really neat.

When I got a little older
I was really shy, when a lovely girl
caught my eye
and I would walk her home
after class
and we would talk
about our dreams
and go together to the library
and for a swim at the town pool

and she would watch me
doing athletics and playing rugby
and I would watch her
playing netball

and sometimes I would surprise her
with a rose or two
or with some chocolates
and get some French kisses
and her blue eyes sparkled
and she was more than just cool.

When I was in metric
I met a beautiful girl at the beach
where she was tanning
and her eyes devoured me
and I was full of confidence
and electricity leaped between us
and that summer holiday
she taught me a thing or two
and that girl
was honest and lovely
and her way of living
still lingers in me.

When I was a young man
and called up to the army
and went to war
having to kill a man or two
in order to survive and stay alive
I grew up pretty quickly,
knew about integrity
and staying true

and when my girlfriend left me
to immigrate overseas
my world was falling apart
when I met a beautiful captain
right there in a military camp
while preparing for war
and she seduced me
and more than that
we made love
as if there's no tomorrow
and shared some secrets
with each other
before I had to go
and she disappeared
while still being dear to me.

At university I met the girl
of my dreams
and it was magic
when she liked me too

and falling really in love
was great
with the person
destined for you

and I wrote her some poems,
gave her some cards, chocolates
and expensive perfume

and every look, every touch, every kiss,
every embrace was the best
that I have ever had

and we got engaged and married
and at my first job
a colleague at work
became my so called friend
and he had to have her
at any cost
and then I lost her
and went to stay
a thousand miles away.

Working I had a choice of girls
but yearned for the one that I had lost
for a period of years long,
but another gorgeous girl found me
and she was my sunshine, my rain,
my breakfast, my lunch and dinner

and we lived a thousand years
in the short time that we had
and if my life was destined
only to be happy with a girl like that
it had been well worth the living
as she was dedicated to me
and like no other would ever be,

but destiny rolled its dice
and I lost her to death
very suddenly

and met a girl with two boys
just older than toddlers
and for years tried to built
a life with them,
but she cheated me
time and again
and left me
for another lover
and tried to ruin me
with the leaving.

Then I met a girl
who was a painter, musician
and poet
and I tried to connect
with her soul
and what was between us
went much deeper
than mere looks,
and when we broke up
I couldn't understand why
and I still wonder
how she now feels about me?

¶Envoi

And now all those days have gone bye
and I would be happy
to have a Sunday wife
who knows how to be true
even if we have to pray night and day
and even if angels
would come from her womb
as long as she really loves me.

[Reference: Lament by Dylan Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Lament On A Sweetheart

When I was young and sure of myself
and almost still a greenhorn,
you were already meant for me

and when I came back from the thundering of war
I marvelled about my chances with you,
and got you
as the girlfriend of girlfriends.

.
That time was filled
with almost a life time's happiness
that was pressed into moments
and your glittering eyes,
the softness of your lips
left me breathless

and with a new beat
my heart was knocking
so if you had become
a part of my being
and could read every thought of mine
and comprehended me better
than I myself.

Through university classes I covertly watched you
and my thoughts were only with you
as if nothing else really mattered
and your enchantment
really hit me to the core.

It was if your smile
could even drive away
the grey of a Cape winter
and I started to write verses to you,
gave flowers and gifts
and when you adored me
it was far past special

and utterly naive I believed

that nothing could come between us,
as if love has an own fortress
as an entrenchment.

Now it's years later
and sometimes when I sleep
I dream that you
are embracing me

and I know
that some flames never die
and I wonder when
I will have a chance with you again

and I am trying to shatter destiny,
to build a life with shoelaces
and like a giant
to stand against life's thundering blows.

Gert Strydom

Lamia

If science can make
all magic things just trivial
and give explanations to all,
cause the rainbow
to unfold as a prism,
what are the images then
still lying in my unconscious soul?

Does doom and destiny
write their own lines
and are there still mysteries
lying somewhere
at the edges of reason,
lurking and waiting
for the right time, moment
and circumstance to appear

to step from shade
into the clear
and could the "tender-personed Lamia"
again be here?

*

One night I have a dream
that seems real
and it is during
the middle ages

of a well built man
swimming a strong river
sometimes trice a day

to get to his flock
on the other side
where fields of grass
is in a great glen.

He swims back
to chop some wood
in a forest
and his muscles bulge
while he swings the axe.

Sometimes while swimming
he glimpses a long shadow following,
but always at the edge
of his perception
as if something is there
but not daring
to come too near.

Slowly but surely
a house and barn
is taking shape
while his hammer
sounds deep into the night
and he works on
in the moonlight.

Sometimes when at night
he swims the surging river
there is movement
in the transparency
that makes the water
swirl and pull

and he imagines
a snake, crocodile
or water monitor
moving behind him.

He bites on a long knife
to have it ready
if need would be,
but he never is afraid

and one night
something is uncoiling,

as black as his cat
with the same green loving eyes
and spots of dark blue,
crimson, green and violet
and what it is
he cannot grasp.

Something between a snake
and water monitor
studies him for some time
and when he reaches
for the hilt of the knife

a sweet female voice
is like a song
in his head
with eyes expanding
as if reaching in.

A tail brushes against him
almost tenderly
and he comprehends each word
that she is saying
although it is somewhat sibilant.

"I have been watching you
for some time
and know that you
are a good man,
and to me you are
very attractive."

When he answers
the knife falls from his mouth
gleaming as it goes
to the riverbed.

"You are beautiful
what ever you are,
but surely dangerous."

He is tired

and swims to the bank
where he takes a grip
on a fallen tree
and the creature
follows him.

He can understand her better
through the hissing:
"I mean you no harm,
but you must trust me.
I have come to love you."

"But we hardly know
each other and you're different..."

But she is so close
that he have lost his words
and he doesn't feel danger
and has compassion for her.

"Kiss me, " the creature sighs
and thinking that it could hardly
be more dangerous
than being right next to her,

he closes his eyes
and kisses her
on the beak
between the pearly
humanlike teeth.

The storm that was brewing
suddenly brakes loose
and he hears a great lighting bolt
striking nearby.

When he open his eyes
he is looking
at the most beautiful
naked young woman
with long black hair
hanging to her middle

and she has a radiant smile.

[Reference: Lamia by John Keats.]

Gert Strydom

Landmine

When the Buffel troop-carrier detonates a landmine
we see dark dots moving in the bush
and I break loose with the light machinegun
that the empty burning-hot caps hit against me

and as long as there is movement
on the other side of the dry riverbed
our fire is drawn
until everything is motionless.

With the smell of gunpowder hanging around us,
a skimpy goat-herdsman
crawls out from behind a giant ant hill
and cries about his dead goats.

Gert Strydom

Landmine [2]

On a afternoon
while she travelled on the farm-road to home,
she was in a hurry to get to the homestead,
to tell her husband that she is pregnant
and there is a hell of explosion.

Scrap-iron does shoot up flaming,
swallows the pickup-truck
and she is torn to pieces,
is later found by her husband,
and recorded by the Police

as another terrorist attack,
with a military patrol
being dropped in hot pursuit by a helicopter
that does with trackers scout the farm
and the murderers are gone

has fled through the Limpopo River
to a neighbouring country
to hide until another attack
and today years later
their commanders sit as a president
and ministers in parliament.

Gert Strydom

Langebaan

There was a day that the lagoon was blue
had a particular lovely hue
far across yellow-brown sandbars
while people were driving past in their cars

and it was shadowed dark
the sea where the sun shimmered had a kind of spark
while you smiled at me,
it was the kind of day which all days should be

with a strange kind of energy and some tranquillity
and we were in love, just another couple at the sea.

Gert Strydom

Language

Language is a brutal thing
when another tongue you do not really comprehend
and then all the time you have in it's learning spent
is simply insufficient
and your words do come out
in a different way than they should
and do draw laughter
from any person that do them hear
that makes it clear
that you have said something different
than what you did intent

but when you love someone
then in love
in the language of tongues meeting
love has its own language that does transcend
any earthly tongue
and do to the true meanings of things go
on its own accord
when hands do touch,
in the touching of tongues,
in each sweet kiss,
in the body's bliss
and I wish that everything
could be just as simple

but all separate from this
when anger comes to a situation
then I can speak and understand
dozens of languages
and not just the two that I do know best
being Afrikaans and English
or the two others that if spoken slowly
or written down I can understand
namely Flemish and Dutch
or the one that I can decipher the meanings of
when they are written down
being German

and of some languages
we do just have the outer shell
of the things out of what it does consist
and we do only know how to greet people,
to understand when they do greet us
and we can say some basic things
like hello and goodbye
or wishing people on their travels home well
or say that it is time to work
and this kind of things
I can do in Zulu, Xhosa and Sotho

but somehow and this is very bad,
curses and the meanings of them
in many different languages
do in angry situations
come alive in the mind
and on the tongue.

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Gert Strydom

Last

When the light dims from my eyes
there will be no fatherly hand
to hold on to mine

to feel the last pulse
of life beating
while the darkness claims me

and when I disappear from life,
glide into death
You are the Father
that I find on the other side.

[References: "Erato" by Anyte. Laaste (Last) by Riana Scheepers.]

Gert Strydom

Last (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

"I do not want to loose you, my love, "
comes from the hurting memory
how a last time I did look at you
and I begged please
but you did disappear out of my life,
as if destiny does swallow a person just like that,
darkness brings raw moments of pain
and I cannot express it properly in words
and now I do want to embrace you tightly,
do not want you to go out of my eyesight
as our love is something that still does exist,
something that brings feelings to you and me
where my poems brought you back
and constantly I do pray you into my days.

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Gert Strydom

Last Night

Last night your skin
was warm and soft
and I could feel your breath
against my cheek.

The winter wind
was rattling the roof
and sand was blown against the window
like a burst of rain.

Somewhere a neighbours' dog howled
at the moon and I could hear,
the big old avo tree
whipping on the roof.

Every now and then
a avo fell with a bang
against the roof,
but you slept on.

The big bed was hot
and fire flamed in my blood
and as you twisted and turned
to sleep on,
your scent filled my head.

Gert Strydom

Last Night (2)

(for Daleen)

Last night my verses to you I did express,
with stars twinkling in the sky
while you tried to rest
and it was I
trying to tell you about my love
and even though I felt feeble at the time
there was a kind of blessing
as you caught every word, remembered every rhyme
called my name with intense feeling.

Gert Strydom

Last Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

Last night I looked at you intimate and honestly
and in the sober glance of today,
it's still with the same sweet enchantment
and there is something past this scope that I do remember.
Maybe I cannot trust holy things to words,
I am scared that the images between the lines will fade,
as that which is between us do enrich my days and my life
and love is much more than that which a person can hold.
Today life does run with us to into different ways,
while we both yearn to meet again,
while our bodies have got their own kind of soft lingering memory
and where we do live separate from each other
I cannot disguise the feelings of my heart
and in all of these things you are very special to me.

Gert Strydom

Last Night (Rondeau Redoublé)

Last night I saw a big white moon
rising slowly, almost with dignity
and the first star said that it would be dark soon
while you kissed me

and together we lay spoon to spoon
melted into each other softly and tenderly,
in loving activity without any modesty.
Last night I saw a big white moon

somewhat magical like in a fairy cartoon
and outside the wind blowing was the only activity
but you had awoken my harpoon
rising slowly, almost with dignity

while you were smiling in glee
and for a moment I felt like a king or a tycoon
while in joy and passion we were free
and the first star said that it would be dark soon

before everything fell swoon,
we were feeling almost unconscious and you were lovely
when I jokingly pulled my face like that of a buffoon,
while you kissed me

and later I heard you croon
a sentimental song while displaying your breasts carelessly
and I wished to be in bed with you until noon
loving you as sweetly and remembering permanently:
last night.

Gert Strydom

Last Night [2]

When I went to bed
with her last night
and I heard the church bell
tolling off the time in the distance,
time lapsed for moments between us.

Her lips and twisting tongue,
was hot and wet
and her lithe body was soft.

We couldn't wait a moment longer
and for some time,
we were in a world of our own.

With our own rhythm
our bodies melted into each others
and I could hear her heartbeat
and cries and together,
we loss sense of reality
and went to a better place.

While we were in each others arms
later on,
I knew that I could not love
any other woman more.

Gert Strydom

Last Night [3]

Last night I dreamed that my hand was in yours
and that you were clinging tightly to it,
that you have forsaken the turning-away-roads
and my nose and thoughts was full of you

but now its today
and I see the glistening shine of your laughter
while I wonder what this day is holding
and new moments full of hope and adventure is waiting.

Gert Strydom

Last Night I Could Have Sworn That I Heard Your Name

in a song that the wind was singing
as past me in a cool breeze it came
and some of the branches of the trees were swinging

and it was as if it was softly whispering at times
of happy things, of other different climes
about the places where it had gone
and the wind blew on and on
and kept on blowing right into the new morn

Gert Strydom

Last Night I Dreamt Of You

Last night I dreamt of you,
waking up in sorrow
from a fitful sleep
while you slowly faded away
like the night
with the beginning of the new day

and there was rain pattering down,
with a fresh smell
almost like that of making love
with clouds milling in the sky above
and every now and then
a thunder cracked down
blazing with intense light

and I thought that your smell,
the warmth of your body
was still lingering,
was still here with me in the room
and I walked into the cold wet night
to bathe my face and body,
to get my head clear
and still you felt near.

Gert Strydom

Last Night I Saw The Spine Of The Night (Octave)

Last night I saw the spine of the night,
I saw stars glow, glitter and jump far away
I did wonder about a God, who creates pure light,
who comes with deliverance to those who stray.
Still the earth revolves on a set orbit
and He is preparing to come back again
while to utter sin the world falls bit by bit
and the day of His judgement does remain.

Gert Strydom

Last Night When Our Hands Touched

when your eyes were sparkling brown,
and I was far past in love with you,
was drunk from love
when we had forgotten every other thing
and I was young
like a child that sometimes fall in love
and you uncovered your soul far past nakedness.

Gert Strydom

Last Night You Had Heard My Screams (Sonnetina Tre)

while my body did shiver and bent
all night long before the darkness was spent
and you did wonder about my horrid dreams
while in sleep I had not been alone
and over my face the dim moon did shone
and shivers run up and down my spine on the winter eve
while my heart did beat at a frightened pace
and more sinister did my dreams weave
while there was real worry all over your face.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon

Late afternoon
the wind trembles through the branches,
the twittering of birds die down
every insect, beetle,
worm, bee and snail
suddenly finds a resting place
before the night comes.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon [2]

It's surprising how bright
the colours of the sunset is tonight,
like a painting
with magic colours against the wall
and it's the time just before twilight
when the light
does kiss the earth the last time
before it does disappear before the darkness
and the moon and evening star are already out.

In my heart there is pain,
the pain of old lost love
that is still searching for meaning
and in the studio you do probably sit
before a canvas
and I do wonder what you are painting
when the day does come to an end.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon [3]

It's surprising how bright
the colours of the sunset is tonight,
like a painting
with magic colours against the wall
and it's the time just before twilight
when the light
does kiss the earth the last time
before it does disappear before the darkness
and the moon and evening star are already out.

In my heart there is pain,
the pain of old lost love
that is still searching for meaning
and in the studio you do probably sit
before a canvas
and I do wonder what you are painting
when the day does come to an end.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon [4}

It's surprising how bright
the colours of the sunset is tonight,
like a painting
with magic colours against the wall
and it's the time just before twilight
when the light
does kiss the earth the last time
before it does disappear before the darkness
and the moon and evening star are already out.

In my heart there is pain,
the pain of old lost love
that is still searching for meaning
and in the studio you do probably sit
before a canvas
and I do wonder what you are painting
when the day does come to an end.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon As You Walk

Late afternoon as you walk
on the meandering footpaths
on the slopes above Cape Town
the smell of pine needles

of blooming proteas lingers on the air,
while beneath you the city stretches out
with its suburbs becoming grey

in the distance, with the sea ever blue
touching the horizon
while the dusk eventually falls.

Gert Strydom

Late Afternoon When The Sun Hangs At Five O'clock

Late afternoon when the sun hangs at five o'clock
she stands on the beach
waves a kissing greeting
before the wind with her hair
does cover her whole face,
and then just as suddenly does quite down
and there is magic
which that moment does bring.

When gambolling she runs away,
while the water are just touching her feet,
and I wonder
if she will eternally make me as happy as this?

Gert Strydom

Late August

There's a chilly wind blowing this morning,
the black-collard barbet
flies into my study's window
as if it can go right through it,
the big brown Labrador jumps
with locking jaws
trying to snatch it from the air,
there's menace creeping into the morning,
menace coming from somewhere,

both dogs jump and try
to snap the postman's hand in two,
while he is putting letters
in the mailbox,

last night the police
made a ruckus at two in the morning,
at the neighbours across the street,
hooted the neighbourhood awake
and as a mistake
was at the wrong address

and when I got back to bed,
I thought that I had heard something
and in t-shirt and shorts
went to investigate
with a shotgun in my hands
but it was only the wind
rustling through the trees,
blowing as it did
from the beginning of time.

This morning felt like Monday,
as if going to work
after a weekend
brought the responsibilities of living
back to me again.

Late Autumn

The yellow veldt, the skeleton chestnut trees
specs of orange-red aloes in the kopje
are near to the old white house
and in the late afternoon shades draw long lines

while I walk up to the house on the red-brown dirt road
and most of the flowers in the garden are stripped bare
but a few irises are flowering yellow,
purple and cream brown

and the sky is dull blue and the early evening cold
is already on the wind that is rustling everything
and after years I open the garden gate
are coming back to my childhood home

stripped from illusions,
and I am bare from the childhood innocence
but full of hope
and looking through a mature man's eyes.

Gert Strydom

Late In The Afternoon

Late in the afternoon the horizon swallowed the sun,
the flowers folded and closed there heads,
the evening star beckoned the moon
and I did think of you
and later I heard the gate open
and my heart went wild
as you did come home.

Gert Strydom

Late Summer (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Lucebert)

In the veldt with you I did become vulnerable
when you made all of my protection insignificant,
when you did draw me down on the soft grass next to you,
where in the shadow of a big thorny acacia tree
we got the sweet and bitter fragrance of grass and wood,
in a moment the cobalt-blue sky was far above us,
when everything became eternal in a moment
like a photograph that gleams en curls in the waves of the sea
in which the two of us are caught as mere humans
where no stone or plant or tree does watch us
where against me you lie so softly,
your eyes shine bright intense with the cosmos in them,
while we do not say a word and are just with each other
and you do smile and later do put on your clothes.

[Reference: "Nazomer" (Late summer) by Lucebert.]

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Gert Strydom

Later You Just Hear The Snoring Of The Innocent Ones

Rifle boys with tanned bodies
in the dark evenings
lie on narrow beds,
counting the days off
to clearing out time,
and some already have the few day feeling

and some are smoking
others are writing and reading letters,
some do read from the Holy Book
or are cleaning rifles, dismantling every thing

and there are far away looks in their eyes
as if searching past the ceiling
trying to talk to destiny which orders things
and takes and gives life

and then little by little sleep sneaks in
while later you just hear the snoring
of the innocent ones, boys over night
turned into fighting and killing men.

Gert Strydom

Latter Day South Africa

The face of the old black woman
is plastered with mud,
a red cloth is wrapped around her head
and her feet treads burdensome
where she walks bare foot
on rocky roads
and every now and then
steps into a thorn
and almost fall over
while she removes it clumsily.

The child that she carries piggy-back
isn't black,
nor white,
or yellow,
or eastern coloured,
he's something of everyone
and is belted to her back
with a ragged cloth
and it's difficult
since he's restless
and the child is thirsty
and the hunger
burns from his stomach
to his throat.

In the distance
she hears people
gathering around a bon fire
drinking beer and dancing,
but she's locked out
and the road is long
and she hobbles on
while the twilight is falling.

Gert Strydom

Lazarus Arising (Sicilian Septet)

I have been told by a young mortician
about a very strange odd incident
where declared dead by a physician
as a corpse to the mortuary went.
An old to death drugged local musician
unzipped the body-bag, did anger vent,
his language was not anything Christian.

Gert Strydom

Le Morte D'Arthur (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Sir Thomas Mallory)

With his breastplate shattered he limped
among the dead,
all of his heroic friends were now gone,
around him spread
lay good, great, honest men, the very best,
and up ahead
swords clattered, the sun shone as always,
but he only saw its fading dying rays,

yet to some men King Arthur is not dead
and rise he will
by the great power of Jesus they say,
Arthur lives still
in their hearts as the once and future king
to from great ill
rid the world, I will only further say
that Arthur was a great man in his day.

[References: 'Le morte d'Arthur' by Sir Thomas Mallory. 'But many men say there is written upon his tomb this verse: HIC IACET ARTHURUS, REX QUONDUM REXQUE FUTURUS 'Here lies Arthur, the once and future king.'" From 'Le morte d'Arthur' by Sir Thomas Mallory.]

Gert Strydom

Leatitia Perfecta

I met you at a restaurant,
you that create magic with words
Leatitia the poet,

still I knew you from the internet
where you paintings dazzle
Leatitia the painter,

maybe also almost
won your heart
with the few words that I write daily.

I heard your voice then
for the first time
and knew that you are able
to sing beautiful songs

while my heart was thrilled
and wondered what the gift was
that you were brining me.

The piano played in the background
and your slender fingers
on the table played along.

Still it was already defined
as things go
that you were beautiful and gorgeous to me,
Leatitia perfecta.

[Reference: Leatitia by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Leave And Let It Be

I have experienced life
in varying times
was forced to war,
was rich and poor,
studied at university,
learned from live
and much more from great men.

Whatever life brings and the oppression
done by government, or my fellow man:

take every thing
even my job, my cars
the way that I earn a living
but leave and let it be: my life,
my shirt, pants, shoes and wife.

Gert Strydom

Leave The Holy Parables And Answer My Question

If could ask God
why I am facing adversity the whole time,
at times have to bare a cross
while my oppressors
are triumphant as if
they are not accountable
and are totally sinless,

I would not be able to lay the cause
against the heaven
and it troubles me
why God is allowing it
or has it been decided in His decisions of fate?

Still by myself
I find no answers
and this is no reproach
and maybe I will wonder
until death silences my mouth
and here I am not challenging God
but only want to understand my life and existence better.

[Reference: Laß die heil'gen Parabolen by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

Leaves

I had never thought
that I would meet artisans
living on the street.

I found a welder, mechanic,
a jack-of-all-trades
and master of many and some
and even an electrician or two

and with my degree
couldn't get a contract
and neither could they

and destiny shatters lives,
letting people blow around
like autumn leaves
being discarded by society

as work had been reserved,
not by merit, qualifications or experience
but by the colour of skin
and affirmative action
they call the demon
(the new in thing)
that has been released

and I wonder if God
hears the sad songs
flowing from guitars,
falling like leaves
in tragic melodies
and if ever a new tomorrow
would rise for the oppressed
and if ever they will be blessed?

[Reference: Leaves by Lisa Zaran.]

Gert Strydom

Legacy

(for mother)

I did not know my dad too well,
as I was only three
when from my life he was gone,
and did die from cancer
but some of his tastes to food I perpetuate,

his way of speech,
the expression in his eyes,
looking to the depth of things
and maybe his integrity

his trust in the almighty God,
but from my mother
I have learned
to love selflessly

even if at times
she hates that trait in me.

Gert Strydom

Leopard

Leopard, high up in a tree
your body and burning eyes I do barely see
and your camouflage makes you melt in
where you dwell untamed and free

and I wonder at the Creator's great art
that constructed you apart
from the lion, lamb and gazelle
and your presence drives fear into the heart
of every mortal man
as with fangs and claws you can
rip and tear and kill
while you live by your own deadly skill

and I wonder how your hunting came to be
out of the same love that created me

or did your fearsome killing begin
as one of the wages of sin
when by choice man did enter in
a world of suffering and pain
in which the effects of our own iniquity do remain?

Gert Strydom

Let Autumn Draw Its First Lines

when the summer sun shines down
from the unstained blue
and its hot rays shine in glory
without any clouds building up,
when the beauty of nature stretches
as if the summer will never pass
and let the autumn then draw its first lines.

Gert Strydom

Let I Get My Thoughts

Let I get my thoughts, my verses from You
who reigns supreme over everything
and in it let You bless me as You constantly do,
to make everyone of my words sing

and let others boast
of finding supreme power
from a familiar ghost
in which they flower

and let them in that spirit dwell
while You dwell with me in tranquillity
and let them be dignified and of its powers tell
while You guide me in every activity:

and although their works play out as a lucky clover
in my writing Your blessings resound over and over.

[Reference: Sonnet 86 "Was it the proud full sail of his great verse" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Let Me

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Let me God, know of Your genuine love for me,
(You do not forget my humble and sagacious life) ,
do not hide Your benevolence in these hard days
and when the terrible darkness around me suddenly comes
then do measure me to Your own righteousness and mercy
and let my words constantly sing about your character,
let me bring Your love, mercy and kindness to others,
even in my sinful nature let me be Your own child
when You do not forget my humble and sagacious life.

[Reference: "Laat my" (Let me)by C. M. van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Let Me Adore You For Much More

Although you are sweet, gentle
and really beautiful
let me adore you for much more
than all of this,
even for more than the sweet bliss
in every passionate kiss.

Let me love you,
for the sake of love, for the principles
of that which goes much further
than material things
past senses and sensibilities,
let me then adore with much, much more
depth and from the heart of God
find the things to bless.

Gert Strydom

Let Me Feel Your Breath Against My Face

(For Daleen)

Let me feel your breath against my face
when right against me you suddenly do awake,
and also do wake me up
with kisses meant for the one that you do love,
when your body does lie cosy against mine
and you do make all of my thoughts yours.
With every kiss, every time that we touch
we do get a deeper meaning
and we do find bliss and peace in each other
where every suspicion and grudge is paltry
and all of our actions and words come to meaning,
in love do bind us unbreakable to each other,
while we do forget every bitter thing
and do know about the magic power of love.

Gert Strydom

Let Me Feel Your Breath Against My Face (Sonnet)

Let me feel your breath against my face
when against me you do suddenly awake
do me out of the very depths of sleep take,
and with kisses you do make my heart race.

When your warm body lies so close to me,
when my thoughts you do your very own make
as we with each kiss in something special partake
do find something deeper, as it is meant to be,

when with each other we are in blissful rest,
where each rancour and delusion is insignificant
and everything comes to something significant
where in the love that binds us we act to the best,

then we then do everything bitter forget
and do only the magic of sincere love get.

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Gert Strydom

Let Me Long For A World

Let me long for a world
where roses, carnations
and every pretty flower
really are meant to matter

where the look in the eye
at times carry more
than any words can say,

where people really understand
and love goes much deeper
than circumstances demands.

Let me find someone
who really knows how to love selfless,
past all comprehension and rationality
and to her forever be true.

Gert Strydom

Let Me Love You In All The Things I Do (Collins Sestets)

Let my feelings be for the sake of love,
let nothing else my heart tenderly move
not even the clear simple understanding
of like mindedness that is undemanding,
let me love you in all the things I do,
with a kind of sincerity that is true.

Your loving comes so sublimely free
and more than myself you are to me,
making me yearn to love you even more
to perfection only you to adore,
let me love you in all the things I do,
with a kind of sincerity that is true.

Let me every day do all that I can
to be truly you companion, your man
to bring only some joy to your dear heart,
never for a single moment to part,
let me love you in all the things I do,
with a kind of sincerity that is true.

Gert Strydom

Let Me Tell About Wouter

Let me tell about Wouter
standing against all wars
and who didn't want to go
to a military camp.

He then got
three years jail sentence
and with a criminal record
he went
to the detention barracks
where the colonel said:

"Wouter you are a naughty boy
and I will get you right quickly,
if you want to stay alive in this camp."

First he had to scrub lavatories
in pace
with the marching stick
hitting holes out of his hands
and suddenly stand straight to attention
when his task was completed.

He was grabbed and forced naked
into a cold shower
where they wanted to scrub him clean
of his faith
with scrubbing wire and a mop
and he didn't
wrestle or kick
and didn't stop believing
in his faith.

On command he was taken
to a instructor
that had to teach him
things about a gun.

"I know that you have no faith, "

he said to him
because he believed differently
and when he didn't want
to touch the gun
the corporal opened
his own pants
and pulled his own dingeling out
and pressed both in his face.

At a time he came under the boot
and still it didn't strip him
of what he believed
and after three years of hell
he was free
in his country
where people really believed in God.

Still I wonder in my soul
and when I faced the enemy
with guns and tanks
who was the most brave
between him and me
and still I cannot get
Wouter out of my thoughts

and I wonder what God
thinks in his heaven
about a army
that gives pain
to people that are different
and when I get on my knees
I pray for both Wouter and me

[Reference: i sing of Olaf glad and big by e.e. Cummings.]

Gert Strydom

Let Me Tell You Of My Love (Virelay)

Let me tell you of my love day by day,
and little things like a dove
that life at times brings onto my way,
see as an action from above,

even if this life does me around shove
let me still truly love you
while into each other we fit as a glove,
let my eyes sparkle blue

while yours have a strange kind of hue,
with care in every remark,
let only kindness in everything be due
with passion as the spark.

When we do in greater things embark
let us then find an alcove,
a place of love, solace against the dark
living out our own love.

Gert Strydom

Let Not Your Ire On My Complexion Fall (Cavatina Sequence)

There are men with some charm, a inner hunger;
a kind of grace
is caught in the very way that they woo,
on every face
they do passion intimately feign,
but in disgrace
there is no kind of true love in their hearts,
their way is strewn with only broken parts.

Let not your ire on my complexion fall,
even mock me;
as I still cherish that which was great and good,
while you are free
from what we both had in sincerity
held as holy;
now that you call someone else as your own,
to me have cruel and most uncaring grown.

[Reference: 'Blame Not My Cheeks' by Thomas Campion.]

Gert Strydom

Let Others Drink

Let others drink beer, wine, brandy
and whiskey
and I will pour a glass of cool drink
and disappear when they are drunk.

Hangovers and retching
and cars that collide
and thoughtlessness,
may later come to regrets.

White, yellow, crimson and any colour wine
can perhaps let reality fade away
for a time,
but being sober, in control
is much better than any pain.

Gert Strydom

Let Our Love Be As It Ought (Villanelle)

Let our love be as it ought
while you are true to me,
with something special in every thought

as something valuable that we have brought
that goes much further than just charity.
Let our love be as it ought

simple, sincere as if its joy cannot be bought
as it is present with us daily
with something special in every thought

that comes by itself out of the blue unsought
as a gift from the divine without iniquity.
Let our love be as it ought

like a pool of cool water in the drought,
that more than quenches and sets the spirit free
with something special in every thought

as if we found something we have constantly sought,
in the way that by God it is set to be.
Let our love be as it ought
with something special in every thought.

Gert Strydom

Let South Africa Be Our Country Again

Let South Africa be our country again
and South Africans from all over the world
stream back,
to dream here like before,
to hope, to wish
of a place
not bordered of by burglar bars
where people can stay free
before God and man.

Let merit and respect be present
and people receive what they deserve
rather than expecting affirmative-action
and mercy from others
and the whole world
and like in the past
let us successfully do our own thing.

Let opportunities really exist
to be free in work,
living and association,
to study in your own language,
let us pull the teeth of the dogs
that rips others apart to rule,
of might that shatters the weak.

Let the animal inside us die
and we really become people
that does not burn each other,
crush and vituperate
and in groups jeering urge the killing on
and do not rob, but work
for the life that we have got.

Let we break the chains
of people ruling
with profit, might
and work people into the ground
and misuse others to gain prosperity.

I am the white Afrikaner that had to fight in war
and now are unemployed and hungry,
while I have a university degree.

I am the black man that without education
have to dig holes and man garbage trucks
and conclude my life in a shack.

I am the coloured that always stand between all groups
and do not know where I belong
and rather gather in gangs.

I am the South African that life
drives down the whole time
and have to pray all the time,
to know how to carry on.

¶Envoi

Still, I am the one that dream
of a country free from crime,
where everybody have equal opportunity,
where rape, corruption
and lawlessness ends
and where South Africa is our country again.

Gert Strydom

Let The Cleverest People Theorize Scientifically

Let the cleverest people
theorize scientifically
and try and proof
that the world
and the great universe,
originated cataclysmic
and out of nothing
developed into perfect systems
that is in harmony.

Still stars are constantly burning out
and natural things
are bound by time
and by its own accord,
every thing runs down
as thermodynamics' second law
teaches clearly.

Let clever and great people
further try and teach
that the Almighty God
is only a myth
and that there's no God,
or Satan
and that man
is his own supreme ruler
and that everything
only is focused around and about
the here and now.

Let them sprout from a homogenous cell,
fish, ape, gorilla and barbarian
and blinded by their own madness keep on reasoning,
I come out of the hand of an Almighty God
and know that my Father
holds His hand over every thing
and from eternity
He has selected me
to be His child.

Even wise men with time
comes to a fall
and the great God
of the universe,
stays past eternity
and His existence and love
can pass all things, time,
places and situations.

Gert Strydom

Let The Scoundrels Return

Like a lightning bolt
coming out of a blue sky
there are bombs falling
in a field where maize
stand green and ripe in neat rows
and craters are left and the field is on fire.

A few more bombs fall exploding
between cattle grazing in the field
and some are blasted to pieces
and the cows in terror forget about their milk.

The farmer is woken from his afternoon nap
and grabs his hunting rifle.
"We hit the wrong target"
the flight leader confirms
and the farmer waits with a gun in hand
on the planes to return and says:
"let the scoundress return."

Gert Strydom

Let Us Dream About A New World

Halt the job and racial preservation,
forcing people in and out of a nation
into a unknown culture
and let the distinction by made by merit

or once again the later population
will inherit a world full of discrimination
and later on another war

and let us pack away uniforms, old memories,
party political slogans and songs
and forget all the past wrongs
and dream of a new world
of a country fair and free
a country with jobs
and opportunities for everybody.

[Reference: Let the children decide by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

Let Us First Care About Our Own People (In Answer To Don Mattera)

Let us first care about our own people,
to their preservation,
to jobs and education to them
while we give a future to our children.

Let us close the borders
to the millions of illegal aliens
and those that are here,
send them all back home

and give a chance to make a living,
for all of the people of this country
by merit that they can live in dignity
and can be free from oppression

or never will we burn old uniforms,
or forget grievances as new ones
are continually being formed,
or never will we be able
to turn our spent dreams
into something new and real,
or be better than our old traditions
be able to still the tumours in many hearts
or give our children any kind of future.

Gert Strydom

Let Us Love Nobly (Stave Stanza Sestets)

May we learn to love as deep and as true,
that not a thing can remove me from you
that all our words and actions only prove
that we both do truly know how to love,
when in old age we are, our days do pass,
in our love, everything might be as it was.

May we love each other with no decay,
that each tomorrow be better than today
and when all of life has run its own course,
in death there will be sleep and no divorce
and when we stand before our God at last
in our love, everything might be as it was.

Gert Strydom

Let Us Meet Face To Face

Let us meet face to face
and let me experience
your love and grace
and let we cry and laugh

be utterly happy and sad
and fill every moment
with caring, sharing tender love
and face new tomorrows together,

that they might be happy yesterdays.

Gert Strydom

Let Your Judgement Fall

Dear God, the friends I hold dear from the very begin
do not know the pain I am in,
some may see the life I am leading
as half a sin, unaware of the soul within

and no words can truly reveal
everything that I know, everything that I feel,
the curses on my integrity my name that rages me
without a way to deal with it, a way to heal

and in the half truths and lies
spread by powerful people as a slandering exercise
poison envelops me like weeds
and although my words and deeds denies

the fabricated facts and I have the power
to against the onslaught stand firm like a steel tower,
have the ability to destroy in return, to debase and to degrade
I do not from my responsibilities or the truth cower

but whom am I mere man to declare war on You,
to shatter your church, to destroy it right out of the blue
with the effects of it having world wide ramifications
even if the facts that I have are reliable and true?

As the men assaulting me, slandering me as a dignified cause
are only men and not without faults or above laws
and should be rendering nobler deeds, be following their creed
not like savage beasts have blood on their paws

□

☞Envoi

and now I leave them in Your hand
and I am not able to understand
how Christian people can act as this
and with the effect of deeds done I stand,

behold me and let Your judgement fall,
Your destruction fall, on one and all
that has smitten me,

every single one, either large or small.

Gert Strydom

Let Your Torch Shine So Bright (Free Verse Sonnet)

When Your stars do burn bright in my heart and words,
do take my mind,
let my humble words come from You
and do lead me on the way by the hand.
Help me at the gate of the city
where it does look out over the distant road,
to stand as your watchman
as You do love everyone
and help my words to be endless without fear
and do lead others to You and to heal their souls
as life is but a dark way
where I do only want to be one of your children,
let your torch shine so bright
that I can draw others with Your endless love.

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Gert Strydom

Letter From Abélard To Héloïse

The separation were very painful
but still you are part of me
although it feels as if everything is coming to an end

but you remain inoculated into me, while my thoughts run wild,
life wanted to get me down,
but still you are part of me

while your loss and pain exhausts my body,
your voice have faded in my thoughts,
life wanted to get me down,

but vulnerable I dared to write love letters to you,
I wanted to press you against my chest,
your voice have faded in my thoughts,

but I have brought you back sharp from memories,
I could even smell your scent, feel your nearness,
wanted to press you against my chest,

I did mean my love in every letter to you.
The separation were very painful
I could even smell your scent, feel your nearness,
although it feels as if everything is coming to an end.

Gert Strydom

Letter From Peter Abelard To Heloise

The separation had cut me with pain
as if life should go this way and us both
do not love each other, had not been one,
as if everything between us does end.
Time, people, occurrences had caught me,
life wanted to get me totally down
but I still dare writing letters to you,
when your loss and pain are aching through me,

but you are still part of my humanity
as if you are ingrained into me,
when I do think about a time long gone;
you and I still fit into each other.
Confused I want even to dare God,
the sound of your voice fades in my thoughts.

Gert Strydom

L'idéal (Sonnets And Small Ballades)

(after A. G. Visser)

Anno 1688:

In France the Huguenots flee to the caves
are hanged for their faith on high scaffolds
as if they are not noble God fearing people
when in God's name others do conspire.

Chorus:

The urge for freedom nobody can kill
and to exist in liberty the ideal is great.

He has a magnificent estate on the Loire
but they squander innocent blood in France,
he has got to flee as for freedom he has got an urge
and over the Atlantic Ocean he comes with great courage

settles down as a farmer in the Paarl valley
where his new estate gets the name 'L'Idéal'
where he plants vineyards as far as the eye can see
and wants to live at peace with all his neighbours and countrymen.

Anno 1899:

Out of the north from the Orange Free State and Transvaal
comes the cry of distress that does set the future for fellow-tribesmen
when the great British Empire declares war against them
and he decides to pay with his own blood a price for freedom.

Chorus:

The urge for freedom nobody can kill
and to exist in liberty the ideal is great.

As a Cape rebel the British will hang him
if they can catch this brave Boer
but he rides along with the victor De la Rey
where he does long for freedom for his own people.

At speed they do gallop with horses into danger

with farms being burnt down a hell of a struggle has begun
and they defeat British soldiers just where they can
but against a huge force majeure the Boer's are far too few.

Anno 1988:

The Defence Force sends him into Angola
from Rundu in battles that wage fiercely for days
where he is manning a Ratel-90 armoured-car
and in victory he answers enemy fire.

Chorus:

The urge for freedom nobody can kill
and to exist in liberty the ideal is great.

He faces enemy T-55 battle-tanks and are scared
where for days his own life does hang in the balance
but the 47th FAPLA / Cuban brigade is astounded
and cornered against the Lomba and Cuzizi rivers,

where his Ratel-90 armoured-car must come to a halt to fire its cannon
but bravely he fights and so does every fellow-tribesmen to give resistance
do destroy ninety-four battle-tanks and hundreds of armoured cars,
to the great sorrow and destruction of the 47th FAPLA / Cuban brigade.

Anno 2017:

Through a bald-headed politician and the voters his country is lost,
farmers and their families are tortured and murdered,
unemployed he is despised as one of a minority
and he wonders what freedom does still remain for him?

Chorus:

The urge for freedom nobody can kill
and to exist in liberty the ideal is great.

Just where he comes there are other fellow-tribesmen that are in greater
distress,

where everyone now lives extradited in a rubbish-heap state,
at traffic lights some stand and beg for money and food
where other fellow-tribesmen do despise them and drive past

but silently the struggle for freedoms does continue still

where he does assist other fellow-tribesmen wherever he can,
do write poems to highlight the oppression,
see it as a duty that the world must understand the situation.

[Reference:"L'Idéal" by A. G. 's note:A Boer more generally called a Afrikaner is a South African whose home language is Afrikaans and is of Dutch and French and German descent.]

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Gert Strydom

Life

Do not look
for fairness in this life,
for you will not find it
as the reason to be living
and will seek it forever.

Do not live life
just as a passer by,
or you will not mind it
and it will pass.
without adding true meaning.

Partake in anything
that you can
and make of everything
something great.

Care for others and love greatly
and experience everything,
that life brings to you.

In the end
when all passions
and life is spent,
you will have had it all

Gert Strydom

Life (Fibonacci)

Life
is
like maths
when people find
themselves common as
points bearing meaning in a plane.

Gert Strydom

Life And Death (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after C. M. van der Heever)

The orange-red moon rises as if it is sailing in the sky
where the last rays of the sun do disappear
and the long row of oak trees are etched in their outlines
as if the sun is still writing its last message
before the darkness totally absorbs the last light
while blue-white the evening star do already shine
and predators hunt to survive in the death and pain of others
while crocodiles and hippopotamuses come out with their clumsy bodies
and there is a fine balance between life and death
that hangs over the whole earth like a web
while birds of prey do glide in the darkness
and like this everything in a way is caught
even man who do strive as a higher being
to noble things and also to his own interest.

[Reference:"Lewe en dood" (Life and death)by C. M. van der Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Life And The World Filled My Heart

How do you
put your life to paper
and where do you begin,
to catch a life into symbols.

I wanted to write something
about myself in a poem,
but life and the world
around me filled my heart.

If I look at the contrasts of life,
I wonder how near the earth
is to its end.

Who but Him
who is the creator and redeemer
and him
that rises from the abyss
are really good and really bad.

And who knows
what's happening in our old world,
but Him who is beyond our comprehension.

Somewhere a child laughed
and another was crying
and I wanted to hide,
somewhere away from it all.

Gert Strydom

Life Chess

It was like yesterday
that I saw two soldiers
play a game of chess,
both were just pawns
in the hands of an evil being.

They fell from the board
and were placed horizontal
right next to it,
as if their existence
didn't really matter.

Their lives were wasted
and somewhere back in the states
their status changed to the departed,
before the game of war
had really started.

It was like yesterday
that I saw two soldiers die,
shot out of their vehicle
by a rocket propelled grenade
and splattered, scorched and burnt.

Without choice I was part of the game
and just the Lord knows
from where true courage came
and at times I and my brothers
fought the fight
to the best of our ability.

Today peace reigns
and the game is over and done
and all my brothers have gone,
but at times it all again
becomes real to me
and forever I am at war
with the demons in my soul.

[Reference: Brothers => Brothers in arms. States=> Back home in the RSA.]

Gert Strydom

Life Goes On

My contract comes to an end
and I will have to find another job somewhere,
and outside people pass in beautiful cars
and life goes on.

At the traffic light there are beggars,
with children and boards
and stretched out hands
and life goes on.

On the road there's a nasty accident
and there are some people dead
and for all of the rest,
life goes on.

Sometimes a person wonders
where everything is going to
and why destiny plays its part,
but life keeps
setting its demands.

Gert Strydom

Life Has Changed (Villanelle)

Life has changed from what it was before,
far too suddenly from each other we are apart.
I do not know what the future has in store,

locked-down I cannot see you anymore
while of me you are an essential part.
Life has changed from what it was before,

while still you are in my centre core,
in my thoughts, in my blood and my heart.
I do not know what the future has in store,

deaths and illness are present more and more
and in communist China all of this did start.
Life has changed from what it was before

and I pray that God do all of humanity restore
that he does the devil's deadly evil plans thwart.
I do not know what the future has in store,

and still daily more and more I do you adore
where to me you are both beautiful and smart.
Life has changed from what it was before,
I do not know what the future has in store.

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Gert Strydom

Life Is A Gift

Life is a gift, a chance to exist
and some people have been great
while others will be greater still
and we do shape our life as best we can
act out the roles
of father, mother, brother, sister, daughter and son,
find someone to hold as the dearest of all
but still human we are
when at times we err, we fall
and our dreams are shattered into pieces
but yet constantly we do try,
we do reach to the unknown
with something more
than just a flickering of hope.

Gert Strydom

Life Is A Gift (2)

Life is a gift, a chance to exist
and some people have been great
while others will be greater still
and we do shape our life as best we can
act out the roles
of father, mother, brother, sister, daughter and son,
find someone to hold as the dearest of all
but still human we are
when at times we err, we fall
and our dreams are shattered into pieces
but yet constantly we do try,
we do reach to the unknown
with something more
than just a flickering of hope.

Gert Strydom

Life Is A Gift (3)

Life is a gift, a chance to exist
and some people have been great
while others will be greater still
and we do shape our life as best we can
act out the roles
of father, mother, brother, sister, daughter and son,
find someone to hold as the dearest of all
but still human we are
when at times we err, we fall
and our dreams are shattered into pieces
but yet constantly we do try,
we do reach to the unknown
with something more
than just a flickering of hope.

Gert Strydom

Life Is Full Of Pretty Things (Alfred Dorn Sonnet)

Life is full of pretty things and I wonder
why constantly we run to find something
when there is beauty at our very feet,
with a myriad of flowers falling under
the jacaranda trees that are blooming,
with tranquillity smelling somewhat sweet

when by nature we are already blessed
and it is as if we are possessed

in life to stumble and at times blunder
trying to find some new significance,
at times letting small things draw us sunder
from a smiling and cheerful type of glance
we are scared that something will plunder
the little joy that brings us some romance.

Gert Strydom

Life Is Not What It Seem

(in answer to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

There is nothing that can stop the sands of time
and although many lives may be sublime,
destiny and death leave marks on each day
while events occur without reason or rhyme.

If lives of great men are footprints in the sand
why is it then so very difficult to understand
that some leaders do lead men to disaster
although they do seem heroic and grand?

In our own kind of reality life is not what it seem,
as much like in a very strange kind of dream
things, circumstances and events are ever changing
and sometimes does not turnout as we do deem.

Even when we are achieving and pursuing,
events, words and acts may be our own undoing
while for justice we might forever wait,
without being able to do a single thing.

Yet in faith, if we do trust in God
even in havoc He is wherever we trod,
from the day of birth and celebration,
even beyond our funeral, the final sod.

[Reference: "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.]

Gert Strydom

Life Is Not What It Seem (1)

(in answer to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

There is nothing that can stop the sands of time
and although many lives may be sublime,
destiny and death leave marks on each day
while events occur without reason or rhyme.

If lives of great men are footprints in the sand
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from the day of birth and celebration,
even beyond our funeral, the final sod.

[Reference: "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.]

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Life Is Not What It Seem (Wreathed Quatrains) (In Answer To Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

There's nothing that can stop the sands of time
some lives sublime will face death on a day
nothing can stay, without reason or rhyme
existence does begrime, by destiny swept away;

great men play and live, leave prints in the sand,
they are grand, but they lead others to disaster,
as plaster impressions, difficult to understand
very underhand few can their tricks master

and faster life passes; it's not what it seems;
as in a dream events are ever changing,
everything does not turnout as we do deem,
self-esteem does not always happiness bring,

even achieving and pursuing, may bring a end
in a world bend, while for justice we wait
with hate, on words and acts till we are spent,
while descent nothing is or even straight

.

but in our gait, if we do trust in God,
even if ungodly we act in recreation
on every occasion to the final sod
it's quite odd, He brings a new creation.

Gert Strydom

Life, However You Do Come

Life, however you do come
with the shining morning star
where every day there is
a glorious sunrise,

or with thunder in darkness
that falls all around me
still I do know that He is with me.

Gert Strydom

Life[2]

I

A sailor on a yacht
upon the wide ocean
sets the sails,
trims the ropes
and watches the wind,
the sky, sun, waves and sea
and stars at night
and sets the course
and instruments give signs
of location and direction
to final destiny
and temperature and strength
of waves and wind
indicate whether waters calm or storm appears.

II

Cause and effect
changes the way
that life goes
and destiny blows the winds,
sets the sky,
to be clear
or for catastrophe
causes the waves
to be small or crushing huge
effects the way that life goes
and in reality there's no way
at times to read the signs
to be able to know
to where to set the course.

III

I'Envoi

People live and die,

are glad and cry,
experience joy and pain,
are totally empty and fulfilled
and life comes in patches
like stains etched on glass
while the pulse of time keeps beating on
and some wish for a new tomorrow,
others want to have more,
some are forever poor,
others born rich
and most of us are conditioned
to accept second best
as the only possibility.

Gert Strydom

Lightning Strike

Near to the gate of SAAB avionics
I saw thunder branch down striking in death
silver-blue and white from a clouded sky,
how thread-thin the lightning shimmered
across a entire grown tree
while needle flames did suddenly explode
and like a surgeon's scalpel did slice the tree in two
while some more thunder was flashing raging over it
and it did suddenly fade away
but on the inner eye the image of it
did very bright remain
while in terror grown birds flew twittering
over the broken nest and the destroyed tree.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Lights In The Night

The sun fades in its red glare
over the mountain top
and traffic lights, street lights
and electrical signs
get an own life
that appears
like flowers folding open to the night.

The city lies dotted out
with thousands of lights
like a big jewel,
that a master artist
unfolds against the dark night.

Cars, busses and motorbikes
draw white and red stripes
like they drive past
crossing and going straight
while the evening
is getting life.

The evening air is beautifully open
and away from the inner city
there are big stars
that hangs sparkling against the heaven
and the Seven Sisters, Orion
and the Southern Cross
are the first to catch my eye
and I wonder how transom
our tinned stars
look out of the universe
and how trivial our lives are
when we look at the great works
of an Almighty God.

Gert Strydom

Like A Beautiful Princess You Glide In

Like a beautiful princess you glide in,
the organ is thundering,
you do fill my heart in every aspect,
are radiating in snow-white lace
and I want to love you forever.
Far past lovely you are
when we are getting married
and you look breathtaking.

Gert Strydom

Like A Bush-Dove

Like bush-dove landing with fluttering
with a letter that it brings will astonish me,
is the sudden message that comes from you
and that message shakes in my hand

as love is something beyond the mind
and it turns life and mere days around.

Gert Strydom

Like A Cat You Lay Curled Up Against Me

Like a cat you lay curled up against me
and your arms do surround me,
are like shoots around my body,

one hand is on your buttocks
and sleepy you move nearer to me
so that the points of your nipples
are pressed into me

and your smell fills my nose,
your breath blow against my neck
when you draw my still closer to you
and sleep does take us away from each other.

Gert Strydom

Like A Child In A Garden

Lord, can I not like a child
in a garden loose my way,
away from the melancholy and fear
finding something wonderful
in every thing around me

or am I still blinded as a human being
in the distress that I read
when destiny strikes around me
and so half orphaned
know that life at a time
even destroys the greatest beauty?

Or are we only delivered to the dark night
that folds around us against our will
as if this only exists in thoughts
while we do not really know what is waiting,
and are still trying to cling to life
while we are continuously destroyed cell upon cell?

Gert Strydom

Like A Fairy-Princess (Free Verse Sonnet)

You can still the storm in my heart,
or of new you can bring it forth
Your humanity is sincere, new and fresh
where day upon day you do touch me.
Constantly I pray that God will protect you,
when my boots grind and gnash over gravel to duties,
it's you that still loves me although my life is turned skew.
It's you that stand by me when others do me forsake.

Like a fairy-princess you go right through the garden,
on your fingers there are fruitful red-brown sand,
where you constantly plant flowers with a small spade,
you see roses, lilies and morning glories that trumpet,
to me you are the only flower in the rising sun
and you hold a whole cosmos firmly in your hand.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Like A Fragile Cosmos Flower

Like a fragile cosmos flower
you came unexpectedly into my life,
before I knew it I did fall in love
and now you turn my days over and over.

Gert Strydom

Like A Glowing Angel (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Louis Janse Van Vuuren)

Out of the bath you walked into my arms,
we had an intimate conversation,
you were wet with your hot skin against my skin
and the world lay open before us both.
Like a glowing angel I do remember you,
how you embraced me with your hot arms,
I felt your sweet breath against my face,
you embraced me as if wings were folding over me.
You took me by the hand
and still you were so very close to me
as if we were going back to paradise
and the mysticism of it I cannot comprehend,
where lips did find each other's in great passion
as if the fire that we lit wanted to devour us.

[Reference: "donker oksel" (dark axilla) by Louis Janse Van Vuuren.]

Gert Strydom

Like A Goddess

(for Annelize)

Like a goddess you are to me,
my heart leaps when you speak sweetly,

it flutters at your smile
and speechless I am for a while

when your eyes do penetrate my heart
and very near not anymore apart

our lips do touch as skin to skin
our hands and tongues do meet and slip in,

we do touch and I am trembling
my eyes go dim and its as if my ears are buzzing

and all of this happens at a single kiss
as if in it is enraptured all of bliss.

Gert Strydom

Like A Goddess You Appear

Like a goddess you appear
with strings of falling auburn hair,
the sun sparkling in your golden eyes,
a joyful smile upon your lips,
dressed in a pure white robe
folding slender around every limb
and smelling clean and pure.

Let the African sky, sea and sand
encompass us till dusk glows red
burning in the west
and in the bright yellow moon,
by light of Sirius let us find the way
through velvet nights
to secret places of love and rest.

Gert Strydom

Like A Illusion

Like an illusion you always stay
just out of my reach
and maybe I chase too hard
after my ideals and poetry
and for sure there is more
which life asks.

Sometimes when I look out of the window
I see you passing outside,
but it's only in my thoughts

When I look at my life
I want to find you in it
and I wish that I
could create magic with words
and cast them
like a catching net over you,

then I would have been able
to have you with me
and you would have really known
how much I love you.

Gert Strydom

Like A Light Coming In Darkness (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

Like a light coming in darkness
I am waiting on You my God
to lead me to the right road
languishing for Your words and commandments

and ask that You do not look past
people that mock You openly
and amusingly serve Satan
as if their destiny in life

are in their own hands
and I need You to fill my lamp
and ask for Your forgiving of them too
and forgive the whole lot of them

that do not have a clue of who and what You are
and if it's possible lead them from the darkness.

[Reference: Kwang-gesang (Kwang song) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Like A Lightning Bolt

Like a lightning bolt
life thunders over me
I am bashed down
just when I think
that I am again on my feet again.

Time flies past much too fast
and the grey
sneaks into my dark brown hair
and between yesterday and now
I am slowly losing courage

and like taking a track
I try to find the meaning
of my existence
and of life

but somewhere
I have lost the way
and over and over
I am lost in the backwoods

and sometimes when I see the stars
I am looking for a beacon
in the night above me,
but nowhere
I can find anything

as between now and remembering
the darkness
like a black blanket
wants to fold over me the whole time

but I keep on hoping
as if success and happiness
is just over the next hill,
but the journey is long
and my feet are sore
and it's as if

I am walking alone through life.

Gert Strydom

Like A Little Boy

Like a little boy
he wants to play
with the rescue and fire helmets
and opens the glass cabinet
where they are stored.

Time and time again
the fire alarm rings
and they are testing
the noisy thing.

Even if smoke rises
people may still think
that they are just testing
some thing.

I wonder what that big
little boy will do,
when a real fire occur?
Will it still be a game,
will he know what to do
and act in time
or will he just run for the door?

Gert Strydom

Like A Pretty Rose That Faded Young (Novelinee)

Like a pretty rose that faded quite young
your sweet love for me had suddenly died
where with some withering leaves it did hung
and day after day and nights, I did cry
and now suddenly some twenty years on
while in loveliness you defiantly act
as if our youth is not already gone,
you want to turn the clockwork of time back,
still I am lonely the night is black.

Gert Strydom

Like A River That Runs Out Into A Delta

Like a delta in a river
you do split away from me,
our lives are spread out from each other
from the first morning light

as if we are in different worlds,
do only know each other at night
and yet you do bring deep meaning
while constantly I can reckon on you

while there is love in each glance and action of you
as if you keep that which is between us high and holy.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Like A Rose (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where at times destiny in life do sting like thorns,
you are dark-red like a rose that flowers in winter,
in the days of rest and decay you leave me speechless
when you are my relief and my mercy in the mad week,
as the one who breaks through cloudy days with a sunny smile
and there is great joy and passion when we do meet
in a cruel, harsh merciless world you do turn my days around,
and I know that there is big value even in painful days.
Your fragrance is carried by the wild wind
where all seasons are astonished by the impact that you make,
as the doves coo over you and the weavers sing your praise,
you are the one that pamper me and find me in my dark days,
the one who constantly touch me with care, mercy and love
the one who brings me with faith to better days in the future.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Like A Sailboat On A Lake

Sometimes life makes you drift on
like a sailboat on a lake
swaying on the wake
and on the embankment
there are bluegum trees
standing with their white trunks
and the breeze blows
its own way
and the waves lapse up and down
with life rocking you
to its direction.

Gert Strydom

Like A Snapped Branch

Like a snapped branch
I am bended before You my Lord
and at Thy feet I want to learn at Thy knees
and I am torn into pieces and weak
and I see the sparkle of your heavenly roof
and the beautiful nature that honour You.

Like a snapped dried out branch
I am broken before You my Lord
and Your decisions of my fate hits me down to earth
and it feels as if I sink away into the dark swamp
without being able to stop it
and I crave a sign, star or miracle to exorcise the evil
or I will always be like a snapped branch.

Gert Strydom

Like A Sun-Bird That İS Drunk With Nectar

Like a sun-bird that is drunk with nectar,
you visit my soul continually with buzzing wings
and hopeless my life echoes on like a shadow
of what at a time it has been, as without hope

but still you draw near in the bright morning
bringing a kind of joy like a flower blooming
in the sheer dry wasted desert in bright colours,
while the night flutters, your embrace me tenderly

while your breast firmly alive press into me,
with shadows visiting us like tranquil butterflies
and outside the rain is falling, sieving continually
with clouds of steam rising from the hot tar;

sun-bird sometimes you leave and are gone
and then there is only sheer silence everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Like A The Tree-Toed Demon

(after Johan Johl)

With his first crow
he announces the morning
watching he is searching
for the first rays of light
with a tense body and feathers spread out.

When the sun rises bright and radiant
it splashes over his neck and body
and right there he becomes cocky,
is ready to fight

like a tree toed devil,
to avert anyone with kicks from his hens
as if the sun has contaminated his head
while he has a view
of the white flaming ball in his eye
and he crows again,
pulls himself erect
where he stands hot in the morning,
as a cheeky cock

In the afternoon he walks boldly
up and down the yard,
pecks here and there
even scratches in the dust
which blows in the wind
before he spreads his wings
to catch the heat of the sun in them
and he leaves his tracks everywhere,
is ready with his striking and treading kick
for them that he does despise
while he waits on dusk
and crows loudly again
orders anyone to stay out of his yard.

[Reference: "Hanepoot op die middaguur" (Cock's paw during the afternoon hour) by Johann Johl.]

Gert Strydom

Like A Violet (Novelinee)

Like a violet her eyes did lovely shine
she was fragile, forward and somewhat sweet,
I did not know if she was really mine
and there was something great when we did meet.
As if we were living for the minute,
as if all, everything that was before
was lost and she was extremely cute
and at time her I did really adore,
but with time she was gone, was no more.

Gert Strydom

Like A White Water Lily

Like a white water lily
drifting on a dark pond,
you lay beside me.

Every part of you are pure
and heavenly designed,
to be more than perfect for me.

Your fingers entwine into mine
and your body,
softly touch me with caressing warmth.

I drift deeper into your centre core
and bind forever more
with something far greater,

than passion and physical rapture
of two hungry souls
and you remain mine

through the passage
of all time
and I know how deep

and far and wide
and sincere
your love really is.

Gert Strydom

Like A Zombie (Swinburne Roundel)

(After C Louis Leipoldt)

Like a skeleton he was slim as if from bone□
while as if asleep he moved on,
chilly heartless like solid stone,
like a skeleton

but we were locked-down and alone
while it seemed if from him all hope was gone,
on television his voice had a awful tone
like a skeleton,

his eyes held no compassion, were like desert sands,
without feeling, sorrow or any kind of surprise,
dried-out like a mummy slowly moved his hands,
his eyes

seemed unearthly as if from another sphere wise,
while he spoke of a pestilence destroying all lands,
for long moments I thought this must be a disguise.

As a minister of state he solemnly stands,
projecting about a illness where far too many dies
but in all of this it was as if he understands,
his eyes

vague but in control as if noctambulant did mine meet
and somehow it seemed that he had no heart or soul,
while almost mechanically he did his words repeat:
vague but in control,

he acted as if we stuck to China and its CDC on the whole,
effectively like them we would the virus meet
and Cuba would help in one or other role.

His words were suddenly forceful but also sweet
and I wondered if communism was his goal,
while from China a deadly thing is now on the street,
vague but in control

as if he was unaware of any lurking evil or its might,
while almost shell-shocked people watched him with a stare.
Little children, mature women and men were full of fright,
as if he was unaware

and it seemed in the midst of this he does in a way care,
were considering treatment to the poor and their plight,
and all my emotions flashed one thing: beware!

Still there was no real kind of evil in plain sight,
to me a charlatan wanted with communist help to prepare,
while life was upside-down and darker than the night,
as if he was unaware:

we all had indoor to stay as the virus is deadly,
children could not anymore together play
and all the measures seemed very severe to me,
we all had indoors to stay

and suddenly all freedom was swept away,
where life was futuristic as if it was meant to be
but not from a loving God and I started to pray,

I prayed for a world full of iniquity,
also for the highest leader who steadfastly set the way
and I also prayed that again we would be free,
we all had indoor to stay.

[Poet's note: "The Zombie" by C Louis Leipoldt from his poetry
volume: "Dick King and other poems." I am quoting the poem:
"The Zombie" by C Louis Leipoldt right here as I view it as important:

□

□

"The Zombie by C Louis Leipoldt"

"His face was like a bleached bone
The desert wind unsands,
And cold and white, like marble stone,
Were both his mummied hands.

His eyes were clouded like the eyes

Of fish no longer fresh;
No glint of anger or surprise
Within their depths did flash.

Heedless like a noctambulant
He passed along his way,
And little children as he went
Ran crying in from play.

The women crossed themselves and held
Their eyes upon the ground,
Until his passing had dispelled
The fear his presence found.

And old men, very close to death,
But still afraid to die,
Gabbled a spell beneath their breath,
Until he had passed by.

Only the stranger, unaware
Of evil's awful might,
Looked at him with a curious stare,
And wondered at the sight,

And asked a native lad who ran
Some twilight tryst to keep,
'What is that dreadful-looking man
Who walks as if asleep? '

With startled glance the home-born youth
Spoke with averted head,
As if he feared to tell the truth,
'A Zombie, sir, ' he said.

I went into a crowded hall,
And heard an old man speak
Of ending wars, 'which, after all,
Were hopeless for the weak.'

With an old man's garrulity
He glibly drooled along.
The future, so he said, would be

Made peaceful by the strong.□□

All little nations would obey
The greater ones above.
The greater ones would have their say,
And rule the world by love.

I whispered to my neighbour man
(Who seemed to pray or weep) ,
'What is this awful charlatan
Who talks as if asleep? '

Tear-stained bi-focals fixed my eyes;
He slowly shook his head,
And whispered back in mild surprise,
'A Statesman, sir, ' he said."]□

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Gert Strydom

Like Adam After The Fall (Italian Sonnet)

Maybe as the sweetest in life in all,
your sincere love stands totally alone,
its impact and acts are forever known:
I am as prehistoric Adam after the fall,

where the intimate details I can recall.
Daily your character to me is shown
before God you and I stand on our own.
In the mind this can be great or small

that as a person you do me complete,
its as if life by this event gets its mark
as adults we together tread on this earth
while our experiences do remain sweet
as we do on the things of living embark
in coming times of happiness and mirth.

Gert Strydom

Like All Things With Time Roses Whither Away

Like all things with time roses whither away,
as does the frail beauty of lingering youth
which comes to sweet perfection on a day,
the waning of life is an ultimate truth,

as life and living is not what it seem
and daily we do live and play wantonly
while like roses, life is fair as we do deem,
but destiny strikes uncommonly

while all of life, living is just a show
in which some joy and some errors are made,
while with love at times we do like roses glow,
with time everything does eventually fade,

while at a time the canker of death lies,
even in the most beautiful of eyes.

Gert Strydom

Like An Angel I Do Your Face View (Triolet)

Your imperfections are few,
where you are beautiful to me:
like an angel I do your face view.
Your imperfections are few
and daily I do love you anew,
where in you I do only beauty see.
Your imperfections are few,
where you are beautiful to me:

Gert Strydom

Like Ants Living Clustered In (Cavatina)

Like ants living clustered in, we do live
and are rushing
without noticing the red rising sun;
and everything
falls into place in our quickened pace
and each feeling,
action, glance is set in a quick-fix day
where we do lose the ability to pray,

with significant others instead of
husbands and wives,
where our children do not have to obey,
living their lives
totally Godless as they reach for more
and are in strive
with the laws and the ways of society
as everything centres just on I and me.

Gert Strydom

Like Ants Living Clustered In (Cavatina) 1

Like ants living clustered in, we do live
and are rushing
without noticing the red rising sun;
and everything
falls into place in our quickened pace
and each feeling,
action, glance is set in a quick-fix day
where we do lose the ability to pray,

with significant others instead of
husbands and wives,
where our children do not have to obey,
living their lives
totally Godless as they reach for more
and are in strive
with the laws and the ways of society
as everything centres just on I and me.

Gert Strydom

Like Any Other Person

Like any other person my hands are stained by Your blood
but every sin and my own will
and everything that can bring separation between us
are covered by Your wondrous blood.

Gert Strydom

Like At Your Holiday-Home

(for Annelize)

Like at your holiday-home at the sea
the waves bash and burst and sweep us along
while the sand does keep coming in the marching
and you cannot wipe my footprints from your heart.

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Gert Strydom

Like At Your Holiday-Home (1)

(for Annelize)

Like at your holiday-home at the sea
the waves bash and burst and sweep us along
while the sand does keep coming in the marching
and you cannot wipe my footprints from your heart.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Like Frangipanis

Like frangipanis do twist to become one
you are attached to my life
and you bring bright colours to each day,
you even fix the bad times.

Gert Strydom

Like In Summer And Spring

Nowhere there's a place
where I can describe,
what joy you bring me
with every passing day.

As the sun kisses the morning
and the stars caress the night,
and the moon dances
over a sky filled with clouds
you are the one really good thing,
that this life has brought me.

When life tosses its darkest winter
and blizzards filled with disaster blow,
your love stays unwavering
like in summer and spring.

Gert Strydom

Like Job

Like Job I talked
with the Lord
and couldn't comprehend,
where my life was going
and from where
all my misery comes?

Then I saw an old man
with a metal cup
in his hand
walking past my motorbike
and his clothes was in tatters
and hope was in his eyes

Then I realized
how much better my life is
and that God
still sees every thing.

Gert Strydom

Like Mountains Lying Far Away And Blue

Like mountains lying far away and blue
love stays constant; it does not become common,
it leaves impressions in the great remembrance

and of this there is something between you and me;
I can never gaze enough at you.
Like mountains lying far away and blue

of which the presence never fades
there is something that looks like true love,
it leaves impressions in the great remembrance

that clings to every other thought,
.as something that does not want to parish.
Like mountains lying far away and blue

your humanity stays eternally true to me,
your face is continually covered with a ray of sun,
it leaves impressions in the great remembrance

and even when your tears shines like drops of dew
our love does stay eternally glamorous,
like mountains lying far away and blue
it leaves impressions in the great remembrance.

Gert Strydom

Like My Father Before Me

Like my father before me,
and in the way that my son,
my daughter will do
I have sprouted from this fertile land

have felt the rain falling in big drops
upon the red-brown hot sand,
have smelt new life springing forth
from the wetness of rain,
from the wetness of human seed

I have smelt the sulphur of blue-white thunder,
have experienced the wonder
of seeing new seedlings bursting
right through the ground

and this continent of Africa
where the sun hangs
in a cobalt blue sky,
will as long as I am living
be home to me.

Gert Strydom

Like Ominous Foreign Flying Objects

Like ominous foreign flying objects
the black and grey clouds do come
with strange shapes
before they do become a solid mass
that cuts off the sun
and here and there do flash down with lightning-bolts
and they do bring a biting chill

and I see hail and later rain
falling untimely in this winter
and that which had not died from the black frost
has now been hit to tatters
before a strong wind does start blowing
and the mass of clouds do disappear
as if they were only my imagination.

Gert Strydom

Like Only A Small Grain Of Sand

Like only a small grain of sand,
my life, the lives of all living people,
and the whole planet lies in Your hand
while for your power there are no boundaries;
You know all things far past mere wishes
and do know each intimate thought
and even the secret, the most intense,
while in the darkness
the Satan tampers as Your biggest enemy
but You know everything, to You everyone is somebody.

Gert Strydom

Like Some Roots Anchoring The Same Big Tree (Envelope Couplet Sestet)

Like some roots anchoring the same big tree
in life you do constantly anchor me
at times when it is really very dark
your very presence covers me like bark
while in life you try to hold me sturdy
like some roots anchoring the same big tree.

Gert Strydom

Like That Of An Angel (Crystalline Poem)

Like that of an angel is your face
filled with a kind of sweet grace.

Gert Strydom

Like The Leaves Do Constantly Return

Like the leaves do constantly return
in a set programme structure
there is constantly in my heart great hope
that with every new tomorrow
feelings between us will last and grow deeper
that always our passion will be repeated,
that it will burn like a glowing fire
that only does calibrate our love deeper
and does accentuate the fullness of it,
like the spring which no one can stop.

Gert Strydom

Like The Stem Of A Rose

Like the stem of a rose,
filled with thorns
I have scratched those
that was unkind to me,
but although I tried to be free
and to live a life without jeopardy,
the inevitability brought me
back down to my knees.

Somewhere there I found humility
and started to know
that other people
where also created by You

To You I have ever been true
and although I erred
it was without intent
and maybe the time spent
on other things,
made them more important to me.

Still it's like a shadow
that You follow me
and Your presence touches me
and somewhere in the darkest night
the only true light stays You.

Gert Strydom

Like The Sun Glowing On The Smooth Surface Of The Sea

Like the sun glowing on the smooth surface of the sea
words of love do touch the heart,
changes face after face to be merry
when frowns want to start
and although the ever surging turmoil of the mind
wants to break free
with the tide and wind of worry,
words carry much more power than we know
and do constantly with deeper meaning glow.

Gert Strydom

Like This I Can Imagine Myself Back To Pre-History (Free Verse Sonnet)

(For Daleen)

Where at Balito the sea plays in and out
you look to where the horizon disappears,
look like a goddess in the bright sunlight,
the sand under your feet is like sieving cinnamon
and like this I can imagine myself back to pre-history
as if something wants to resound in my consciousness,
can think about a time without any fear or pain
where we are sharing precious memories,
where I hear your bright and joyfully laughter,
fragrances of pineapple and palm oil hang in the air,
the beach-wind rustles through your fair hair,
your hand is intimately in mine and it is soft
and no person will want it differently
when an unexpected cold wave make you shiver.

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Gert Strydom

Like Wrinkles On The Water

Like wrinkles on the water
words and deeds circle out wider
until love is later
something more than just a decision
and even when fear and pain appears
there is a kind of balance
that goes through everything
while you and I adore each other intimately
and our time together lingers
when moments sometimes contain hours
while what we are is never narrow-minded or set
and I see somebody lovely in you
that perfectly fits into my existence, into my body,
someone that brings certainty to every when and maybe.

Gert Strydom

Lily

Oh dear sweet Lily
how sad that life
is dragging us apart
and that by choice
you are living
a life of your own.

When you have time
or want to reach out to me
no pure flower,
or desire can change
the way that you treat me.

Even the enticing petals
of your naked skin
cannot win over
what is getting lost
when you do not
really want to comprehend
the cost
of the way that things
are going between us.

Gert Strydom

Lily Of The Valley (Novelinee)

With a natural kind of subtle ease
aromatic your small bell-shaped flowers
bloom somewhere among the many trees,
quietly springing up after rain showers
you bring happiness and bliss through fate
with a unmistakeable sweet green scent
luring the nightingale to its mate
before your fragile flowering is spent
as if some angels down your steps descent.

Gert Strydom

Lineage (In Answer To Ted Hughes)

In the beginning was thought
in the mind of God
who begat sound
who begat word
who begat material formation
of light, air, water
and firm foundation

setting natural dimensions and laws,
forming biological living things,
going past natural selection,
where only the strongest survive

coming alive as mere man
begat from Mary
as a human being
who begat unsurpassable love
and self-sacrifice,
dying, shattered from the presence
of the Father
as a cast out being full of sin
and this lineage begun and ended with Him.

[Reference: Lineage by Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom

Lingering

After motorcycling a hundred miles
just to be with her,
driving through sieving rain,
curtains of fog,
biting, icy cold
in the middle of a June winter

your relationship with its doubts and hopes
mills through your mind
and when she runs out
to open the gate
like a bright ray in the rain,
smiles as if life is great
you just cannot wait
for her embrace
and her hot lips
to burn the chill from yours

and her cheerfulness, passion
and love lingers
like a lasting flame.

[Reference: Lingering by Lisa Zaran.]

Gert Strydom

Lingering, A Feather Is Blown Around And Around

Lingering, a feather is blown around and around
while it falls from a white dove
where it flutters away against the heavenly blue sky
and there is something that I see

of God's great creative power,
when I feel life rushing through my veins,
with the wind swishing around me
and this is on earth just another normal day.

Like this His love which is totally selfless, is lingering,
I see in my mind's eye the dove descending on Him,
I hear His Father's voice
when He who Himself is pure comes from the water

and His whole life on earth,
His humanity, His existence
turns my thoughts back to Him
and there is only deep love, wherever I look,
that forever stays lingering.

Gert Strydom

Lion At The Zoo

Golden eyes full of death
stares back at me
and I can almost smell,
the scent of meat
on it's breath.

One of its paws strikes threatening
while the yellow-brown tail swishes to and thro
and I see a row of deadly nails spiked in it.

It's ivory white teeth
glitters in the sunlight,
when it opens its jaws.

a Thundering roar close to me
let the hairs on my arms rise
and I see the pink inside of its mouth.

.
It paces up and down
and keeps on watching me and there's symmetry
in every step that it takes.

When it walks away
I see a black spot at the end of its tail
and it disappears into the long grass.

Gert Strydom

Lions

Lions like to eat
and to them meat is meat,
and the difference
between wild beast and man
does not matter at all.

When the Romans fed
Christians to the hungry beasts,
they ate them without
any remorse
and the difference
between Christian and sinner
did not matter at all.

When tourists leave their vehicle
in a animal park,
lions will kill and eat them
without any consideration
to chairman, president or millionaire;
like any natural prey.

Once a angel made lions
play like kittens with Daniel,
but before his enemies
touched the bottom
of the den,
they were broken into pieces.

[Reference=>"22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths,
that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocence was found in
me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.
24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused
Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their
wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces
or ever they came at the bottom of the den." Daniel 6.22+24

Gert Strydom

Liquid More Pure

Liquid more pure
than that flowing on earth
and from the wells in the ground,
from tankards in white clouds
drifting on the blue sky
fall sparkling like jewels
through the air.

The smell of rain
rise from the ground
and the earth is fresh and new
while drops shower it
and a secret ingredient called nitrogen
brings life and gives growth
to grass, flowers, plants and trees.

Gert Strydom

Little Black Girl

As if stuck in the stark naked reality
I see you wondering totally unclothed
in the nearby park,
walking wobbly on small legs
with huge brown and white eyes
looking inquiring at everything
before you start staring into the distance

and somehow I wish that I could protect
your innocence, your sweet childish sincerity,
that I could make you free
from a world filled with starvation

and could like a butterfly give your wings,
to find your own joys in a world
of beautiful and enjoyable things
but that's not the way that your life is set to go.

Gert Strydom

Little Brother

When you were my little brother,
the night frightened you,
as if the darkness
had something unimaginable,
some unpredictable thing
and in its vastness with dark creeping shadows
monsters were part of your imaginings

but when the sun was up and bright
nothing could take the hero character out of you,
you rode your brown Arabic stallion,
bareback even with blisters between your legs,
we swam every dam and stream
and knew each and every rock
and cave in the ridges
even far from our house.

At night it was a different thing
and when we passed the creek
with wind bristling through the reeds,
you thought of ghosts, dark creatures
doing unspoken deeds
and when I sprinted away
revelling in your fear,
you shouted at me to stay near
and in my dreams
sometimes I still hear your childish voice

and now you are a father of two girls,
of which one is at university
and the other in high school,
you are a minister of religion
in your own spare time,
you are an advocate in the Supreme Court,
and at times the judge
without being scared of any kind of thing.

Gert Strydom

Little Does It Matter What I Do

Little does it matter what I do,
the loving of you
is a strange and uplifting thing,
and sometimes right out of the blue
much like a storm that is arising

words and acts find there mark

As with the falling rain,
sorrow and joy comes down in rushes of pain
where it patters on my heart
and sometimes in happiness that does remain
while far from me you are apart

but still together through life we do embark.

Gert Strydom

Little Donkey

When the monarch of Moab
did go to the fortune teller Balaam at Pethor
who did possess extraordinary occult powers
they did persuade him to curse Israel,

you donkey carry did him
and an angel of God
did stand in your way as an opposing force.

You saw that angel
and did swerve out three times
to avoid the angel
killing Balaam

and frightened did press
yourself and Balaam against a wall
where Balaam did hit you with a stick
being furious
when you did go and lie down beneath him.

Even when you did speak to him
and asked why he was unfairly hitting you,
he was not surprised
but said that if he had a sword
he would have killed you

and when God opened his eyes
he saw an angel
with a drawn sword
standing ready
to kill him

whereupon Balaam did bow down
and fell on the ground
on his face
at which the angel told Balaam
that You little donkey had saved his life three times.

Balaam travelled on you further

and did three times bless the Israelites
and the heathen king Balak
did become so angry
that he clasped his hands together.

Gert Strydom

Little Girl On The Beach

(after Analisé Carstens)

The sea washing in and out enchants the little girl,
while she can feel the streams between you and me,
when she looks at you her eyes is far past cobalt blue.
She picks up a shell and watches a crab scattering away
and digs a small furrow to keep the sea out,
with a mother of pearl shell she builds a castle out of sand,
other precious things she clings to in her hand,
which childish and naive she holds out for us to look at,
when she looks at me her eyes are far past cobalt blue.

[Reference: "Seuntjie op die strand" (Small boy on the beach) by
Analisé Carstens.]

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Gert Strydom

Little Harry (A Cautionary Tale)

Little Harry grew up to be a businessman,
one of those that make a profit in any way they can
and from the days of his youth
he was wheeling and dealing without a regard for truth.

At times he laughed with a sudden kind of glee
about other people's infirmity,
their trust and weakness of the mind
that helped him to play on them havoc of a certain kind.

Every afternoon at the close of day
he took his earnings, his shady profits away
and he would go out to dance
to find a girl with whom to romance

until the early morning light,
but at a time he became known as a predator of the night
as in relationships he treated girls just the same
as his customers and to him love, was just another game

and so it came to be with time passing on
that all the sweet girls, all his companions were gone
and with money he had to pay for love and attention
for the kind of women that sincere men do not mention.

Loneliness was something that he could not face
and life went on at its same old pace
but suddenly a solution came to him
to buy a Russian bride, someone beautiful, full of grace and trim,

to marry her and like a princess
he would treat her and his life would be without distress
while at his whims she would act,
almost like a slave without being able to go back

and off to Moscow he went
with one task hell-bent
and there he did pick and choose a lovely woman,
who would be desired by every other man.

Together homewards they travelled
but from the start their relationship shrivelled,
while he introduced her to every other Harry and his mate,
with her dined out and went to the movies until late,

for at times he treated her as just another bought thing,
and if his wishes were not met, his words did sting
and on his wedding day,
she left him; to a new true lover she went away.

Gert Strydom

Little Princess In A Glass Box

(for Gwenavieve Enslin)

Your dad says proudly that he did design you himself:
your eyes, nose and mouth are genetically from him.
Your mother says that she is your own breeding machine,
the paediatrician says that you may go home tomorrow
and it is much more than just a maybe.

Your small long body astonishes me
where you are laying in a glass box with a blue light
and we would not want it any different
where you are growing at the speed of wind
and minutely small sunglasses cover your eyes
against the sharp light that is blinding you
and your grandmother wants to pull you much closer.

Fragile, ill and brittle you lay and wait
and I pray that you will be well on the following day.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Little Princess In A Glass Box (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Gwenavieve Enslin)

Your dad says proudly that he did design you himself:
your eyes, nose and mouth are genetically from him.
Your mother says that she is your own breeding machine,
the paediatrician says that you may go home tomorrow
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Fragile, ill and brittle you lay and wait
and I pray that you will be well on the following day.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Little Princess In A Glass Box (Sonnet)

Your dad says proudly that he did design you himself
and your eyes, nose and mouth are genetically from him.
Your mother says that she is your own breeding machine,
the paediatrician says that you may go home tomorrow
and it is much more than just a maybe.

I am astounded by you small long body
where you are laying in a glass box with a blue light
and we would not want it any different
where you are growing at the speed of wind
and your eyes are covered by minutely small sunglasses
against the sharp light that is blinding you
and your grandmother wants to pull you much closer.

Fragile and brittle you lay and wait
where the machine is doing its work to the following day.

Gert Strydom

Living In A World Of Our Own

How long ago has it been, since the day
that you wore a red dress
outside that glass citadel
where the hopes and dreams of nations
are lost in?

It somehow made you look so utterly young,
so alive and the wind made your blonde hair
look wild, giving you an untamed look
at the small fountain of the United Nations

the sun was so very bright,
that even the sunglasses
wasn't enough to dim the light

and the boats sailing on the river,
was somewhat romantic
if you can find that kind of thing
anywhere in that busy America
with cars shattering the peace,
travelling by at speed

and it had been a really great day
with us living in a world of our own.

Gert Strydom

Living Separate Is A Kind Of Hell (Sestina)

I

Coming into the valley there are three distinct ways
and one I see but two of them are totally out of sight
on foggy days but can be seen on the open sunny days,
while outside it's as dim as if in the falling kind of light,
while in the rain outside still the birds do God praise,
and in the distance is the big sold dark hill at its height.

II

My love is at my hearts breadth, depth and its height
where it comes to you in all the words, deeds and ways
that can bring you happiness, respect and great praise,
even in the unsaid things that remains out of sight,
where you face and eyes do glow as if with an own light,
where you do enchant and liven up my days

III

and here in this lovely vale without you I have days
where it is as this kind of pain is at its height
and from this separation between us there is no light,
where our lives had gone in their different ways
and without you the future seems dim and out of sight,
where for this kind of life there is no praise

IV

but daily I pray for us both and still do God praise,
pray that He in omnipotence would straighten our days,
where He is my friend but holy and out of sight,
lives far off glorious, are respected on His height,
but right here do daily care in many small ways,
are for me the direction and in life the light.

V

I wish that you could experience with me the morning light,
that with the different birds we could together God praise,
where nature has a great beauty in almost all of its ways,
where we could wander through the veldt on sunny days,
could climb the mountain up to its highest height
and all of the town and countryside would be a sight.

VI

In your new life our love for each other might be out of sight,
where in your work you are constantly in the light,
are now at your career's ultimate impressive height
and people do you daily impress, admire and praise,
where only work and some more work are in your days,
where we do both view life in totally different ways.

VII l'Envoi

Writing this you call and do me praise, say my poetry is at its height,
you say you have our love and my words in sight, in dusk's fading light,
promise to compensate in many ways that you will be here in three more days.

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Gert Strydom

Locked-Down I Want To Be With You

You are in my heart, mind, soul and spirit,
the one who I long for and do miss
and locked-down I want to be with you.
You are in my heart, mind, soul and spirit
and as my wife you are flesh of my flesh,
the one who are most important in life to me.
You are in my heart, mind, soul and spirit,
the one who I long for and do miss.

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Gert Strydom

Lolly Jackson

(in answer to Edwin Arlington Robinson)

One morning in Bedfordview
I saw him passing in a red Ferrari,
the very next day on my way to work,
he drove by in a yellow Lamborghini
and the newspaper said he was caught
doing over two hundred kilometres per hour
and it must have been in his white Porsche
on his way to church,
when he tried to catch up for being late

and I visited Teazers at a few places
while those bars belonged to him
saw some lovely topless girls
serving drinks,
as waitresses and thought
that he was a very lucky man

and one morning
while driving past his large mansion,
about twenty girls
stood in pyjamas, in very thin apparel
on the pavement
while the house was burning down
and it was quite a sight
with all of those lovely ladies
firemen and television news crews

and my life carried on,
with work at another company
and I did not pass there anymore

and one night the television news said
that he had been shot dead
and that the police
was looking for a certain man
who did it.

[Reference: "Richard Cory" by Edwin Arlington Robinson.]

Gert Strydom

Lonely (Italian Sonnet)

(after William Bloke Modisane)

When I am so very lonely I do think of you only,
while in my heart the sadness wants to scream
and your intimate voice I hear in every dream,
as you do constantly remain so very dear to me.

but in life from each other we are apart and free
where my life and world is not what it might seem,
and the fear of losing you rises in me like steam
while with you I need to find peace and tranquillity

my voice echoes down life's abandoned alley
where only you can my heart's painful yells hear
while the echoes go far to where you are
as if the sound finds you stuck away in some abbey
where of losing you completely I do fear
where from me at times you are so very far.

[Reference:"Lonely" by William Bloke Modisane.]

Gert Strydom

Long Ago A Man

Long ago a man
with sandals and a cloak
walked on dust roads
and like it is with people
he was different.

He saw every one as his brother
and sister
and shared his possessions
with everyone around him.

Love, compassion and comprehension
was in his eyes
and he did nothing
for his own advantage

and still today
his tracts lie wide
and they cannot fade away.

Gert Strydom

Long Beach

On long beach
we swam in the cold water
before walking up to the wreck
of the Kakapo
which were covered with sand
with pieces of rusting iron
sticking out
like a big skeleton
and a round semi-circle at the back.

The sand was soft
and white under our feet
with Chapman's Peak and Noordhoek
towering up above us,
within walking distance.

Gert Strydom

Long Before Becoming Substance (Cavatina)

Long before becoming substance, Your love
protected me,
You already knew all the many things
that I would be;
beyond the understanding of mere man
serenity,
the greatest glory envelopes You,
while constantly to me You do stay true.

Gert Strydom

Long Before My Birth (2)(Cavatina)

Long before my birth, my father walked,
talked with You
and before being substance You knew
all that I would do,
nothing escapes are everywhere,
You do stay true
when all around me my world falls apart,
You do still live in the depths of my heart.

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Gert Strydom

Long Before My Birth (Cavatina)

Long before my birth, my father walked,
talked with you
and before being substance you knew
all that I would do;
nothing escapes You, You are everywhere,
You do stay true
when all around me my world falls apart,
You do still live in the depths of my heart

Gert Strydom

Long Have I Dreamed As A Warrior

Long have I dreamed
as a warrior
to have the right weapons
and armour
to be able to face any foe.

Bring me the shield of Achilles
that can block every blow
and twist to wherever
An enemy go.

Give me the aegis of Athena
to cover my back and my chest
on which the circling snakes
never rest
and spit beams of lightning
on whoever touches me.

Let the giant sword of Goliath
find its way into my hand
and when the blue steel flickers
no enemy will be able to stand.

but moreover let the spear of bitter mercy
protect me
even against unseen enemies
and let me remember
who's side it did pierce
and always be true to Him.

Gert Strydom

Long Jumper

Early he had measured his own steps,
wanted to get the distance correct
to reach his utmost, very biggest jump,
instinctively he did already know
that this single moment, this split second
would take everything from ingenuity
and he did then prepare himself,
but at great speed that was eating power

he knows that he is breaking the record
as if the air is giving him some wings,
is swept with everything that he has,
as if life is moulded to the moment
as if he begs God for very fulfilment
in that jump he has to give something.

Gert Strydom

Long, Long Ago There Were Two People

Long, long ago there were two people (just you and me)
and we wed and then divorced,
to my remorse and my years were empty without you
and I couldn't get you out of my heart.

While I had been a student,
I visited you and Shaun
and he was dressed
in a yellow jersey and dark green pants

and you were dumbfounded by life
as if nothing could still pervade you
and yet
I could get a smile out of you

while he rocked
on his ball up and down
and could laugh so easily.

A curate then wanted to know from me
if now I want to fornicate in duplicate,
as I still loved you.

So I wondered if he
honours the same God as I
and what his holiness
is teaching him?

At times I were really stupid
and still our lives came together
and we grew more mature and learnt
and I also later broke your heart.

¶Envoi

Still you are the one who looks
into my thoughts and soul
and knows what I am thinking
and really understands me

and there is nobody
that I can compare you too

and when I close my eyes
I want to look into yours
and with you in my arms
I want to go to sleep.

Gert Strydom

Long, Long Ago There Were Two People [2]

Long, long ago there were two people (just you and me)
and to my remorse my life was empty without you
and I couldn't get you out of my heart.

I visited you and Shaun
and he was dressed
in a yellow jersey and dark green pants

and we married and was then divorced
and it was my wish to embrace you again.
Long, long ago there were two people (just you and me)

and I was trapped like an animal in a corner
not aware that you loved me still
and he was dressed

as if for a visit from me
and to me his eyes were bright blue
and I couldn't get you out of my heart

and to me your life were only based on pleasure
still you are the one that looks into my deepest soul
and I did not know that you loved me still

and it looked as if you still wanted to be free from me
and did not know that you still liked me.
Long, long ago there were two people (just you and me)

and nobody I can compare to you,
with you that really understand me
still you are the one that looks into my deepest soul

with whom I wanted take life on,
the one around whom my feelings doesn't fade
and I couldn't get you out of my heart,

but then my life went on without direction
and you astounded me,
with you that really understand me,

I drove thousands of miles from you,
believed that your loved had forever withered away.
Long, long ago there were two people (just you and me)
and I couldn't get you out of my heart

and our lives did touch each other's.
I visited you and Shaun
and you astounded me,
in a yellow jersey and dark green pants.

Gert Strydom

Longing (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Marius Absalom)

I smell the rain that pours down and keeps falling on the wet ground
when a lightning-bolt does come down blue-white in the concrete jungle,
but everywhere small groups of people stand around in the alleys
and I would escape back to the rural countryside if I could
while neon-lights keep advertising all kinds of things
and slowly I take step after step while evil does hang over the city,
the stars glitter far away above the lights and busy traffic
while I do long for better days and back to my childhood days
and there is a gambol, music and lights that drone and hum,
young people everywhere together do laugh happily and its dark night
and when a dark figure comes nearer and my heart skips a beat,
for danger I am ready and do expect the worst
but in a black leather jacket a much older man walks past
while the eternal longing for peace and tranquillity do remain in my heart.

[Reference:"Verlange" (Longing)by Marius Absalom.]

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Gert Strydom

Look How Recklessly The Moon Is Shining

My darling, look how recklessly the moon is shining,
see how all of the stars sparkle
as if never again
there will be a night like this.

Have you not read my message
in the stars above your head?
How much I love you,
where you are here next to me?

I wish I could put all of the flowering jacaranda trees
in all of Pretoria
into my words to you

and all of the flowers in our garden
to make you realise how beautiful this spring is

but I am saying only
how much I love you,
where you are here next to me.

Gert Strydom

Loosing Its Material Form

As if stomping out of a dream one night
just as I put out the light
and was blinded by darkness
with red glowing evil eyes
in its black face
a demonic beast appeared
and materialised into solid flesh

much larger than life
with its head against the ceiling
as broad as three well built large men
combined into one
and the terror of him
got like a drug into me
making me lame
right through my body.

In the sudden moonlight I saw
his clothes of leather just as black
and he bended over me
and nearer he came
squashed me with both hands
as if he was going to pulverise
every part into the very cells
from which my body is made,

but when I thought that I couldn't
get a sound out
the name of God
whom I called for help
made it disappear,
reducing it to fine particles

looking like a television set
with no reception
where it fade away
into the naught
and then it was gone
loosing its material form

and then I really knew
about the power of His name
and that out of every thing
and in every situation
He could rescue me
and prayed and even felt safe
against demonic beings.

Gert Strydom

Lord

Lord, teach me to like a child cling to Your fatherly hand
and Lord, send your angels to daily guard over me,
to walk ahead on the way that I still do have to go
and teach me to trust on you unending love and

Gert Strydom

Lord May There Fall Light

Lord may there fall light
and bring revelation
of every dark place
in my humanity.

Make me faithful to only You
and help me
keep with Your word.

Let these times become holy
right through the darkness
and let me see Your bigger light:

help me to take each step
on the right way
that leads to You
and walk with me.

Gert Strydom

Lord Of Power And Strength

Lord of power and strength
that rules the universe,
created earth, planets, stars
with vast space into infinity,

in the sky and on earth
the great magic of Thy
works I see
and just but a speck I am
against Thy great immensity
and still I am dear to Thee.

Gert Strydom

Lord Touch Our Eyes To See

Lord touch our eyes to see
in every plant the flower
that it brings,

in winter the rest
before the spring
that is coming,

in steely grey clouds
the rain that quenches
the thirst of everything living

and beyond all of this
to know from where
all good things come

and that unseen
Your servants dwell
among men ever helping,
protecting and spreading Your love.

Gert Strydom

Lord, God The Father

You are fair to judge me
and to judge all of my iniquity
as a man I was born into a world of evil
and also to judge me of the evils that I do not see

the ones that was present when I did begin
the ones through me did others win
it is Your right and duty to judge me
as only Your own Son is free from sin

but by the blood and mercy of Your Son
all of those vile things are now undone
and in His cloak His righteous life
I stand before you as a sinless one.

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Gert Strydom

Lord, Help Us To Lead A Life

Lord, help us to lead a life
that's free from oppression
and let us keep our eyes
only on You.

Give strength to the people
who are leading this country
that they get insight, wisdom
and guidance from You.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Here Where I Stand On My Knees

I want to stretch out my hand
that Your omnipotent hand can take mine
and help me find the kind of faith
to believe like a mere child
without any certainty
and keep trusting that You
do only want the best for me.

Gert Strydom

Lord, How Easily We Keep You Responsible

Lord, how easily we keep You responsible
for every disaster hitting us on this apostate rebel earth
and still You see everything, every moment

that things decay into amok, how touching
we are seeking to a greater worthiness.
Lord, how easily we keep You responsible

and we never think properly,
we at times want to judge You according to our feelings
and still You see everything, every moment

where we act in aberration, at times totally without humanity,
act against other older people.
Lord, how easily we keep You responsible

as if the consequence of our choices and deeds are infectious from You,
to further send us to damnation, bring infection to everyone, even the elderly
and still You see everything, every moment

where we are suffering, are following You or are avoiding, every deed and
glance,
where You look into the depths and to You nothing is at face value.
Lord, how easily we keep You responsible
for every disaster hitting us on this apostate rebel earth.

Gert Strydom

Lord, I Know That Even In Impossibilities You Are Able To Act

Lord, you rescued my nation
when a onslaught of thousands of Zulu's
came at Blood River
against less than five hundred
with flintlock rifles

and when Cubans with armour under Soviet control
drew up in divisions
and a war about Africa was loosened,
we trusted You

but now the Afrikaner nation has been brought
under rule by another culture,
that does not regard You
and murder and take whatever they want
and see the lives of others and possessions
as their own.

¶ Envoi

Lord God, I know that even in impossibilities
You are able to act
and ask that You remember
the covenant of our ancestors

and take note of this injustice
and that You in Your righteousness
cause this oppression to end
that the sun may shine as well
over my people.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Let These Days Be Consecrated

Lord, let these days
be consecrated
and let I read signs
of Your presence
in every thing around me.

Let we live in times
where integrity, honour
and brotherly love
is at the order of the day.

Let other people
see You in us
and let the wide world know
that we serve You.

Lord, let these days
be consecrated
as if You are among us.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Let Your Name Be Kept Holy

Lord, let Your name be kept holy
by all of the people of this country,
let we see Your presence
in each others words and deeds

and let us know
that we do serve the same God.

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Gert Strydom

Lord, Never Might I Truly Understand (Cavatina)

Lord, never might I truly understand,
that God and man
You are both, but Your divine selfless love
does widely span
through all my thoughts, through all what I do see,
Your Godly plan
brings to my greatest iniquities grace
and I long to see Your loving kind face.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Only In Your Footsteps (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Lord, only in Your footsteps there is life for me
and Your life sets me free from all of my iniquity
but every day I do struggle and fall
to stay step upon step with Thee.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Protect This Sister (Parody)

(with apologies to J.M. Synge)

Lord, protect this sister and any visiting mister
enlighten her brow and let her know nothing sinister
protect her heart, lung and liver and never make her shiver
and in her guts, in her soul a calling give her.

Let her live with free delivered dinners
at a holiday resort as a saint among sinners:
Lord, Your blessings give
and she will surely delightfully live.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Teach Me

Lord, teach me to still trust in You
even when I do not see Your presence in my life
and when I do need to walk through the darkest places
then be there to hold onto my hand.

My whole life, those that I do love and everything that is mine
does have a end and a beginning in Your hand,
are only borrowed to me for a time
and every action, word and sentence

are remembered by You where it has a impact on someone else
and Lord, as a mere man I do continually ask you for mercy.

Gert Strydom

Lord, Why I Got Leave Everything Behind

Lord, why have I got to leave everything behind,
why must I abandon at a time and place
my darling wife and also my own will
and why have I got to go away alone,
to cover my eyes with my hands before You
and reach You as a single person;
I feel so blemished against Your pure light
and before You I stand totally alone;
You had brought love for all of my hatred.

Gert Strydom

Lord, You Are The Captain Of My Soul (In Answer To William Ernest Henley)

Even when the darkest darkness covers me
when no compass can find its magnetic pole,
when there is nothing at all that I can see
You still beacon me to draw my very soul.

In the striking of destiny and chance,
Your power is still here, is still about,
in the worst of any circumstance
You still care when I am really worn out.

Through the aging of many passing years
with You at my side, I am unafraid,
as in all happiness and all my tears
You are constantly coming to my aid.

Wherever my life goes, whatever is my destiny,
Your consistent love keeps making me whole
and leaves all my choices totally free
while You steer my life, are captaining my soul.

Gert Strydom

Lord, You Are The Word (Italian Sonnet)

You are the word that is all life,
who spoke at the very origin
who caused all things to begin
in a perfect way without any strife.

You made everything that is alive,
even when Lucifer came with sin,
self-sacrificing You did that battle win,
did forgive Adam and his lovely wife

and yet today mere men do You betray,
they do act and speak as if You do not exist
as if a god each one is without conscience
and yet still today Your way is the best way
but to follow their own will they do insist,
do find the answers to all things in science.

Gert Strydom

Lord, You Have Got My Country In Your Hand

I

Lord, you have got my country in your hand,
have broken my whole world that's around me,
stripped it, the precipice is everywhere
and have also taken my whole career.
Like the apostle Paul I stand in your light,
are blinded, try to get some direction,
but am smitten down upon this old earth
with a kind of pain that cuts right through me

still sight is being revealed to me
and where I pray, fall humble at your feet
you know everything, keep protecting me
as the great ruler of the universe.
Sometimes it feels like a life sentence,
but now I really know the true meaning.

II

But now I really know the true meaning
of being your child, your adopted son,
in the night around me, I know no fear
when everything suddenly is worthless
and destiny firmly, definitely
takes my property, wife and her children,
with my life broken as if it cannot heal
my country rejects me as if I am missing

but I had to come to a turn around,
while I still see your bright light shining,
that life sometimes brings a kind of poverty
had to become my own dim reality,
I had to wander in the black darkness,
I had to learn to only hold your hand.

III

I had to learn to only hold your hand,
how long do I have to beg for mercy,
do I have to trust you only blindly,
when real demons reach with their hands to me?
As a human stand against this rebellion,
when my own world is declining with me,
it feels as if darkness folds all over me,
not if Michael is conquering at all.

The onslaught shows that I am straight on target,
that my poems make the enemy vulnerable,
I have to know from the sheer fierceness
that you do win, I am touching crisis points
but teach me to trust childlike upon you,
without my poor faith in you abating.

IV

Without my poor faith in you abating
when I take the road leading to salvation,
let me then hold onto your mighty hand,
even if great evil is around me,
even if I am picking a thorny cane,
even if time passes far too quickly,
it feels I am taking an endless road
but I will get true salvation from you

where all my life is braided together,
trapped in a nest of quite painful thorns,
it is you that decide over my lot,
each day I learn a new kind of lesson,
things get right very slowly, bit by bit
when you free me, when you show me the way.

V

When you free me, when you show me the way
when the night is dark, radiates nothing,
it looks as if I am deteriorating,
when the small golden moon wanders away
your pure light will still fall upon me

where my life is like a bright small flower,
with destiny thundering in destruction,
I become somewhat dead and even dumb,

do not know how to get out of it all,
will you then still be leading me further
to where the sun rises, is bright again,
past my own fear and all of my conceit,
do you still stay with me, when I am down,
in the wet road with lamps in a dim row?

VI

In the wet road with lamps in a dim row
the faint light reflects from the falling rain,
tonight it is where I get purity,
stand washed somewhat clean and pure
against the pattering, falling water
in which there is a great kind of healing,
you understand me and are washing me,
are bringing sincerity, forgiveness

while my deceit washes away from me,
with neon lights surrounded by great fog
I am freed by dropp for dropp that falls down
as if in the storm I find purification,
you again bring me back to conversion,
in no exposure, hero veneration.

VII

In no exposure, hero veneration
praise that the angel of darkness brings,
can I sing his lustre or of his works.
Only to you, God, I am giving glory.
To you I aim my gifts, so insignificant
as a kind of love, as appreciation
as you are protecting this wanderer,
make deep words sprout from me that circle out.

Almighty Lord, I want to sing a psalm

about your love that is self-sacrificing
where you are still ruling everywhere,
about you as a living parable
that reaches with truth through all the darkness,
Lord, you have got my country in your hand.

Gert Strydom

Lorelei

(after Heinrich Heine)

In my thoughts a legend remains
about a beautiful young girl that sings crystal-clear
and every man that come into contact with her
is lured to destruction,

at a critical time attention is drawn away,
when she combs through her tresses,
her song sweeps a person away at the most dangerous place,
of her remains the loveliest impression

and the helmsman and every other man only see the young woman
that leaves them with beauty and a sorrowful song speechless
where a boat near to an I rock sails on the Rhine
and suddenly unexpectedly they run aground

but in my thoughts there is much more to this
where a young woman with confidence does lead a man astray,
where his attention is only on her and everything is going to hell,
and enraptured she leads him to another life.

Through all times this thing is noted down in history
and with me stays a young woman and in a dance she turns,
where she causes a king and a man of God to loose their heads,
while Salome exposes herself and step and turn.

[Poet's notes:"Die Lorelei" by Heinrich Heine.
Matthew14: 1-11.]

Gert Strydom

Loss

In the might Orange River
just past Augrabies
you lost your magic ring
and there princess
you cried
while the water around you
circled out wider.

That knotted Russian wedding band
which should have brought you luck
that was for generations in your family
was grabbed
by the fingers of the red water
and was washed away
to maybe decorate the finger
of a dark goddess

and in your soul
you felt the darkness coming near
as if something crept
from the water right into your soul

and the shadows of willow trees
growing on the banks
reached out ominous
as if they were trying to protect you
against something.

Still the sun was bright in the sky,
the blue stretched over the heaven
and your reflection which was thrown
on the surface of the water
was matchless
and I saw tears in your dark green eyes.

Gert Strydom

Lost Angel

In valleys of concrete I have lost you
and in this godless city
where one hears the noise of sirens, brakes
and car engines, you walk
into someone else's arms

and lights flash luring right through the night
while people cavort as if there is no tomorrow,
untill the morning sun rises in the east,

prostitutes wipe the sleep out of their eyes
and motorists curse and throw dirty signs at each other.

In valleys of concrete I have lost you
and now you have just become a memory,
another fallen angel
in this hell of a place.

Gert Strydom

Lost In Rural Suburbia

Streetlights flicker on at the end of day,
the day is gone,
I am on my way far too suddenly
with headlights on,
all around me many tall buildings rise
solid like stone
there are some busy people everywhere,
are always rushing, going here and there.

Coming is darkness of the early night,
some neon lights flash,
the large city does never really sleep,
some people dash
to be in time for dinner appointments,
heaps of old trash
line some of the long backward narrow streets
where whores and slimy characters meet.

No tranquillity is in this city,
I drive away
to somewhere in a old rural suburb,
the headlights play
over a very old graveyard with trees;
on no new day
all the kinsmen that sleep there will awake,
from the high palisade some old paint flake.

I stop across at a small grocery shop,
life I ponder,
were the lives of all those people fairer?
Here and yonder
they daily worked their farms and cornfields
and I wonder
about changing times, about rural bliss,
about how full of crime daily life now is.

This suburb has a own kind of gentleness
with big old trees,
teenagers in love not knowing about

flowers and bees;
I have got to rush to still shop in time,
some employees
are busy leaving, are on their way home
and I get a smile as the owner's welcome.

Gert Strydom

Lost Love (English Sonnet)

Sheer grief did drive him almost off his mind
and suddenly some strange things he can see
and odd things that no other man can find
becomes clear, but this is not sympathy

and he can see tiny flowers growing,
their buds opening petal by small petal
every bird's wing in motion fluttering
rocks glimmering with their inner metal

and amplified sound comes to his ear,
the wind rushing along in the distance
the chirping of some small finches in fear
and though almost godlike the hindrance

between him and his beloved dear wife
he cannot pass, enter that place alive.

Gert Strydom

Lost Paradise

Around me in my country it looks
as if everything and everybody are loosing control,
do shattering continue into the darkness,
women want to be past board-thin
as if everything does clatter mechanically on
and all of life is without meaning
in a paradise that has gone to hell
in which everything honest, good and reasonable does decay

but when I do awake early in the morning
there still are the bird bringing songs of praise to You,
the cosmos that after the rain suddenly everywhere do flower
and I know that You do notice the oppression,
in times of crisis You do still straighten the way
and I do experience that You do truly constantly answer prayers,
still have got control over everything
as the king of the universe
and in disorder, chaos and decay
at Your own time You do come to salvation.

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Gert Strydom

Lotus Land

I.

There are no more oxen
to tread through the dust,
not even those of A.G. Visser
or Jan F.E. Cilliers
because they have died long ago
or are eaten
by Afrikaners as steak
and there's no wagon
to be drawn,
because every chariot has its own power
and its own beauty too.

II.

Fast the kilometres rush past
and marsh and meadow
are driven through before sunrise
and if you leave at dawn
you can reach the Cape before dusk
and we are already living in a languid country
where the sauce train
comes and get many people
while the others
still have to pay tax.

Some sit without education in offices
passing the hours on their chairs
while they do not know how to work
or to do a task
and are just waiting for their wage
or to talk on the phone

III.

The rich get richer

while white men
that can work and have university education,
are jobless
and women now try to do their thing.

The ignorant becomes bosses
that only knows how to cringe
and by black economic empowerment
and affirmative action
uneducated get big salaries
while the country slides backwards.

IV.

Wanderers even come from other countries
and just where they can
they squat.

At every traffic light people stand and beg
and do not know
how to work
and with coins and rands
that everybody give in pity
this evil is strengthened.

V.

Caning is gone out of the schools
and most children do not know
respect anymore
and do not know how to learn
or to honour their parents
and I wonder what have become of my people
and where our country is going
and if everything is rushing to the end?

[References: "Lotus-Land" by A.G. Visser and "Die Ossewa" by Jan F.E. Celliers.]

Gert Strydom

Louw Wepener

When Wepener climbed mount Bosigo
the steel assegai points
glittered against the slope.

His rifle hit its own thunder
where he stood
against a horde of the enemy.

Shooting loading and shooting
while assegais shining
like falling rain from the air

and the Almighty
asked a brave man a sacrifice,
to like His Son carry a cross.

[Reference: Ter nagedagtenis van Kommandant Louw Wepener by F.W. Reitz.
Assegai = A spear.]

Gert Strydom

Love

I love you
and am blessed,
that you love me too.

For some people destiny determines,
that they stay lonely
and never love someone.

Others love someone
and are too afraid,
to do something about it.

Some people love
and lose it,
at a time

The tragedy is
when nobody,
ever comes to love you.

Gert Strydom

Love & Girl (Argonelle)

Why love?

I see your eyes glitter
sky-blue full of sparkling pure light
pretty deep, secretive and bright
I see your eyes glitter.

Why girl?

Your glance now is soulless
as if all of life is missing
without any feeling closing
your glance now is soulless.

Gert Strydom

Love [1]

What is love, an almost incomprehensible thing
that makes you crazy over somebody,
while you are getting more and more involved
and you see something romantic in all twilights

almost hear her voice in every whispering,
even in images on the other side of sleep,
drinking happiness out of the cups of the gods
as if surrounded by something supernatural

it leads you on new unknown roads
with something unique in every kiss,
forms a unit of you, and I
ecstatically soothes with absolute bliss,
as if nothing can divorce you from each other
and it is a covenant, until the final rest.

Gert Strydom

Love 2

Sometimes I do wonder how to catch
love in mere words.

Are you and I only coincidental
characters in it

that does know something of it and do experience it
but never do bring it to full meaning
and sometimes I can express something of it
and at other times my words become twisted

as if there is something deeper,
more beautiful
that do pervade more vivid
than mere words?

Gert Strydom

Love Alters Not

(after William Shakespeare)

Let me state with all of humankind
as my witness, that love is more than bliss,
is much more than the drawing of a kiss,
it does no error or any change find,

it is true to the body, soul and mind,
in the simple things of each day it is
and all other allures it does dismiss,
much stronger than life, pass death it does bind,

burns with a kind of eternal hot flame
which wanders not within time, months or weeks,
its acts, its words continually does bloom,
in hardship it does not find any blame,
eternally sincerity it seeks,
it stays true, even at the gates of doom.

[Reference: "Sonnet 116 Let me to the marriage of true minds" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Love And Loving

(after Robert Browning)

Right through spring
I bought her bunches of roses and carnations
that were flowering
wrote verses in anticipation
that somehow these things would catch her eye
but she had even thrown a sheave away to die.

In mere meagre words
I tried to put all of my love,
as my feelings to my wife to prove
but her actions were cutting me like swords
when she chose another above me,
demanded from our marriage to be free.

During our separation I phoned her
and she acted as if I were someone unknown
while in the background I heard her lover whisper
and around me my entire world had fallen down
while she acted in iniquity
and I heard them both laugh in glee.

I'Envoi

Since then many years have gone
while with other women my life went on
and I know love and loving well,
that it can be either heaven or hell.

[Reference: "One way of love" by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Love And Science

If love is just
a chemical reaction
then how do a scientist explain
the thought process
that accompanies it
and feelings that are real and true,
if it's all just a chemical hue?

Gert Strydom

Love Between Us Is Another Kind Of Thing (Free Verse Sonnet)

At night when the heat of the summer-day is gone
it sounds as if the whole house is listening to you and me,
it seems as if the stars and moon are whispering to each other
about the secrets of the times between you and me,
even the weavers have about us a kind of knowledge,
where we find each other in an adventure in the darkness,
while every promise and covenant between us seems more real,
where we do live together in our own bond.
Love between us is another kind of thing,
there is much more than just bodily passion to it,
where sincerely I do entrust you to God,
it causes the heart to sing from mere joy
and at times a person cannot really comprehend it,
as something eternal remains between you and me.

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Love Cannot Be Captured

Love cannot be captured,
mapped or referenced
in the essence of how it exists
of how in real life it actually is
as oblique, roundabout and indirect
a person do suddenly advance into it
or unexpectedly it does call at the door
where it does alter life
does alter how we act and believe and are,
does alter the heart, the spirit and the soul.

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Gert Strydom

Love Cannot Be Hidden (Novelinee)

(after Charles Dickens)

Love cannot be hidden, or set aside
its impact is present on every day,
it's there like the sky that is blue and wide
and it is radiant like a sunny ray.
Even if kept in total secrecy
life is not the same as it was before,
love changes things from what they used to be
as it goes to the very centre core,
from where its impact is seen more and more.

[Reference: "Song" "Love is not a feeling to pass away" by Charles Dickens.]

Gert Strydom

Love Comes To Me (Cavatina)

Love comes to me both selfishly and selfless;
every thought
has something happy, a own purity
silently brought
by your very presence, a essence
that's heartfelt sought,
up to the very heights you do me raise,
with all the unspoken words of your gaze

Gert Strydom

Love Does Not Keep To Seasons

Love does not keep to seasons,
is not caught by days, by months or by time
and where it really is true
not even death can lock it down.

Even when age wrecks features,
when money dwindles away,
love has the capacity
to still stay true,

still sees through the eyes
that in youth found beauty and sincerity
has a link to the divine,
and in all of this I want you to be mine.

Gert Strydom

Love Explicitly

The bedroom is set
for comfort and convenience
in pastel colours with paintings
hanging on the walls

her fingers, tongue and mouth
like butterflies
are fluttering over my whole body
letting passion build up and up

and her naked body
throws a shadow on the wall
where candles give light with flickering flames,
with her supple body being gracious and slim

almost looking as a mural,
that by itself gets energy and life
when moments and eternity
stretches out between the two of us

with her hot breath
softly blowing against my cheek
she moves slowly with rhythm,
purposeful and without haste

making of every moment
a masterwork of passion and pleasure
and hissing sounds
turn into moans of pleasure and joy.

Gert Strydom

Love Expresses Itself Nevertheless

I fear no grieving widow, even if the world wails
I have no yearning to issue another one of me
even if earth weeps and with sombre details
declares that the last of my days will be,

and even if my life is spend,
life still has its sorrows and its joys
the entire world does not end,
it is still filled with its pleasures and its ploys

and in truth no child though from my body
is truly me and even in temperament we are apt to be different
and love appears by itself, is different for everybody
and still I am living and far from spent:

there is no shame nor is it heartless to be childless,
without fear love expresses itself nevertheless.

(In answer to William Shakespeare/Reference: Sonnet 9 "Is it fear to wet a widow's eye" by William Shakespeare.)

Gert Strydom

Love Has Begun (Cavatina)

Your perfect white smile is like a fragment
of the hot sun,
there are great fires in your blazing brown eyes,
love has begun
between us in a simple way, day to day
a world of fun
awaits me secretly when you are near,
in your sweet voice a thousand songs I hear.

Gert Strydom

Love Has Got Something

Love has got something
of feelings and a decisions
mended together,
but how do you
express it in words?

Some things
you can't just say
to laid bare
the depths of it.

Words and deeds
together just gives a view
about what is going on in the heart.

Still there are times
that it feels
as if things are really perfect
and you really know
and understand each other
and together
go into life.

Gert Strydom

Love Has Its Own Language

The intensity of kisses,
the look in eyes
that burns flaming,
the touch of hands
which is loaded with intensity,
is all without true meaning
if there isn't love
between partners.

Love has its own language,
that people speak with each other
and at times words are needless:

The silent understanding
of what is going on in the heart,
the gladness and trust
which leaks out of its own accord,
the being together
without having
to touch each other;
says deeper things
without having to use words.

Gert Strydom

Love Has No Kind Of Impediments (Cavatina Sequence)

(after William Shakespeare)

Love has got no kind of impediments,
it does stay true,
its direction does not wander about,
its simple bright hue
like a star sets an unfaltering mark,
it does shine through
the darkest bitter kind of circumstance
goes far deeper than only some romance.

True love is present in every glance,
some soft lips, cheeks
do entrance, but its totally timeless,
it does not seek
something better for itself, it's selfless,
at times it's meek,
yet wild, unfathomable in essence,
it draws two people to its own presence.

[Reference: 'Sonnet 116: Let Me Not to the Marriage of True Minds' by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Love Is

Love is a wonderful thing,
that can bring
the greatest joy,
or it can sting,
like nothing else.

Gert Strydom

Love Is (Rubliw)

Love is
the things we miss
and yet its not just bliss
or something hidden in a kiss
but the simple kindness of every day
the small words and acts that we may
in the depths of the mind
do leave behind
or miss.

Gert Strydom

Love Is (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare, after Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

Love does not have impediments; do not alternate the heart and mind,
is true in conscience, like the compass to the pole and is an act of will,
it does not excuse, problems, temptation or wrongs of any kind find,
it brings joy, happiness, bliss, tranquillity and does stand against all ill,

where it does encompass the breadth, depth, height in its own essence,
do measure with ideal grace and in the tempest it stays on the true mark,
in all things it does stick to what is right, has compassion in its presence,
do not waver by circumstance, is not changed by time or when it's dark,

love is secure with firm beliefs, childhood faith, is steadfast does not roam,
stands objective at the very precipice and in everything does stay unshaken,
in jeopardy under the influence of fate it does not to other objectives come,
it is timid, kind, enrapturing and extreme judgements by it is never taken,

love change not in days, months, years, centuries or aeons or do presence loose
it cannot be bought or sold: it is principle, passion and compassion put to great
use.

[References: "Sonnet 116 Let me not to the marriage of true minds"
by William Shakespeare. "How do I love thee, let me count the ways"
by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Love Is [2]

Love is much more
than being together in bed,
much more than the solace
which two bodies, two souls find
in a accomplished intimate act
and I could have told you
how deep its intensity, its principles go
but when you are sleeping on my chest
the whole wide world is at rest
and maybe then love is at its best
while I am truly blessed.

Gert Strydom

Love Is A Bitter Thing

Love is a bitter thing
that cuts nastily,
Through my heart.

Too many beautiful things
still lies too spring fresh,
between you and me
for love to end by itself.

I do not know what to do
to stop love from disappearing somewhere
between yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Every time that you are with me
I know that things between us,
are still sparkling alive.

The things between the lines in each conversation,
your body language and your fingers that draw lines
through my hair,
betrays what lies hidden deep in your heart.

It does not make sense that you want it dead
and your words say that it is past,
but still you want to be with me.

Gert Strydom

Love Is As Strong As A Person Do Believe In It

1

The world becomes full of leaves that autumn scatters around
and cheerful like a child you throw shopping bags on the bed,
look life and me in the eyes, joyful smile,
and today you are to me lovely and far past pretty,

2

(your heart rejoices...it's as if you cannot wait,
you greet me with a kiss; say sincerely that you do regard me with respect)

3

Outside a dove do coo in a tree of which the leaves are turning brown,
you smell of the jasmine and gardenia from the garden,
you now live only for me and I have got all of your attention,
I guess you have got a gift for me, they probably charged you a small fortune,

4

(your heart rejoices...it's as if you cannot wait,
secretly you do delay and tell me about your day)

5

Outside the sky is dull-blue the sun still bright and strong,
on the bed's cabinet is the Bible that you do study and mark,
I look directly at you and here you now have me in your power,
between us the atmosphere is very intimate in the room,

6

(your heart rejoices...it's as if you cannot wait
and I wonder what you want to say and do not expect anything strange.)

7

Your eyes are green and brown full of autumn-leaves that are blowing in the
wind

but you are very earthy and a spring- and summer-child,
outside the neighbour's car stops, hoots and I think in a while it will be night
and it's as if constantly I loose you and find you again,

8

(your heart rejoices...it's as if you cannot wait,
you peer deep into my eyes, talk softly :)

9

"Do you know, that days and seasons are passing me,
that here where I am living I do exist only for you,
at times want to scream your name out with all of my power,
as your wife stand before God and everyone? "

10

(your heart rejoices...it's as if you cannot wait:

"I am so glad that you are here and want to cry and laugh.")

[Poet's note:In the Southern Hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

Love Is Far More Than Just Lust Or Desire (Novelinee)

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

Love is far more than just lust or desire
it's something that dwells in every thought,
burning with a kind of immortal fire
something that we do want and sometimes sought,
it's even in solitude and devotion,
a kind of thing that truly makes us whole,
going much deeper than just emotion
bringing selfless glory to the human soul,
at times a never ending kind of goal.

Gert Strydom

Love Is Like A Gentle Smooth Pond

Love is like a gentle smooth pond
and then life comes with its cares and pain
and love's ripple effect spreads far and beyond
and like drops of pure rain
It brings life and your shadow falls next to me
and the pond's surface does reflect you
and life with its complexity
seems far away and our feelings seem true.

Gert Strydom

Love Is Much More (English Sonnet)

(for Daleen, after Lord George Gordon Byron)

Love is much more than just desire
it's a gift and blessing out of heaven,
an immortal essence that spreads like fire,
from the immortal to mortal man given,

it takes human words and acts above
mere mortal ideals and human thought,
where this divine principle is called love,
brings relationships to where they ought,

comes with a distinct kind of inner grace,
do it truly, sincerely and vividly express
touches the expressions of the human face,
to a person can bring either more or less,

and this is how you, darling, do make me whole
you do touch the flesh, heart spirit and the soul.

[Reference: "Love" by Lord George Gordon Byron.]

Gert Strydom

Love Is Not Enough

You did say that love
sometimes is not enough

as if by destiny, words and acts
in something it lacks

whenever for a time we were separate
when words and acts I experienced as hate

and yet love is the only thing
that brings joy to living

and in its act of the divine
freedom from sin is yours and mine

and the greatest true expression is this
is how divine selfless God's love is

but after you did declare our relationship null and void
what was left of our marriage is destroyed,

yet now where from each other we are gone
you are the one who says that love still does live on

and this brings me to remembering
every summer and spring

where together we did the gardening,
together prepared food and did almost everything

and while this was how life was
great times together did pass

while after church together through the streets we did walk
did look at flowers and with each other did constantly talk,

together at times did catch a nap and more
and we did each other truly adore,

while for an honorarium you were working five days a week
(for less than minimum wage) together the Lord we did seek

but then the head elder, doctor, at church said the Sabbath is not
a day of rest and I contested this and for it great trouble I got

and he financed the Butler park hobo ministries outreach scheme,
made sure that you were involved in it as the main member of the team

and far too busy with the things of the church you did become,
together we did not any time spent while you were almost never at home,

even came home at eleven o'clock on a Saturday night
when to poor people he did sent you out as if it was his right

and from all of this I do realise it's what you do with love that does affect it,
if it does grow or do wither and eventually die bit by tiny bit,

that faith and hope and the reasons for living are all a part
of love which is the core engine of the heart.

Gert Strydom

Love Is Not Something That Is For Sale (Villanelle)

Love is not something that is for sale,
it does burn with its own kind of flame,
it does not become trite or even stale,

it does exist between male and female
and between people it is not the same.
Love is not something that is for sale,

about its affects there are many a tale
and for it people do have many a name,
it does not become trite or even stale,

it brings people back when all other things fail
but for some people it's just a kind of game.
Love is not something that is for sale

and at the loss of it some people do turn pale,
others think it's something that you can tame,
it does not become trite or even stale

and for its intensity there is no kind of scale
it can bring a person joy, happiness or shame.
Love is not something that is for sale,
it does not become trite or even stale.

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Gert Strydom

Love Is Something That You Cannot Remove (Catena Rondo)

Love is something that you cannot remove
quite suddenly you know, she knows it too
it is in everything that you say and do,
love is something that you cannot remove

quite suddenly you know, she knows it too,
it is the very quaintest kind of thing
that to you both is suddenly happening
quite suddenly you know, she knows it too,

it is the very quaintest kind of thing
when sense and sensibility brings
to your actions, thoughts and your feelings wings
it is the very quaintest kind of thing

when sense and sensibility brings
a secret understanding that is true,
sincerity that encompass both of you
when sense and sensibility brings

a secret understanding that is true,
when a look carries a message to both
that goes much further than any oath
a secret understanding that is true,

when a look carries a message to both
when the body reacts to a single touch
when pre-comprehension says very much
when a look carries a message to both

when the body reacts to a single touch
when life seems so much greater than it is,
when mere company is full of much bliss
when the body reacts to a single touch,

when life seems so much greater than it is,
when a bond develops around the divine,

selfless you loose the own me and mine
when life seems so much greater than it is,

when a bond develops around the divine
where although separate, you become one,
without each other hardly want to live on
when a bond develops around the divine

where although separate, you become one;
love is something that you cannot remove,
to each other you do not have to prove
where although separate, you become one,

love is something that you cannot remove
quite suddenly you know, she knows it too
it is in everything that you say and do,
love is something that you cannot remove.

Gert Strydom

Love Is Such A Brittle, Fragile Thing (Sonnet)

I do not know why without any cause
you let a barrier, some impediments arise,
why you want to flee away from me
and lash out when I do not deserve
any kind of pain or a scolding?

Truth be told you do hold me dear
but at times act lowly when I am near
and I do wonder about the reasons in your heart,
if you truly at times want to cause us to part?

As a guest, at times I do not feel worthy to be near
and you above all other things I still hold dear
and sometimes at night awake I do lie
while the daily happenings again passes me by,
knowing that love is such a brittle, fragile thing.

Gert Strydom

Love Is The True Measuring

I see a girl bowing before her husband
and washing his feet
and weighing each word and deed
of her own
and begging for his blessing
as if man is nearer to god than woman
and not only human
and she believes in reincarnation.

Some others eliminate the self
and try to live like monks
stripped from self esteem
and earthly pleasures
to find the divine treasure.

But love to me
is the true measuring
of the being supreme
and selfless, pure and keen
the Messiah sacrificed His life
and was not immured by death
and rose serene
above all earthly things
to go to His Father
and yet in Him
both God and man are one.

Gert Strydom

Love Is True (Strambotto Romagnuolo)

With no kind of weakness or impediment
love is true like the compass sticks to the pole
hope, trust, honesty is its embodiment
and where this is lacking there is a huge hole;
not even age does its sheer beauty remove,
its huge power and effect does constant prove,
it is not wandering like the wildest wind
like you it's always true, unselfish and kind.

Gert Strydom

Love Keeps Flowering And Sometimes

Love keeps flowering
and sometimes it comes brutally
filled with a type of energy
like revolutions over the sheets
and at other times softly and swishing in
like the tides
where you lay against me with your thighs

or through the gospels of mad hermits
I am overwhelmed by your passion
are swallowed by it.

When the sun hangs as if painted on a canvas
and I only get more and more of you
then you become a small perfumed garden around me
where lilies,
roses and the most beautiful carnations
open their cups.

Gert Strydom

Love Me (Villanelle)

Love me with sincerity,
with the true feelings in your heart
in times of loss and of prosperity

while our influence linger into posterity
and may our lives never part.
Love me with t sincerity,

as if our words and deeds are more than surety
in truthfulness that is something of an art
in times of loss and of prosperity

and when we are old without any dexterity
may our feelings then last and never depart.
Love me with sincerity

that brings feelings to a kind of clarity,
that daily anew does start
in times of loss and of prosperity.

and may we constantly act in solidarity
as if nothing our affections can thwart.
Love me with sincerity,
in times of loss and of prosperity.

Gert Strydom

Love Me Truthfully And Sincere (Italian Sonnet)

Love me truthfully and sincere for nought
but the essence, the principle of what love is,
even if desire comes in rapture and in bliss,
let there between us be more in each thought,

than just that which together has us brought
and let each single sweet lingering hot kiss,
be filled with respect and honour and be like this,
without change be in how our true love is wrought,

while with childish hope and God's true grace
we do each other seek in life's intimate need,
where ourselves we do in each other daily loose,
adore each other without argument face to face,
do uplift in each pleasant caring word and deed,
do constantly in life God and each other choose.

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Love Remains Eternally

"Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
but bears it out even to the edge of doom." - William Shakespeare

(in answer to Johann Johl)

Winter is not to be blamed
that the darkness still in the morning lingers,
days do fly past.

Winter is not to be blamed
that the frost lies like a white-blanket,
longing with iciness do constantly feed.

Winter is not to be blamed
that there is distance between you and me
and I do love you more intensely.

Look deep into my eyes and with understanding you will believe:

Winter is not to be blamed that the high summer
of our love is matchless,
when we lay times down in thought
that is holy and eternal for us both,
do reconnoitre the landscape of love with each other.

Winter is not to be blamed
that your love brings an eternal summer,
that I can love no one else like this through all times,
love remains eternally. Glance deep into my eyes and believe.

[References: "Alleenloper" (Solitary) by Johann Johl. "Let me
not to the marriage of true minds" by William Shakespeare.]

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Love Stays True

Love stays true
like the compass to its core
and do not issue
any wavering, to the one that it adores

and without any alteration from its state
it is fixed, pointing to the limitless beyond
without having to wait
on what destiny demands and it ties with its own bond

in the spirit and soul of the human race,
it is much more than mentioned above
and its power supersedes time and space
or it does not function as love:

whatever challenges it face or anything that looms,
it is perfectly sincere and true past death, past doom.

[Reference: Sonnet 116 "Let me to the marriage of true minds" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Love, An Almost Incomprehensible Thing

Love, an almost incomprehensible thing
that makes you frantic about somebody
when you become more and more involved,
see something very romantic in twilight,
even hear her voice in every whispering,
even in images just beyond sleepiness,
tasting joy from the fountain of the gods
as if something totally supernatural

takes you on unknown, adventuring ways
with something unique in every kiss,
that makes a close unit of you and of me
pacifying with some absolute bliss,
as if nothing bad can separate you,
as if it's a pact to the final rest.

Gert Strydom

Love, We Must Part Now

Love, when you have to leave me,
let it not be
with hatred, with calamity
and although we are both sad
with voids that none other can fill
let we remain great to each other.

Outside the world goes on,
people fall in love, children are born
and each and every morn the sun
hangs bright, full of heat
in the blue sky

and although regret and sadness
fills us both
let us be free from cruelty,
remain you and me
and part each other with dignity.

[Reference: Love, we mast part now by Philip Larkin.]

Gert Strydom

Lovely Girls Lying Stretched Out Everywhere

On the beach I did discover them,
with bodies shining in the sun,
lovely girls lying stretched out everywhere.
On the beach I did discover them,
where from under dark glasses they catch the eye
and I wonder what they were thinking of me?
On the beach I did discover them,
with bodies shining in the sun.

Gert Strydom

Lovely To His Eyes

A farmer walks up to his horse and it is spring again
and he bridles it and there is pain
in the old man's body,
but the earth is soft underfoot after the rain.

In the distance a red Massy Ferguson tractor
ploughs drawing neat lines, but he's still the administrator
and it's early spring with every thing living rejoicing
but the ache in the flesh reminds him of the words of the doctor.

His son is out there tracking the field
and it's as if he has now to yield
before the young, who are vital and strong
just have to go along, but he still has some power to wield

and his eyes measure the ploughed field, the smell of fresh earth
surrounds him, almost like a token of new birth
and his young wife looks up and smiles with eyes full of promises
while he secures a saddle with a girth,

puts a foot in a stirrup and reach up
for the knob on the saddle and for moments they look at each other
and her gaze is enticing, filled with spirit
her hair is blowing in the wind like surf on the beach

and the ardent Arabic horse knows its master well
acts with love, as if under his spell
while they gallop away
and he has got cancer, is a dying man, unwell

but life is really great and the sun, wind and sky
is familiar like any other day, where he is saddled high
and they meet him as friends, companions before he turns,
rides home to a wife who looks lovely to his eyes.

Gert Strydom

Lovely To His Eyes (Hybridanelle)

A farmer walks up to his horse and it is spring again
in the distance there's ploughing red Massy Ferguson tractor
and he bridles the horse and there is pain

His son is out there tracking the field
seems young, vital and strong
and it's as if he has now got to yield

and the earth is soft underfoot after the rain.
and he's still the administrator.
A farmer walks up to his horse and it is spring again

and he still has some power to wield
and his eyes measure the ploughed field, the smell of fresh earth,
seems young, vital and strong

and he wonders how many years still remain
but the ache reminds him of the words of the doctor
and he bridles the horse and there is pain

that surrounds him, almost like a token of new birth
and the ardent Arabic horse knows its master well
and his eyes measure the ploughed field, the smell of fresh earth

and stretched out lies the farm that he has to maintain
and on the house's thatched roof gleams the lightening conductor.
A farmer walks up to his horse and it is spring again

and he horse acts with love, as if under his spell
and life is really great under the sun, wind and sky
and the ardent Arabic horse knows its master well

and from riding horses he have got to abstain,
but he keeps his face pleasant like that of an actor
and he bridles the horse and there is pain

everything is familiar like any other day, where he is saddled high
and he feels full of spirit
and life is really great under the sun, wind and sky

the farm stretches out lovely to his eyes without a stain
and he rides to the chicken coop and the incubator.
A farmer walks up to his horse and it is spring again
and he bridles the horse and there is pain

and probably soon his only child will inherit.
His son is out there tracking the field
and he feels full of spirit
and it's as if he has now got to yield.

Gert Strydom

Loving (Crystalline Poem)

(for Annelize)

Loving you is a bit of mystique
in a world without any critique.

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Loving Has A Skill (Rubliw)

Winter
brought its own rest
and in the time of chill
when all was stripped to the core
you were very kind to me, and much more
when I was tired and somewhat ill
and loving has a skill
that at its best
restores.

Gert Strydom

Loving Kindness Lingers Deep In Your Soul (Stave Stanza Sestets)

I am glad that I have met you on my way,
as you bring something lovely to any day,
loving kindness lingers deep in your soul
makes everywhere a place it does control,
discoverers have gone to worlds unknown
but with you, we have a world of our own.

Both our lives are different hemispheres
that completes a whole without any fears,
the way to truth in your lovely eyes rest
where the course set, is always true and best
others me to different ways have shown
but with you, we have a world of our own.

[Reference: 'The Good-morrow' by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

Lucifer

Created to exact design
without fault in his construct,
with a choice between good and bad
he glittered among the fiery stones
and gathered in counsel with the other
sons of God.

An cherub set above
other angels as a mighty being,
but his own appraisal of me and I
and self
and of his glittering beauty,
made him egoistic, a god
equal to the Most High
in his own view.

Mighty above mere man
and among other celestial beings
he persuaded other angels to follow him
and he went to war
against Michael and the angelic host.

Glowing ruby red
like the radiant sun,
the fire in his spirit
made him a dragon,
consumed himself
and everyone that followed him
with hate, lust, jealousy and deceit
and they were smitten down to earth.

With great guile as a sneaky snake
did he in Eden appear
and tempted the woman Eve to hear
about disobedience
and left the knowledge of good and bad
and she saw something in his eyes
that she could not comprehend,
with one deed followed him

and man lost his innocence
and distrust, destruction, death,
pain and ruin followed soon.

[References: Ezekiel 28: 13-17. Revelation 12: 7-17. Genesis 3: 1-4.]

Gert Strydom

Lucifer (In Answer To N. P. Van Wyk Louw)

Thus he rebelled without anyone stopping him,
wanted to put up his throne above, at times
equal to that of the almighty Creator
and approached others for this goal,
felt at times that his jealousy was noble
where he stood at the edge of the precipice
and thunder flashed ominous around him.

He dragged a third of once holy ones along
to all at once squander their lives,
joy, virtue and nobility
and along with them
later missed the glory, peace and love
of the heavens and knew
that he (the flaming son of the morning)
is trivial to the Most High (who is always honourable)
could not even stand in His shade
and through stars, he had torn, through the heavens
to declare war, as in his heart he wanted to win
as if insanity was eating through every reason and sensibility
and had destroyed his nobility.

When he stood alone in front of Michael and thunderbolts,
suns and comets was thrown at him
at supreme command, he new pain and misery
was banned from heaven, with all of his rebellious team
was crackled down in flames
and in his heart he had to admit that it was just,
that he could not give life to anything
and could not comprehend or have love anymore,
as might, his splendour,
his own power had overwhelm him
and then he could still fall on his knees and beg for mercy

but he was far too proud for it
and he wanted to take revenge on the Almighty One
where he cunningly deceived man
and got some more victims for his own punishment
but for man God himself came to pay the price,

Lucifer was convinced that death on the cross
was the end of God, as God had become man,
in his heart Lucifer thought that he had won
and when God rose staying available for man
Lucifer could still not comprehend or explain love
or what it is to as God have the power to life.

[Reference: Lucifer by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Lucifer At Sunrise

I

From the place that he calls home
mighty Prince Lucifer rose
stretched himself out under the sky's dome
while everything was still at repose
throughout the world men were quarrelsome
a flock of birds did past close
but to him no final defeat had yet come

and he tasted the bittersweet victory
of the Lamb of God being nailed to a cross
and from that day his life had been transitory
filled with small victories and great loss
as his revolt (the age-old story)
had come at a personal cost
as had been recorded by history.

II

For mere moments he stood in awe
caught by the perfection of the rising sun
but still in place was God's character, His law,
while a new day had begun

and he remember how it once had been,
of all the beautiful and great things that he had seen,
how perfect, how matchless had been his life
but now by his freewill he was leading a life of strife

and new strategies was in every thought
but for all the chaos and calamity that he brought
the omnipotent power of the Son
was still helping everyone

while God was ever-present watching him as a tiny speck,
continually holding him in check.

Lucifer In Disguise?

He sits in his tower block
surrounded by workers
that admires him (or so he thinks.)

The being working day after day
in the white tower block
somewhere in Centurion

drags on a thick cigar
and blows blue clouds of smoke
that hang in the office

and plays a game
that tells
of his might and prosperity

and he expects that when he speaks
others must listen
attentive and in silence

as if he is almost equal
to the Lord God
and thinks that those working beneath him
swallows every word

and in the evening three or four
or maybe five
prostitutes are called by him
to get picked up by his limousine,

so he asked me
what is wrong with me
to be without a job

and expects me to explain
if it is liquor, women, being a thief,
or maybe murder.

Then I thought by myself why beings (like him)

not also are affirmed
and why that action

is still lacking with him
while the company's goods
are very obviously disappearing into his pockets

and I keep myself
from sending him
to damnation,

or maybe to send an assassin,
bomb planting terrorist or two
as a answer to him,

but maybe after twelve in the evenings
he himself goes down to hell
to tell his subjects there
about his new misdeeds.

Gert Strydom

Lucifer In The Heart (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the black townships the days and nights clatter pass
while mini-bus taxis are constantly at war
with every bus and train and do protect their routes with murder,
they shoot with AK-47's as they do drive pass
where this country is now free from law and order,
where things everywhere do only become weaker and do deteriorate
and for nobody there is respect or consideration
when Lucifer gets his claws into everything
and in the lawlessness do stick out his dark fingers
where white educated and qualified people are unemployed,
hordes of others do strike and even at universities do demonstrate violently
while criminals do merciless torture, rape, murder, rob and break
and God's mercy, His love do lack in the hearts of people
while Lucifer and his darkness is in the heart, the mind and eye.

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Lucifer Pondering At Night (Cavatina Sequence)

(after George Meredith)

Having rebelled against the divine,
the evil fiend
grows wary of his dreary dominion,
without a friend
in strive against reasonable nature;
seeing his end,
for lingering moments he is in awe
of beings following God's righteous law.

Love, loving, procreation and order
is beyond him,
as time passes on, his future looks
constantly dim;
he longs to be back among the bright stars,
both his eyes swim
but his mind stays set to have this earth,
for a moment he smiles in utter mirth.

Above his head planets and stars shine bright,
it is darkness
that still surrounds him while he is unseen,
his godliness,
his power, still is in his ragged mind,
in his madness
he does know that against God he can win,
earth has to become a place of endless sin.

[Reference: "Lucifer in Starlight" by George Meredith.]

Gert Strydom

Lunchtime Visit (Free Verse Sonnet)

This afternoon when your car drove in through the gate
I knew the joy that you do bring,
it's as if my life do suddenly get meaning,
as if every bird do sing joyfully in the winter.
This afternoon when time passes too quickly
I do find pleasure by your mere presence,
I want to tell you how I do constantly miss you,
I have got the biggest urge and am forthright
to take you for long moments into my arms,
I see the stars that gleam in your green-brown eyes
and we know that this love do just continually grow,
while the sun slowly climbs to the highest point in the sky.
When you have to leave we have still so much to say
and it's with the heartache of longing that you have to go.
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Lust Or Love?

If it's lust or love
nobody will ever know
and the night in front of the hot fireplace
I cannot forget easily
and still both are at times
part of what is in a relationship
between two people.

Strangely the lust eats me
were I stand almost naked
at the fireplace
and small john,
tries to stand just as upright
and big as big john.

There are flames from the fireplace
flashing in your eyes
when I take my underpants off
and your white face
is suddenly strangely pure,
while the inner fire
eats both of us
and the nipples of your big breasts
erect and prominent
almost magically draws my fingers.

Your mouth is hot,
soft and sweet
and your body
better to play with
that the strings of a guitar
and there are passion that abate in us
and when I disappear in your depths
there's pleasure that at times
builds and subsides
and later we both
hit the right chord

Mabalêl

(after Eugène N. Marais)

To Rakwena the big old hippopotamus hole
with the jar that she is taking to fetch water
Mabalêl the daughter of chieftain Rasithlare do triple,
do tread over the shrubbery and the tussocks of grass

with the wind rushing through her hair
rustling the grass and jerking on the leaves of the trees
while her ankle-rings do jingle happily
and there is tranquillity at the pool and she do notice no danger,

notices the sun shining on the water's surface,
from the distance voices do sound up
but she do not notice the two crocodile-eyes peering through water
and with happiness she thinks back to her childhood days,

hear children laughing out loud in the distance
how pots and pans do jingle and clatter
in repose and vivacious do dip the jar under the water
do walk still deeper into the pool as a huge mistake,

do not notice the slight ripple of the water or the black spot,
only her image reflects and leaves that are rolling in the wind
when out of the water with rough power jaws jerk open and slam shut
while a slapping tail do twist the water around and around,

where she does froze from shock and horror
for the massive crocodile that bites off her arm
and does scream her lungs,
her life out but nobody does notice her distress,
when that armoured monster murderously pulverises
her ankles and legs
and on the water surface only blood remains
and a piece of cloth do float

and in that night there is weeping at her mother's hut
while the old induna and his impi
do walk to the water that turns and do foam at times

with long-arm spears with razor sharp blades
pierce it a thousand times to kill
where they cross that pool to and fro over and over

and chieftain Rasithlare cannot take revenge on his child's death
where with torches they keep stabbing until the early morning breaks
as there is no sign of the crocodile and its prey,
not even higher up in the brook

and the wind does whisper dark secrets but no one knows their meaning.

[Reference: "Mabalêl" by Eugène N. Marais.]

Gert Strydom

Macabre Dance

It's goodbye to the house on the hill
overlooking the bay
and nothing will ever again be ok
and the businessman, the learned professor,
the doctor, the dentist, the artisan
and even the artist must die

as now matters are settled with a blade,
an axe, a sub-machinegun and torching
by masses of barbaric uneducated people,
who wants more of every thing
and takes it by force

and it's goodbye to the farmer
who cultivates the land,
goodbye to the holy man
who teaches people of God,
the tradesman, the shop owner,
the policeman, soldier and guard

as now matters are settled
with airliners, nuclear, bio or chemical bombs
by religious fanatics
who wants to rather kill than convert

and demons are walking among men
as if they are some of them
and mankind is going awry
with some believing that they are gods
and are waiting on a greater god
to land in a UFO
and know about occultist things

and some are living for the power of money,
to buy and to sell
and are sending their neighbours,
brothers and sisters
and all of mankind to hell

and still the words written
by John, Luke and Mark are true
that the Creator will come
to save, to judge and to destroy
and wants to rescue everyone

and the wild animals, the fishes
and birds know that the end is near
before a cloud appears in the sky
in the form of the hand of a man.

Gert Strydom

Madeline

Sometimes I wonder Madeline
sweet, innocent girl
why I did not make you mine?
I still see your soft brown hair twirl

and in thoughts I am still lost
in the deepness of your dark-brown eyes,
sometimes I can touch you almost,
as if you are with me after all the goodbyes.

Our love was never really expressed
but burnt with a kind of intensity
and in your companionship I was blessed,
in your pure sincerity

and maybe I will wonder forevermore about a passionate kiss,
about how it would have been to be with you in sweet bliss.

Gert Strydom

Madonna

I thanked the gods for you
and you were Madonna beautiful to me
as if something holy
radiated from your heart.

Your golden eyes
could look deep into my soul
and you could understand me
for who and what
I really am.

You could put your fingers
to strings and brushes
and the most beautiful words
could go out of your hands
and your sparkling voice
stays forever with me,
but Madonna,
you are gone.

Gert Strydom

Madonna (New Version)

I thanked the gods for you
and you were Madonna beautiful to me
as if something holy
radiated from your heart.

Your golden eyes
could look deep into my soul
and you could understand me
for who and what
I really am.

You could put your fingers
to strings and brushes
and the most beautiful words
could go out of your hands
and your sparkling voice
stays forever with me,
but Madonna,
you are gone.

Now I know that John Keats
and AG Visser
would have understood how it feels
when a princess
whom you tried to build a life with,
decides that she does not
like you, nevertheless love you
and I wonder
if there's still a heart beating
Madonna, in your breast?

[References: La belle dame sans merci by John Keats, La belle dame sans merci
by AG Visser, La belle dame sans merci by Gert Strydom and No red rose by Gert
Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

Madonna On A Wall

It's another thing to see
how a mural,
gets a life of its own.

I see her measure and draw
the outlines and I wonder how,
she calculates the image that unfolds

With a palette
on which she mix different colours
and a painter's pencil,
she paints an image

[See picture of the madonna mural at my webpage:
that comes out of a wall.

.
I am struck by what she's doing
and how her fingers,
perform magic with a brush
and the art and beauty
that unfolds almost without bother.

It's as if the Madonna's eyes
follow me as if she's alive,
to where I move
all over the room

There's something of her soul
and a new presence,
that's caught on the wall.

Gert Strydom

Madonna Portrait

I saw you painting,
not a sideways glance
of a elephant head
with deep creases showing,
or the neck of a giraffe,
not a Tuscan scene
with tables with white table clothes,
neither an abstract scene
in blue, green and gold.

A portrait unfolded before my eyes,
not a half naked nymph,
or wood fairy
but a Madonna without child
pregnant and serene
looking utterly holy
with olive skin
and great big innocent eyes
against dark colours
in a ruby red cloak.

Your fingers mixed colours expertly
on the palette
to the right exact hue
and blazing lights
lit the canvas
on the easel
and the painting
became an old world masterpiece
with stroke after little stroke
adding depth and meaning
and somewhere in the distance
a midnight-black dragon appeared
with a open mouth
as if drawing nearer
truly alive
detailed to the smallest respect
and evil in every way.

Maiden Market

(in answer to Christina Rossetti)

Day and night, from early to late
where they were plying an age-old trade
men heard the maidens cry:
"do not a mere moment wait.
Come play with us, come play and buy,
come play and buy the time of your life,
only tonight I will be your darling, your wife, "
and they were very lovely on the eye
where they did promise moments of bliss,
threw lovely kiss after lovely kiss
promised endless pleasure
and they were charming in the way that life is.

Early in the morning and night after night
they promised moments of delight
when Garry and Paul
kept just out of sight
where they were on their way to and from work
and some were slender and other small
some were curved and others tall,
some had billboards up at traffic lights
some walked enticing in the shopping mall,
some were in seedy magazines, promised to blow you away,
and they constantly repeated: "Come play with us, come play"
they said they had legs all the way to heaven
promised ultimate fleshy satisfaction during the night and day.
They wondered if meeting one of them would be an unpardonable sin
and in Garry's imagination experiences with them did begin.
Paul shook his head while early and late they were only looking
but his warning sounded hollow: "decease and death could be entered
in."

Paul and Garry had been friends from childhood,
they looked out for each other minding the others good
and they both were young, handsome, wealthy and unmarried
in the way of friendship much thicker than blood.
On a afternoon coming early from work on his own

Garry phoned a maiden whose exploits was renown,
she did invite him to her home, a big sunny mansion,
where she waited upon him in a very enticing gown.
Between them there was a kind of magic electricity
and their illicit fun seemed to be
the very thing for which life is made
and from commitment they were both free.
Paul met him later at his own house
were full of concerned upbraidings:
about STD's and such kind of things
but Garry told him straight about the encounter
and seemed full of satisfaction and joyful tidings:

It seemed so adult, full of fun and romance,
they even did for long moment with each other dance,
like a girlfriend there was a line of clothes to her curtained bed
and now she was more than just an acquaintance
while very little between them was said.
Garry just saw times of delight lying ahead
even did convince Paul to try the same kind of thing
and nobody could talk any sense into his head.

I'Envoi

They both visited girl after girl,
on and on life with fun did whirl
until the precautions on a day were in vain
and destiny came down on Paul with a thundering swirl.
He was arrested for participating in a crime
in the police lockup-cell did feel begrime
without knowing it then
had contracted herpes and AIDS at the same time.
His life did suddenly feel lethargic,
while he did pine away and tragic
he suffered for a long time
while Garry did act apathetic,
did continue with his life
without a day of guilt or strife,
kept visiting the maidens
without truly knowing the love of a wife.

[Reference: "Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti.]

Make Me Like A Child

Lord, outside it's pouring
and every thing ugly
I want to wash from me,
to fall in pools
at my feet.

Again to stand like a child
in the rain,
without worry
about where everything is going.

To rollick in bright drops
that hit splashing
against me

and to know with innocence
that everything comes from Your hand
and around me
every leave, branch, tree and flower
pays their homage to You.

You control even thunderbolts
and You are the One
that stops savage winds,
give life to an earth
that yearns for water.

¶Envoi

Lord, teach me
to serve You better and to understand,
and like a child to go to You
and in trust
to look at Your works
and to know that in everything
Your mighty hand
still folds around me protecting
and that all things
are possible and practicable to You.

Lord, again give to me
the trust and innocence of a child
that with my hope centred on You
I attempt to build my things
and although
the world about me blinds me,
like a scared child
to take Your strong hand in mine
and teach me
to keep You in my heart again.

Gert Strydom

Make Me Worthy

Make me worthy
to deserve the path
that Thou has set for me.

Let me see Thy hand
in all the things
that I do.

Show me Thy presence
in every flower and plant
and tree.

Make me free
from every self involved thing
and help me to seek only Thee.

Let others know Thee,
in every deed of mine
and from being acquainted with me.

Gert Strydom

Making Tea

The kettle hisses like a life snake
with steam evaporating, almost burning my hand
while I am pouring the hot water into two cups
and I do not remember
if it's Joko or Five Roses,
(it doesn't matter anyhow)
and I put the kettle down
but before I can put some cream or milk in
you cuddle me from behind
with your perfume, your body against mine,
your presence,
later is all that is in my mind
and sugar is added
before I press the teabags with a teaspoon
and stir both cups
and there's something in the taste
something special when your eyes
tell me that you do enjoy that cup of tea.

Gert Strydom

Makoemazaan The Waterman

(after A. G. Visser)

When you go to a tranquil silent stream
surrounded by willow tree after willow tree
you are at the place where Makoemazaan does live
and he knows how to thwart adults

but only children younger than ten
can see that sly waterman
where they do follow him when he lures them away
but if you look carefully you may see

something stirring below in the water
when the children with you are feeding the coots
but he will be just right there where you are
and you will not know that he is peeping at them

but when they do disappear they do follow him to below
into the water-world and they are astonished with everything
he does bewitch them; do change into Namlaambo, the yellow and green snake,
and everything down there is different and for children somewhat special

where he shows them age-old secrets,
do take them away to there deep at his palace,
do tell them things about everything that does live in the water,
do constantly make a fuss about every child and praise each one

and they do forget everything down there
as if they do not know about their parents and brothers and sisters,
do constantly want to play games with that evil old snake
and at a time when it fits him he wants to eat every child

but when a mommy cries above the water
he wants to hide the children still deeper away from her,
until a tear of her does drop on the water surface
and it brings a radical change to things there deep in the pool

causing every child to see him for the monster that he is,
it makes him defenceless and wipes out his power,

when out of an overwhelming kind of fear he takes them back
and later about these strange events they do have no knowledge

do want to cling to the pants of their mothers and fathers
and is so weirdly scared of something strange and unpredictable.

[Reference:"Makoemazaan" by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Malotto

An old valiant packed past capacity
drives past hooting
to get children, dogs and goats
out of the dust road

with its stereo tape-deck
turned to full volume blasting
out a penny whistle tune
and while going round a corner

it only just misses
an orange bright star bus
with fluttering balloons
from which the bride and groom
hang out through windows
waving at pedestrians.

Gert Strydom

Man

That by nature man is born
in a world where destruction is set
where each infant is met
with a build in thorn

of germs of the plague and unadorned
enters it almost as the Creator's pet
struggles to get
through the passing years, headstrong and stubborn

surviving against the tooth and claw
with a higher purpose in man build in
to comprehend, to be self aware and to love,
to build splendid things from mere straw,
to impact on everything living
reaching with prayers, with hope to God above.

Gert Strydom

Man [2]

Living on the third planet from a small sun,
with numerous other living beings
man and his civilizations rise and fall,

forever arguing about the existence
about a superior God like being
existing or not at all,
about the source from where life springs

constantly gathering numerous things
that he gives value to,
finding ways to use his mind and intellect
and still staying only human.

Gert Strydom

Man Has Become Estranged

While technology makes life
more comfortable
man has become estranged
from the purpose of his existence
and slowly life starts
to only turn around the self
and people wonder
if a God does really exist
so as if with time
they are becoming gods themselves.

Gert Strydom

Man Still Is Just Man

When man mastered
the horse and chariot,
and later build cars
to drive over the earth
it made him no god
over it
and still he lacked
the knowledge
of how to make
out of nothing and a void
sand, pebbles and rock.

When man felled a tree
and build a boat
to float on the river
and the sea
and later constructed ships
and submarines
and mastered the art of sailing
he still was just man
and storms, huge waves
and water could still kill him.

When man mastered the art
of flying by machines
and could travel in the sky,
planes could still dropp and crash
and man was still bound
by the laws of nature.

When man mastered fire, steam, fuel,
electricity and nuclear power
and could harness it
at his choice
and reached into space,
he still stayed human
and a spec in the universe.

Man To Live (Diamantes)

Man

friendly, excited
scheming, hunting, working
woman, vehicle, job, house,
motor-biking, parachuting, scuba-diving
devoted talented
life.

Gert Strydom

Man Tried To Outreach The Lord Of Evil Himself

Out of the ash
flames leapt
into the air
and in the distance
the retch provoking smell
fumed in grey white clouds
higher into the black clouded sky
where death ovens
flamed up mercilessly.

Polished boots crunched
over gravel
while men in neat black uniforms
and some in grey
marched with schmeischer machine guns
at the ready in their hands.

Their faces were masked
as if in stone
with no other expression
but mocking and indifference
locked into blue eyes
and brushed blonde hair
sticking out
from under black caps
on which skulls gleamed ominous
set as machines
grinding on without
any emotion.

A small girl maybe only ten
slipped and dropped
to the ground,
where a manicured male hand
helped her gently
to her feet
and cold blue eyes
burned into her brown
and a small frown

left lines on his face
and only maybe
he would dream of her again.

Off to the showers they went,
marched by soldiers
that never saw any battle
and didn't care,
but forcefully
sheltered them there.

Men old, some at the prime of life,
boys teenage to very small,
old grannies, women mature,
beautiful girls and some only kids
to be de-verminated for sure.

Shaved to the skull,
their hair braided into boots
possessions taken from them
soap to be fried from their bodies,
gold from their teeth
and rings from their fingers
glittering evil in the dim sun

and when the doors closed
behind them
cyanide dropped like white fog
from the air
with a almond smell
and soldiers laughed
while they twisted in agony
as if it really wasn't happening
and they were only watching
a horrific show
and man tried to outreach
the Lord of Evil himself.

Gert Strydom

Mandrake (Free Verse Sonnet)

While the golden moon falls through the window
I feel your hot breath against me,
in a dream parts of my life flashes pass
when in the distance a rifle shot resounds,
you are my edifying and my decay,
the one at whom I get passion and healing,
the one who gives me life and do cut me,
the only sincere one in the entire universe.
You are the poison deep in my blood,
that does chase me madly to you,
the one that do understand and know me,
that for all other love do indemnify,
the on for whom I dare all,
with whom I loose and win everything.

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Gert Strydom

Man's Last Goodbye

(in answer to Sara Teasdale)

The rain will fall,
as it usually in summer does,
or in winter in Mediterranean climates
or even in spring

but the clouds that gather in the sky
will be radioactive filled with death
pouring down from the sky

but no bird will sing,
at the beginning of spring
and there will be nothing living
to mind when mankind perishes utterly
as in selfishness he has taken everything with him

and only desolation will be left
when everything living is gone
and maybe for evermore
the earth will be a planet of death,
just one huge funeral site.

Gert Strydom

Many People Knew You Well

(after Robert Browning, for Minette)

Many people knew you well,
but not one of them as free,
as in the way that you were to me
and all your achievements they do tell

but even after death they are under your spell
and they a gracious beautiful lady see
while I am struck down by iniquity
and am wondering about heaven and hell

while watery my eyes go
and spiritless you lie at final rest
while I am deadly pale
and uncontrollable now my tears flow
while to me life is just a long continual test
in which we all struggle to prevail.

[Reference: "Sonnet: "Eyes calm beside thee (Lady, could'st thou know!)" by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Many Professionals

Many professionals and people in the middle class
wait for their days to pass
to go under cover of the night
to live their lives over, to get their delight
at home where there's nothing that harass.

Gert Strydom

Many Professionals [1]

Many professionals and people in the middle class
wait for their days to pass
to go under cover of the night
to live their lives over, to get their delight
at home where there's nothing that harass.

Gert Strydom

Many Small Miracles

Throughout life different places I have been,
various things I have seen
and although some days seemed odd
many little miracles came from the hand of God.

Gert Strydom

Many Times

(after Christina Rossetti)

in great love I gave my heart to you
and the next thing that you did do
was to find it and me unworthy
while to you throughout I was true

(oh my dear, oh my dear)

and yet in your eyes I was weak,
even my verses and way that I do speak
and with indifferent eyes you looked at me
while integrity and your love I did seek,

(oh my dear, in my returned heart was fear)

that you do not really me understand,
that powerless I do constantly before you stand
and I wondered what you do want me to be
while my life, my character you scanned

(just the low pitch, not my words you did hear)

and too many a time you broke my heart,
even told me to leave that you do want to part
as if continually you wanted to be from me free
and I did set myself on my poetry, on my kind of art,

(and I wondered if I did get your message clear)

but then I took my heart to my Lord God to scan
to measure me in my integrity and as and as a man
and all my possibilities he did see
even gave me to my words a design and a great plan

(oh my God, oh my Lord you are constantly near)

while in some poems of your love and power I do sing
and with your help I can do almost anything

(even in my iniquity you do find me worthy)
and all that I am and the little that I have I do bring.

[Reference: "Twice" by Christina Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

Many Times I Wondered (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Many times I wondered if love is a thing from heaven or from hell
where of the impact, the wonder and the woes I can as a witness tell
and yet sometimes it comes as sincere, great, beautiful and true:
in all of the perfect qualities that I have found living in you
while its domain is everywhere on the hill and down in the dell,
where you walk the path of light and are constant in all your ways,
I am blessed beyond what a human does deserve in all of my days
and almost like in witchery you have wrapped me in your spell
where of the impact, the wonder and the woes I can as a witness tell.

Gert Strydom

Many Voices Sing A Song (In Answer To Ha Fagan)

Many voices sing a song
that asks the blessing of God
over the whole territory,
the continent of Africa

and there are millions standing there
everyone settled in one continent
Zulu, Xhosa and every Shangane
as if planted by Your own hand,

but where is the place of the Afrikaner,
where the Afrikaner can also flower?
Of the white woman and man
that comes from this earth?

We are down trodden, everyone expelled,
Boers, that You Yourself cause to sprout here.

[Reference: 'Nkosi Sikelel' i-Afrika by HA Fagan.]

Gert Strydom

Marginal Notes At Our Own Time

When Aaron walked with a pan of fire
through the people
in that hour
he brought salvation
walked with hope
to supplant the pestilence
before it could circle out.

The face of Moses was full of light
when he came down the mountain
back from God
and he was astounded
by the misdeeds
of his people

for whom the light was inexorable
who rather wanted to celebrate in feast,
wanted to fry and slaughter animals
rather than to invade a promised land
and then had to journey through the desert.

Here where I am already living
in the Promised Land
there is now a struggle
going on for survival

and the fire comes
that flames over my whole nation,
even though we are still
in the hand of the Lord of the universe

and when the light looks inexorable,
the roads of the enemy's gorging
looks so inviting, or menacing,
I know that the struggle still goes on
of people who decently wants to make a living
in an own place.

Maria Zeitner Linke

I

For the Russians, the members of the Red Army
at the beginning she has more hate than respect.
She does remember the first dark day
when she fled from Berlin and how they did corner her.

She could not defend herself
and while she were preparing food for them they were laughing at her
where covertly they were looking at her
and in the back of a military truck she could not stop them.

It happened suddenly and unexpectedly
where eight of them time after time did rape her
and later she would thoroughfare through the whole Red Army
that would tear her clothes from her time after time,
where in Siberia she did year after year languish for freedom
where to her it feels as if every day does come to a final end.

II

Where to her it feels as if every day does come to a final end,
like a child she trusts in God,
like a small girl that holds on to His hand
she continues to hope and trust.

Unfortunately she can talk and understand Russian,
she asks the Russians why are they continually raping her
where bewildered she clings to her torn clothes,
and they strip her naked

try to hang her from an apple tree,
she struggles to escape and she struggles for her life
and around her folds darkness
when the last German resistance does catch the Russians unaware
and when she comes to her senses she is astounded,
while she wonder why she is still alive.

III

While she wonders why she is still alive
the Russians see her as a spy
because she can speak and understand Russian,
and whatever she does

she cannot persuade anybody to let her go
as a normal German woman
and she is taken to a country where every human being hates her,
are harassed for nine years in prisons and penal camps

but does not let these things get her down,
does not even want to renounce God
in the presence of the killer Chorobrof,
when he aims his pistol at her and decisively pulls the trigger

and the loaded pistol refuses to fire,
while the raging Russian stands astonished.

IV

While the raging Russian stands astonished
he fiddles with the weapon in unbelief
screams at her to go away
and does shake his head time after time.

Later Chorobrof walks past with two other Russian officers
with the pistol that he swings wildly in her direction
comes to a halt and in anger he roars:
"There is the holy Mary, even my pistol cannot kill her! "

The interrogators come to the conclusion:
" by pure accident
you did come to be seen as guilty"
but at the Waldheim trial the court says:

"you are a war-criminal, a traitor" and she gets the death sentence,
she is seen as anti-socialistic where she is innocent and just a Christian.

V

She is seen as anti-socialistic where she is innocent and just a Christian
but continually Maria does urge other people to believe in God
and time passes very slowly in the prison
but nothing can stop her trusting in the Lord God.

Later a decision is taken that she is innocent
and the communists cannot convince her
to donate her prison wage to Northern Korea
and again the prison door does slam shut behind her.

Four years after the Waldheim trial Mary is set free
where she still does trust Jesus Christ as her saviour,
she is allowed to pass over the border to West Germany
where her mother and father at Stuttgart station clings to her

and her father says over and over: "praise God, praise God
and she does return to life as a single individual.

[Reference: The true story of Maria Zeitner Linke as written by Ruth Hunt and
Maria Zeitner Linke in the book: "East Wind."]

Gert Strydom

Marie Sklodovska Curie

You devoted your life to your husband and to science,
did receive two Nobel prices,
but did pay a terrible price
as from radioactive material you were not free.

You and your husband did discover radium and polonium
did work in a distant shed while the hours did run till deep into the night
and you did get out of ten ton of pitch ore a decigram of radium
while the rain were at times leaking in through the roof.

Gert Strydom

Marigolds (Novelinee)

Like the morning glory you worship the sun
opening golden fold upon golden fold
following it from the time the day begun
as if that starry thing you do behold
longing for its shining white hot rays
as if watching while it is moving on
opening sunny day upon sunny day
and closing just as soon as it is gone
as if its love to you is the only one.

Gert Strydom

Marijuana

That idiot constable
of the South African Police
who was your colleague
gave you a Marijuana cookie
to eat with tea
and you thought
that he was only joking
and ate it
along with some of your girl friends
who were eating some too.

The psychoactive ingredient,
Tetrahydrocannabinol
made you suddenly hear voices
was followed by giddiness, euphoria
and lost in reality and fragmented ideas
and that drug
really went to your head
and sometimes I wish
for that foolish constable
to be affected by it instead.

Gert Strydom

Marilyn Monroe's Photo In Blue (In Answer To T.T. Cloete)

Boldly sits pretty Marilyn Monroe
but there is something more that this photo tells
than a pair of pants clinging in blue,
than only female attraction under a thin skin.
Stripped and very bare
the material and the silence scream
like her languishing life story,
with a painful lonely coldness.
More than her nakedness that comes from beneath
a person is totally astonished
and bowled over by her pain
and there is a kind of dark monstrosity
that hides beyond the mask of the actress,
of a heart that cannot cry itself out.

Gert Strydom

Marilyn Monroe's Photo In Yellow-Gold

How many times I did see
how you stopped your dress
from blowing up,

for many probably a cliché
but still you stay to me
a lovely lady

where you now lie on a bed
with hair done yellow-gold,
with your right arm stretched above your head

with eyes half-open,
lips begging rose-red for a kiss
you can like a princess

do bewitching things
to any normal guy
and you look like a fairy-princess, a summer child.

Gert Strydom

Marina

At the marina in Hout Bay
expensive and fancy pleasure yachts were
lying on the surging swell
with water lapping at their bows
safe in a small harbour

and many times did I long
to be on one of those small ships,
to live such a pleasure filled life,
but it came to me how inconsequential
a life of wealth can be

as if my words, my reality
would loose all substance
while I witnessed fog sweeping in from the sea
blotting out each lovely drifting form

and still I had more horizons to explore,
had more words to write,
had more places to go
and things to experience,
as if my sails had to be set
into a world where storms rage
far from the sheltering
of a safe harbouring place.

Gert Strydom

Martha

She really knew Him well,
but not as well as she could have
and was all the time busy preparing

getting things ready
and listening here and there,
but not really finding the time
to listen and to talk as deep

as she needed to
and when He was gone,
she had done her best
to be of service to Him,
but He wasn't any more there
to share His knowledge
and she really missed Him
the blessings
of His presence and love.

Gert Strydom

Martha (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Sheila Cussons)

I did not find time to like her
to lay everything down at His feet,
to tell Him my deepest secrets,
as I was busy preparing,
was setting things in place for Him and for everyone
and I did also want His attention and love,
wanted to make promises that change my life
but He was not like any other human being
and still He did notice my works, did notice me,
did thank His heavenly father for the food and everything
did want to change me in my humanity,
did tell me that a person can serve God in other ways as well,
eventually everything was just His blood and bread
and His death was to every one of us a terrible thing.

[Reference: "Martha" by Sheila Cussons.]

Gert Strydom

Mary (Persian Quatrain)

The promise of a Son the angel brings with beating wings,
it's as if pregnant her heart with an utter kind of joy sings
where the blessing of a child does upon her wait
but the world brings Him to account for all sinful things.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Mary At The Grave (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where she cried heart rendering, she stood at the grave,
for a moment lingered dumbfounded and did notice that it was empty,
could not comprehend this, did not trust the peace,
as in her heart there now was only love for Him,
she could not understand the crucifixion and still less the empty grave,
did notice a man in the garden through her tears,
did not know what these things did hold for humanity
and the events of the crucifixion went through her mind,
where she stumbled, walked further and suddenly she did recognize Him
and a blissful smile replaced the anguish on her pretty face,
with her love she wanted to go to Him with her confession,
she wanted to rush to Him with her arms opened wide
but He blinded her there with a holy pure sinless kind of light,
where she realised that His love is totally selfless and for all human beings.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Mary From Nazareth

Mary innocent girl from Nazareth
when you went on your knees
standing in front of the God of the universe,
before your marriage already pregnant against the law

did you know that the Godly child that you were carrying
would only depend on His heavenly Father,
that He would be downtrodden by men and despised
without ever complaining about his fate?

With your fear during childbearing with pain circled out wider
did you know that He would bring salvation to the world with pain,
that blows would cleave into his body, with a crown of thorns upon His head,
before nails would pierce his hands and feet mercilessly?

That night right there in the stable
when your gaze fell over the bare circumstances
did you know blessed woman,
that the God of the universe

came to this world only as a mere man,
stripped from his omnipotence without end
to fulfil His mission here as a mortal
without cursing those that were murdering Him?

When you nursed and cared for Him day after day
teaching Him to count on His fingers
did you realise the depth of His love and knowledge
when He told the priests in the temple about God?

Mary from Nazareth, when fear were cutting through your motherly heart
when you saw your darling child suffering,
hanging for the entire world on the cross
did you know that his omnipotent Father was still near?

When His last power dissipated on the cross
were you then estranged from your son
or did you know that He would rise again
to take up His place as the conquering God?

Mary woman from Nazareth did you remember His words,
or did the mourning mangle you too deeply
when your son carried the shame of the world
to know that you could trust His promises?

l'Envoi

When thunder cleaved through the air and fell in darkness
while He died next to a murderer and thief, of sin an image
did you know why a God had to die
that your own child had to prove that God loves selflessly?

or would this realization only later become clear from the words of His followers,
did you know that He would bring salvation to the world with pain,
that blows would cleave into his body, with a crown of thorns upon His head,
before nails would pierce his hands and feet mercilessly?

[After Elisabeth Eybers/Reference: Maria (Mary) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Mary Magdalene

While the dark night folds around me
I wait on Thee,
who could speak
and sent the storm
back into the sea.

At times I wonder where my love
for Thee started,
or was I made with it,
that Though dark brown eyes
could know the dark depths of my heart
and could touch like no other
and could heal me
and make me completely free from all sin
and I was happy.

With every stroke that the hammer makes
against the cross of wood
and every nail that tears
right through Thy body,
I knew pain
like never before
and in my soul
the dark depths died
with Thy death

At a time even my pomegranate red lips
and round full breasts
made no impression on Thee
and Thy holiness
and unconditional love
touched deep into my heart,
so that I washed Thy feet
with ointment of nard
and in humility used my hair
to dry the feet
of the Son of God.

While the morning sun

risers red on the horizon
I wait on Thee,
to come back to this earth
as king and supreme Lord.

Gert Strydom

Mary Magdalene (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's difficult to explain the way that I am now,
where I am sincere and pure and full of faith like a child
where I try to keep every word, every instruction of Him,
do only constantly find new hope and selfless love
and people regard me as a whore impregnated by demons,
but for the change that turned my life around it is difficult to find words,
where now I do bring proselytes to the Lord God,
do help others to be free from the darkness
and so humbly light comes to the lives of others through me,
where He does fill me with bright insights that are sure,
where I walk vulnerable in His steps and am starting my life over,
where my lust is replaced by the love of God that is filling me
and He has died and lives again and also in me,
where His truth do daily come to stature.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Mary Magdalene [1]

When she saw Him there
where death could not bind Him
with love radiating out of His face
she was blessed among all women.

Somewhat perplexed she wanted to touch Him,
wanted to make Him (her own) for a moment
and she looked into the eyes of God
and an eternity passed for her
while she stood in front of the Lord.

Gert Strydom

Mary Magdalene As A Accused

How does the love of man upon man
blind the power that always gives light to darkness
where my whole being at a time could react
and be lost in passion and pleasure.
In me those urges and voices are now silent
and I am new and pure like a child.
I have wasted far too much time and energy
without finding any happiness until now.
He writes mighty words upon the ground,
words that drives my accusers away.
What He says stays with me: 'Sin no more.'
Words that free me from condemnation,
selfless love is His endless treasure
and I have come to full conversion.

Gert Strydom

Mary Most Lovely Maiden In Nazareth (Free Verse Sonnet)

Mary most lovely maiden in Nazareth
God did watch your ways,
when the archangel Gabriel stood in front of you,
did have a message for you as a woman and as a mother.
You thought about his words tried to figure out their meaning,
that you are blessed among the woman, what it does really mean,
that God does send an angel of light to you a sinful human being
and wondered about what the coming of the angel does mean,
somewhat perplexed you were suddenly scared and searched for meaning
while the words did still hang in the air
and he mentioned that the Holy Spirit would make you pregnant,
suddenly in your heart there was a song of joy
while his lustre, his wings did spread over you
and this great task you did not want to avoid.

Gert Strydom

Mary Of Nazareth (Refrain Stanza)

A archangel brought God's message to you
but it was a strange kind of thing not knowing what to do
and even Joseph wanted to divorce you in secrecy
but with God's command to him he was happy,
when you sang the most lovely song to God that was to your heart true,
where the redeemer of the world you had to procreate as a virgin,
very painfully realized that His blood covers all sin,
where He was the redeemer and you loved Him through and through
but it was a strange kind of thing not knowing what to do.

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Gert Strydom

Mary, From Nazareth

Mary, innocent girl from Nazareth,
did you know that the Godly child you were carrying,
when you fell on your knees in prayer

with fear and pain that got more
when it seemed as if you were torn open,
did you know that He would bring salvation with pain

when before marriage you were pregnant against the law,
did you know that He would ask for help from His father?
Mary innocent girl from Nazareth,

did you know that nails would pierce His hands and feet,
that night there in the stable
when it seemed as if you were torn open,

did you know that He would not save himself from the cross,
without ever complaining about His destiny,
when you fell on your knees in prayer,

when you saw the bare situation,
when God himself came as a human
that night in the stable

and for a time your child was jolly and full of fun,
without anybody accusing Him then?
Mary, innocent girl from Nazareth,

as He was stripped from His omnipotence,
when you were caring for Him day by day,
when God himself came as a human,

carrying all the sin of this world
was He was dumfounded on the cross
when you fell on your knees in prayer?

When He told the priests in the temple about God
did fear go through you motherly heart,
when you were caring for Him day by day?

When they kept you away from your son,
when they were whipping Him,
Mary, innocent girl from Nazareth
when you fell on your knees in prayer

did you then see how He innocently was suffering
with fear and pain that got more,
did fear go through you motherly heart,
did you know that He would bring salvation with pain?

[Reference: "Maria" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

May God Forever Be Praised

May God forever be praised,
although we do not comprehend
the science flowing from His hands,
that His words have the power to materialize

how He created everything
that we know about,
or still have got to discover
and although He is love

we do not really understand
or at times even know Him
and whoever see Him in His works
cannot deny that He exists

while everything in nature
to His glory continually sings,
of the great power
of his selfless love.

Gert Strydom

May I Constantly Find You

May I constantly find You,
may You cross every road with me,
may I always stand before Your face
as long as blood flows through my veins
and may my house wherever it is
be called a home of prayer, a holy place
and a place that never goes against Your will
where only Your Holy Ghost comes in,
make me to only your property,
that only Your works flower in my life.

Gert Strydom

May I Offer Her A Single Rose

May I offer her a single deep red rose
as a witness of my love, my integrity
that she may in the withering see

how frail life is
and knows
how dear she is to me

and may it be
that this single thing
bring her to my arms.

[Reference: Go, lovely rose by Edmund Waller.]

Gert Strydom

May It Be Given...

May it be given that this pain
now disappear
and that out of this sorrow
healing will come.

May it be given that out of each tear
that falls burning,
your ghostly shadow will disappear.

May it be given that memory
may bring to you
a place of honour in my remembrance
and preserve you forever
as a sign that it was love.

¶Envoi

May it be given that out of this ash
that once was my most holy,
I will stand up
to go forth
and that I now become this phoenix
and encircle my thighs with power
and rise.

Gert Strydom

May She Who Did Once Read Gibran's Prophet (Cavatina)

May she who did once read Gibran's prophet,
with love to me,
who could with her very sweet presence
bring tranquilly
know how short life lingers before it's gone,
how suddenly
time runs out, into oblivion fades,
in the utter darkness of lifeless shades.

Gert Strydom

May The Presence Of God Be Between Us (Cavatina)

May the presence of God be between us
in all our love,
to bring it to a new selfless fullness,
to then remove
any kind of blemish from our feelings
as on we move
from day to day in holy sacrament
may all our joys be only by God sent.

Gert Strydom

Maybe

Maybe life goes like this
that somebody brings the world to a halt
for only you
when you do trust someone with your love
and then the pregnant night gets a new meaning
in each yearning in moments that are unknown and new
and the experience stays with you
in this joint seclusion
when you do believe that love is sincere and intimate
with more meaning than what you have experienced up to now,
when there is much more than just pity
in a kind of bliss that you can never really forget
and maybe when trust and integrity touches you
love becomes resolute.

Gert Strydom

Maybe (2)

(for Annelize)

Maybe the biggest sacrifice
that a human can give
to live selflessly
and to make sacrifices for others

and maybe this kind of love
is the nearest
to the love that comes from God

and perhaps this is how I want to love you.

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Gert Strydom

Maybe (22)

(for Annelize)

Maybe the biggest sacrifice
that a human can give
to live selflessly
and to make sacrifices for others

and maybe this kind of love
is the nearest
to the love that comes from God

and perhaps this is how I want to love you.

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Gert Strydom

Maybe (3)

(for Annelize)

Maybe we both will be lost
in the back streets of Paris,
or will take a taxi
in the narrow streets of Spain?

Maybe we will rather have to go
to Uvongo or Margate,
or to somewhere on the South Coast
or in the Cape at Langebaan
or further on

to walk beaches full of tracks,
to experience the wind, the sun and sea,
to know each other better and walk together,
to burn to the colour of a wild olive tree

or if you do really want to
we could ask that strange thing
that hangs flashing in the sky
to take us away to
the other side of Orion?

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Gert Strydom

Maybe (4)(Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Maybe far too long I have waited
for the time to come to meet you again,
to walk with you in the sieving winter rain,
to with you live a life of love and are elated

about just being with you and small happy things,
to forget all of the heartache and pain,
with you in my arms to remain,
and together to live through happy tidings.

With us there is no end to love, it lingers
but maybe it's just another act
on the stage of life,
that is trying to slip through my fingers
but through the years tries
to remain intact
while nights and days dies

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Gert Strydom

Maybe 1 (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Maybe life goes like this
that somebody brings the world to a halt
for only you
when you do trust someone with your love
and then the pregnant night gets a new meaning
where I am now bringing these words to you
that something unknown, new of love stays with you
in this new joint seclusion
when you do believe that my love is sincere and intimate
with more meaning than what you have experienced up to now,
that there is much more to it than just pity
in a kind of bliss that you never really forget in the coming years
and maybe when trust and my integrity touches you
our love becomes resolute.

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Gert Strydom

Maybe 2

Maybe I will never have any children
and your children that I regard as my own
who constantly demolish me with their words
and try to overwhelm my life with violence and force
may stop and maybe you will lie against me
to procreate a new life during this pregnant night
or maybe I will have to wait forever
on small bare feet to totter
or maybe between the white and black
I will have to hope constantly on conversion
and keep looking for grey arias in the depths of my heart
as maybe things will change with the passing of time

or maybe I do need only to write these words down
and have got to forget of a child with eyes and a body.

Gert Strydom

Maybe 3

Maybe we both will be lost
in the back streets of Paris,
or will take a taxi
in the narrow streets of Spain?

Maybe we will rather have to go
to Uvongo or Margate,
or to somewhere on the South Coast
or at Stilbaai or further on

to walk beaches full of tracks,
to experience the wind, the sun and sea,
to know each other better and walk together,
to burn to the colour of a wild olive tree

or if you do really want to
we could ask that strange thing
that hangs flashing in the sky
to take us away to Mars?

Gert Strydom

Maybe 4

Maybe a new tomorrow is just a wish
where everything will be better
without any pain or fear
and maybe you can get
a prospect
of a place where everything is better
where people live together in happiness and peace
and where there is more than just forgiveness
where people do continually astound you
and love comes to meaning and reality.

Gert Strydom

Maybe 6

(for Annelize)

Maybe the biggest sacrifice
that a human can give
to live selflessly
and to make sacrifices for others

and maybe this kind of love
is the nearest
to the love that comes from God

and perhaps this is how I want to love you.

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Gert Strydom

Maybe A Thousand Times

(for Daleen)

I have cried for you
have prayed for you many more,
have loved you earnestly and true
knew that you me too do adore

but you and your grown up offspring

did turn my life upside down.
I have seen you smile very happy,
have seen you frown,
have even heard you curse me

have with joy heard you sing

and far too many times we did fight
over nonessential things
and you had been my happiness and delight,
the one who gave my life wings

who daily did affect my living.

To me you are simply really lovely
and do bring beautiful things to my life
but I do not have the ability to make you happy
as a partner and a wife

as in your mind there is always something bothering

but some people think that we are incompatible
and about our love they simply do not care
do constantly create situations that are combustible
but where they do not belong they time and again dare

and in all of this far too much has become the hurting.

Where we are separate, apart and divorced I do feel broken
and now all of your grown children's insults, curses and assaults

are raw and constantly in my mind but this remains unspoken
where every time it was not really my fault

and I have become afraid of snapping and reciprocating,
of doing to them painful things that sting and sting.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Maybe All Of Life Is Caught In Brilliant Moments

Maybe all of life is caught in brilliant moments,
when the physical and spiritual becomes one
moments of bliss, moments of true happiness
and I am remembering the times that are gone

while I struggle on in a world mixing truth and fallacy,
in love and loving and the war of these to get the upper hand
and have to make a living in a confronting kind of reality
and maybe we mortal beings do not really understand

that loving is in reality a free thing;
in lives that have been spoilt selfishly
we want to control and tame everything
and are not content in leaving things to develop naturally

but the adventure of loving and live still goes on
while in living with the pathway of life we move along.

Gert Strydom

Maybe Far Too Long I Have Waited (Sonnet)

Maybe far too long I have waited
for the time to come to meet you again,
to walk with you in the sieving winter rain,
to with you be elated

about small happy things,
to forget the heartache and pain
and with you in my arms to remain,
and together to live through happy tidings.

With us there is no end to love, it lingers
but maybe it's just another act
on the stage of life,
that is trying to slip through my fingers
but through the years it tries
to remain intact
while nights and days dies

Gert Strydom

Maybe From The Beginning I Am Like A Child

Maybe from the beginning
I am like a child
that does not want
things to come to an end.

At times I stand alone
against life
orphaned from my dad, my grandma
even my animals

the ability to understand
the reason of why mortality exists,
as if people and animals
by their own choice walk out of your life

and I struggle with the reasons
of human existence.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Am Already Somewhat Half-Forgotten (Roundel)

As the leaves, their smell, their scent half-rotten
are with the homecoming wishing me well
maybe I am already somewhat half-forgotten.

As the leaves, their smell,

does remind me, does a thousand stories tell,
of days that will always be unforgotten
of when I was under your charming spell

of the kisses that at a time were gotten
when we did meet deep in the dell
but unforgettable, life now is rotten,
as the leaves, their smell...

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Am Looking At Eve

Two paintings
look back at me:

The one girl is shy
and stripped to her middle
with auburn hair
covering a breast

and the other
hanging round and firm
tipped by
a pink brown nipple.

The big eyes of the other
are greener than grass
and laurel is wreathed
through her auburn hair

hanging in strings
of a fairy like girl
whose complexion
glows pink and alive

and she's dressed
in big green leaves
holding some purple lavender
in a unseen hand

and I like to think
that both paintings
shows the same girl
and maybe
I am looking at Eve.

[Reference: Keys to your heart and Fairy Queen by Mandi Engelbrecht. (These paintings belongs to me.)]

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Am Now Dreaming

but time and destiny
keep making plans and throwing their own dawdles
and who knows when events are to happen?

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Come From A Time

where things were better and different
than they are now
and still I keep believing and do trust
that every person deserves an own place in the sun.

Even when some of my wife's family members
have been mowed down by criminals in a robbery
I still want to keep believing
in our country, in our time
some kind of change will come,

that people will grant each other a own free existence,
that the Lord God walks at the front of the road
to make it even
and that this is a year of prosperity and hope.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Had Forever Been Lonely

Maybe I had forever been lonely
without noticing it
until the day that we met

when you brought sparkling
something new to my life
and shook me awake out of ignorance

but from that day you have been puzzling me
and from feelings for you
I have never been free.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Imagined This Afternoon (Couplets)

Maybe I saw the grandchildren play outside
as I glance you and they did seek and hide,

I did imagine this afternoon
and that trick of the mind was past too soon

but when I looked up into the bright blue
still on its place the sun did hang true,

as if it came with a message the wind did softly caress me
as by the smell of your perfume was near fleetingly

and when orange-red the sun did later set bit by bit
I heard Gwenevieve said that on His canvas God was pasting it.

I am captivated with our love and everything that it does bring,
also with the great painful unknown longing.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Know My History A Little Bit Better Than You Do (In Answer To Sipho Sepamla)

Maybe I know my history
a little bit better than you do.
My friend, you are talking
about stories being heard
around coal-stoves
concerning animals
and no real facts
are expressed in your poem.

I know when my ancestor Joost Strijdom
arrived in the Cape of Good Hope in May 1678,
that I descend from the lovely brave Maryna Ras,
when your ancestors
were migrating from a place called eMbo
at the big African lakes under
leadership of chief Dlamini
and later under chief Nguni.

I know how my ancestors battled
against wild beasts, fought the zulu-impi
at Blood River
and overcame by the help of
the almighty God
and that I would not have existed
if they died at the hands of the Zulus.

I know how my ancestors build
farms, churches and houses
while yours were living
in thatched grass huts.

I know how my great grandfathers
and one of my grandfathers
was enveloped in a war against the British,
how they survived
and how my great grandmother
died in a British concentration camp.

I have even faced Cubans
under Soviet command
in the largest mechanised battle in Africa,
apart from those in the Second World War
and we had a decisive victory
that is now being denied
while history books are being rewritten
and fiction is creeping in
and maybe the new propaganda, the lies
of the new history suits you far better.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Was Rehearsing (Decuain)

Maybe I was rehearsing to be me
when we trained very hard in the camp,
when we tracked the deadly enemy
through the hot sun, the strong wind and the damp,
or maybe I had been a kind of scamp
as the war went very well on each day
but when writing here at the bedside lamp
I wanted to run, to run far away,
not in great fright to run away, or to flee,
but to find a place of great tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

Maybe I Will Forever Seek To Find

a few words that speak right through humanity,
for something that is not written in any poem or dictionary
that blows away like leaves in the wind

when eternity lies in a drop of dew,
when I hold onto the transience of a flower,
the breathtaking of the rising sun
and at times when you do hold my hand.

For all of these things I do not have the right words
and to another they may seem mere purposelessness
but the meaning of existence keeps on beaconing
like the white morning star twinkling in the distance

Maybe I will forever seek to find
a few words that speak right through humanity.

Gert Strydom

Maybe It's A Harsh Lesson

Maybe it's a harsh lesson,
that suffering and pain
brings meaning to life
and there is sometimes beauty in broken things,

a time that you find deeper appreciation
for that which you get with time, with effort
and even when sometimes you stand confused,
it feels as if wounding is cutting to your depths

there is a time when love comes matchless,
brings somebody as your own, somebody that astounds you.

Gert Strydom

Maybe It's Love

I

The sun once blushed and was aware of you and me
where the river meanders away
while we were kissing each other,
where a finch twittered like an intruder

I took you by the hand,
we splashed laughing into the river
along the riverbank
but no water could wash our sin away

When we undressed totally naked
you embraced me for indefinable pleasure
and we discovered each other as man and woman
your sin, became my sin

and I did not want to give up this experience;
it was wonderful to lie on the grass.

II

It was wonderful to lie on the grass
when you were right against me,
to catch you into memory,
it was wonderful to have you right against me

and I wonder how to say it in words
when I was holding you until darkness
knowing you in everything, even every small happening
when it felt as if I could not deny you anything

with the sun is high in the sky,
with bees flying to flowers in the garden,
with the splashing water of the pool throw shadows,
the clouds big and white sailing past
and God moving His hands over His canvas
in colours of blue, orange and bright red.

III

In colours of blue, orange and bright red
a whole world lies between you and me,
the world is adorned at sunset
when I cannot get you out of my thoughts,

as if I see your shining eyes
comprehending the feeling in them,
the way that you hold your head
causes me to take my whole life into examination

as if that which was and still is between us
are forever reaching out for answers and to each other,
I become aware of my deep longing,
I want to stroke my fingers through your hair.

Not one of us really comprehended the meaning
when you walked out of my life.

IV

When you walked out of my life
and I knew that you still loved me
there was big pain in it
but you did not let out anything about your feelings

and although you knew then, years later you would really realize
where the end of your, of our happiness started
and nothing would have let you come to your senses,
things changed when you slammed the door.

Now more than twenty years later
you are just as pretty as you had been then,
nothing has really changed in our feelings,
there are still stars in your eyes when you laugh,
I can see how well you fit into my life,
I am still in love with in a way that I feel for no other.

V

I am still in love with in a way that I feel for no other
when the jacarandas outside marry in purple dresses,
with the winter fleeing
and I sincerely do love you.

How eager I am to let you see this beauty,
of the whole city standing in glory,
the odour that suddenly fold around you,
raising from the streets

but you are more than a thousand miles away
in another lovely world, with a own beauty
to where I want to go sometimes,
but only experience can let you adore these trees,
can let you be aware of perfect day upon perfect day;
where I lift my eyes to the creator God.

VI

I lift my eyes to the creator God
praying for Him to be with you,
when I was on my knees this morning,
while I was missing you.

At church there was communion
where I could share in his sacrifice
and my thoughts strayed to you
where I imagined us just married,

my prayers went to Christ Jesus
and our relationship and you I entrusted to Him
where as high priest He serves before His Father,
I asked for His blessing and care over you

but was yearning for moments with you,
even if you wait until the winter of our lives.

VII

Even if you wait until the winter of our lives
before you want to come back to me,
I am waiting day and night
and wish the time to past quickly

and then that cold time
will be a summer for us
and continually
we will laugh in days without fear

loving each other
as if there's no end to time
and together we will start a life
with a holy bond

but I have got to keep to your wishes;
the sun once blushed and was aware of you and me.

Gert Strydom

Maybe Life Is A Transitory Thing (Rubiyat Sonnet)

We are older than our first days of bliss,
when that summer was filled with happiness
and that time to us was the entire world,
where for more than a month I do you miss.

Probably everything justifies remembering
something extraordinary great, a way of living,
together as a perfect fit, in moments bit by bit.
Maybe life ruled by destiny is a transitory thing

with moments of joy and true love here and there,
in a kind of life of which few people are really aware
as they do not find someone to connect with like this:
you are my greatest blessing when you are right here.

Somehow in times like on this very moment now
my mind, my heart does with your presence glow.

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Gert Strydom

Maybe Living Asks

Maybe living asks
for us to handle life
day by day
and to make the very best
of everything
that destiny brings

since everybody has their own
winters, summers and spring
and laughter and tears
are characteristic of living.

Gert Strydom

Maybe Love Has Something Similar To Lightning

Maybe love has something similar to lightning
not something frightening
but as special essence
that lingers on the inner eye, a kind of thing

a kind of inner art
that stays grained into the heart
beyond living, beyond time and space
when destiny does people part

and sometimes the separateness
turns into a kind of emptiness
where you realise the finality of death
but still affection does not want to rest

and in memories love sometimes keeps going on
while in person to the earth you are gone.

Gert Strydom

Maybe Love Is

(for Annelize)

Maybe love is something supernatural
that at a time does sneak up and jump upon you,
that does neatly fit into a person's thoughts and feelings
of which the heart and soul and spirit do constantly sing.

Gert Strydom

Maybe Now It's Far Too Late (In Answer To Robert Browning)

Maybe now it's far too late
to tell you about what you meant to me
and I am closing the garden gate
where your flowers still grow with an own dignity.

You hair at a time was gleaming with gold,
you face glistened with a sweet smile
but that was in distant days and now I am getting old
and I am lingering for a short while

again caught in memory,
but your hand, your presence I cannot keep
and in another world from me you are free
but in reality in the earth's bosom you do sleep

and we loved each other for a short while
but I have lived on and on since then
have sailed like you dreamt to do on the Nile,
have known both good and evil men

but sometimes in other faces it's your eyes that I see,
in something that is much more than just a memory.

[Reference: Evelyn Hope by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Maybe The Biggest Sacrifice

Maybe the biggest sacrifice
that a human can give
to live selflessly
and to make sacrifices for others

and maybe this kind of love
is the nearest
to the love that comes from God.

Gert Strydom

Maybe There Is A Deep Secret

Maybe there is a deep secret
of how people really do find happiness
or maybe meaning blows away like leaves in the wind
with how life really is

but still everything does bare a deeper meaning
when you bind yourself to someone else.

Maybe there is a deep secret
of how people really do find happiness

in emotions of love and sympathy
and hope is as the trust of a child,
even when destiny is about to devour everything.

Maybe there is a deep secret
of how people really do find happiness.

Gert Strydom

Maybe This Is Not Really Goodbye

The stars still shine
in the darkness above
and although I do not
anymore know your love
somewhere the sun
is again rising.

Even seeing the sickle moon
stalking the sky
and at this present moment
I cry for your lost,
love doesn't really
charge a cost
and as time goes by
I might love again.

The truth always
rises again
like drops into the sky
and with the clockwork
again appear like rain
and although we have parted
maybe this is not really goodbye.

Gert Strydom

Maybe We Would Have Acted Different (Cavatina)

Maybe we would have acted different
if we did know
quite how short our time together would be;
nothing could slow
the hands of destiny, the claims of death,
that made you go
to a place where cannot as yet follow,
as the greedy cold earth did you swallow.

Gert Strydom

Maybe You Will Still Love Me

Maybe you will still love me
when I die, when I loose all life
and lie under the dark lumps of sand
and become part of the earth
and maybe someone will say later
that nothing could curtail our love

that we did love each other
like no others could.

Gert Strydom

Meals That I Remember

At Camps bay the wind is blowing
and the waves leap and thrust
against the jetty,
where my eyes
roam over the big boats.

There's a restaurant
that fries snook on the coals
and serve it with lemon slices.

My mouth still waters
when I think of Henk and Frikkie
each preparing a pot on the grill
and the aroma that makes
everyone much more hungry.

When I was ill on my birthday
and I and Lood fried stake and sausage
and I later ate it at work,
I knew how nice the food
from a braai really is.

Every meal that you prepare so deliciously,
surprises me with the things that you add
and I am like a king
when you are with me.

[Reference: Braai =>a Barbecue done in the South African way. Pot=>potjiekos.
Something like a pot roasted stew. It's prepared in a pot on a wood fire.]

Gert Strydom

Measure And Paste

With a pair of compasses and a ruler
in mathematics almost the impossible is realised.

In mathematical quadrature
the structure of a flame,
even of a rose leave is captured
wherever we want to hang them

as mathematical equations in practical mechanics
where we draw contours as if they are elastic
while we do avoid real impossibilities
and try to fit everything into squares.

Gert Strydom

Meeting

For a moment your hand rests cool in mine,
when you wish me a happy new year,
when our eyes meet deep, when you introduce yourself
and I know that you are extremely lovely,
for moments this contact lingers with me
while the pace of my heart quickens,
the contact becomes something intimate and intense,
a place away from a world of pain.

Gert Strydom

Meeting With A Waitress

(in answer to Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali)

He saw her serving at a table,
did leave a bigger than normal tip
with his own number on the bill,
smiled at her friendly and he was lonely.
Before he had reached his BMW
she did call him on his cellular phone,
invited him to her apartment
much later that evening at the end of her shift.
He met her with a bunch of red roses,
a bottle of very expensive champagne
and her smile was shy and unpretentious
while her teeth gleamed like genuine pearls.

[Reference: 'Did' by Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali.]

Gert Strydom

Melting

Your soft lips on my cheek
is melting into each beautiful gaze,
causing time to hang in moments.

Your soft lips on my cheek
wants to capture everything precious
every thought, deed and urge.

Your soft lips on my cheek
is melting into each beautiful gaze.

Gert Strydom

Memento

At a time when my world was falling apart,
as if the seams were loosened,
when I had lost my job, lost my wife
and her children to another man,
when society was unravelling
with the new government
whose departments do not function properly

when both my cars were stolen
and the insurance and the police
wiggled themselves out of the equation
as if it wasn't their concern,

you entered my life, entered into me
like a thunder falling from a blue sky
unexpectedly, but with great power and magic
there was tranquillity in your smile
and the believe that I had been sent,
been sent by the gods
and in memories
your voice, the look in your eyes
and your smile
still is part of me.

Gert Strydom

Memories Are Caught

Memories are caught
on the sideboard,
maybe on the fireplace
or locked in the garage
as tools that are forgotten
and photo albums are opened
but nothing brings the years back.

Gert Strydom

Memories Of Eighty-Five

I. 'A macramé plant hangs close to her bed

A macramé plant hangs close to her bed
on the eiderdown she lays stretched out,
at times as in deep thought or prayer
when the swimming pool draws you through the window
with dull blue water covering it,
inside lays burned brown a sun goddess
and her eyes swallow me alive
when she understands, knows me for whom I am,
loving me with passion from the start,
loving me through light and darkness.

II. The summer sun hangs white and hot over the sea

The summer sun hangs white and hot over the sea,
the sand is white and soft where the sea washes out
her smile and conversations carries me off
when I am caught in her beauty
and later the water is lovely cool
before a big wave knocks off her bikini top,
I have got to hurry to the beach
to get her a big towel,
later it's a big joke for us both,
far too quickly summer sweeps past.

III. At sunrise we drive past Chapman's peak

At sunrise we drive past Chapman's peak,
along the sea on a twisting road
and she's very much in love with me,
far away a ship is only a small dot
and her smile and her face sparkles
when we stop to look at nature,
with her light blue blouse clinging tight fitting on to her
and I kiss her above the emerald sea,
holding her for moments tightly against me,
and she enchants my heart, are doing things to me.

IV. At Hout Bay we sail out of the harbour

At Hout Bay we sail out of the harbour
and the wind is blowing her auburn hair around,
the sea lays stretched out from the boat,
on rocks an otter snorts like a dog,
others swarm wild around him,
when the boat rocks to and fro we get nauseas,
wish for the trip to be over,
see a big shark circling,
are happy when we are sailing away,
with the small boat dropping us at the shore.

V. In Kirstenbosh we were really lost

In Kirstenbosh we were really lost,
still I wonder about her gleaming lips,
her green-brown eyes descending into my heart,
feelings creeping deeper into me,
that is still living as a spectre,
as if forever she is part of me,
I am not really able to free me from her,
she still calls me unexpectedly,
I do not want it to end
and forever I am yearning for her.

Gert Strydom

Memories Of You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Bertolt Brecht, in answer to Barend J. Toerien)

Above us the sky is pretty cobalt blue
where we stand in the shadow of an oak tree,
the moment of our first kiss is a dream,
is build into the wonderful remembering,
with your green-brown eyes I see you,
the dog yawns and stretches out in the afternoon sleepiness,
in the distance thunder flashes while rain does pour down
while for moments I do look at you
our lips do spark on each other's in contact,
the suddenly grey sky does not matter to us,
it's only you and me in an eternal moment,
a redbreast frolics on the branch of a tree,
when for a lifetime I do get involved with you
and suddenly the sky above us is very dark.

[References:"Erinnering an die Marie A." (Memories of the Marie A.)by Bertolt Brecht. "Herinnering aan Marie A."(Memories of the Marie A.)by Barend J. Toerien.]

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Gert Strydom

Memory To Eugène Terreblancé At Rooigrond Prison

This government slammed a jail door behind you,
caged you in like a animal, locked you behind bars
in the prison at Rooigrond;
when this government took your freedom
a potted plant was your biggest treasure
and the grace that you found on your knees
from the almighty Lord God

and between the prisoners with tin plates,
who were continuously making a ruckus,
they tried to devour your humanity.

In the mornings they gave you porridge,
before prison doors slammed behind you,
in the afternoons again porridge and for dinner pale soup;
but still you are walking through my thoughts,

your splendid poems turn and whirl in my mind
as if they are still keeping you alive
and this government
does not hear the cock crowing three times,
the Son of God was also betrayed and sold.

The barbarians that slaughtered you with pangas
already got bail,
(the one as a child is free from prosecution)
and in a few days your killers
(from Mozambique who brought disorder here)
will probably walk free as heroes into the streets.

By some of your own people despised
you were actually right, your own blood that flowed;
on the hands of black people,
stays proof of it eternally

¶Envoi

and somehow the blacks in our country
has totally lost their senses,
where they rob and decimate

the Afrikaner people and Afrikaner farmers.

[Reference: Rooigrondtronk (Rooigrond prison) by Eugène Terreblancé.]

Gert Strydom

Mere Existence (In Answer To Breyten Breytenbach)

With the hot sun daily appearing,
the beauty of the glittering stars at night,
the wind dancing through the leaves
it seems as if every thing is caught,

as if existence is mere rejoicing
in which insects, birds and people are frolicking,
as if we are in a world that is only waiting
for bigger glory with each coming day

as if our lives are not measured out
to mere existence, as if time can last eternally,
as if time itself is missing,
only is something fleeting that we experience,

as if everything is caught in the here and now,
in that which we experience and live through,
the feelings in the heart,
the principles of loving

but reality
is filled with heartache,
illnesses, suffering and pain
with our youth that disappears,

there is grey coming to our hairs,
the beauty of our faces,
our bodies decay with the years
and time is measured out for every one

until when our lives suddenly
or gradually comes to a end,
where each one of us decays
like just another wilting flower.

[Reference: "daar is geen tyd" ("there is no time") by Breyten Breytenbach.]

Gert Strydom

Message (Free Verse Sonnet)

Our words do sometimes pass each other
and with the hearing there is a difference,
where words as message and meaning
with hearing do not want to stay the same,
where about five kilometres do us separate,
the non-verbal signs are missing between us,
when we do miss eye contact and gestures
and only get intonation and the mere words,
which make that we are almost living in separate worlds
but try to get so near to each other as we can,
to permeate with what is in the heart,
as if we are endeavouring to something mystical and holy
and when we find each other really, we are speechless:
about how intimate love is and its scope.

Gert Strydom

Messages From Nature (Sonnet)

The first fruit are already on the branches
where it's in the middle of spring,
while the birds outside do constantly frolic and woo each other
as outside the whole garden is full of joy,
where every new morning does bring an own meaning
while the fruitful sweet juice do form around the pit
as if every insect, bird and pretty flower
comes with a own special discourse over life,
as with beauty and hope and joy the days are full
as if nothing great and lovely is missing,
when days and nights, weeks and months do pass quickly
where feelings in the heart do gather,
everything lives to God as a small witness
that He will come again and that everything will stop in a mere moment.

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Gert Strydom

Messenger Of The Coming Rain

The far off roaring thunder told me that the rain was near
but suddenly at the garden-gate a redbreast I did hear
where it did dance and sing its joy of the coming rain
sounding sweet and serene as if this happiness it could not bear

and that amazing little bird thing
to the entire world wanted its great joy to bring
where it danced to and thro in its passionate song
did of the joy of a new season and new life sing

and some people might see it as a little pest
that does disturb them in their tranquil rest
but to my its godsend, a messenger divine,
and of the small blessings it's one of the best

and such amazing things do happen with the coming spring.

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Gert Strydom

Messiah (In Answer To Fanie Olivier)

At spring tide He feels the pushing crowd,
sails away a bit with the boat
where from a few fishes and bread
He makes enough food for a multitude,

holy men want to throw rocks at an adulterous woman
and in the sand He writes, scattering their plans
but continually there are the sick, the weak and broken people
that gathers around Him, waiting Him in at cities on every visit

and in Jerusalem against Him is being conspired,
His death is decided upon,
but in the upper room He washes feet, hold communion

and men capture him violently in the garden,
arrest Him as a sacrificial lamb
and on a hill on a Friday they plant His cross,
with rioting people that want to point a finger at Him

while they sling insults,
inviting others to the same foolishness
and He is driven from life
wounded, killed and before that whipped

and at the end of His life His voice is interpreted correctly
when He dies selflessly for every nation and people.
He overcomes as victor over fear,
healing others by His death.

Gert Strydom

Metallurgy

I wanted to bind to you
with bonds binding like stainless steel
or another kind of more valuable metal
of silver or gold could do the thing

but then we had to separate
and I found that the bonds were formed
from aluminium or rather pewter
that breaks to pieces when tension comes
and very quick you did leave me.

Gert Strydom

Metamorphosis

(after Lucas Malan)

In the morning at first light
you do awake me
to splash around with you in the water,
where you swim like a mermaid
in water clearer than glass.

In the afternoons in the warm water
you dive graceful with an arch,
you swim as if you do belong in the water,
like a water-beast without fear
and are neither fish nor flesh.

At night the water gleams like stars
on your luring body while you do float around.
When you find a cool place in the summer-heat,
you do transform into a mature woman.

[Reference: "Metamorphose" (Metamorphosis) by Lucas Malan.]

Gert Strydom

Meteorology

The small golden spaniel
first told me whining
and then barking
at the French windows
about the coming rain storm

and as always she was right
as 'n bit later
I hear thunder flashes
falling far away
and suddenly the air
was overcast with black clouds.

Early she already wanted
her food and fresh water
and went to lie
on her dry hot bed

When the first drops started to fall
there were thunderbolts
falling outside in the yard
but still the black and white cat
was caught somewhere in the rain.

Gert Strydom

Michael

When unrest came to the heaven
and Lucifer wanted to be equal to God
Michael and his angels did defeat Satan.

When Moses looked at the burning bush
he saw God, who looked like an angel,
did get instructions from Him
from whom life itself does come
and he did stand on holy ground.

When Daniel lifted his eyes up to God
his words was heard in heaven
and Gabriel, an archangel from God was in battle
against the prince of Persia
for twenty one days
until a angel who is a prince, Michael,
did come to help him and brought victory.

[Poet's Note:"Michael (Hebr., "who is like God") , called St Michael in the Christian churches,
one of the seven archangels in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, presumed to be leader of the
angels (see Daniel 10: 13,21; 12: 1)and guardian angel of Israel. According to the
pseudepigraphic Book of Enoch, Michael and his command of faithful troops defeated the
rebellious archangel Lucifer and his followers, casting them into Hell. In the Talmud, his
relationship to the other angels is compared with that on earth of the high priest to Israel; thus, he
is considered the immediate lawgiver to the prophet Moses on Sinai (see Acts 7: 38) ." Microsoft
Encarta Encyclopedia.]

Gert Strydom

Michelangelo Buonarroti (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after A. J. J. Visser)

It's where I go thousands of years back
with this hard marble rock,
I concentrate and I give strict attention,
for moments I have got to stand back,
once more I hit the chisel with greater blows,
notice sparks flying from the top of it,
I chisel on his face, his nose and under-lip
and the figure speaks to me and I chisel on,
I know that he was heroic and for women attractive,
I have got to determine the proportions correct
to get him true to life as a man,
of him I have done research and bare great knowledge
but here I have got to bring out the best from under my chisel
and when I am finished again I stand back and David looks at me.

[Reference: "Michelangelo" by A. J. J. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Midsummer Day

In Sweden people today celebrate
a pagan feast
on the midsummer day
and snaps and beer,
are taken from early on
as one of the rites of May.

Unmarried girls sleep
with bouquets of seven different flowers
under their pillows
and hope to dream,
of their future spouse
or lover.

It is thought that magic
is at its most powerful today
and tonight rituals are performed,
to look into the future

.
a Pole is raised
as a symbol of fertility
and people dance,
around the midsommarstang
and like in a trance
they are swept away with passion.

Gert Strydom

Might I Find You Again?

Might I find you, see you once again,
before my life is shattered and spent,
before I have the greatest discontent
and let my love of you be not in vain,

but let your coming be like drops of rain
before sunshine come through clouds being rent
may I of all things that did bring tears repent
or forever I will be in sheer pain

for like a kind of sneaking, rampant thief
you have taken, my very soul and my heart
had broken it as a punishment to sin
but now I have found some kind of relief
in your love and hope that we will not part
as a new chapter of our lives begin.

Gert Strydom

Migrant Birds

Suddenly out of the blue
they came together and flopped down,
children wanted to shoot some with catapults
when wildly they flapped wings among each other,
were walking up and down with twittering sounds,
were standing around in parks for breadcrumbs,
were walking around on sidewalks like pedestrians
until the church bells did ring of three o'clock,
and they flew up in a wide curve
taking to flight into a born-in direction.

Gert Strydom

Migrating Birds

Most of winter was stripped of life
but in thousands they do suddenly appear
when all of the blue sky is full of fluttering
with migrating birds gliding everywhere
as they come to rest on roofs and telephone lines
and you are surrounded by singing, twittering birds
pertly flapping down on porches
and from daybreak you can hear their calls
when in hordes in the garden skilfully they do peck at insects,
are peering from branches
while you still are shivering from the morning's chill
and in the early twilight their chattering awakes you
as some peck on crumbs
and try to exist in a town or city.

Gert Strydom

Migrating Birds [2]

Most of winter was stripped of life
but in thousands they do suddenly appear
when all of the blue sky is full of fluttering
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as some peck on crumbs
and try to exist in a town or city.

Gert Strydom

Military Call-Up

In a region where thunder falls in the summer
the city lays stretched out when the first sounds of war resound,
when boys are called to be soldiers for their own country
to protect their borders from danger when the first shots are fired.

The infallible remote control unravels a falling of feet
of eighteen year old boy upon eighteen year old boy.
In a region where thunder falls in the summer
the city lays stretched out when the first sounds of war resound,

with military police on patrol to avert decline
where in front of garden gates, on veranda steps they lean smoking,
catch drunken soldiers in bars and kick them that they groan
somewhere in the back corner of the universe
in a region where thunder falls in the summer

Gert Strydom

Military Service (Refrain Stanza)

(after Daniel Hugo)

Breyten Breytenbach writes on his cell's wall
and on paper: Help! Where a person feels small.
The same message echoes in my heart
where for a military camp with normal life I have to part,
(I wonder if that poor man did to he knees fall)
while in my thirties I still have to go back to the army
as if from the military I would never be free,
my letters to my love are censured purple through all
and on paper: Help! Where a person feels small.

[Reference:"Diensplig" (Military Service)by Daniel Hugo. Poet's note:It was termed a military camp but male citizens (who were previously trained)were called up, (for up to four months a year)back into the army from their normal careers to be exercised in and sent back into war or to whatever duty the South African Defence Force deemed them to fulfil.]

Gert Strydom

Military Visit To A Primitive Rural Village

We found the right broken tooth village
where the inhabitants
were busy hiding terrorists in the night,
the terrorists were scared to be further involved in war,
the stars, the yellow moon was bright,
in armoured cars we were ready for a fight,
all of the local population were scared,
without courage to dare
they were busy hiding terrorists.

I had no sympathy for their plight
as the terrorists had attacked commercial farmers and women,
did plant landmines
and their collaborators were of almost any age,
where they bundled together was a sore sight
while they were caught red handed
where they were busy hiding terrorists.

Gert Strydom

Military Visit To A Rural Village (Rondine)

Harbouring terrorists, at the dead of night
we found the right dilapidated village,
terrorists were afraid to further war wage,
the stars, the yellow moon shone very bright,
and in armoured cars we were geared to fight,
all the villagers were scared, had no courage;
harbouring terrorists

I had no great sympathy with their plight,
as to farmers and women they did damage
were planting landmines at almost any age,
huddled together they were a sore sight,
harbouring terrorists.

Gert Strydom

Milking In The Early Morning

In the sifting winter rain
the cows are patches of white and black,
moving their ears and watching
with big tender shining eyes
and carry the smells
of soil, leaves and manure
and their breaths are like clouds of fog
when they enter from the paddock

and I have to attach the shining
machines to some tits
that begins sucking
with a hissing sound

and I am studying business
at the private university
and with all my fees
that I have paid in advance,
my assignments and tests
wherein I have obtained high marks
why I have to work,
have got to do labour for free,
somewhat like a slave
to get a predicate,
to be admitted to exams
is still beside me.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Minefield

Thunder came from the grass
and open the earth split
tearing the wheels from a armoured car

and again the ear deafening roar
just as before lightening leaped
right from the ground
slicing at a battle tank

and then most of the armour
draw back to safe ground
and two officers went right in
through the battle din of machinegun
and tank canon

to extract a tank with a wounded man
while shrapnel fell and bullets screamed
across their heads
and at the craters edge repaired,
got that piece of armour moving again.

Gert Strydom

Minette, Once I Had Been Blessed

Minette, once with your company
and love I was blessed,
sweetly smiling, still your face I see
even the book with flowers pressed

still reminds me
of how things between us had been,
about life's frailty
and you were like an angel that I had seen

beyond all words beautiful and fair
with eyes the colour of a pure sky,
with blonde golden soft hair
and even while the years pass by,

even in death you remain ever young
and sometimes my feelings for you are still strong.

Gert Strydom

Mirror Image

Although I do constantly
look similar in a mirror
the grey appears bit by bit
in the colour of my hair
and although my eyes burn blue
they cannot fight against
sagging and wrinkles.

Gert Strydom

Mirror Image [2]

Maybe it is a problem
that I am robust, purposeful and independent
as I can be no mirror
that only does reflect
your own humanity, your own thoughts

and what man is
frozen & stainless & mute
& shut & transparent & servile
& distant & aplanatic
in how he does exist

and at times
it's as if you do view me like a mirror
when you comb your hair in front of me
does unclothe and stretch out your body
and do think that your nakedness,

the glance in your eyes,
the expression on your face,
your legs and arms
and your breasts
do leave no impression upon me.

Gert Strydom

Misfortune Of A Aurora East Rand Mineworker

A 36 year old man works months without payment
at the Aurora East Rand gold mine
under the illusion from the black owners, promising
that salaries are following, but without receiving money.

In January he only receives ten percent of his salary
(which is just eighteen hundred rand)
while the company owns him for eighteen months
and the government does nothing against the black owners

he looks for other employment everywhere
but is not able to find anything else,
he is put out of his house and has to leave it
finding nowhere to go to

things get too much for the poor man,
he loses his cars, his furniture
and almost every thing that he possess,
in his thoughts he is at the edge of the abyss,
he does not know how to put food on the table,

tries to hang himself three times on one night
where his wife stops him just in time
and now she is really scared
that he will try to suicide again.

Gert Strydom

Missing Her... (Sextilla / Sestet)

The softness of her fleeting kiss
has got a kind of sheer pure bliss
her sea green eyes, her lovely face
are still in my thoughts all day long,
while we together do belong
and to her there's a kind of grace.

She is in my dreams every night,
in a kind of tranquil delight,
she puts my life in disarray,
with her passionate moans and sighs
the lingering look in her eyes
that comes to me every day.

She desires to carry my name,
burns in my heart like a pure flame,
there's sadness in every goodbye
when for work we have got to leave
but she is back on every eve,
in beauty with the fading sky.

Gert Strydom

Mist

Mist fades the sun out
and houses are blocked off
by smoky rain clouds,
but the yellow iris flowers pure
and the air smells fresh
as if I am kissed by nature.

There's wet drops on the grass
and the two dogs
lie under the shelter
on their beds
hardly wanting to move.

A vague delight unfolds within me
while I walk through the garden
lost and locked into a own world
and see the sun almost looking
like the moon
where it hangs white and laced off.

Gert Strydom

Modern Day Mariana (Cavatina Sequence)

At times sinister, other times placid,
just sweeping on
far over the horizon of the flat earth,
all life seems gone
in the arid landscape of the Karoo,
stone upon stone
shimmers in the great scorching noontime heat
while wild pigeons walk the roof with small feet.

Two old rusting wind-pumps guard the kingdom,
they are lifeless
and when the light wind passes they creak to life;
somewhat careless
rusting tools are strewn all around the grange,
quite purposeless
she pages through a very old magazine,
around her life and the world does decline.

Every day she picks a marigold
from the garden,
continually plays the 'he loves me' game,
a passing warden
is at times the only male company,
she does pardon
her fiancé for not coming to visit,
but she does not really understand it.

As time passes she grows somewhat older,
time moves slowly,
the old wooden floor creaks under her feet,
far too lowly
her life seems while old portraits watches her
and gradually
she starts to live in a kind of strange dream,
at night inhuman voices laugh, cry and scream.

[References: 'Mariana in the moated grange' in the play 'Measure for Measure' by William Shakespeare and 'Mariana' by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.]

Mom

Mother sometimes I feel guilty
that I left your home so suddenly
without even thinking about you
at the time when I got serious with Riana.

Maybe I did deserve the years of hell with her
but constantly I did only see your love.

Even when she caused
my retrenchment
and with good experience
and a great degree

I know how difficult it is for a white man
to somewhere find a permanent job in this country
and through all of this you were the one Mother,
that stood faithful at my side.

Mother, you have got to forgive
that at times I am so stubborn in life
for all of the times
that I did not appreciate you.

Gert Strydom

Moment

Maybe only once in life
somebody comes
that halts your world
at the moment that you meet,

where how she looks, the way
that she looks at you,
the sound of her voice,
the words that she does say

makes that moment perfect
and through the commonplace
a magic moment unfolds
that a person will maybe
remember for the rest of life.

[Reference: "Moment" by die Dutch poet Jean Pierre Rawie.]

Gert Strydom

Moments In A Church

There is a light that falls through
the stained glass windows,
a tranquillity that reminds you
that you are in a holy place

golden letters on the pulpit blaze:
"God is love"
the sound of the pipe-organ bubbles up,

there is a old woman praying without words
where thought-struck I sit in a back bench
and outside there is a plant
of which the branches move in the wind
while I am trying to find acquiescence

a newspaper boy shouts outside:
"in Iraq bombs do fall like rain, "
cars and motorbikes rush pass
where for a time
we are in a different world.

Gert Strydom

Moments In The Sun

This afternoon I wanted to catch a moment in the sun with you
as if pulling out weeds in the garden after the spring rain
could bring something special to our being together
and with you I wanted time to linger
as if I was longing for wonderful moments
and the whole afternoon we were together and alone,
our conversation was about general things
in a garden with flower blooming and bird song
and then I realised about a garden of the heart
where the sun also does sometimes shine
and thunder clouds do come at times
in moments of pain and sorrow
and there was something special in being together
with the sun shining around us.

Gert Strydom

Moments In Which Love Comes To Stature (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Vincent van der Westhuizen)

From being in love and love at first you wanted to know nothing
but with open arms you waited on me to come to you,
at the time forget about the amount of sugar in coffee and tea,
did cry when I left under the golden great moon.
For you love was finished an ichabod
where more than just friendship did come between us
and our conversations went to humanity and to God
where history did leave us both dumbstruck
until by yourself you realised that love is greater
than any words between us can express,
that it comes in public and also in secrecy,
that it can turn over plans and perceptions
where the nature of love wants more and more
and by itself it finds a place to exist.

[Reference: "Moment" by Vincent van der Westhuizen.]

Gert Strydom

Moments Of Such Great Rapture Must Be Sin

as the depths of love we do enter in
to know you so intimate there must be trust
finding a kind of beauty deeper than skin

like the first time an eagle is flying,
something more than just touching
as you leap into the waiting abyss,
straining against how life really is.

Gert Strydom

Moments That Linger

Every breath, every heartbeat of you
are known to me,
even how you stretch yourself out over the bed
in moments that linger and linger.

Gert Strydom

Moments That Linger [2]

Every breath, every heartbeat of you
are known to me,
even how you stretch yourself out over the bed
in moments that linger and linger.

Gert Strydom

Moments With You

Moments with you I cannot forget,
where I do know about the depths of our love
and in the silences that hang between us
unspoken words are caught

and sometimes just as a child
you have got to find your own words
and discover each other like strangers
and go together to an unknown place

to get a deepening there,
to find a stronger binding of you and I.

Gert Strydom

Monstrosities That I Observe Among Christians

I. It's a monstrosity that some people believe

It's a monstrosity that some people believe
that a deadly illness,
poverty, loss of a job and income
and every disaster that happens daily to people

results from their sin,
where people live outside the hand of God
and when I think about a one-year-old child
that is dying of cancer,

see how people that were wealthy
now is on the street,
it reminds me about Job,
while there is still trust and hope
in the biggest darkness.

II. That the eating of meat is sin

Some people believe
that according to the Bible it is sin
to eat meat
and so easily they forget

that the Bible says clearly
that some meat foods are clean,
that Jesus himself multiplied fishes and bread,
that shepherds caring for their flocks of sheep

were informed about the coming
of the Son of God
and still I wonder
why the shepherds had sheep?

III. That atheists originate from the teaching of some churches

That the doctrines of other churches
compel people to become atheists
as there teachings are free from all truth
and only true Christians

in that particular Christian faith are serving God,
as if God is not reaching out His hands
to all Christians
and every has do not have dedicated people

and then they hit on their breasts like the Pharisees
and say that they are elect children
of Abraham,
while they are really a brood of vipers

and the atheists that I know,
are people that struggle
to find God in science,
as if a person can bind Him
to figures and symbols.

IV. That the will of God is carried out

That the will of God
is carried out in every decision
that a church organization
or its representatives take

and when a minister requests you to do something
it comes from the mouth of God Himself
and if you are not able to or want to do it,
you are rebelling against God.

I have heard ministers
using prayers to force
their will upon people,
as if they are twisting
the arm of God
to turn things to their way.

Gert Strydom

More Beautiful Than Any Flower

(after Heinrich Heine)

More beautiful than any flower
you are fragile in your heart,
without words you do leave me speechless,
do know me in joy and in my sorrow.

Face to face you are before me,
to me picture-perfect in your blonde beauty,
where I pray that you do remain pure in your heart,
that God do protect you with all of His power.

[Poet's note:"Du bist wie eine Blume" ("E'en as a lovely flower")by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

More Pretty Than A Flower

More pretty than a flower you are to me,
when in the morning you pass in the road,
when your hair shines, when I get a smile.
More pretty than a flower,

you turn me around your little finger,
I cannot avoid my feelings for you,
when your humanity and grace astounds me,

when I suddenly start to fall in love,
like a school boy I feel somewhat stupid
when I look at you, when I admire you and you are
more pretty than a flower.

Gert Strydom

More Than For Any Other (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

More than for any other for you I do care
and a love so selfless and pure as this is rare
but yet the world without us will be just the same
where people will each other mindlessly blame
yet you do spread goodwill and cheer everywhere
and I am blessed by you through and through
where you are kind-hearted in everything you do
where of no other woman like you I am aware
and a love so selfless and pure as this is rare.

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Gert Strydom

More Than Memories, Feelings And Knowledge

More than memories, feelings and knowledge
I want to pour into my verses
and something with a new meaning
that gives a view of another world

I want spread wider with each verse,
where words reveal injustice, love and beauty,
something that goes to the core of the heart,
that brings fulfilment by the reading of it

but I am bounded
by my own humanity, thoughts and ideas,
by my experiences of the world,
a place without love, filled by fear

and still there are things that surprises me,
that flares to life from the old dead ashes.

Gert Strydom

Morgan Le Fay From Avalon (Part I)

My weird (in my mind) is a little fairy
that comes here time and again
and her witchery some people do find scary,
they believe she can cause havoc and pain

but do not witness her spells and do move on,
do at times change her form into beautiful womanhood
and she does come all the way from Avalon
but in my heart of hearts I know to me she only means good.

Sneaking from tree to tree
as a wild little thing from the forest
that at times is keen to see me
she comes closer and steals upon me when I do rest

as if she is scared that I will again see her small lovely face
but then it's the loveliest thing I have seen
and when she moves there is great grace
with her eyes being emerald-green.

Sometimes she wears a witch's hat on her head
or her raven-black hair do without it gleam
when she comes in the hours of the dead
and of her I do dream dancing in the moonbeams.

Her complexion is snowy-white,
her lips far redder than a red-black rose
with in her eyes a strange intense kind of light
and she has the most slender nose.

I got to know her on a night, not fully asleep,
when as a grown woman I caught her kissing me
held on to her as if her to keep,
in an embrace out of which she could not get free.

"You have got to let me go," she said softly.
"Not before I do your name know," I did reply.
She said: "Morgan le Faye or Morgaine"
and bright intensely her eyes did glow.

The smell of fresh apples were on her breath
her mouth tasted much sweeter still.
Eternal youth was somehow to her bequeath
as if she could bend time to her own will

and this I did later from her lips hear
but at the time the loveliest of woman was this,
I was if under a spell and did draw her near,
I did find something exhilarating in every kiss.

"Why are you right here and wooing me? "
The words came out not as I did them intend
as she was truly lovely
but the honest truth I did also want to comprehend.

"I am here hero, to set you free,
to set you free from your broken heart
to heal you mind, your self and your body,
to give you unknown bliss before we do part."

"I am no hero and never have been, "
but she did not believe me, and her kisses did my words still.
She said that I have got to prepare for a great war
but of it she did never tell me more.
I protested and said that I have true heroes seen
but was swept away into bliss and myself I did in her spill.

Much later I could not really believe it
where snugly she was in my arms, in my bed,
where it felt as if together we do really fit
and no kind of pain or fear was in my heart or my head.

For days we lived like this
as if we were on a honeymoon and newly wed,
as if the only thing in life was the ultimate bliss
and during that time many things to me was said

but then one a lovely sunny day Morgan did suddenly change
into a minute radiant fairy with two golden wings
and back to its normal spin and woof she did my world rearrange,
said that she had to attend to some pressing things.

"Good grief, what kind of witchery is this? "
I said in great amazement
she fluttered up to my face and gave me a final kiss
while I did not know what this meant.

By now I knew that she was aeons old,
but in real life extremely beautiful and young
of great ancient Avalon I was told
it sounded like a tale as if it does not to the real world belong.

"What more do you want to know? "
She asked as if in moments she would be gone.
I thought to be funny and witty and said:
"If you are aeons old, then tell me about someone
on whom time did fame bestow."
And she told me of great King Arthur who is dead.

Why she came to me I do still not know,
(she warned me to be ready for any attack)
but she did love, health and healing to me bestow
and she promised to be back.

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Gert Strydom

Morgan Le Fay From Avalon (Part II)

My glance swept up and down and all around
when I thought that I did hear a faint sound
and I even went outside to look for tracks on the ground

but the earth was only with winter stripped bare
but yet it was if I did stare over something that was right there
and shaking my head in my mind I do see her everywhere:

Her eyes do gleam that emerald green,
her face stays the loveliest that I have ever seen
and I wonder if only in my mind my time with her have been?

Her dress sometimes is green or black or full of the colours of the rainbow
and in my heart a strange feeling for her do glow
while her step is full of grace but slow

and yet in her fairy shape through the flowers she is dancing,
do frolic while happily she is prancing
but in reality there is just nothing

and yet in all of this I feel my heart stir
feel something touch my cheek my lips as if I am dreaming of her
but probably it was just the wind and I pull myself together

and where I am, I do stand unmoving still
do look carefully at the things that do my glance fill
say her name to beacon her to come even if it's against her will.

Again I say: "Morgan le Faye" and do repeat: "Morgaine."
In the distance I hear thunder and think that soon it will rain
while with longing my heart does pain.

Recollection comes to me as I have dreamt of this very day
as if I do have second sight I know from very far away
she journeys towards me and again I do her name say.

Some more thunderbolts do bash down near
where in the open I stand without any fear,
do smell the thunder do its harsh voice hear

with jagged twisting bright blue-white tracery
one huger bolt from the others breaks free
and in it for a moment an image I do see.

Not as a fairy suddenly she do appear
as a woman from the lighting that did bash near
and above me the sky is blue and clear.

"Hello hero, you did bid me to come to you,
where daily your fight for a life and a career is true.
I am here to help in whatever you have got to do."

She runs into my arms and like this we do stand...

Gert Strydom

Morning

When the early morning rays
were caught in the sky

and it did look as if again
it would be a hot day
and the sun did change from red to white,

when trees did point fingers into the blue
and the fragrance of flowers
did hang like a cloak around you.

you did sit in the car with me
and your eyes did give away
numerous kisses.

Gert Strydom

Morning {2}

When the early morning rays
captured the dawn sky

and it seemed
as if it is going to be another hot day
and the sun was changing from red to white

while trees did push up their fingers into the blue,
while the smell of flowers
did hang in a cloak around you

you did sit with me
and your eyes did distribute many kisses.

Gert Strydom

Morning Breaks Magnificently

Morning breaks magnificently in colours of red,
shattering the night's embrace with shining rays
and I am waken in my bed,
knowing that this will be a day of days

and even while you are far away,
your love and understanding makes everything special,
turns every moment, every sunray
into something with great potential.

Gert Strydom

Morning Glories

Let Leipoldt write about violets
which are in the field,
I have my own flower
or weed that I adore
and it's Sunspots
that grows out of the good earth.

You can call it a pest
or a weed,
but I am nuts about the heavenly blue
full of blue flowers that creep everywhere
and push twines out in all directions

Purple cardinal climbers
that climb up everywhere
and after the rain
burst out in all directions
stays a beautiful flower to me.

[Reference: Morning Glories=Sunspots=Heavenly Blue=Cardinal Climber. C.L.
Leipoldt's poem Oktobermaand.]

Gert Strydom

Morning Glories (Balassi Stanza)

You open with the red sun
with small petals that run
over walls from tiny seeds
in purple-blue small cups
everywhere streaming up.
People see you as a weed
while in clusters you grow
opening from the first glow,
are very lovely indeed.

Gert Strydom

Morning Song

It feels as if the screaming
of a cricket goes right through the depths of me,
pass sleep into my brain.

Outside there's a choir of frogs croaking
to really wake me up
and I wonder why everything
and now even the birds
this morning is singing so happily
and somewhere in the distance
a cock crows a few times.

The sun's red fingers
already feels through the twilight
and I see the big old dark brown dog
stretching herself out
as if she is worshiping the sun
and then sits prepared on attention
while she's watches the street.

Gert Strydom

Morning Walk (Parody)

Full of revenge the animal started walking,
while the wind jerked off curtains down the street
blowing wildly behind clouds of fog,
passing the supermarket, where trolleys stick out
like always bunched together.
Passing tractors, with a lost tooth, going round a drum,
shy, she sneaks past rubble, tin shacks
that is stripped, past a tower next to the street;
a female dog that morning is walking
with twisted teeth.

And in her territory she gradually got loose, became dog again,
crossing the streets without a chain, going right through a fence,
where she walks into a direction without an owner, playing with butterflies
that are hopping up and down to find nectar or are turning above the lettuce;
she pauses, with the smell of meat that drives her on,
while she is half blinded.

Oh, the gnashing and a clatter when the wind
rips curtains off at houses down the street,
capsizing something against a car,
blowing beds and bricks, exposing poverty
at every shack.

She walks inquisitive
over rags, intestines and rubbish bags
that are stringed together,

inquisitive up to the street,
running over the road full of uniforms,
whining with aching teeth,

the wind flies up full of fester
when she shakes her big head -

at this place
the wind is contained

forever.

(With apologies to Louis Esterhuizen/Reference: "Oggendwandeling" (Morning walk) by Louis Esterhuizen.)

Gert Strydom

Morning-Glory (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Its blue pure perfect colour is the first we see
but there is a price to this beauty
it does overgrow anything near to it
yet its hue holds a kind of tranquillity,

with its petals a small trumpeting thing
where as we do recede its hue is darkening
glorious it does follow the day,
its absolute colour is always striking

if we are near or even far away,
optical tricks on the mind it does play
as if this flower is somehow holy,
to our senses unspoken words it does say

its delightful shimmering radiance
is seen at only a single glance.

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Gert Strydom

Moses

The people are fed up
with eating manna
which is like getting
putu porridge every day
and somewhere it passes
being nice
and they want some meat
to roast on the coals.

The scouts sneak back
to where we camp
and only two are convinced
that we can win the battle
and can conquer a country
where there is milk and honey.

The others are sure
that we will come undone
against giants of ten feet ten
and we have to find another way
even if it's through the desert.

Still the cloud glows hot at dusk
where it hangs above the camp
and I see red,
orange and pink colours.

The staff is sturdy in my hand
and there is silence at night
and I see God's stars
appearing one after the other
against the heavenly sky

while I wonder
what to do with these stubborn people
since the desert is hot and dry.

Gert Strydom

Moses (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

He is the man that talks directly to God,
who refuses to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter,
did leave the palace of Pharaoh as a prince
without fearing the anger of Pharaoh,
did go back to Egypt to Pharaoh,
to stand before him as a man of God,
did tell the words of God to that king
and did warn that the Lord God will defeat Pharaoh,
wanted to give up his own life to rescue his nation,
did constantly pray to God,
while the cloud and fiery-column did lead him
and when the people were stubborn against God's law,
he did look with faith as one that sees the unseen
and did live as a man that was only serving the Lord God.

[References: Hebrews 11: 23-30. "Moses" by M. M. Walters.]

Gert Strydom

Moses [2]

(in answer to N.P. van Wyk Louw)

When I stood on the mountaintop
did notice the Promised Land
that enticing did lie ripe before me,
where I may not enter

pain went through my soul
as through the desert I did find the way
but my own will was my undoing
which made me to relinquish that beautiful land

but then I did wonder about what did lie over the other horizon,
beyond the blue beyond and I was aware of greater beauty
and while the known world did lie beneath my feet
my eyes were focussed on a heavenly inheritance,

I did look up at the heavenly portals,
did see a glorious world lying there.

[Reference: "Opstand" (Revolt) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Most Beautiful Girl

Most beautiful girl
I send a message to you
but no postal dove can get it to you
as life passes far too quickly

but the stars, the moon, the sun and the sky are witnesses
to the feelings that we have got for each other

and in seconds it has got to be with you
so that you can read it
and can give a nice lovely answer
to how perfect moments between us are.

My lips upon yours carry it
and in every gasp or breath,
in our heart beats the message is send
and it's as if this moment can last eternally.

Gert Strydom

Most Of Your Precious Jewels Were Stolen

Most of your precious jewels were stolen,
your car's window smashed
by a black man with a beanie hat,
who grabbed your handbag
from the seat next to you
were you were parked between two cars
at a traffic light.

The thief ran into the minibus taxi rank
and you were too afraid to follow
into that maze
of black travellers.

Even your cellular phone was taken,
along with your purse, identity document
and driver's license.

You called me from the nearby
plumber's shop
and I drove quicker from Johannesburg
to the centre city of Pretoria
than the Police could
from a few blocks away.

Every precious jewel you had,
the emerald engagement ring,
the ten-centimetre broad gold armband,
your string of pearls, two rings
with three carat diamonds,
the charm bracelet with the big five
that I collected golden pendant
by golden pendant for you,
even my Rolex watch was stolen
and some golden Kruger Rands,
earrings, rings and bracelets
that I cannot recall anymore.

You were crying and shaken
and I tried to comfort you

and entered the minibus taxi rank
trying to find discarded documents
or something,
but without avail.

When the police came
they were too afraid
to search the taxi rank
and said that its dangerous
and when I told them
that I had searched it already
they were astonished
and they told you to report the crime
at the nearest police station
if you wanted to make a case
and drove away with their yellow van.

Gert Strydom

Most Of Your Precious Jewels Were Stolen [1]

Most of your precious jewels were stolen,
your car's window smashed
by a black man with a beanie hat,
who grabbed your handbag
from the seat next to you
were you were parked between two cars
at a traffic light.

The thief ran into the minibus taxi rank
and you were too afraid to follow
into that maze
of black travellers.

Even your cellular phone was taken,
along with your purse, identity document
and driver's license.

You called me from the nearby
plumber's shop
and I drove quicker from Johannesburg
to the centre city of Pretoria
than the Police could
from a few blocks away.

Every precious jewel you had,
the emerald engagement ring,
the ten-centimetre broad gold armband,
your string of pearls, two rings
with three carat diamonds,
the charm bracelet with the big five
that I collected golden pendant
by golden pendant for you,
even my Rolex watch was stolen
and some golden Kruger Rands,
earrings, rings and bracelets
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at the nearest police station
if you wanted to make a case
and drove away with their yellow van.

Gert Strydom

Mother

From the time I was small
I remember you Mom
praying on your knees
in front of Him
who hears every thing
and understands
and past who
nothing ever goes

and how we together
had to sit in church
with respect
and even had to give our cents
as tithe to the Lord.

Mom, your love is
so selfless and unbounded
as if Jesus Himself
marked off the borders
of your humanity

and although the years
past just too quickly
you are in your old age
still my leaning post,
my advisor, my anchor
and my mast

like only the
most wonderful mother
can fit into the heart
of a boy and man.

Gert Strydom

Mother (Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Mother, to you I could always escape
as you do understand the human being that I am
and my spirit is constantly free
while the world goes on in its desolation.
I have never been scared
have exorcised all things that are evil with prayers
but in my earthly stumbling gait
in my years of maturity you did rescue me.
Before your true heart every glance of suspicion does disappear
while you do support my scouting journey of poetry
as my truest buttress in the stormy night and in the sunshine,
in your days of old age I can still find support on your shoulders
while I am trusting and believing in the omnipotence of God,
do still wait on the time of my salvation.

[Reference: "Terugblik" (Survey of the past) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Mother And Child

On one of the back benches in church
I see a young girl
unbuttoning the top of her blouse
with slender white fingers
to let her baby drink.

His sleepy blue eyes opens
and his small lips suck
on a swollen nipple
and mother and child
is framed into my mind
like the painting of the Madonna
and milk streams into him
while the congregation sings.

She gazes as through time
with uplifted head,
giving him power, the love of God
as if fixed to the spot while praying
and giving him milk.

She tenderly touch the baby
with every movement
echoing great love
and he settles sleeping
and a smile of tranquillity
is on her face.

Gert Strydom

Mother Is Upset

Mother is upset where in silence she stands praying
seventy two rand is suddenly missing
and she do not know where she has put the money
and she does not want to fight with young Sarah,
do not really know how to settle this
but she takes me by the hand and we walk
to the little village without me really comprehending.
She asks if perhaps Sarah had picked up the money
and suddenly the front door is slammed
before Mom gets her money with Sarah's face shining from fat.

Gert Strydom

Mother Mary

Like no other
from the time
I saw first light,
mother Mary sacrificed
her life for me.

In times of desolation
when all others doubt me,
mother Mary still believes
in my integrity.

In times of darkness
when no other is near,
mother Mary talks to me
and tries to set my eyes
back on the light
and her voice
is the only one that I hear.

Every morning before the day begins
mother Mary's prayers
goes to the King of kings,
telling Him of all the things
that living brings to me.

When all hope is gone
and all things are done,
mother Mary takes my hand
and reminds me to trust
and that the new morning
is very near.

Beyond reason
when there's no indication
that any answer
or victory is possible,
mother Mary still believes
and the Almighty One
touches me through her.

Age is making mother Mary frail
and time is rushing by
and I am afraid
that the end is coming near
and although life has taken
its toll from her
mother Mary is like no other
and will always be
my dearest mother.

Gert Strydom

Mother Mary (Persian Quatrain)

Mary still speechless to this very day you do people astound,
they do pray to you like to God but in Him my salvation is found,
they believe that you that are a mother are also a co-redeemer
but I that you are a woman and that He do turn my world around.

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Gert Strydom

Mother, Far Too Quickly The Days Are Running Past

Mother, far too quickly the days are running past
and it's as if it was only yesterday
that we did live in the old white house against the hillock
and in all of the bad times
I can only remember how you lead me nearer to God
but we cannot avoid the way that life goes
and yesterday is like water that we want to hold in our hands
and we see only flashes of the back of tomorrow
while we try to fit into the big old world
but as a mother there is nobody just like you.

Mother sometimes I struggle to find the right words
that tells about your sacrifices,
that tell how you are still selfless
and if I do not comprehend life fully
I can still in my fiftieth year go to you
and between us there is a tight bond
and how precious is every small thing
in the hands of your adult child.

Gert Strydom

Mother's Day

It was mother's day
and you wanted your dead mother
to be alive again,
more sincerely than anything.

You even were angry with me
for not thinking about you
on that day
of you now being motherless
when you had a mother
for most of your life
and a father too

and that there was something empty,
something missing from your life,
and her being gone
was terrible on that particular day.

That you couldn't make her breakfast,
pick nasturtiums
from the garden for her,
or even talk to her,
on that special day
and I said that I didn't realize that you were
missing your mom so much,
and offered my sincere sympathy
and told you that we have to appreciate
our parents
while we still have them,

that life lies only in the hand of God,
that I had grown up without a father
and that my mother was the only parent
whom I really knew
and ironically the only woman
that didn't leave me in the lurch

which made you angrier,
so much so that you slammed

the phone down in my ear
when I called to apologize
and I wondered why
the persons that we hold dear
leave so much pain
when they are gone
and what had gotten into you?

Gert Strydom

Motorbike

It's as if my motorbike has got wings
when at speed it does run,

do change gears with an engine that roars
but there is something dark that fills speed

as if life and death is covered up while they do hang in balance
and I am aware of the insignificance of man.

Gert Strydom

Motorbike Ride

This morning it was dripping when I got up
and I wanted to say goodbye,
but I thought that you are probably still lying
and that it's cuddly and hot
and that I am going to pull you out of sleep,
then I withhold myself from it.

It's another thing to play Russian roulette
with the rain.
I decided to take the chance
and the road to work with the motorbike.

At places the road was still wet
and there where sand flushed over the road,
but I won the rain this morning
and opened the throttle
and the cool wind
blew strong over my body
and before it fell I stopped at work.

This afternoon I will have to play again
die the game with the rain
and I pray that it will fall later if it has to fall,
or I will be wet and cold
and it will be a hell of a thing
to get home.

Gert Strydom

Motorbike Riding

When you drive a motorbike,
feel the wind cutting through your hair
there is a kind of pleasure that you experience.

Gert Strydom

Mountain Pass

A overloaded, dilapidated bus
with its big loaded roof-rack
started swaying to and thro,
lost its tracking on the wet tarmac

and in a thunderstorm on a mountain pass
left the road, tumbling of the cliff's edge
as if tossed in the storm its occupants
were crushed, drowned

went down into the riverbed
without any sheltering
against the abyss
and impartially the water flows
carrying silt and whatever it can find
in a brown mud bath on, onto the sea.

Gert Strydom

Moving

There's confusion to find things,
to prepare the kitchen, the rooms
when the hallway and lounge,
the garage is standing full of boxes

and we are like nomads,
as if every thing is ready
for the next removal

while we find small treasures,
precisely plan how to arrange our house,
our new life.

Gert Strydom

Mowing

There was not a sound
but that of the machine
that howl against the sky
and magically sheared the grass
from where it grew.

No bushes of grass, or even weeds
could keep its length
when that yellow long necked
Weedeater appeared.

Grass, weeds and stems
were scattered everywhere
and underneath, with the smell
of mown grass in the air
a beautiful lawn appeared.

Gert Strydom

Mowing (Cavatina)

Overpowering the machine mowed
with its roaring
stifling all other kinds of garden sounds,
the nylon string
of the edge cutter frayed at times
and approaching
a butterfly fluttered about
in silence, far away was a child's shout.

Wild doves and sparrows pecked small insects
on the green lawn,
orange hoopoes were fluttering about
while some did fawn
where I had laboured lonely hours
after first dawn,
extremely bright shone the white hot sun,
on another summer day full of great fun.

Gert Strydom

Mowing The Lawn

The chestnut tree is now stripped bare
and all of the golden leaves have been raked,
bagged in black sacks.

The last summer sun
hangs white hot in the autumn air
while the lawnmower growls willingly.

There's sand and grass
coming into my nose and the weed-eater
cuts away the jungle.

I see the two cats
climbing down a evergreen tree
from the roof of the garage

and there are ripe yellow tomatoes
on stems in long rows
and a few figs swelling out
hanging on branches
and I cut tufts of grass
at the back of the prickly pears.

Gert Strydom

Much Later (Couplets)

The inside of your thigh
softly stretched over me do lie

where a leg does cross over mine,
you are like a blonde angel lying supine

but I hear you breathing and your soft heartbeat,
your breasts go up and down and I feel your body's heat

where you are so very close to me,
do mutter words in your deepest dreams and life has sanctity.

Where the moonlight falls all over you the moon seems small
and I pray a prayer of thanks to God somewhere in the all,

pray that you will love me when life is upside down and wild
and you passionate woman, do look innocent like a child.

Gert Strydom

Much More (Rubliw)

You do
cross the tar road
and my heart leaps with pain
while I wish that you will remain
and the wind does jerk at your skirt, your hair
while to me you are very fair
and my emotions overload
and I love you
much more.

Gert Strydom

Much More [2] (Rubliw)

Much more
I do love you,
more than the day before
and although each day might be new
love is present in the simple things we do
and you I do deeply adore
even when out of view
feelings grow to
be true.

Gert Strydom

Much More Than Just Sound

(in answer to Joan St. Leger Lindbergh)

I

While writing poems losing the words, the sound,
the images in the mind
is like bliss fading away
into life in a harsh winter-day
and then again them to find,
is to set my feet and heart on solid ground

II

and somewhere in all of this are you
the one whom I do adore
and yet words are not impish things,
but the sound of which the heart and soul rings,
the implements that make life much more,
while my love for you is sincere and true,

III

where you do bring joy to the nothingness,
do bring the magic that just happens with intimacy,
while eternal moments constantly do come and go
and you I do like my own heartbeat know
while the perfect woman you are to me,
in a cold world like sunshine do bring true happiness.

[Reference: "Just sound" by Joan St. Leger Lindbergh from her
volume of poems: "Waves, " published by Lindlife, Kalk Bay.1994.
Poet's note: I am quoting her poem "Just Sound" here:

"Losing the sound of words
Is like losing one's guts.
Discovering them again
Is like a penal thrust
Through clouds and mire
Suddenly to find that, actually,
You can come again!
So easily lost, these impish things

That make sense of nothingness.
To be able to hold them again
Is like a golden ball
Of fulfilled desire."]

Gert Strydom

Muckleneuk Ridge

We sat between packed boxes
in a sold house
and I made some tea
and while we drank
the hot liquid
I told you that I
cannot afford the mansion
in Muckleneuk Ridge
near Unisa University
of which the rent included
water and electricity.

The two boys
were playing outside
with the dogs
throwing a tennis ball
for them
and we could hear
their laughter and excitement
coming in.

It was a really grand place,
with five bedrooms, a study,
a very big lounge
and had a great modern kitchen.

It had huge rooms
with private entrances,
yellow wood floors,
pine ceilings,
a braai area at the back
and sprinklers
in a huge garden.

You didn't want to take
no for an answer,
started crying
and went on your knees
begging me please

and embraced my legs.

That house had caught
your heart,
spoke to something
in your soul
and made you truly
feel like a lady.

I helped you to your feet
drawing you up
by your hands
and we embraced.

There wasn't much
that I could do, but to agree
and although we cut the finances,
I had to make a plan.

That house was like palace,
it was near to the highway
to Johannesburg
(where I worked) ,
right for the children's school
right for your work
and just the place for you.

Gert Strydom

Muse

Every poet waits
for a really great poem
to take form
in words,
but I rather want my muse
to become part of me
and to give life to every word
and to write words
that comes flaming from the page.

Gert Strydom

Music Became Part Of Her Soul

As life swept by, she kept her tapes,
cd's and dvd's
using the holders as setting places
for drinks, for cups to stand on
and one was bended in the windowsill
by the heat of the sun.

They reminded her about a life passed
and that was gone,
some brought moments of joy and fun,
some tears, others incomprehensibly
brought a unknown fear
of the end of life drawing near,

but with each and every one
something rippled through her heart
as if keeping unfound love alive,
the hope for something new,
something great to appear
and music became part of her soul.

Gert Strydom

Music Thumped Out Of The Minibus Taxi Rank

Music thumped out of the minibus taxi rank
with a few indigenous females dancing
bare chest with whopping breasts
shaking along with the beat

with sweat glistening on their
half-naked bodies
and some of taxi drivers grinned
at the maids of their harem

displaying their wares
to the stares of passing
European men
and Japanese foreigners
with flashing cameras
and they clapped their hands to the beat.

Gert Strydom

Musso

Musso my ginger Persian cat
lies stretched out
and sleeping
on the box of my computer.

Every now and then
he opens his golden eyes
and yawns and stretches out
his golden-yellow striped
left foot.

When I stroke his head
he stretches it back
and there's a smile
of pleasure
with two tiny protruding white teeth.

At times this beautiful golden monster
brings his presents to me
and any big grasshopper,
mouse, rat, bird
or snake
that he finds
surprises me at times.

Gert Strydom

Mutability

Outside there are the golden rays
that light everything as they fall and quiver
coming and going through nights and days
but constantly are again lost forever.

Outside the wind sings in its strings
blowing its tiny offerings
of dust and clean fresh air
while clouds and rain it in motion brings.

Life changes with times of sheer happiness
to when there's pain and sorrow
and daily the world from sunshine to darkness
while constantly there is a new tomorrow

and at times we have joy, at times we weep
while nights pass suddenly while we are asleep.

Gert Strydom

Mutability (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I

We are like leaves blown in a savage wind
where on another day no one again them will find,
or like notes echoing into the night on a piano
that in the morning does not anymore anywhere go
and in the matters of the heart and the mind
never again will I sacrifice myself just so,
even if streams of tears do forever flow,
your people cannot life up and leave their acts behind,
where on another day no one again them will find,

II

You and I are like day and night
and the one bares darkness the other light,
where we are in life's great mutability:
never together the two of us can be
where I cannot live a life in fright
even if with love you do quiver,
away from each other we are forever
where others do deem you out of my sight,
and the one bares darkness the other light.

III

Far too many times disrespect has been acted out on me:
the value of what I am and do your people do never see,
shameful acts, words and decisions you and them have taken
that have over time great resistance in me awaken
and now like this you do not want it to be
yet your children cannot and do not want to make the past undone,
where by your wishes and will our time together is gone
where from this savage treatment yet now even I am not free,
the value of what I am and do your people do never see.

[Reference:"Mutability" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

My Angel Has A Voice Like Velvet

My angel has a voice like velvet
which makes notes lie soft on the ear
and I want no other music.

My angel has a voice like velvet
when her fingers play with a guitar
and stroke magic sounds from it.

My angel has a voice like velvet,
which makes notes lie soft on the ear.

Gert Strydom

My Apocryphal Song Of Songs

Song of Songs: Chapter one

When my darling is still slumbering
the blanket drawn up to her chin,
lying peaceful
I am without words

when the day brake red across the mountain's comb
she is still stretched out
while the sun lovingly
stirs its first fingers

and when she moves
her big golden bracelet shines
pearls around her neck glitter
like the dewdrops

outside on the grass and trees,
like the golden colour of the sun
that now hangs high above the horizon
and I can catch the first white gleaming

of her smile
the morning wind swirls
singing over the glory
that she brings to my life

her eyes glitters brighter than the heaven
with their own rays and meaning
that is caught in her glance,
she looks lovely and fresh

and I know that God is blessing me
with her presence,
where He binds us together
in moments of time.

Song of Songs: Chapter two

I want to feel the rays of sun in your eyes
being lost over my body,
bending over your body
I want to take the core out of your soul,

I want to feel the pulse beat of your heart
in your naked breast,
through the pleasure and pain of this life
I want to long day after day for you

and abate all my passion, all my joy in you,
carrying you along through the times of my life,
catching moments in the glory of bliss,
making you to my most honourable aspiration

and tonight I want to come to you,
to make you mine.

Song of Songs: Chapter three

When I saw you
words curled up in my mouth,
my voice suddenly became hoarse

and I were wondering how your smile looks
while you were looking in my direction
and suddenly my thoughts were blunted off

when I saw passion in your eyes,
in my thoughts I had undressed you already,
removing your garments one by one,

but when your lips were burning beneath mine,
our conversation had dried up altogether
and we melted into each other: eye into eye.

Song of Songs: Chapter four

Your first kisses caught me,
with your bright eyes

later your lips were against my cheek
after which you and I

wanted more intimacy
with intensity hanging in every moment,
the sound of your voice was like the singing of birds
and closer contact we could not avoid

we french kissed
like mature people do
this kind of thing
with joy and scouting
and your eyes were full of intense wishes
with moments of passion and tenderness.

Song of Songs: Chapter five

When I stood below your window,
the light in you room went on suddenly
but it was no love-song,
but poems that I was presenting to you

of my love that I held out to you,
like a bush of red roses
and I believed

that you could hear them
right through your sleep.

Song of Songs: Chapter six

Early in the morning, when the fog was concealing the world,
your breath was caught against my cheek,
when the sun's first rays were teasing with long fingers.
Early in the morning when the fog was concealing the world,
your breath was like the wind over mountains and valleys
while mist hanged like the breath of the world in the basins,
early in the morning when the fog was concealing the world,
when the sun's first rays were teasing with long fingers.

Song of Songs: Chapter seven

Early morning with the call of guinea fowl in the field
the morning is already preparing,
the rays of the sun break through the nightly cloak,
the sun breaks through the nightly wall

with the day spreading to everywhere
like the gleaming of your eyes she smiles broadly.
Early morning with the call of guinea fowl in the field
the morning is already preparing,

and between you and me there's an invisible band
that binds the essence of love with an oath,
you are with me through all happiness and sorrow,
I feel your nearness, even your small soft hand
early morning, with the call of guinea fowl in the field.

Song of Songs: Chapter eight

To sing of your beauty, I want to catch nature,
causing the sun's rays to splash brightly on your cheek,
with my feelings at times caught in a labyrinth
we are bonded in the dark night to each other
with kisses hanging over our entire bodies.

Your eyes are bluer than the sky, your hair threaded out by the wind
and when you sleep I am already longing,
but in the mornings I too blinded by your smile
to sing of your beauty.

Sometimes you twist beneath me like a pretty snake,
the knowledge that we are mortal scares me,
I see the autumn tinted into your hair,
while you smile in a noble and innocent way like a child,
I try to catch that which is between us in words
to sing of your beauty.

Song of Songs: Chapter nine

In the pool of the fountain
the sky reflects cobalt blue
and shadows fall over the inner court

and there is images sprouting whirling in my mind
of me and of you
in the pool of the fountain

and you are like an angel surrounded by sunshine
where we cling to each other dripping wet
and shadows fall over the inner court

and even the wind blows with a song, a refrain
and there are pure white lilies that I look at
in the pool of the fountain

and the time spent with you is noble and pure
while we try to stretch moments to preserve them
and shadows fall over the inner court

drawing the two of us, line fall upon line
the sky reflects cobalt blue
in the pool of the fountain
and shadows fall over the inner court

Song of Songs: Chapter ten

With your lovely face
and bright blue eyes
you can at any time disrupt my life,

a single word causes me to believe in your love,
your soft lips, the blush on your cheek
and bright blue eyes

holds me captured,
the sound of your voice,
your soft lips, the blush on your cheek

clenches around my heart,
with your soft hand folding around mine,
the sound of your voice

is that of a beautiful woman
and with knowledge of how perfect you are to me
with your soft hand folding around mine,

you surprise me time and again.
With your lovely face
and with knowledge of how perfect you are to me
you can at any time disrupt my life.

Gert Strydom

My Autumn

My hair turns grey
and my friends have left
to stay in the USA,
Australia and Great Britain
and life is just rolling on
and the beginning of winter
is nearly here
and the summer forever is gone.

Shadows appear like ghosts
from the past and memories fade
like the shades in the sun.
Life was sweet and painful at times
and I have loved and lost and of the battles I fought,
I have won some, but what good has it brought?

Gert Strydom

My Autumn [2]

Around me trees are stripped
rigid, bare and totally naked
and heaps of leaves lie fallen
already colouring
from yellow to red and into brown.

Everything is lifeless,
like my life in pieces
and still there are thunderstorms
that repeatedly falls in this winter
out of season

and I am almost blinded by the thunder
as if it wants to devour everything about me
and still there's new life
that this rain brings
and it's clear
that my autumn is coming too early
and although my body still feels young
the greyness are creeping in

and you write words
of keeping yourself in vain,
of a child
that never will be born

and about everything becoming rotten
like a compos heap
and that love has also receded
as if everything this autumn
has elapsed for once and all.

Yet the grass is still green,
some trees are covered with leaves
and I wonder where you and I stand
when this season disappears
and the coming winter ends?

Still you are in my heart,

as if you are part of me
and I know that life without you
is totally meaningless.

Gert Strydom

My Barmaid

I

Let's drink to life
and love and liberty
and in all things be free.

II

She's got a variety of drinks
at the bar in her lounge
and likes JC Le Roux sparkling wine
and Dimple Haig whiskey
and when I visit
she pours KWV red wine
or some Hunters Gold cider
or Johnny Walker whiskey for me
and we chat like old friends do
and we play pool
and she beats me each time
and we slow dance
on Bob Marley and the whalers
and no woman no cry
becomes real to me
and although some other guys
may know her intimately well,
she stays totally magic to me
and far better than all of this
is when I kiss her
and take her in my arms
and she melts into me
and really intense sparks fly
and she becomes mine.

III

La belle dame sans merci,
this girl will forever,
be precious to me.

My Beloved Country

My beloved country
two oceans do embrace you at both sides,
a mountain does greet them that sail nearer to the southern point
and beautiful you are as if God is protecting you to the end of time.

Up to your most northerly border trees are stretched out like guards,
where they do cover you from the Cape to the Bush-veldt,
inland your rains do pour down with lightning flashes in the summer
and in the Cape the rain does pour down in winter without any thunderbolts.

Even in the dry Karoo farms lie stretched out
and there are farms as far a person can trek through you.
Here my people have their own precious piece of ground
and they do remain your children, even if they are robbed and wounded.

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Gert Strydom

My Blue Bike Thunders Below Me

My blue bike thunders
below me
and cars and trucks
flashes by.

It's a hot day with an open blue sky
and nowhere there's a cloud
to be seen
and the warm wind brushes my hair.

The smell of the grass, petrol,
exhaust fumes and tar
rises around me,
but I am free
and the bike catches some speed
and the road stretches out
in front of me.

Gert Strydom

My Body Is The Temple Of His Love

(after Hafiz)

My body is the temple of His love,
my heart, my mind even though my own
is the sanctuary that must become holy for Him,
my life is dedicated to my Lord
and everything that I have known
while I have been adventuring,
though at times it darkens my being,
my life with sin,
His spirit dwells within
and in Him I am clean.

His life is pure like the Lily
growing in the swamp,
is bright with pure light
like the sun that overcomes the darkest night
and in Him my shattered pieces are whole,
He is the essence of my soul.

[Reference: "My soul is the veil of his love" by Hafiz.]

Gert Strydom

My Buddies (A Reply To Boris Slutsky)

All young white men at a time
was forced into the military, into war
or had to serve a three year jail term

and most of my buddies came home,
but some did not:

Parachuting into a enemy camp
there was one close friend that died,
the other three I hardly knew
and to the government it was
an incidental small thing against
seven hundred and fifty
enemy SWAPO and Cuban casualties

and on one patrol one close buddy
stepped on a landmine
were blown up and no one else was hurt,
and to the government it was
an incidental small thing against
the enemy that had lost
little less than a full platoon.

In Angola when we met enemy armour,
turned FAPLA / Cuban divisions
under Soviet leadership into junk

I saw a Ratel armoured car
that was trapped in a landmine field
that had been shot out
with the holes
were enemy tank projectiles went in
and every one inside was burnt, incinerated
if not blown to bits, turned into ash

and it had been only one of eleven
armoured cars
and troop carriers that was lost
some of only thirty-one soldiers dead

but there was pain that flashed through me
when I saw it

and to the government it was
an incidental small thing against
four thousand seven hundred and eighty five killed
on the Cuban/FAPLAN side, 94 tanks
and hundreds of enemy combat vehicles destroyed

and now no one thinks
of the sacrifice that all of these soldiers made,
of the hundreds of thousands
of returning citizen force soldiers
who were nuts, bomb happy
with post traumatic stress syndrome
or whatever you want to call it

as to the government it is
an incidental small thing,
that happened in a distant past
as if the ex-soldiers are non-existing,
even seen as apartheid criminals by some.

[References: Buddies here used as name used in the South African Defence Force for comrades. Ex-soldiers here used instead of war veterans, as in African circles the word war veterans has got a new derogatory meaning connected to it. My Comrades by Boris Slutsky.]

Gert Strydom

My Bus Is Full Of People That Do Seem Dead (Free Verse Sonnet)

My bus is full of people that do seem dead
and almost everyone is tired and exhausted
while a man and boy stands in the aisle between the benches
and the Brakpan bus is on its way to Springs.
Where you smile at me you do draw all the attention,
your hand is soft in mine and you are charming,
your eyes are big and intense and sincere,
your nose is somewhat impudent
where I am regarding you,
godless seem the people and the city
and for eons I can look at you like this
when you say that it's time to get off and take me on the arm.
You are pretty, independent and impulsive
and I know that I do truly love you.

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Gert Strydom

My Clothes, My Shoes Fit From The Shelve

My clothes, my shoes fit from the shelve
as if in shops clothing
was specially designed for my body
and whatever I desire fits perfectly

and I wish our lives
to be the same perfect match,
to find happiness and sincerity
and love in the way that you regard me.

Gert Strydom

My Country Is In Ruins

My country is in ruins,
it's a place that here and there is falling to pieces,
the decline is clearly visible
and the home of almost every white family is a fortress.

Maybe the writing is on the wall,
maybe people who pillage,
at a time will be send out in thousands,
to murder and rob as they did from their prehistory
and time and again I wonder
how long the peace can last?

Sometimes it looks as if integrity
is totally lacking from your fellow man,
as if every one wants to take revenge
for one or other reason,
as if people only living themselves
but maybe compassion is still hidden somewhere?

How much I want things to be different,
and I am longing for a place in the sun of my own,
to talk my own language, to live out my own culture
and at times to express my own thoughts.

Still there is a sun shining in the heaven,
clouds do still disappear at times before the blue;
people still have got dreams, love and ambitions,
are living their lives in happiness, joy, sorrow and pain.

Gert Strydom

My Country Lies In Pieces

My country lies in pieces
as if it was in a hell of a fatal accident
and daily I see Johnny's and Helana's
on gravel and on grass
that does not know where
they fit into the new world.

How must my people go on
when life stops
for them in the middle
of a swamp
and where is Johnny going to get a job
and where is Helena going to stay
or is she going to open her doors wide
and invite every man inside
for a pound of two.

In vain our blood clotted
and fell on rock
of this mother earth
and at times in the dark night,
I still dream
about rifles cracking in war.

It's like nothing
can change things back
to what it was
and there's no new tomorrow,
waiting on my people
and not a reasonable chance
to make a life.

I pray time and again
and ask the great Lord
just for a place in the sun
and to stay free as a citizen
and that merit must apply
and my soul that dies inside of me,
draws strong to the field

where the sunlight falls
and thunders flash blue white
over the iron rocky outcrops.

Between the things of life
white men are searching for work
and wonder how
to place bread on the table
and I see them stand
as car guards
at supermarkets
and it's as if those
that brings and measure out the calamity,
tear pages out of their lives
and artlessly roll cigarette zols
out of a family Bible
and I wonder if our blood
will have to clot
and how far things will have to go
or has it become part of life
and is it quite normal
for everyone?

[Reference: Spoorwegramp by Henley-on-Klip by JC Steyn. Johnny=> John
everyman. Helana=> Beautiful women. Hellen of Troy.]

Gert Strydom

My Darling

My darling has got tiger eyes,
my most beloved has got semi-precious stones
that sometimes shines gleaming
as if a golden colour
is hidden deeply in the brown of her eyes,
as if the darkness of her eyes
holds on to a secret kind of light.

Sometimes the eyes of my beloved gleams
golden like the sun
that hangs in an open blue sky,
as if she continually with her heat
can comfort, caress and cover my skin.

Sometimes I want to be lost
in the depths of her eyes,
I want to loose myself,
I want to be soulless and forget myself
when I know of the depth
of our true love.

Gert Strydom

My Darling (English Sonnet)

(in answer to William Shakespeare)

My darling's eyes are pleasant as the sun,
like pomegranates her lips are sweet and red,
with rose tips her firm breasts do me stun,
silky smooth shiny hair is on her head,

arum lilies she tends that are purple and white,
the colour of ripe peaches is on her cheeks,
Chanel, Estee Lauder, Moon-drops brings delight,
her breath is fresh as mint at the bubbling creeks.

I love the lines of her words and her voice I do know
which falls with an almost intimate sweet huskily sound,
I admit I have not seen lovely Aphrodite come and go,
but angelic with smooth silk whispering she walks on ground:

almost divine my woman whom I do love is very rare,
with no other I can her on all of the earth compare.

[Reference: "Sonnet 130 My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"
by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

My Darling (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrains)

My darling, there is something
that is great, that is unseen happening
as our love becomes unlimited
as with new life spring rushes in

and even when the days seems plain
when there is no right and ready answer for pain,
when scorching hangs the summer sun
still our love intensely does remain.

Gert Strydom

My Darling (Sicilian Sonnet)

I will protect with everything in my might,
where now I am praying for God's grace,
that His help will be present in every place
while this deadly virus is out of sight

and I urge leaders to do things that are right,
to act correct when away from public praise,
while I miss you so deeply in each day's
challenges and in this time of great fright,

To keep you alive in my mind experiences I use
where to life and living there is still great hope,
but it's as if bit by bit your image I do lose
and daily we do with the things in life alone cope,
where this lock-down is not something we choose
and its stopping and salvation is in God's scope.

Gert Strydom

My Darling [2]

(After Robert Louis Stevenson)

My darling is beautiful with eyes the sun's hue
Sparkling like morning dew
And she is honest, true and utterly straight
The creator made her to be my mate.

With words that at times can be a consuming fire
Or a blessing like a cool stream and love that doesn't tire
Always cheerful and level headed and never sinister
I find the most gracious qualities in her.

As friend, companion, partner and wife
She was sent to this life
To live openly
Forever duty bound but still free
As the greatest of blessings to me.

[Reference: "My Wife" by Robert Louis Stevenson.]

Gert Strydom

My Darling Has Got Tiger-Eyes

My darling has got tiger-eyes that sometimes glisten
as if a golden colour is hidden deep in the brown,
as if the darkness of them
holds a hidden kind of light

and so my darling's eyes do glisten
gold as the sun
that hangs in an open blue sky
as if with the heat of them
she wants to cover my skin.

Sometimes I want to be lost in the depths of her eyes,
sometimes I want to be soulless,
want to forget myself totally
and only want to know of our love.

Gert Strydom

My Darling Is An Artist

My darling is an artist
who saves pictures, her impressions on a canvas
and sometimes deep things
are expressed by her mere words,

as she paints the sea green,
at times mother-of-pearl
or a dull blue
and I wonder how she does it?

With a brush she can warble
can charm and adorn things,
she can bring bewitching colours suddenly
to the early breaking day.

I'Envoi

My darling is an artist,
sometimes she muddles my whole life,
when her lips are sugary sweet
and she tells me the plain truth plainly.

Gert Strydom

My Darling, With What Will I Compare You?

You that look to me much prettier
than all the other flowers?
The sun that rises in the mornings
are much redder than any flower
but it's as if you do radiate my whole world,
as if your rays comes right out of your heart.
Even the evening flower, the rose or gazania
are all insignificant in your presence
as if they are only images of you
and in deference I must admit
that I can find nothing
to bind to your beauty.

Gert Strydom

My Darling, You Are Special (Italian Sonnet)

(after Christina Rossetti)

My darling, you are special and precious to me
I daily do pray for God to constantly accompany you
and to keep our love as a principle strong and true
where it is something of substance that comes free
and where we cannot the future or destiny foresee
that intact our love will stay even if our days are blue
where constantly I think of you in everything that I do
where He changes the way as to us it ought to be

where you are my companion, my lover and dear friend
whilst I love you as a man in all the ways that he can,
I wish to love you each day in a special way much more
where this thing between us is something without an end
that does our time and both our lives to the very limit span
where from the depth of my heart and principle I do you adore.

[Reference: "Sonnet O my heart's heart and you who are to me" by Christina Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

My Darling's Arm Lies Over Me

My darling's arm lies over me
and it's as if the silence
gets a deeper new meaning.

I lie on my back and she on her side
and our heads touch hot
against each other and forever
I can stay like this against her.

I feel her breath softly
blowing against my ear
and there's intimacy
with her hand
clinging to my breast
and the sun is already high.

Outside there's blue air
coming through the window
and she sleeps peaceful
and the light wind
jerks and jerks leaves
of the potato trees
and there's a cool breeze
intruding through the open window
into the room
and I lightly
stroke her soft back.

It's nice to lie together
in bed on a Sunday morning
and to have you're darling
lying against you
and her toes that stick out small
from under the duvet
is perfect in form and size
like those of the first woman
and her womanly beauty
pervades me strongly
while she sleeps on unaware

and I see a big pink-brown nipple
rising up and down while she breaths
and like a photograph
it's framed into my mind.

My darling's arm lies over me
and it's as if the silence
that stretches out long
gets a deeper new meaning.

Gert Strydom

My Dear Loving God

My God, who does have comprehension
for each thought, for every thing
that goes through my head,
who attentive like a father does see
how I cry and at times do sing

I ask you, where I now stand at a crossroad,
where in brokenness I do wander away from your law
that softly you will lead me back to the right way
and if you have to admonish me at times with love,
that you will draw me nearer even if I am contaminated by darkness
and will bring me to a way out (past every earthly restriction)
that with love you will wrap your arms around me

and where at times I do fall
that you will still straighten my ways
and your attentive glance will remain upon me
although you are at the other side of the universe,
that you will touch my heart and my desires
so that at a time I will also find rest
in a world where there is constantly conflict and discord.

Gert Strydom

My Dearest Writes A Few Words

My dearest writes a few words
that are very really striking
and I wonder how she knows
the reasons that I love her.

At times she astonishes me
and sometimes she surprises me
and there's times that she makes me happy,
but all of these things
are far to little
describe that which is between us.

Gert Strydom

My Distant One (Sonnet)

I dream of a house somewhere at the sea
where I and my distant one
see bougainvilleas growing up a wall
with braiding wisteria that do spread like fingers
and we both do know how great it is
to be in love and inseparable
while the Cape winter rain do wash everything clean
and you do lay close to me with a fireplace
blazing with burning pieces of wood
when the whole house is hot around us
but now my life, my days fall apart
and you are not here with me, my distant one,
I wonder what to do
to touch your soul again?

Gert Strydom

My Doll, Life Plays With Us A Cruel Game (Free Verse Sonnet)

Sometimes in life and love I have got faith and great hope,
when I long back for the pretty days with you
then I want to change this life with something better,
baptize you into the most wonderful things that do exist
where we are destined to walk together through life
and for that which life really is and its scope I am not afraid,
where God's love and great mercy do constantly hang over us,
still the fullness of love lies open in the future.
My doll, life plays with us a cruel game
but you do depend on it that I do truly do love you
and I only ask for that, which is beautiful and sincere,
the love between you and me I cannot put into words,
where we do over and over end and start again
and over rough abysses we have got to help and carry each other.

Gert Strydom

My Ex-Mother In Law

My ex-mother in law
was an unusual person
that could wish others
into death

and when my ex-wife's
first husband died from cancer
she believed
that the Lord God
answered her prayer

and for me
she also prayed a thousand times
that same prayer
and fasted
and put tears with it
although I didn't really
deserve it,
but here I am still
and it's another story.

Her husband
falls down on the golf course
and is dead from a heart attack
and he hits his last ball
away into the bushes
without any control.

At the funeral
I had to help carry the coffin,
wash dishes
and what ever
my mother in law asked.

Father in law
had a small black dog
that went everywhere with him
and smoked pipe
like Van Donck

cannot stoke up on table mountain
and the dog
then also had to die
although it was great in health
and could still live for years.

I had to take mother in law
to the vet
as she couldn't drive a car
and hold the animal
while he got
a last injection
and dig a grave
in the garden
and put him there.

¶Envoi

Now I wonder
what goes into such a person
that after her husband's death,
she is finished
with every thing of his
and married
in months again
with somebody
to keep her company?

Gert Strydom

My Experiences With Telkom South Africa (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

The Telkom South Africa landline is down
my eighty nine year old aunt looks at me with a frown
and fifty Rand spent on the mobile phone
do not get assistance and she is still cut-off and alone,
for literary two hours I cue and no assistance is shown
while at the Telkom office in the new Springs mall
with the RICA-law and selling phones black employees stall
and it's as if in South Africa every person is totally on his or her own,
my eighty nine year old aunt looks at me with a frown.

The white manageress to a door at the back sneaks by
(into her position she has been affirmed) she do not dare tot meet my eye
and after two and a half hours with a Technical Support they do me connect
a technician to my aunt's home Telkom SA does direct
my mother and aunt who cued with me are tired as the afternoon did fly.
A SMS states: "Telkom will endeavour to resolve the problem within five
days, "
for much longer than the entire weekend the problem stays
while Telkom has a monopoly the manageress passes and a pie she does buy,
(into her position she has been affirmed) she do not dare tot meet my eye.

[Poet's incident happened on the afternoon of Friday the 2nd of February SMS
was received on my mobile phone, which runs on Vodacom.]

Gert Strydom

My Father (In Answer To T.T. Cloete)

My father lived for God, family, friends
and for his country,
just before his death, as a lay preacher
he gave a sermon in pain while trembling,
he was formidable, the kind of man
to emulate,
his word was true, more concrete than steel,
integrity did radiate from him.

[Reference: "Ballade van die patriot" (ballad of the patriot) by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

My Father's Will

If in everything I only do
what is my Father's will
to me will come no ill
as His love is constantly true

and for nothing I have any fear
while He daily works within
my life, my being is cleansed of sin
while He is always near

If in everything I only do
what is my father's will
to me will come no ill
as His love is constantly true.

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Gert Strydom

My Fingers Want To Pick The Bright Stars (Crystalline)

My fingers want to pick the bright stars
that glitter blue in the darkness

Gert Strydom

My First Parachute Jump

I knew that parachuting is a learning thing,
something that you can be taught to do,
but that the real teaching
is in the experiencing, the doing of it
and with my first jump
I confronted the blue sky,
considering what it would confer on me?

The experience
was certainly a bit scary,
even a little bit threatening,
but much more exhilarating
with the wind soaring
and me drifting down,
falling much faster
that I had expected to

until the chute opened
breaking against the fall
and it felt as if it was jerking,
jerking me right into heaven.

Gert Strydom

My Footsteps Resounds On The Yellow Wood Floors

My footsteps resound
on yellow wood floors
and around me rooms are empty
as you have left
and have taken most of our possessions along.

Every step feels like into a strange place
and still I have been living here for years
and everything is really well known
and I hear the dogs barking outside
even before my cellular phone rings

and your lover wants to talk to me
and I send him straight to hell,
but he phones again
and says that he is outside at the gate.

I tell him that I am not interested
and to drive off
but still he stays
and the dogs and I
have the inclination
to get hold of him

and when I come out of the house
there is thunder in me
and at the gate he drives away
with screaming tires
ripping the grass out
of the sidewalk
and stripes are left on the tar road.

I make some tea
while my blood is boiling
and want to phone you, but what the hell
and whatever you want
can go and lie with your lap dog
and I have nothing more to say to you

and the house is empty without you
and without your children's voices,
but there a serenity folding over me
and I am without you
and it's a blessing
the value of that I note much later.

Gert Strydom

My Friend You Talk About My People And Me

My friend you talk
about my people and me
being equal
to Hitler and the Germans
of the Second World War,

but do not know
that I and most of us Afrikaners
treated black people
like human beings,

never lifted a hand
against one,
that I knew from being
a toddler that they were
Christians as well

when my mother
gave the money that was left
from my father's funeral fund
for a church to be constructed
in their own community.

How I saw the effect
of the Church Street bomb
killing innocent civilians
on the street
men, women and children
from any race.

How I was forced
to go to the army
and to war
and patriotic did my duty there

to stop communists killing,
raping and robbing the future
like they did in East Germany,
Hungary in sixty-eight

and with the Portuguese
still living in Mozambique
and in Angola
when that countries
got their independence.

How in Soweto with the army
I had to stop black people
killing black people,
burning their fellow man alive
while their women were
cheering them on

and I saw man more being animals
than human beings
without having any mercy
for each other
having lost all conscience
for their cruel deeds.

You do not know
that I will not quarter
for a country
full of pirates

and not the Orlando
soccer playing type
but people who rob,
kill, maim and rape

that there's no other escape
for Afrikaner people like me
and nowhere else to go

that I love this land
maybe more than
my forefathers did
who sacrificed
their lives for it

that my great grandfather Japie Strydom
lost his farm in the Cape colony

when as a Cape rebel
he joined the war
against the British,

was almost executed
when the war ended
was imprisoned on St. Helena,

that his wife
died in a British concentration camp
where she was fed finely grinded glass
in the flour given to her

that I want to get rid
of oppression against me
and my fellow Afrikaners
and want to have a life
like any one else.

Gert Strydom

My Friends Have Left Me

(after John Clare)

My friends have left me,
they do know me not
and at times I am struggling with my sanity
but there are still some words that I have got

while the sense of nothingness
envelops all of my world
and to everything I have a strange aloofness
while I am trying to hold

onto some kind of meaning
as my life under the whip of destiny bends
but it's at the edge of disaster that I am leaning
and it feels as if everything somehow ends

while instinctively I know
over the edge at a time I have got to go

[References: 'I am - yet what I am none cares or knows' by John Clare.]

Gert Strydom

My Garden Blossoms (English Sonnet)

My garden blossoms pink, red, purple and white
where the birds do twitter, a spring is murmuring,
and in great tranquillity it is to me a great delight
while through the oak trees the wind is whispering

and I walk up and down in this almost holy place
between roses, lilies, geraniums and hollyhocks
and here I can feel God's presence and His grace,
do hear the laughing babbler where the dog it mocks

but in all of this great beauty to you I do painfully long
as without your presence everything here is very empty
and in my heart my love for you is sincere and strong
while daily I do constantly wish for you to be with me

while I see patterns that do pass in the clouded dappled sky
and far too slowly my days without you in them do pass by.

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Gert Strydom

My Gi Jane Ii

From the start you big eyes
looked right through me
and your glance
stirred the strings of my heart,
gave me shivers and only you
were in my head
while I read love and passion
in your eyes
and you made Luhatla wonderful for me.

That exceptional hell of a place
suddenly became special
and the exercising in
(before going to war in Angola)
had already become a pattern
and I couldn't wait
to be with you
and time was only much too short
and days past much too quickly.

Then the morning came that had to be
and I saw courage and something valiant
in your eyes.

How bright the Luhatla sun shone
when the farewell came
and I drove away in my Ratel armoured car
and you had to stay behind.

Gert Strydom

My Girl (English Sonnet)

My girl, to my heart and soul you are anointment,
in my words you are in many terms and disguises
and I do look out to our next intimate appointment
while with you and in you my heart constantly rises,

while every day is perfect when you are with me,
where you are significant and truly vividly sublime,
while you walk this world with a kind of dignity
as a wanderer in this realm of life, space and time

and I pray that you remain in my heart and soul,
that I might know you in each day's happiness,
as you make me alive, make me strong and whole
as the only true and right cure to life's loneliness,

as I turn the pages of my life it's you that I find,
where you are witty, truthful, beautiful and kind.

Gert Strydom

My God Cares For Birds

My God cares for birds,
butterflies and bees
and flowers and trees
and even cares much more
for you and me.

Everywhere I see
the greatness of His works,
smell the scent, touch the frailness
of flower cups
and want Him
in the love between you and me
to make our world
more beautiful
and our love work perfectly.

Gert Strydom

My God Is Not A Icon And As A Living Omnipotent Being Much More Than That

(in answer to Breyten Breytenbach)

The Lord Jesus Christ who is God
who is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient,
and omnipresent and who does live as the saviour
that brings light and truth
to a world of darkness

cannot be pressed into a bottle like a jinnee,
like peaces saved in syrup,
as a image that has been flattened,
as a carved image,
a religious portrait
or a Christ-image
or even as a holy image
and the word of God does stand:

"You shall not make yourself an idol
in the form of anything in heaven above
or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.
You shall not bow down to them or worship them,
for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God."

God (Jesus Christ) does not keep dying,
did rise by His own power, by the power of the Father
and the power of the Holy Spirit,
He is not suspended and neither his fulfilment
where He does now act as High Priest, as King
and as Judge of the world.

It is true that some Christian faiths and religious leaders
do twist the Lord God (Jesus Christ) to this chimera,
do interpret the Holy Scripture, as they do want to
and do not read it in context and do not know
that salvation does only come through Jesus
and by His righteous offer,
where they are crucifying Him time after time

where my God does live
as a self-sacrificing God whose love is selfless

and it is for sure true that we are in world full of sin
that does keep on declining
where murder, killing, rape and robbery
are at times prevalent
but still the perfect offering of God (Jesus Christ)
is accomplished,
still He does rule and He and His will is in control

and everything is not frozen like in pure mathematics,
people do change at times,
are beings with conscience, feelings and emotions
and not only biological computerised machines
that is programmed to keep on erring,
we have got an own will and do make our own choices

but this onetime soldier
was forced for self preservation by a government into a war
and into murder and killing and the frustration,
the destruction that it does bring
does remain bitter in my throat,
as I do believe in living and let live
and most people that had gone through a war
are just like this
with the posttraumatic stress that never gets an end
as a punishment that breaks a person's humanity

and the witches-pot with soup are continually inspired by demons,
by the human counterparts stirred and brought to a boil,
and the clouds do bring their rain at the set time
but when man tries to play God
and at "HAARP" try to control the natural cycles
and by this do eradicate other "by accident, "
in our world everything does live and die
people have got pleasure, joy and do experience love
and pain and hatred and death

but away from this world and its restrictions
and its huge rebellion and darkness,
outside the touch of time

the Son of God does exist
where his omnipotence constantly do miracles,
bestow His love and care to billions of people
and in His Father's house there are place for a multitude
when He does return to this grain of sand,
that we do call earth,
to set everything right,
to bring salvation and an eventual judgement.

[Reference: Exodus 20: 4-5.]

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My God Is Not Just An Icon

My God is not just an icon
that still hangs on a cross
and where I go He walks along
and He is present
in every moment.

He knows every human being sees every tear,
hears every prayer
and when darkness folds its arms around me
I am still in His company.

Let others believe what they want
His love urges me
to believe in Him.

Gert Strydom

My God Is Not Just An Icon [2]

My God is not just an icon
that still hangs on a cross
and where I go He walks along
and He is present
in every moment.

He knows every human being intimately
sees every tear,
hears every prayer
and when darkness folds its arms around me
I am still in His company.

Let others believe what they want
His love urges me
to believe in Him.

Gert Strydom

My God Of You There Is Something (Villanelle)

Where no human knows what goes on,
I see something glimmering,
over the edge of life's horizon

and when all is said and done,
still its essence is shimmering,
(where no human knows what goes on) ,

and I look before it is gone.
My God of you there is something,
over the edge of life's horizon.

Beyond all You are still the only One
that from death do to life again bring
(where no human knows what goes on)

and to this earth You came as the Son,
of You the angels and all of nature sing
over the edge of life's horizon

You do set the lives of each and everyone,
You are the one that are forever existing
where no human knows what goes on,
over the edge of life's horizon.

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Gert Strydom

My God Witnesses Every Thing

My God witnesses every thing,
the woman crying at night
about the child that she doesn't get,
the robbers sneaking around in the day
driving away with stolen cars,

the poor living in shacks
who have to live on a paupers wage,
the farmer working in his fields
who goes home at dusk,
the barbarians that assault him later
and kill him with panga blades

and there's nothing that passes by my Lord
and on His time His justice follows,
His salvation and wondrous deeds unfold
and every day He sets the way
that every one of us go on.

Gert Strydom

My God, Do Not From The World Draw Your Protection Away (Hybridanelle)

My God, do not from the world draw Your protection away.
where from a virus there is now illness, death and pain.
As a child and young man you heard me when I did pray

and You known me very well from my birth,
where totally upside-down without freedom we exist
and now the way of life futuristic has changed on earth.

You have walked with me as my protector day by day
and it seems as if Lucifer does the upper-hand gain.
My God, do not from the world draw Your protection away.

righteous Satan's decuples look as if full of worth,
do still tell man that he is like a god and immortal,
where totally upside-down without freedom we exist,

where now I pray that Your many blessings would stay
but with the virus only a semblance of live does remain.
As a child and young man you heard me when I did pray,

I did not fear with You in my company while I am only mortal,
although in the army and at work Satan and his kind did life turn,
do still tell man that he is like a god and immortal,

where Lucifer did You way back as a friend and helper betray,
and with him in control all life and living is totally in vain.
My God, do not from the world draw Your protection away.

Lucifer wants every person along with him to rebel and to burn
but Your self-sacrifice did freedom from all kinds of sin bring,
although in the army and at work Satan and his kind did life turn

and today deceitful Lucifer wants to be a god do act in the same way,
want man to think that he does heal and do the earth sustain.
As a child and young man you heard me when I did pray.

You do know about every event and also about everyone everything

also how man in this age and time does not want a relationship with You,
but Your self-sacrifice did freedom from all kinds of sin bring,

I pray that You will not with Your help against the virus delay,
while Satan does his attack on mankind maintain.

My God, do not from the world draw Your protection away.

As a child and young man you heard me when I did pray.

You are present in all things that men do
and You known me very well from my birth,
also how man in this age and time does not want a relationship with You
and now the way of life futuristic has changed on earth.

[Poet's notes:

That man is immortal and can be a god was from the start a satanic is 3: 2-5
"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees
of the garden; 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden,
God hath said, Ye shall not eat it, Ye shall not surely die; 5 And the serpent said
unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.5 For God doth know that in the day ye
eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing
good and evil."

Isaiah 14: 12-14."How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer son of the
morning [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations
{O Lucifer: or, O day star} 13 For thou hast said in thine heart I will ascend into
heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the
mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north 14 I will ascend above the
heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

Matthew 24: 4-7 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that
no man deceive you.5 For many shall come in my name, saying <3004, I am
Christ; and shall deceive many.6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars:
see that ye be not troubled for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end
is not yet.7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom
and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse
places."

Matthew 24: 23-24 "Then if any man shall say unto you here [is] Christ or
there believe [it] not 24 For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and
shall shew great signs and wonders insomuch that if [it were] possible they shall
deceive the very elect."

2 Corinthians 11: 14-15"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.¹⁵ Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose shall be according to their works."

Maitreya at religious meetings have several times literary appeared and some of the members of Theosophy call him "the cosmic Christ that are coming."The Theosophy and Buddhists talk about Maiteya as a savoir / world teacher /advisor / world master that will come.

As in the New Age religion (with reincarnation)Theosophy talks of the evolution of humankind to being part of god, which is to me very disturbing as nowadays people on the road or in whatever situation do act as if they are gods without respect to any other as a regard to myself and me and my own will.]

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My God, I Beg For More Than Just Mercy (Roundel Prime)

My God, You do know that my wife is by me adored,
that she to me is a person with angelic beauty.
as someone that in many ways want to be free.
To heal the world and this country I beg, my Lord.

to forgive iniquity where You do everything record
and only You know what in the future is going to be.
My God, You do know that my wife is by me adored,
that she to me is a person with angelic beauty,

that I try to spoil and pamper her when I can it afford,
that in a way she is much more than life and living to me
and that I want to be with her in this life and in eternity
but this virus hangs over our heads like a sharp sword.
My God, You do know that my wife is by me adored,
that she to me is a person with angelic beauty.

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Gert Strydom

My Golden-Haired Fairy (Mono-Rhyme Stanza)

(in answer to Heinrich Heine)

My golden-haired beautiful long-legged fairy,
daily I do you spellbound in our garden see.
Sometimes you sit on a bench under the oak tree
and when I offer you a red rose gallantly,
your happy smile has to it a kind of eternity
and to heart in kindness goes your beauty,
where I do know you and you truly do know me,
are my companion, friend and wife as if it's meant to be
where your love comes from your own will free.

[Poet's note: "Die Unbekannte" by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

My Hands Shake While I Turn The Car On

Against the fogged car window
my fingers call to the outside
while you walk away
tossing away the past, of years long.

There's a chill folding around you
while you are holding yourself brave,
lifting your head in a recalcitrant way
and my hart is still calling to you

and you believe that every clicking clacking step
gives you greater freedom
and I have loved you in vain
and you walk away to your studio

pulling the door bolted locked tight
as you have already decided
to ward off the world and life
and my hands shake while I turn the car on.

Gert Strydom

My Heart

My heart is like a forest in spring
and everywhere fragrant trees fill me,
birds from morning to noon sing
while I know your loving.

My heart is like a brook
bubbling with endless water
cool and pure
and blessed by nature

with deer visiting me unexpected
and little insects reflected
on the mirror of my ways
while you are near to me.

My heart is like a aged book
where sweet memories hide
on every page where you look
while you abide with me.

Gert Strydom

My Heart Does No More Belong To Me (English Sestets)

My heart does no more belong to me,
as in loving I have given it to you
where it grows in sweet tranquillity,
as tender well-cared plants often do.
My heart is like an iridescent shell
that is swept out to your feet with the swell

in the waters of the endless blue sea,
in which the sounds of joy is whispering
with the great magic as life ought to be
but still my heart stays a delicate thing
that at times you do call your very own,
while we experience joys somewhat unknown.

Proclaim your love as something eternal
while we wander under cobalt blue skies
opposing everything dark, infernal,
while happiness is reflected in your eyes
as you have come to live in my own life
as my angel, my lovely sweet wife.

Gert Strydom

My Heart Does Trust (Crystalline Poem)

My heart does trust you like a small child
but in love you do drive me wild.

Gert Strydom

My Heart Has Gone Quite In Me (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

My heart has gone quiet in me
and this is not from tranquillity
but from the sadness and all the hurt
that I do continually experience and see.

Gert Strydom

My Heart Is

My heart is like a almond tree,
with snow white
flowers in spring.

My heart is like a loerie bird,
that teases life
from a fruit tree

My heart is like a rainbow's beam
that appears with the last drops
over the country side.

All of these things are vague
like morning fog,
compared to the happiness
that you bring to me.

Gert Strydom

My Heart, Mind And Soul Is Your White Surface

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

My heart, mind and soul is Your white surface
on which Your light at times do fall and do shine through
do make visible the darkness, each deformity
and although I am human full of defects and weak
Your selfless love does come to me a thousand times
and you do shine through my disposition in each kind of thing.

You do make my alien premonitions a reality in Your light
where my dreams and ambitions and love do be come to reality,
where You do give me signs from yesterday, today and tomorrow,
where I stand without any secrets before You,
where You do strip from me that which is harmful and that does me curtail
while just that which is good and great You do allot to me

where even that which I sometimes do think is out of my range
and that does stand on the borders of becoming reality do come to fullness
as that which in Your eyes do let me grow to a full human being
in my lost, broken days where others do despise me,
when You do make my self-conceit clear to me and like a loving father do
admonish me,
while You are at work with my smallest and greatest yearnings and problems
where in Your bright light, Your greatness and love I am constantly astounded.

[Reference:"My venster is 'n blanke vlak" (My window is a white surface)by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

My Heart's Hope (Italian Sonnet)

(after Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

What words will I use what paths find that are not upon trod
to you and our true love to find and then to experience and explore
while poetry as song yield up in your heart as a wave do to a shore
or like Israel of old find a new red-sea to pass through dry-shod.

Where we are separate and that I love you still might to you be odd
but love is something that is a principle and in essence stays forevermore
where daily I find that it has something more and deeper in store
while what it is and how it comes and its essence is from God.

In the name of God, of our love and truth would I
find for you of our love and what is right the evidence
that which to all other love do still strongly signify
that my love is true and real and like fire very intense
while it still stands as days, months and years go by
as much more than just a desire or lasting sense.

[Reference:"Heart's hope" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

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Gert Strydom

My Humanity

In the day there's light
and at night it's dark
and yet life
is not all that simple.

Most probably I am somewhere
between the dark and the light
and in the greyness
of either dusk or dawn
and still have to decide
what my words and deeds
of either night or day will be.

Gert Strydom

My Last Lament

Today my darling asked me
about a song
as a last lament,
when one day
they lay me to rest.

Surely it would be a song
to my Lord and king
that I want her to sing,

but the more I thought about it
the clearer it became
that the here and now,
the time I that I spent,
the acts that I do
and the words that I write
should be what honours me.

Gert Strydom

My Letters To You

Think of me
when the wind whirls
lines of dust up on the farm
and you watch clouds in the bright blue
for hours long
that pass like ships
over your head.

I send letters to you
from which more than half
of words, paragraphs and lines
are censored out with purple blue ink
telling a hundred and one stories
out of far of Angola
about how I stand at the door
of a Hercules
and green bushes
pass like dark dragons beneath
and I descend out of the blue
on Cassinga.

Later brigades of Cubans
with armoured cars, tanks,
fighter jets and helicopters
hanging abominable in the air
are included in my narrations
and maybe
they wipe every thing of that out,

but to our love
nobody can do any thing
and every letter
carries an embrace and a kiss.

Gert Strydom

My Life

I did give my whole life to you,
did build my whole existence around you,
that now I am wondering
what the future do hold without you
and now with the divorce I have got fear,
fear that you do read the wrong things between the lines,
fear of how easy my destruction will be for you
as that which had been before is now destroyed,
somewhere we did loose it and I did loose my own humanity
as if it's gone without any track
and you do know me like I am,
do know my greatest secrets and their meaning
but about what is in me, the knowledge is missing
and certainly but slowly life does drag me on.

Gert Strydom

My Life (2)

(for Annelize)

Through the years alone I did walk a long road
with love, mercy and God's favour and hope for the two of us,

did wonder about how love is a bitter and a sweet thing
with both happiness and heartache in a own meaning

that sometimes let you feel like a painted clown,
or an acrobat at the edge of death in a lurching chair

and like Eugene Marais I wanted to think that life is just a joke
of which humans do not really conceive the meaning

but you do always remain in my thoughts like a shining goddess,
and I cannot stop myself of thinking about you,

I cannot stop my self from confessing my love for you,
as it does remain the biggest, deepest thing between you and me.

[Reference: "Skoppensboer" (Jack of Spades) by Eugene N. Marais.]

Gert Strydom

My Life Is Like A Merry-Go-Round

My life is like a merry-go-round
with the merriment going as it
goes round and round
and where it stops
I do not want to go

or maybe more like a roulette wheel
turning always turning around
and where the ball falls
I do not really want to know
because it's not where
I want it to

and I long for a world
free from hardship, free from tears,
free from worries and pain
and free from the force of destiny.

Gert Strydom

My Life Is Like A Riddle

When I look back
at my life
and see how fast
everything pass,
I sometimes wonder why
things happen
and life takes its course?

How many times
my life reflects
things like a riddle,
of which I do not know
the answers.

Still I trust Him
who can make
all things new,
to touch my life
with His love.

Gert Strydom

My Life Passes By

Like a castle on a rock in the bay
sheltered against sea, wind and spray
under a brazen sun falling like fire
from the sky
with storm clouds and thunder
gathering at times

my life passes bye
into its God speeded winter
and gulls, gannets and cormorants
flash down into the tempestuous sea
to catch some last fish
and I am lost in me
but life abounds still
with everything in a living thrill

and the fire in my heart
burns at its own speed
while live is still great indeed
and no time, or season will
bring me to standstill.

Gert Strydom

My Life Passes So Quickly

My life passes so quickly
like a stream passing in flood
with water rushing against every thing

My life passes so quickly
that every deed and every word
frolic whirling together and are corded.

My life passes so quickly
like a stream passing in flood.

Gert Strydom

My Life Was Dying

(for my wife, Daleen)

My life was dying in such slow degrees
that at times it seemed like the weathered trees,
stripped with bareness while the winter did come,
everything about me seemed only gruesome
and it felt if I did only heartache know
but on a great morning the sun did earlier glow,

in the late afternoon the first rain of spring did flow
and somehow I realised that God do still His mercies bestow,
while gardening on the morning next the prayer meeting at our home
forced me to hold the dogs in check, seemed nothing but meddlesome,
but then you did walk into my life as if in answer to my entreaties
became my true love and brought to me the greatest memories.

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Gert Strydom

My Little Buck (Parody)

(with apology to Daniel Hugo)

My little buck I am wooing you
- my prints lay - right over the sand dunes -

with unmeasured brazenness
you are already sighing with regret

- trembling from my first glance -
while I keep myself converting sober

but then suddenly become shy:
darling, you walk right into my trap.

Gert Strydom

My Lord

My Lord, some people say that You do not exist,
that You and Your crucifixion and resurrection
is but a fable

Others see You as an inaccessible, cruel God
who sits unapproachable
as a age-old man on a throne

and then there are those that say
that you are female

and others that do believe
that every thing in nature
do possess a part of Your godliness

and they believe that at a time
a person becomes part of You and looses the own identity

and others do believe that you have extradited
an imperfect world to its own nemesis
and that You turn Your back constantly on everyone and everything

but I do know You, for who You really are,
do experience Your presence constantly

and in Your word there is another image
of love that is selfless that I do find
and I see someone that goes to broken persons
bringing healing, love and peace.

Gert Strydom

My Lord (Crystalline Poem)

You see me when I fall to sin,
just with You can I against it win.

Gert Strydom

My Lord God (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

When as a mere child fatherless I took Your hand,
I do remember: on the pathway of life at my side You did stand
but at places the road was terribly rocky
and even through the dust roads You did accompany me
but now all my dreams are shattered like castles of sand
and I stand at a place where my lost love I want to find again,
where I beg You to in our lives to remain,
where life is treating me somewhat underhand,
I do remember: on the pathway of life at my side You did stand

[Reference: "O grysaard" (Oh grey head) by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

My Lord God I Beg You

Do not let Lucifer come as Maitreya, Mahdi or another god,
oppose him in this deadly time completely
as the cosmic Christ and the saviour of humanity.

In depth as omnipotent creator You do know him,
please do refute the plans that he and his followers forge.
Do not let Lucifer come as Maitreya, Mahdi or another god,

that with healing from a deadly pestilence astounds humanity,
let utter darkness surround him where You alone do give true light.
As the cosmic Christ and the saviour of humanity,

he does twist around all of Your plans and your character,
do sweep along those that are superstitious and even Your own people.
Do not let Lucifer come as Maitreya, Mahdi or another god,

where as extremely good this villain is disguised to everyone,
do not let him build his temple in Jerusalem and draw people there
as the cosmic Christ and the saviour of humanity.

As a mortal human being I am stupid when I am near to You
where life comes from You I am perplexed in Your great presence
Do not let Lucifer come as Maitreya, Mahdi or another god,
as the cosmic Christ and the saviour of humanity.

[Poet's notes:

Isaiah 14: 12-14."How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer son of the morning [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations {O Lucifer: or, O day star} 13 For thou hast said in thine heart I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

Matthew 24: 23-24 "Then if any man shall say unto you here [is] Christ or there believe [it] not 24 For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders insomuch that if [it were] possible they shall deceive the very elect."

2 Corinthians 11: 14-15"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.¹⁵ Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose shall be according to their works."

Some resemblance exist for a savoir / world teacher /advisor / world master that will come between Theosophy, the Buddhists, Islam, Scientology and Japanese religions. Maitreya at religious meetings have several times literary appeared and some of the members of Theosophy call him "the cosmic Christ that are coming."The Theosophy and Buddhists talk about Maiteya, Islam talk about the Mahdi and the Japanese religion about Miroku. As in the New Age religion (with reincarnation)Theosophy talks of the evolution of humankind to being part of god, which is to me very disturbing as nowadays people on the road or in whatever situation do act as if they are gods without respect to any other as a regard to myself and me and my own will where clearly relative truth (that which I want the truth to be)stands against absolute truth (that which the truth truly / really is.)]

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My Lord I Pray

My Lord I pray
that forever man may see
the sunrise in the morning
with a new day breaking
like it did from the beginning

rain falling when and where it's needed
bringing life to plants, trees
animals and man

the rainbow after a storm
holding your promise
that no more universal floods will come

seasons at their appropriate time
as year after year moves on
with new harvests

and that You forever hear
the voice of man.

Gert Strydom

My Lord Is The Ruler Of The Whole Universe (Roundel Prime)

My Lord is the ruler of the whole universe
and soon He will return as judge of us all.
People have longed for Him since the sin-fall
and soon the death and pain on this world He will reverse.

Before Him even those that are perverted, wrong and perverse
will fall down and all of His children will hear His last call.
My Lord is the ruler of the whole universe
and soon He will return as judge of us all.

Every day I do with Him converse
about the things that daily do me befall.
He knows everything if it is big or small
and daily He does me in His great divine love immerse.
My Lord is the ruler of the whole universe
and soon He will return as judge of us all.

Gert Strydom

My Lord The Day Is Breaking (Rubliw)

My Lord
the day does break,
it does feel as if You
are right here and the great beauty
does linger while I find deeper meaning,
do feel very humble like a child
where You do determine
every small thing
with love.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, (Italian Sonnet)

long before I came to life
in Your thoughts was all of me,
You did even see my iniquity
where I do fit in, in a world of strife.

You formed me, gave the spark to make me alive
knew before I was what I was going to be,
prepared me through many years for my duty,
even knew before me about my wife

my knowledge, my skills, my talent and art
came from where you did guide
while wonderful I was made into my own person,
while you did love me with a selfless heart.
In my own heart daily you do dwell inside
and you love just goes on and on.

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Gert Strydom

My Lord, Faith Is A Path

that spirals up to You
on which at times I do stumble and fall
and then do get up again to head on.

It is much more than only to know that You do exist,
It's to know that You do want to and that You can
and that You do want only the very best for me

and it's difficult to become selfless like You,
to lie down my own will to You and for others
and sometimes I do struggle to understand
how my life does still fit into the world

and sometimes it's as if I do look into a mirror
to only see what it does reflect,
just to see how my own life looks
without the power to look further on

but love has got the ability
to hope and to trust
that at all times You do know the best.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, I Do Believe

My Lord, I do believe
that You do bring healing and rest
in the times of silence,
that You do continually hold Your hand over me
and are travelling ahead on the way
to set things right.

My Lord, help me to believe more
and to trust sincerely.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, I Do Call On You (Villanelle)

My God, in a deadly time I call on You
in whose almighty hands eternity lies
where we all are sinners in the things we do,

do not even have about the future a clue,
as far too many people from a virus dies.
My God, in a deadly time I call on You

in incompetence and not by my virtue
and our unworthiness not one of us denies,
where we all are sinners in the things we do.

I know to Your words you remain forever true
and that You do look into the heart past any guise.
My God, in a deadly time I call on You

where you know this virus through and through,
are past the most prominent scientists wise,
where we all are sinners in the things we do

to come to rescue where it acts like flue,
do with its resilience humanity surprise.
My God, in a deadly time I call on You,
where we all are sinners in the things we do.

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My Lord, I Do Not Anymore Ask The Things Of A Child

My Lord, I do not anymore ask the things of a child,
not even to find prosperity
but that you keep my whole family
tightly against your chest.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, If I Do Forget That Your Law

My Lord, if I do forget that Your law
do express Your character and love
let me then still experience Your grace
and give me the fixed faith of a child
although I am blinded by the darkness of my own sin.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Let Peace, Security And Love Reign Supreme

(in answer to N.P. van Wyk Louw)

Where I in all my own things
stand naked before Your glance and insight
and You see right through the smoke screens:
the hiding places in my existence,
I want to go to the depth of Your heart,

with my words, prayers and wishes,
my dreams that I cannot tell,
ask holy things from You that people
hesitate to ask and do hide from others:

That You do bring sincerity,
grace and peace to South Africa,
a turning away from a cruel past,
I ask that boundaries do break, for real healing,
that changes hate, bitterness and envy
to opportunity after opportunity.

That the possessions of people remain their property,
that all kinds of oppression do stop,
that people with qualifications get employment,
that the government really will build up this country.

Heal people in their cultures and in their souls,
that big scale dispossession do not become famine,
that everyone keeps farming on his own piece of ground,
I ask You to pour out Your blessings generously.

[Reference: "Grense" (Borders) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Sometimes I Do Forget

My Lord, sometimes I do forget
that You do know about every feeling and emotion that I have,
that You do have knowledge of all things
and do have the answers even before I do ask,

that to be angry,
have heartache and even fear
are not necessarily bad
and even when I do miss the bigger picture

that You do still love me.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Sometimes It Feels

My Lord, sometimes it feels
as if I am going through the most difficult times of my life,
as if alone I stand in a place of destruction
and as if I am constantly drawing fire from my enemies
but small things tell me that Your hand does cover me
and every day my life does continue
on a unknown undiscovered track
and constantly I have got to leave a place of safety
but when I do look up I see Your shadow falling over me
and at the very brink I do find an answer
and it's as if situations do come right
when I do expect distending fire to start
and in the valley of death You do still lead me on
and constantly I am astounded by Your salvation.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Sometimes There Is Only Silence

My Lord, sometimes there is only silence
when I do talk to You
and sometimes I feel totally abandoned by man and God
as if a cold unconcern
keeps hanging over everything
and its then that I do long
and do not know the reasons for each thing
while the machinery of destiny keeps measuring out life
and then I do wonder

but when I am full of questions
You do bring with small things still meaning
and on the very brink things do come right again
when You bring wonderful light in a world of darkness.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Take Me To The Place (Persian Quatrain)

My Lord, take me to the place
where You leave my sins without a trace,
with Your great love and mercy
do every fault of mine erase.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, There Are Times

My Lord, there are times when I am searching for answers,
are searching to where deliverance lies
and sometimes situations just feel too much
but continually I do find Your answers
on time and unexpectedly.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, There Is Something Sad

My Lord, there is something sad
that I want to bring to You
and its clear to me
that You do already know of it
and also about it's extend.

At the theological seminaries of some universities
there are learned people
who want to find You
with pure logic and ancient research

and now there are some of them that do claim
that You did not rise from the grave.

In my simplicity I do wonder my God,
how people try to find you only in their books
and research
while You do stand outside of everything
and Your own words do determine
all things miraculously
outside the scope and limitation
of human science?

Sadly everything comes to an empty nothing
when there is no relationship with You
and the lives of people do end in nihilism.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Today I Did Realize

My Lord, today I did realize
that Your feet do fit in my cursed shoes
and suddenly the thought did come to me
that Your death and my baptismal wash my life clean
that whatever comes on my way
You do stand in the breach for me
and the small things in life did astound me
and although I do not always understand the way that life goes
I do constantly look at your tracks
that leads me through the dangerous places
and even when the path forward looks impossible
You do at the right time help me to avoid calamity
and Lord, now I know that You are a reality
in a broken world full of darkness

Gert Strydom

My Lord, When I Look At The World Around Me

My Lord, when I look at the world around me
It's a breathtaking beautiful place
that on no day looks just the same
and even though my life at time is stained with sin
You do still come nearer to me
and You do not just use pure logic of black and white
when Your blood does make me free
and everywhere there are coloured buds on the branches
where You constantly touch my life and the whole world,
constantly do bring better and new perspectives
to make life just better and better
and I see Your hand in every pretty thing.
Still You do remain near even when I do not understand
how things and events do make sense and to where life is going.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, Where Medical Personnel With Gloves And Masks (Free Verse Sonnet)

My Lord, where medical personnel with gloves and masks
stand at the pulse-beat of the lives of others in this time,
they bravely sacrifice in an age-old tradition
while death goes unseen right through humanity.
I pray that You will assist each one of them in what may come,
that You come to the rescue when that virus tries to infect them.
My Lord, please do now turn around lives, times and days,
that people again will have a fixed trust in Your omnipotence.
Bring forth leaders that stand rock-firm at their word,
that does stay true to principles and every big and small duty,
that does manage and build up this country as it belongs to be,
I ask that every one will here find an own place in the sun.
You did set our time, our belonging together and cultures,
I ask for goodwill, mercy and care to descend on each one of us.
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Gert Strydom

My Lord, You Do Know All Of The Masks

My Lord, You do know all of the masks that I wear for the world
and also all of the things that are hidden deep in my heart.
My deepest secrets are known to You
and even the things that I do not want to admit to myself.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, You Do Know My Circumstances

My Lord, You do know my circumstances
and know about all of my problems
and I do not even have to name them to you.
Do You not want to walk on the road ahead
and find the best way for me
so that I can catch up with You
where You are waiting in the unknown future.

Gert Strydom

My Lord, You Do Really Understand (Hybridanelle)

My God, You are the only one,
that truly knows me heart to heart.
You know me while a virus moves on

and through eons You remain the same.
You do come to the rescue of man
and there is great power in Your name,

when from my wife and children I am gone,
You are with me when I am from my wife apart.
My God, You are the only one

that really knows my life and every aim,
You are the Lord who every single thing sees.
You do come to the rescue of man,

in frailty as a mortal Your greatest work was done,
where righteous painfully You played your part.
You know me while a virus moves on,

You answer me when broken I go to my knees,
do come to me as the one that really do understand.
You are the Lord, who every single thing sees,

who created every single thing as the Son,
You saw the virus as it did in China start.
My God, You are the only one

who hold everything in Your omnipotent hand,
You do truly care from humanity, for my wife and me,
do come to me as the one that really do understand

when on me concerns and worries are heave like a ton,
when a lock-down do all future plans thwart,
You know me while a virus moves on.

You were despised when men did not know what Christ ought to be,
where Daniel prophesied that the time of the Messiah was near.
You do truly care from humanity, for my wife and me,

You know when with empty promises governments do people con
and from You comes my words, my poetic art.
My God, You are the only one,
You know me while a virus moves on,

to You its origin, existence and stopping is clear
and through eons You remain the same,
where Daniel prophesied that the time of the Messiah was near
and there is great power in Your name.

Gert Strydom

My Lorelei

At times she sings for herself
and sometimes I hear her
talking to the animals
and at times there's happiness
which bubbles out by itself.

She loves water
and if it's a hot day,
she wants to swim
and it's as if it takes her
to a place of healing.

I see her bathe with candlelight
and her wet body glitters,
while she's locked to a world of her own

To me she's beautiful
when she lies on my chest
and look at me with big eyes
and I burn her image into my soul.

She is my rock to which I anchor
en when life's storms come;
it's her safe waters
that protects my humanity.

Gert Strydom

My Lory Bird

I had a baby grey Lory
that the dogs tried to catch
and treated it as a pet.

As the bird
grew and became tame,
I started to love it
and it also loved me.

When it heard me come near
or saw me
it called joyously and its crest
went up and down,

It was my desire to give the Lory freedom
when it was properly raised
and I wondered if it would be able
to exist on its own.

One day my bird was ill
and it waited on me
to come home
and before I could get it
to a vet
it gave a last goodbye
and died

I knew
that no other bird
or animal,
would get that Lory's
place in my heart.

Gert Strydom

My Lost Love

If I meet you face to face once again,
what will we do then?
Will we ignore each other,
about one another not at all bother?

Probably we will kiss and embrace
looking at each other's face
and act as if nothing can quench the spark,
the feeling that returns at a time and place.

Gert Strydom

My Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(After Piet van Rooyen, for Daleen on her birthday)

My Love, my barefooted girl
you do bewitch me and you do make me blind,
you cause my heart to sing about love
while everywhere in my life I constantly find you.
Darling, you are the one who brings love
and you do change the day on the spur of the moment,
it's to me that you do reveal your secrets
and like a hopping child you want to skip and jump.
My most beloved, for you life is at times a joke
and when I do not realise your puzzles,
you are the one that say things straight as they are to me,
you are the one that do walk into my life,
you do turn my whole world around and around,
when with your love you do come to me.

[Reference: "meisie 1" (girl1) by Piet van Rooyen.]

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Gert Strydom

My Love (Rubliw)

My love,
no other women
has moved me like you do
and you bring possibilities
of what true love is supposed to be
and fuel my innermost passion
with feelings that are true
and real bliss is
like this.

Gert Strydom

My Love Outshines The Summer Sun (Sonnet Corona)

(after William Shakespeare)

I

My love outshines the summer sun,
even stars in their remote twinkling light
and her eyes are more beautiful, each one
than the stars glimmering at night

Her cheeks is dimpled cute
her hair is an auburn crown,
her cheeks is rosy beyond repute
her hair is sun-shot twisting in a way of their own.

Her lips are more soft and warm
and her spirit is more mild
than a ray of light falling on my arm
or at times more free and wild

than birds where they fly,
my love is like the radiant sapphire sky.

II

My love is like the radiant sapphire sky
like the breeze rustling through trees
so lovely on my eye,
eager to please.

My love is like the summer sun,
like the blue hued sea
always warm and full of fun,
touching me gently

even when the darkness calls
and when time goes to its finality
like a star her light still falls,
my love stays true to me

in every thing her face I see
so gentle, sweet and free.

III

So gentle, sweet and free
my love lives her life
but I long for her to be near to me
in a world without any strive.

Like a lily prospering alone in the marsh
blooming pure and serene,
my darling lives unknown to a world harsh
out of control, away from the limelight scene

and in that rural place
her beauty is untouched by makeup,
filled with a sweet grace
and even in the morning when she wakes up

the sun is in her hair,
my darling is really fair.

IV

My darling is really fair
there are stars in her eyes,
she's the most beautiful flower found anywhere,
her eyes are much more pure than the bluest skies.

When she smiles at me,
smiling tenderly,
I in her smile blessings see
as if love is there in all of its glory.

Still more so the bliss
that is caught in her kiss
that comes from the divine
which she is making mine

and sometimes the beauty makes her cry,
when the day flutters by.

V

When the day flutters by
with the sun setting red
you will find my love and I
where stars come out from bed,

then like a butterfly
the sun kisses the night,
touches the dark low and high
before it goes by with its last light

and she unloosens my tie
while we watch the full yellow moon,
while the fire in her eyes lie
sparkling, much brighter than the sunny afternoon,

but with a passing bat flying low she catches a fright,
while the stars are shining bright.

VII

While the stars are shining bright
like jewels in the sky's crown
on a winter night
it has tranquillity, a beauty of its own,

her eyes are radiant,
as if aflame
lovely and brilliant
and of some she know the name

and something indiscernibly small
creeps into the very soul, into the heart
and of it that is all,
a smouldering, something with which we cannot part:

to me she remains the only one in joy and fun,
my love outshines the summer sun.

My Love, Today You Called Me (Sicilian Sonnet)

Of people who charm each other I have not a clue,
their ways are like mist that evaporate like steam,
as they temp destiny, in heartache at times scream,
where this life holds you to what you say and do.

My love, today you called me out of the blue,
at times it feels as if you are only in a dream,
luckily life with you is reality and not as it seem
where always I know that honestly you are true,

Yet beyond principle love to me is a mystery,
something in which you lead me by the hand.
I do not know how tomorrow is going to be
but in faith, trust and hope together we stand,
do know each other intimately in sincerity
where we are living in a cruel and joyful land.

Gert Strydom

My Master-Teacher

You, from who words do come
easily and correct from the source,
who does astound with great verses,
who does make poems living things
maybe to you I am only touching

but still my words do stay devoted
to your teachings
and to those of N. P. Van Wyk Louw
as if woven around them,
I cannot hide the punch, the decisive factor,
and even though some of my verses are sizeable

it does at times feel as if you do not consider my words,
as if in the wide world I am standing alone
and day after day
I am going into an own direction,
but yet I am bounded to gain,
to keep growing in my abilities,
in that which I do experience,
to take my steps on the road
that the omnipotent Master-Teacher does show.

Gert Strydom

My Mind Is Lost In Thoughts About You (Sonnet)

My mind is lost in thoughts about you,
in the feelings that you do awake in my heart,
and there are so many good and great things
that you are bringing to life.

It's as if I have been asleep all of my life
and are now only awakening
to how life is supposed to be
in how passion and happiness
does come together, in how
living for someone really is

and in these moments life does seem
simple, happy, great and pure
as if everything that I have experienced
have led up to only you.

Gert Strydom

My Mistress' Eyes (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

My mistress' eyes has a bluer hue to them
than the colour of the cobalt sky,
not coral nor tomato can compare
to the soft care that I find on her lips

and the touch of her fingertips
is more gentle than any breeze
and the colour of her hair is rarer, more unique
than that of grass, or that which metal wires can hold

and her breasts and nipples
has a greater purity, enticement to them
than any snow or the darling buds of May
and the beauty that she holds, is more fragrant
than the flowers that even roses do display
when our true need for each other unfolds.

[Reference: Sonnet "My mistress' eyes" by William Shakespeare]

Gert Strydom

My Own Dearest Love

My own dearest love, she is unloving and cold
and she has no cares of the things of this earth,
once her hair gleamed like gold
and she was lovely from the day of her birth.

Far too quickly her life was swept away
and it was special our meeting
like the sunshine of one lovely day
and her presence was only much too fleeting.

Her leaving stings and keeps on stinging,
while in this spring myriads of birds are singing.

Now there is only a kind of emptiness
and I am not able to forget her
as there was bliss in every caress
and sometimes I wish I had never met her.

Gert Strydom

My Own Goddess

In my thoughts

I see you standing in front of a large mirror
and you do remind me of a goddess,
of a Aphrodite but with a much better nature
with loveliness coming from your personality,
from the depths of your heart,
with a loveliness that are all your own

where you are in a white and light pink bikini
or maybe a brassiere and panties
and your buttocks, your legs and middle
do make perfect curves

and the lines of your slender arms and back
do attract my eyes.

Your pose is somewhat inviting,
while your golden hair do glide down
in two perfect ponytails and do crown you lovely face
and I can swear there is softness in your eyes.

I look at the shape of your face, at your slender nose
at your soft lips, at your slender neck
at the perfect round shape
of your breasts, at your flat stomach
and the form of your hips,
at your slender long fingers
at your hands
and the picture is perfect to the contours
of form and shape,
is a great expression of female beauty.

I wish that you were right here
and I wish that I could embrace and kiss you.

Gert Strydom

My Own True Love (Cavatina)

My own true love has come from sheer despair
(a divine thing
that is not betwixt by mere destiny.)
She is living
with purity that binds body and mind,
our love exists
in and also beyond the realms of time
where it's glorious, joyful and sublime.

Gert Strydom

My Own True Love (Cavatina) [1]

My own true love has come from sheer despair
(a divine thing
that is not betwixt by mere destiny.)
She is living
with purity that binds body and mind,
our love exists
in and also beyond the realms of time
where it's glorious, joyful and sublime.

[Reference: "The Definition of Love" by Andrew Marvell.]

Gert Strydom

My Own Words (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

My own words are sometimes stammering
where days and nights I do long for you
but I am at times scared of reality
and sometimes do have difficulty to sing love songs
but still I do want to bring you beautiful words
as if our lives are not set by destiny,
while I hear joy in the songs of the birds
and God is present in everything,
with the faith of a mere child I want to believe
and I am scared to loose you again
where I do know that you do love me too,
where time and again I do you find,
and I know that God do hear my prayers
where he brings you into my days.

[Reference:"m is dit dat ek nie meer kan sing" (Sonnet. That is why I cannot sing anymore)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

My Own Words Is God's Great Mercy (Crystalline)

My own words is God's great mercy
that as poems I do constantly see.

Gert Strydom

My Peggy Mitchell (Chant Royal)

Her smile seems so serene and sweet as if it's everlasting
while she is still basking in rays of sunshine
although storm clouds are gathering,
and her beauty is something of the divine
and almost careless
our loving comes in swiftness
while she is drawing attention,
telling me things that no other woman will even mention
but she has an own dignity
are spirited to my apprehension
and from all cares she seems free.

In her humanity there is something
that does not meet the eye, something sublimely fine
and far too easily she makes my heart sing
when every smile of hers is mine
and I see a kind of kindness
shining through her loveliness
a kind of deep emotion
bringing a deepness to every affection,
it is far more than beauty that I see
in her solitary devotion
and from all cares she seems free.

Her joy is far greater than that of spring
and on her face every lovely line
is aflame when passion is rising
and it seems that to her spirit there is no decline
for she's a summer girl without any meekness
and it seems that her glance does truly bless
but of this she does not have the slightest notion
while her looks at times causes a small commotion,
her laughter and joy is not full of glee
and I write this to a girl that loved me as a salutation
and from all cares she seems free.

Sometimes she dresses somewhat daring
and with her I want to dine,
when from all troubles she makes me uncaring

with burning candles and sparkling glasses of red wine
but to her sometimes our loving turns into nothingness
in pain she is tormenting me even when we are in bliss,
sometimes she is truly unruly at the slightest instigation,
with her words finding accusation after accusation
and I wonder if her loving is just charity,
if she has a unruly disposition
and from all cares she seems free.

She once carried my ring
and that happiness I cannot define
as she was full of joy at our wedding
and in joy her face did shine
without any aloofness
and I from my old ways did digress,
followed every recommendation
to make our relationship work, even in presumption
loving her in all sincerity
but maybe her truly loving me was a big assumption
and from all cares she seems free.

I'Envoi

Now she is driving me to anarchy and lawlessness
while I long for her sweet caress
and I sometimes receive an admonition
to my affectionate attention, to the words that I mention
while I am longing for sweet tranquillity
and I am searching for a loving connection
and from all cares she seems free.

Gert Strydom

My Plants

My plants
are eaten
by all kinds of vermin.

There are golden beetles
that reaps
the leaves of the beans,
brown buzzing beetles turning in the air
around the tomatoes,

snails that can't wait
and demolish the leaves
of beans, spinach
and tomatoes.

Indian miners
that feast in their beaks
as if every thing belongs to them.

Even poison that I spread out
doesn't help a bit
and plants from Mrs. Roberts
that should keep such things in check
grows rampant

and after rains
there are weeds
everywhere,
as if my garden
was prepared only for them.

Even one of the taps breaks
causing water to spray without end
and I have trouble
to bind it down
and have to go to Builders
to get a new one

and this garden man gets fed up

and wants to pull
all of the vegetables out
one by one
and put something else
like flowers into that ground,

until my darling says:
"thank you for the beans,
spinach, carrots and tomatoes
that you placed in the bowls,
can I get a bit of parsley
to put in the salad? "

Gert Strydom

My Princess

At the first time that I had seen her,
she did something to me
with her big eyes glancing into mine
and she being so streamlined

that the revs of my heart jumped
and I did know
that I was in love
and I thought about a way
to make her mine.

Gert Strydom

My Redeemer, Advocate And Father (Cavatina)

My redeemer, advocate and father
and my true friend
walks every day through trouble at my side.
When I am spend,
He gives me the power to persevere
right to the end;
His power nothing can ever remove
and in Him are all my faith, joy and love.

Gert Strydom

My Requiem

Under the wide blue sky
spread my ashes let them swirl
when it's at its brightest hue, its brightest blue

and if wind or water whirl
what is left of me
over land and sea

then let heaven be my canopy
where I will be forever free
and not set in the dark earth

that impedes me
and in the shining sun,
the falling rain, the blowing wind

forever I will be
shattered to different places

I'Envoi
where gladly I will lie
while time passes by

until the Lord of host in dignity
again reconstructs me, brings me back
to another life.

Gert Strydom

My Shadow

When I cross the road at the green traffic light
and the cars want to drive right over me
as if everyone has got greater rights than others
then my shadow does walk along,

where daily everywhere it does stay next to me,
at times do cover me, do withhold calamities,
as if You with its presence
do constantly fold Your hand around me.

Gert Strydom

My Shadow-Dog

From the beginning of my existence
you do walk along with me my shadow-dog,
my on my tracks like a eternal guardian
with the beautiful, the pain and miserable things of life
that you do experience along with me

and constantly you do sniff around in my thoughts
as if you do want to find new meanings
and old undiscovered treasures
but sometimes just like me you are blinded
against the danger that hides everywhere
in the world around us,

you do triple and cry when a loved one comes near
and just like me you are astounded with their retribution
stabbing in the back and when they are toady

and sometimes you bark for the postman
but also for the prowler,
the burglar, the robber and murderer
that does sneak past
to do catastrophe to someone else

and sniffing, sniffing the farmers hear your barking
until deep into the night at times
or where you do howl at the coming up of the red-moon
until it later much higher becomes gold or silver-white

and still you do guard me against
the whore and the adulteress
that does pass much too friendly
and it's as if you smell the death clinging to them
where you do avoid them
and are searching for your old buried bones
as treasures in the ground.

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My Shoes

My shoes were brought to me on order
from Zimbabwe by a missionary,
a man who sell bibles
and sometimes give them away,
just before Robert Mugabe
did root out the manufacturers and sellers
and the rest of my order went to waste
with another pair of buffalo leather shoes
and a buffalo leather jacket as well.

The black handmade elephant leather shoes
do tread far roads with me,
they try to walk on the tracks
of my deceased father,
try to stand up with integrity
like my late grandmother wanted.

The other day I had them re-soled,
to lay down some more tracks
and the elephant leather
might last a life time
and I wonder how the future
folds open before them?

Gert Strydom

My Sincere Feelings I Cannot Dismiss (Sicilian Sonnet)

From that lovely very first glance of you
I knew our love would be everlastingly
and most kindly you then smiled at me
with sincerity and did what ladies do,

you acted reserved, to your nature true,
in your green-brown eyes I did something see
a glimmer of how a future could be,
and to this day to me you remain true

but now with this lock-down we are apart,
and my sincere feelings I cannot dismiss
as you are in my soul, spirit and heart
and I have never known a time like this:
where death waits if you do the rules thwart,
constantly I do you terribly miss.

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Gert Strydom

My Small Jack Russell Dog

My small Jack Russell dog sniffs around
on the ground
to find something nice to eat
or some other kind of meat
and a paper blows in the wind
but it does not bother her at all
where she is standing over something small

Gert Strydom

My Soccer Team

I see men standing next to each other
in a line
and they wear yellow and green.

The national anthem plays
and its like nobody honours it
or know the words,
but maybe they are caught by the great moment.

The whistle blows
and the ball is kicked to and fro
and there are men attacking
and others that defend.

The goal is open
and the ball flies past in a wide arc
and it's as if my team
can't score any goal.

The opponents have the ball
and shoot it right over the field
and one of their front players
hits it with his head.

The ball flies twisting
and with a swing in the air
and is accurately aimed at the goal

As from the ground
the goalie rises
and the onlookers are silent
and just before it's too late,
the ball is caught
and the crowd cheers.

It is as if something sweeps into
the men with yellow and green
and they play perfectly,
like only a good team can.

There's passion to win
and the ball is passed
from player to player
and a mighty kick,
launches it accurately past the goalkeeper
to get entangled in the net.

The crowd cheers and go nuts
and vuvezelas are blowing
and flags are swept to and thro
and the players grab each other.

Gert Strydom

My Song For You

(for Annelize, after Dorothy Parker)

This is what I swear to you:
that eternally I want to view you
as the most wonderful and lovely woman,
that I do want to honour you
and love like this is something that stays eternally,
even if decades and years do pass
as you are always very special to me,
this that I swear to you.

Here are my sincere prayers:
that continually I want make you proud of me,
that our love day upon day will become better,
that without meaning or reason
we will intensely as man and woman love each other
and constantly I do pray you into my days
that in truth we will never fabricate anything for each other,
are my sincere prayers.

Out of life I do know
that love does sometimes bring pain and sometimes happiness,
that love is a principle and not an inspiration
but that it does cover all things,
that you are my first and last woman,
that I have been missing you for decades
and the Lord God does bring everything to meaning,
is what of life I do know.

[Reference: "Somebody's song" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

My South Africa (Gogyoshi Sequence)

1

Bring back my days of innocence
where the farm is quiet with cattle that graze
and no criminal or rapist do strike,
where I catch the smell of alfalfa,
barefoot walk in the red-sand home.

2

Bring back the carefree days
where no one steals my car,
while I am wooing a girlfriend
and twenty Rand at the Spur
buys two burgers, cool-drinks and desert.

3

I am searching for a time
where easily I could get permanent employment
where the employer cared about his employees,
did drive out to a house if one was ill
and provide help if he could.

4

Again in the twilight I want to walk outside,
to see the silver-white stars and golden moon,
smell the rain on the evening-wind,
do not want to fear to be robbed or assaulted
but truly want to know tranquillity in my South Africa.

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Gert Strydom

My Stupid Fingers Write Words To You

My stupid fingers write words to you
as you do notice me while my whole world falls apart,
as there are something bright in your eyes
in which I find a great familiarity

that like a ray of sun throws light upon my life
and at times your smile wants to enchant me
when I catch your eye
as if a life-time is already between us

and then the whole world suddenly looks different
as if a big adventure lies before us.

Gert Strydom

My Territory (Limerick)

Some thirty centimetres around me
is the territory bordering my body,
so stranger beware when you draw up close
when we wait in lines and rows
or I might hit or knock even spit thee.

Gert Strydom

My View On A Certain Myth

That mighty Leviathan that do in water dwell
of whom the Bible does tell
is none other than Lucifer who God did expel
when as a man God came to save men from hell

and sometimes that seven headed dragon-snake
do the form of many other mythical things take
as if he, a created being, has brooding immortality
as a phoenix from the fiery ash or a dragon in a lake.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

My Whole Life

My whole life
has been set
to find the person
in whose soul
I can drown my tears,

to find the arms
that embraces with warmth and care,
the look that understands
beyond comprehension,
the one that is truly there,
an anchor against despair.

I have searched near and far
until we met
and even if this wanderer
do not know yet
what depths love really is
and what it demands
I do know that you
make me happy
and without you
I do not really know
where to go.

Gert Strydom

My Whole Life (Crystalline Poem)

My whole life you made new and free
did touch me with your humanity.

Gert Strydom

My Wife

My darling wife, the seasons come and go
but the summer-sun is in your laughter,
spring is in your eyes
and sometimes innocent like a child
you want to look past the times of life
as if there is something precious in every day.

There is intensity when I hold you in my arms
when we stand still for a mere moment.
It's as if my whole life long I had to wait for you
and you do make me great
even in my inabilities.

Gert Strydom

My Window Is No Blank Surface

My window is no blank surface
but is a bright reflection
of Your light that trickles through to me
as Your interest

from morning twilight
where day and night
penetrate deeper into my life
while I wait upon thoughts coming from You

where every facet of my life now is getting meaning
as Your sharpening, Your forming into a new existence
free from my conceit, my weakness,
where your light, truth and love are going right through me

I know that You bring consciousness
and Your glory, Your splendour is circling out brighter.

[Reference: My venster is 'n blanke vlak (My window is a blank surface) by N.P.
van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

My Words

With words spinning in a blur
becoming part of every thing
encompassing everyone
I want my verses to fork out

in bolts of blazing thunder
that shatters oppression
set the wrong ablaze flaming
and yet falls like sunshine
or drops of rain,
wherever there is pain

wherever beauty and sanctity
still reigns in this world and let my prayers
be aflame with mercy
but fall with destruction at their core
to settle the score for the weak, the oppressed
and may everyone struggling to be blessed.

Gert Strydom

My Words Are Set

I do not set my sails
to the wind,
as it's a thing
that at times
blow in all directions.

How can anyone
stay true,
if he doesn't set
the right direction?

My words are set
like cuneiform writing
notched into rock.

Gert Strydom

My Words Keep On Wandering

When I bring you a flower
from our garden,
then you do smile radiating like the sun,
while for moments
you are astounded by the beauty

and you do draw a picture for me
where you lie naked
stretched out in the sheets
and I wish that I could somehow
catch your beauty in a verse,

your hair that hangs in locks,
your smile that goes through all of my barricades
but my words are only wandering around
as if they have got nowhere to go.

Gert Strydom

My World Does Awake (Crystalline)

My whole world does awake at first light
with God's sun shining in my sight

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

My Years Are Coming On

My years are coming on
and some of my words
are gone from my mind
never to return again
and still I have not
said my best words yet,
but still sweet words come to me.

Every day my hair is
turning more grey
and when I want
to determine the sum of my life
and find the meaning of it,
it's like a hurricane
that twists away from me.

Gert Strydom

Mynah On A Branch

I sit up high in the cherry tree,
with my black eyes sharp
watching everything that is moving below
and of everything's action and inaction I do know.

I call out mimicking the nearby human,
who at times do give orders to the hounds
and when I do call
the dogs come running halting abruptly at the tree

before both of them jump
but they cannot reach me in the safety of the tree
where they both stand in confusion
as if my intelligence do outreach both of them
and screaming I swoop down,
do fly over their heads
and the air does carry me out of the leaping reach.

From up high in the cherry tree
I do inspect whatever there is to eat
and when the postman at the front gate
tries to put a letter in the box
he does draw the attention of the two bloodthirsty hounds.

They race away
and I do land at the feeding bowls,
peck at the tasty bits to my heart's content
and do pace up and down to mark of my own territory

Again I land on the top of the cherry tree
and gregarious I do scream again at the barking dogs
to call them back to where I am
to keep me company
and the dogs do quiet down,
come lie down at the foot of the tree
as if they know that I am a god
that is worth worshipping.

I take whatever food do fancy me

be it fruit or meat
and cocky with arrogance
I am determined to eat.

Through eons from eternity
nothing has really changed
to check or hold me back
where I do live just as I want.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Mystical Reality

There are red flames
that's curling in a bush
out of her head
and the fairy princess
are pure and innocent
with her violet
flower petal dress,
which shows her body
at places through the thin material.

She has green magically beautiful eyes
and pointed little ears
and slender arms and legs
and her fine transparent wings,
sweeps past and looks
as if it is made
from the thinnest silk.

About her there's clusters
of golden flowers
and in the background,
a gigantic female angel
with ink blue thought struck eyes
that is near to protect her.

The strict face
of the blonde angel
looks like that of a mother,
that is watching over her child
and I see her blue white wings
that fold over each other
and her deep blue dress
with its golden collar
looks like that of a queen.

[Reference: Mystical reality. Painting by Mandi. Look at the painting on my website:

Naboth's Vineyard

Naboth did not want to sell
or trade his vineyard
to king Ahab as he believed
that the Lord had forbid
him to sell his inheritance,

but that vineyard was near
to the palace of Ahab,
who sulked and was angry about it,
where he was laying on his bed
and refusing to eat.

He told his wife Jezebel,
a princess from Tyre, about it
(and she worshipped Baal) ,
told him to cheer up
and that she would get him the vineyard.

Then she wrote letters in his name,
placing his seal on them
to the elders and nobles
where Naboth lived
ordering them to proclaim a festival
and at the feast
to let Naboth sit between two scoundrels
and let them testify falsely
that he had cursed both God
and the King
and then to stone Naboth to death.

As soon as Jezebel heard
that Naboth was dead
she told Ahab
to take the vineyard into possession

but God spoke to
Elijah the Tishbite to tell Ahab:

“Have you not murdered a man

to take his property?
Here where dogs have licked up Naboth's blood,
dogs will lick up yours! "

So Ahab said:
"You, my enemy have found me! "

"You have done evil and even your descendants
will be cut off,
every last male of them
slave or free man.
Dogs will devour your wife, Jezebel,
will eat your children dying in the city,
and in the country the birds of prey
will feed on them, " Elijah replied

but then Ahab fasted wearing sackcloth,
humbled himself before God
and he was spared for some time.

In a battle against the king of Aram
Ahab fought in disguise
along with Jehoshaphat king of Juda
and the enemy chariot commanders
were ordered to only fight
against the king of Israel

and when they attacked
the king of Juda,
Jehoshaphat cried out
and they saw that he was not
the king of Israel
and broke off their attack,
but one of them
draw his bow at random
hitting Ahab between sections
of his armour and he bled to death
and was buried in Samaria

but while men washed his blood
from his wagon
at a pool where the prostitutes bathed

and were cleaning their weapons
dogs licked up his blood.

Later the prophet Elisha
send a man
from the company of prophets
to Ramoth Gilead
where he took Jehu
a commander of the army
into a inner room,
poured a flask of oil out over his head
and did declare:

"This is what God says:
I anoint you
as king over Israel
and you are to destroy
the house of Ahab your master"
and the young prophet then opened the door
and ran away.

When Jehu came out
one his fellow officers
asked if every thing was well
and why the madman did come to him?

Jehu told them that he was anointed
as king over Israel
and in a hurry they spread
their cloaks on the bare steps
in front of him,
blew on the horn shouting:
"Jehu is king! "

Jehu said: "If this is how you feel,
let no one slip out of this city
and tell Joram,
and Jehu got into his chariot
and did ride all the way to Jezreel
with his troops following him

but the lookout at the tower of Jezreel

saw them approaching
and king Joram ordered a horseman
to go and meet them
and to ask if they come in peace?

The horseman rode out
and Jehu asked him:
“What do you have to do with peace, “
ordered him to fall in behind
and when the lookout reported
that the messenger did not come back
another messenger was send
and did not return either.

The lookout reported that the driving
of the front wagon is like that of Jehu
who drives like a madman
and Joram (the king of Israel)
and Ahaziah (the king of Juda)
had their chariots hitched up
and drove out to meet Jehu.

They met Jehu at the plot of land
that belonged to Naboth
and Joram asked Jehu
if he was coming in peace?

Jehu replied: “How can there be peace
as long as the witchcraft and idolatry
of your mother Jezebel abounds? “

Turning his wagon around Joram
tried to escape, while shouting at Ahaziah
that they had been betrayed

but Jehu did draw his bow to its full strength
and his arrow pierced Joram's heart
and he slumped down in his chariot
and Jehu ordered his chariot officer Bidkar
to throw the body of Joram
in the field belonging to Naboth.

Ahaziah saw what happened
and fled with the road to Beth Haggan
and Jehu drove his chariot
with speed after him shouting:
"Kill him too!"

Near Ibleam they wounded him in his chariot,
but he escaped
to Megiddo where he died
and Jehu went back to Jezreel
and Jezebel painted her eyes,
arranged her hair
and was looking out of the window
as he was driving in.

She shouted to him:
"Are you here in peace,
is Zimri well,
murderer of your master?"

Then Jehu looked up at the window shouting:
"Who is on my side? Who?"
Two or maybe three
male servants looked down at him.

"Throw her down!" Jehu ordered
and they threw her down
and some of her blood
splattered on the wall
and on to the horses
that trampled her.

Jehu went into the palace to eat and drink
and then remembering Jezebel and said:
"Take care of that cursed woman
and bury her as she is a king's daughter,"

but when they went to her
only her skull, feet and hands were left
as the dogs had devoured her flesh
and no one was able to say:
"This is Jezebel."

Gert Strydom

Napoleon Bonaparte

The world lay at his feet
and the whole of Europe he wanted to unite,
into Asia his armies swept
conquering Russia

until they met up with a fierce winter
and at Waterloo he had the British outgunned
until rain fell for days
and his big guns got stuck in the mud.

Whatever stories history, the Russians
and the British do tell,
against nature and its Creator
Napoleon's armies did fall.

Gert Strydom

Narcissus

The whispering trees draw him
and much deeper he goes into them
until a while later he is lost
and walks up and down as if in a spider's web.
"Is anybody here! Is anybody here, " he calls
and he listens for an answer.
"Here" echoes loudly back to him
while he feels lost and unhappy
and shouts at the top of his voice "come"
while lingering he turns round and around
and he hears "come, come" echoing loudly
he sees a pond, Echo with her palm
stretched out to him, wants to declare her love
but he is caught in the image of himself.

Gert Strydom

Narcissus [2]

To be caught
into the me, into the self,
and constantly to have to delve deeper into it,
to see only your own face
and at times look at it with fear

as if your whole soul
is reflected in your own appearance,
as if no wife
can at any time draw you with her beauty,
even if her eyes are blue as the sky

is a terrible kind of thing
and he stares and stares
while the water of the pool
does continually circle out wider
and does see himself and nobody else
while he waits and waits from early to late.

Gert Strydom

National Service And Thereafter (Refrain Stanza)

For two years I have to bend myself to other's will
and the days in hot pursuit of terrorists remain with me still,
we are at a laughable wage send to war
where life can last for only seconds more,
where spirit-breaking exercises do every day fill,
later are called up at work for camp after camp,
with a number the army does its mark on my days stamp,
we are convinced to stop the ungodly communist ill
and the days in hot pursuit of terrorists remain with me still.

[Poet's note: The National Service was compulsory for a period of two years but thereafter it was termed a military camp where men as citizens were called up, (for up to four months a year) back into the army from their normal careers to be exercised in and be sent back into war or to whatever duty the South African Defence Force deemed them to fulfil.]

Gert Strydom

Nature Haiku's

With some red kisses
the wildness sun flowers
while the winter flees

*

At night I show you
small pieces of buckshot that gleam;
shot into the night

*

The wilderness calls
next to the big concrete jungle
where some lights glitter

*

At a small nozzle nest
a red weaver-bird parade;
the large sickle-bush flames.

*

The black tar road steams
whizzing like a great morass
while a green frog croaks.

Gert Strydom

Nature Tankas

The cup of the moon
flowers yellow in the night,
is big round and clear
next to a swarm of small stars
that withers in the morning.

*

Pink rose cup opens
on this clear winter morning
as a butterfly
that flutters at the garden gate
drawing the postman's brown eyes.

*

Ibises scream screeching
when the small dog chase them up
as if they curse it,
while blue doves peep from green branches
as if they see something odd.

*

Purple jacarandas
in the soft drizzle hang full of
fragrant shining drops
until a quick shower falls down
washing pretty flowers off.

*

When a grey bush shrike
greet the morning joyfully
we are drinking tea
around the old kitchen table
and that bird sounds next to us.

*

The scent of wet sand
rise in my nose with the rain
that which stays behind -
the smell of nature still hangs
in the big old large white house.

Gert Strydom

Nature Was Drawing Me Along (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

The whole of summer weavers gathered
violets, arum-lilies grew among the reeds
in the swamp, morning glories were like weeds,
some long-tailed widow-birds fluttered,
all day finches sang a twittering song,
vibrant nature was drawing me along
in colours of green, purple, yellow and red.

Gert Strydom

Nature Was Uneasily Silent

Nature was uneasily silent
as if it was waiting for something to happen,
way back in the distant hills
lightning bashed down
glared blue-white
but at the distance no thunder was heard
I could smell the distant rain,
knew that in mere moments
it was going to pour down right here.

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Gert Strydom

Nature's Philosophy (Novelinee)

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

No things in nature acts only single
as all things are set to love each other;
why can we not also such like mingle
to be more than like sister and brother?
In a loving, caring kind of emotion,
embracing the wind touches the flowers
and to each other there is devotion,
the sun shines with its secret powers
while the earth is kissed by rain showers.

[Reference: "Love's philosophy" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

Near Christmas Day

I see your face reflected
in the window of the car
where it's raining and we are driving for hours
and big-eyed you look while the rain do splash down,
in the distance there are windmills and barns
and it's as if the rain is washing everything clean
and yet a ray of sunshine does gleam over the walls of a homestead
when we hit water and are sliding,

do luckily glide over an empty traffic light
with a red dot of the sun in a fiery-pattern
and it's as if this moment is holy,
further away the sky is open and clean
with strangely here and there dots of fog
where the veldt portrays a horde of wild flowers
and in all of this God's presence is coming to meaning
and when over other crossroads we drive into the city,

the streets are deserted and Picasso-red
when the sun sets and decorated for Christmas
and I wonder if the people do truly know God,
do invite Him into their hearts

see a Father Christmas in a park distributing gifts
and he is suddenly enveloped in light or maybe I did only imagine it,
where poor children in rags stand around him
and we do drive into the city to our home.

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Gert Strydom

Near Heidelberg

Near Heidelberg there is a piece of farmland
where as a child I did find tranquility
and from all kinds of obligations felt free
when the perils of life I did not understand

and in the open veldt mind chains are gone,
when there is only the sky and hillocks of solid stone.

In towns and cities I have spend many days,
have felt the meaninglessness of what life is,
a loving woman's bliss
and have experienced people and their weird despairing ways

and at a time life did simple seem
but the entire world changed
and my own life was rearranged
and from the choices of youth I cannot myself redeem

but at the stream on the farmland weavers are twittering
and no one else does there go
or perhaps of this place do know
and in the silence there I find something
that brings a kind of peace to the heart.

Gert Strydom

Near Helderberg Hill

There's a chill tonight
on Helderberg Hill
an icy wind blows through the trees
and it's raining still,
as it did for days
as it does each
and every Mediterranean winter.

The sweet scent
and not that of the forest of the trees
but of lavender instead is in the breeze
and fills my lungs, fills my heart, my head
until it becomes a part of me

but big eyed you lie
in the bed next to me
and the rain outside falls on and on
with fog cordoning off the hill,
the painting on the wall,
the garden with its bush upon bush
of waving lavender
are now all gone out of sight

and a solitary pistil awakens and grows in size,
entering a calyx, a tubular corolla forming two lips
and it could have been spring
as new life is sprouting, but a chilly winter it is
in the house near Helderberg Hill

Gert Strydom

Near Helderberg Hill [1]

There's a chill tonight
on Helderberg Hill
an icy wind blows through the trees
and it's raining still,
as it did for days
as it does each
and every Mediterranean winter.

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and not that of the forest of the trees
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entering a calyx, a tubular corolla forming two lips
and it could have been spring
as new life is sprouting, but a chilly winter it is
in the house near Helderberg Hill

Gert Strydom

Near The Old Chestnut Tree

I idly wished upon a falling star
far away in the night sky
and glimpsed your ghost
passing by

under a silver moon
with fair hair streaming
down your cheeks
and you were glowing white
as if shimmering

and still your voice
was filled with love
and soft almost as the breeze
blowing above my head
through the old chestnut tree

and sadly we had to part
at the start of day
and your goodbye
still lingers with me.

Gert Strydom

Near To Gobabis

Near to Gobabis,
(when it still was South West Africa)
a farmer gave me a lift
when I was on military leave

and that hardened pioneer
who daily struggled against the desert
told me about the grace of God
and about His great love

while he watched me
where I was sweating in his pickup truck
and I was very sure that God measures out
the way of each human being

and the urgent blue eyes of that man
still stays with me
as he did know
something more about his creator.

Gert Strydom

Neighbours You Would Like To Miss

I

The type of whites that camp out
on the sidewalk
frying their barbeque just there
with chops and sausage grilling,

enough for a huge feast,
talking loudly in order to inform
the whole neighbourhood
what they are saying

and with heavy beat music playing, partying
and dancing to early morning light
while their kindergarten kids
are pushing carts up and down
in the street, getting every
dog to bark all night long.

II

A bull of a black man
almost gigantic in size
who uses his pickup
to unload a huge black ox

in his back yard
and then slaughtering the thing
just there with it bellowing
to invite his ancestor ghosts to visit

the neighbourhood and his garden
while a witchdoctor is dancing
around the beast, singing and beating a drum
and then he tries to spit roast it
on a huge fire burning all the meat and inviting a squadron
of minibus taxi drivers to a feast of uneatable charcoal.

Neil Diamond Sang His Greatest Hits

Neil Diamond sang his greatest hits
through the headphones
and while we sometimes
picked up Radio Five
on short wave
its jingle sang:
"stay alive with Radio Five"

but a much greater power
were with us
while we shot out enemy battle tanks,
one after the other
with a Ratel-90 armoured-car.

Gert Strydom

Neither Out Far Nor In Deep (Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Robert Frost)

Whether it is in spring, summer, winter or fall
you will find people at the beach on the sand,
where in groups or single they lay, sit or stand,
from a distance the sea is huge and they are small,

although they do not look far it does not matter at all
where they turn their backs to the city and to the land
are joyful all over the beach, alone or a small band,
and some are tiny, others are fat and some are tall

where the sea lies before them flat as gleaming glass
some hold company, talk and look from the beach
while others ride the foaming waves to the shore
while in the distance a white sailboat sails pass
from the cool water some do stay out of reach
while others do the sea and everything in it adore.

[Reference: "Neither out far nor in deep" by Robert Frost.]

Gert Strydom

Nemesis (Free Verse Sonnet)

(In answer to A. G. Visser)

Speechless is creation
when weeds do luxuriant usurp it,
in fear are small animals
while birds do sing songs of praise.
Serious burdened are humanity
when no end does come to injustice,
some are earnestly looking for peace
and others only for the rifle and the bomb
but over all of this stands the cross
as forgiveness for every defect and mistake,
but also as a final judgement
and as destruction or preservation
as on one or other daybreak God will say:
"No further only to here! "

[Reference: "Nemesis" by A. G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Nero

He lives in his white house
and slowly each day
the world passes him by
and there are things
and people to get
and to use,
to expand his empire.

There are some more places
where armour can roll in
and the local population
can in fear run away
from bombing flying machines

and from the hunger for more power
and the fervour for more money and oil
he becomes totally insane,
while his men
invade foreign countries
the one after the other.

The speakers
of his very modern sound system
play violin sonatas
while a enemy terrorist nuclear device
explodes somewhere in his city
and against the shock waves
and radiation he is protected
and outside
flames leaped into the sky
while for very long
life cannot exist there anymore.

Gert Strydom

Nerves Of Steel

The battle against enemy tanks,
in armoured cars that continually roll in
does require nerves of steel

to time upon time drive in at speed,
to stop to risk your own life,
to get in a shot

and then to drive away quickly
and to stay alive
remains an immense thing

or maybe it becomes mechanical,
as if the events are already programmed in
along with teamwork
and keeping your mind

and all that I do remember
is the hollow feeling,
enemy projectiles flying past,
enemy armour burning

and the dismal smell of death
that remains on the wind.

Gert Strydom

Never Do Our Feelings Seem To Abate

and even summer at its prime
at times against our passion seems temperate
and yet they may grow more intense in time
as between us nothing is just moderate
and the intensity seems like a sin or a crime
while daily we do grow more affectionate.

Gert Strydom

Never Do Our Feelings Seem To Abate [1]

Never do our feelings seem to abate
and even summer at its prime
at times against our passion seems temperate
and yet they may grow more intense in time
as between us nothing is just moderate
and the intensity seems like a sin or a crime
while daily we do grow more affectionate.

Gert Strydom

Never Have I Been Quite So Much In Love

Nothing I know that is almost like this,
where there's sweet bliss in every kiss
you are very difficult to forget,
since the blessed time when we had first met,

never has a tale like this been foretold
of the sheer loveliness that I do behold,
never have I been quite so much in love
and nothing can such deep feelings remove.

Gert Strydom

Never Have You Painted More Beautiful

You have never painted more beautiful
than last night
and young black woman
with curling hair
standing next to each other
look as if three
comes magically from one body
and they stare with big eyes at me.

Maybe the paintings
are comic picture beautiful
and you thought
that the one
with the pumpkin on the head
is the most beautiful
and there were others
wearing gourds
and I wanted to smile
when you asked
if it is art
or only craft.

Gert Strydom

Never In All The Years That I Am Living

Never in all the years that I am living
could I learn to know someone so intimate,
have I been so caught in your love,
did I want to win your heart so desperately;
it's as if I know you from the start of human existence,
as if God has drawn a way for us through eternity,
from the moment when I noticed you for the first time
it's as if you are making me much greater than mere humanity,
as if you are bringing joy for heartaches,
when I awake every morning with greater power
and I know that God Himself is present in your presence
then there is only sunshine in the waiting day
and I wonder why I had to find you after a lifetime
when something so unfathomable strong binds us to each other?

Gert Strydom

Never Will I Forget You (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

(for Daleen)

As memories of you forever live on
even when from you I am at times gone
even while from you at times I am gone,
when my life is sometimes cluttered
the kind words that in love you uttered
are like the many things that you have done
as memories of you forever live on.

As memories of you forever live on
in my life you remain the only one
who on me did goodness bestow.
In a way you remain wherever I go,
even when my ways are set hard like stone,
as memories of you forever live on.

Gert Strydom

New Green Leaves Are All Over The Willow Tree

New green leaves are all over the willow tree
and wherever I look
some pretty wild flowers I do see,
and arum-lilies are blooming in the brook

on this, the very first day of spring,
and it's if all of nature is welcoming me,
as if the birds do sing
and rejoice quite happily

as if to this great new world I do belong
as if everything around me is covered in beauty,
in a kind of innocence far from the trampling throng
and the feeling of the presence of God becomes strong

as the river forever rushes on merrily,
as if this place in nature is where I am meant to be.

Gert Strydom

New Life

This morning a white broken shell
did fall out of the big old oak tree
and high up in the branches
there was a twittering

of a small new living thing
and I did hear the adult birds sing
from pure joy
while they did fly to and thro

the blue did fold open
with the glory of the sun above me
and everywhere I could notice the love of God
that watches everything.

Gert Strydom

New Year's Day

Having both good and bad times
the year rushes by
and I know that no hail Mary
or our Father
will bring prosperity
and turn loving
to something deeper

as my prayers go straight
to the Creator
who knows me through and through
and He controls my destiny
as much as His angels guard me

and He has already paid the penance,
day by day walking every step
as my companion
even helping when I stray.

Gert Strydom

New Year's Eve

The year slowly comes with the ticking clock to an end,
while the new year is almost born
when the neighbours drown themselves in liquor,
and afraid of the festive sounds the cat sneaks in again.

Soberly we have our own festivities,
while outside thundering explosion on thundering explosion occurs
when the New Year is almost born
and afraid of the festive sounds the cat sneaks in again.

Later more meteorites explode
and they hang like stars to the heaven
while the neighbours gather around a barrel of wine,
and afraid of the festive sounds the cat sneaks in again.

Gert Strydom

News Report

Only one person survived the attack,
when three black men with machineguns
killed the farmer, screaming loudly: "come here you bitch, "
bursting into the house, kicking her, stripping her clothes off
and they acted as if totally insane.
On the floor she was tied up tightly
where they raped her, shouting: "you Boor whore."
In the hospital she cried without end,
could hardly face reporters for the interview,
are without her possessions, husband and country and feels dirty.

She will never forget the black rapists,
even when praying to God,
as long as the killers still are alive,
there's something burning in her like festering wounds
and only a grave is left to the honour of her husband,
in thoughts she is again swept away,
it feels as if every black man is watching her,
nothing can be trade for the life of her husband,
she strongly considers selling the farm,
are without her possessions, husband and country and feels dirty.

In her thoughts she lives through it again
with fear for a sexual disease or sores,
at night suddenly get awake shivering,
out of superstition even avoids ladders,
sometimes falls asleep in her pink underwear,
hear branches rustle, a dove cooing,
it feels as if someone wants to silence her,
she wants to hide from the whole world,
totally apathetic feeds the cattle green fodder,
are without her possessions,
husband and country and feels dirty.

l'Envoi

but the community is deeply moved by her,
they want to capture and abduct the criminals,
believe that terrorists are lurking on farms,
but she doesn't want to mention this matter again,

are without her possessions, husband and country and feels dirty.

Gert Strydom

Next To Me You Lie So Still (Couplets)

(in answer to Nel Noordzij)

Next to me you lie so still deep in your sleep,
this impression in my memories I want to keep

while you are next to me for another while,
your face, your body and soul are fragile,

where for moments my glance stop on your face
and tranquillity I see, of worries there are not a trace,

and in me there is no kind of alarm,
although in the mind's eye a child may be in your arm.

[Reference:"Je light zo neergelegd te slapen" (down you lie and sleep)by Nel Noordzij.]

Gert Strydom

Next To The Railway Line

Next to the railway line
different coloured arum-lilies are blooming
and it's unusual
that they grow in rows and rows wildly
where they bloom lovely.

Gert Strydom

Nicodemus

When they nailed God to the cross
it did have great meaning to Nicodemus
(the Pharisee who knew the scripture)
who in secret visited Jesus at night
that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah
and is truly the Son of God.
Not only this knowledge
but the death of Jesus
jerked at his heart.

Gert Strydom

Night

The joy that you bring
when we are alone with one white candle
glowing in our room

while you draw me into a hot embrace
covers all other things,
even sand, grass, flowers and trees
that is outside,

causes me to want the sun
to leave the blue sky
to have you near to me
and to dream while you are here.

Gert Strydom

Night And Day I Have No Peace

Deep in the night
I hear the monster
rumbling along the railway track
and it whistles so shrill
that it is forced into my brain
and I am immediately waken
from my sleep.

A smaller monster swishes
past down in the street
and roars as if it's somewhere
on a racing track

and on the main road, further away
something pulling a heavy load hoots
before thundering on into the night

and at times people drive
into the lamppost
where the road turns away
with one hell of a bang

and a little later
sirens cry past
to try and rescue
someone somewhere.

Early in the morning rubbish bins are collected
with a thing that growls and whines
and smashes with iron jaws

before the postman
and later the man from the pharmacy
drives past on scooters
and gets every dog in the neighbourhood barking

and night and day
I have no peace
as long as I am living in the city

and things are driving
to and thro the whole time.

Gert Strydom

Night Of The Long Knives

People now believe that if
somebody like Eugene Terreblance
could be killed so cruelly
it awaits every white person
and that black folks are itching
to rob, to chop to pieces
and to dishonour whites
and to rape women
and that the government propagates it.

It is thought that farms and houses
will be stolen with force
in the same way as in Zimbabwe
and many people now want to leave
and go to other countries
to escape poverty
and avoid being forced
into a squatters' settlements.

Envoi

Friends and loved ones of mine
want to escape the night of the long knives
that they get out of the writings
of visionary Van Rensburg
but still the One that could save at Blood river
walks on my side.

Gert Strydom

Night Ride

The bus rolls out
on a cold rainy night
and the greyhound
drives to the freeway

with a friendly hostess
distributing some cool drinks,
toasted sandwiches
with a choice between
chicken and mayonnaise
and cheese and tomato

and a girl watches me,
smiles when I catch her eyes
and there's something familiar,
yet she is a total stranger
and her friendliness let me wonder
if she is maybe a well-off prostitute?

But the way that she is holding her body
tells that she is not selling anything
and she is beautiful
and I wonder what she does for a living?

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Gert Strydom

Night Was Coming

Night was coming
with a piercing huge orange sun
breaking through
white and black clouds
in the west.

It found a gap
and the sun was hanging
like a orange ball
above the street
and it was blinding.

Cars passed barely visible
above the orange glare
and some had already
turned their lights on.

The sun dipped down
below some trees
and for a time
it glowed behind them
and soon it would be dark
and the first stars
were already appearing
and a full yellow moon
was rising,

but below bright lights
was already burning
right across the city
in colours of amber
streetlights
green, yellow and red
traffic lights,
blue lights flashing
on police cars
and almost every bright colour
caught on neon signs
while people came and went

to different destinations

some smiling and relaxed,
others in a hurry
and some others
locked in a world of their own.

Gert Strydom

Night Watch

Security guards walk past while they are on guard
with traffic lights, street lights gleaming
they are armed, in boots and uniforms
while some wait smoking outside of the cafe
and then they get into three patrol cars
and outside its raining buckets full and its night
and I wonder what Rembrandt would have made of this
before some become distant in the rain
and the cars of others suddenly come to life
with screaming tires, flashing lights
while they talk on their radios
and some run fast down the street.
with concern on some faces
while cars swerve at full speed around a corner.

Gert Strydom

Nightclub

(after Fanie Olivier)

The saxophone whines past my ears
and you do dance happily very close to me,
where among all the men I am the only one in your eyes
but it's as if he low C does cut right through my ears.

The jazz-music fills the room,
another pair does dance up and down and are jolly
and you are so close to me that we could be one,
before you twist out of my arms around and around.

In the faint light I see your smile radiate
where I have got to take all kinds of steps,
later your arms do surround me
while I am lost in the depth of your eyes.

When we walk out into the bright night
you face still tells the about the joy
while a hobo reads alone from a old Bible
and for the other people it's a big joke.

[Reference:"Nagklub" (Nightclub)by Fanie Olivier.]

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Gert Strydom

Nightingales (Roundelay)

Barren are the hillocks, the cliffs and streams
in the wilderness where the sun harshly beams
where you nest, learn your joyous sublime sound,
filling many nights with something profound

where you sing at times right up to the dawn
and to your sweet voice many men are drawn
while it is echoes through the sky and ground
filling many nights with something profound.

Gert Strydom

Nightly Visitor

While I dreamed last night
I suddenly awaked
and through the window in the moon
saw a grey horse snort at the fountain
and fire glowed in that animal's eyes.

A woman that's really beautiful
and white, rigid and merciless
glided out of the saddle
and around me every thing was deadly silent
and the look in her dark eyes
cut right through me
without any life.

I still wanted to ask her
how she got to stand so suddenly
next to me, but she already walked
right through the walls and were gone.

l'Envoi
Next door where the wasted away woman
that had AIDS lived
I heard half chocked
a last rattling cough,
before horse hoofs
hit sparks out of the tar road
and the white women
rode away in haste.

Gert Strydom

Nightmares

In the nightmare that I do sometimes get
the South African border war
and operations in Angola are alive again
with shots being fired, people dying,
the local population that suffers
and war that happens around me
when I barely do escape destruction
as if this past
is totally indelible
and my whole body does shake at times
when this dream
does repeat the previous reality,

I dream that I fall into a dark pit
into infinity,
sometimes do fall past stars and the whole universe
and become part of the naught,
that no parachute or any thing
can rescue me from this falling
till only I am living
with darkness everywhere

and where I have got a degree
the metric end examination haunts me
as if I have got to write it again,
are totally unprepared
and my university calculus
can make no calculations.

Sometimes my own future does haunt me
in premonitory dreams
and when I awake I laugh it away,
but when the events do later happen in real time
I do already know about them
as if destiny does walk step upon step in advance
but I do cling to the illusion of hope,
know about change
and better days that certainly will come.

Nightmares (English Sonnet)

There sometimes is really bad kind of dreams
which you want to avoid, to be waking,
when in your ears you hear your own screams,
while your body, mind and soul is aching

These dreams return like a bomb ever ticking
to the time that they come back with anxiety,
as if the past, the time of war is sticking
its fingers in the present life with impropriety.

Night after night as in sleep you plunge in
again you are in cover behind enemy lines,
you dream of escaping barely by your skin,
where you were trapped by some landmines,

about shooting to kill to be able to survive,
about as a duty taking someone else's life.

Gert Strydom

Nights And Days (In Answer To T.S. Eliot)

I

The summer day draws to a end
with its last light spent
with blaring television sets,
at the racetrack, people checking their last bets
children playing in passageways
that had seen better days
and in city block after city block
with flower pots being displayed
on balconies
the rain patters down
and time stretches to seven o'clock
in another rundown town
where vagrants stand under trees in vacant lots
trying to shelter against the rainy breeze
as human beings with spirits, stripped gone
when the streetlamps go on
one after another first flickering
and prostitutes indiscreetly start to walk the streets
rather gay and alluring.

II

The early morning light
shines bright through open windows
and unfamiliar couples awake next to each other
do not even know each other's names
and do not bother to kiss goodbye
in apartments and houses where the smell of sex,
champagne, beer or wine is still lingering
from the nightly escapades
and the blue sky shimmers with freshness.

III

Alone in a city apartment,
one among hundreds of others,
you lit a candle and solitary

have a candlelight dinner
with sparkling sherry
in a long glass
and are really beautiful
with big dark eyes,
a pear shaped face
and soft tender lips
and think how sweet
it would have been
if you had some company
and life stretches out almost endlessly
with going to work, your duties there
and coming home to an empty flat
and downstairs the Nigerians
are having another all-night party
with music thumping
through the floor,
the next-door neighbour
is again having a row
with his fiancée or wife
and they are slamming doors
and life is going on
in the same way
that it usually does.

IV

Somewhere up high, beyond the endless sky,
beyond the universe, the Lord is looking down
at every city, every single town
seeing every person
and even their thoughts, personal, private,
lascivious or serene
becomes part of His understanding
of human beings.

[Reference: Preludes by T.S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

Night-Song (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

I did drink in the darkness
against the beating of my stormy heart,
saw you enraptured and thought
about great joy and great sorrow,
your lips were soft, sweet and near
when you touched me warm and intimate,
like an angel you were in the valley of the moon
where you did make a moment eternal.
I found you as my own time and again,
peaceful outside was the whole street
with a wonderful enchantment all over your face,
we were far past real bliss and joy,
did know how sincere and deep true love is.

[Reference: "Naglied" (Night-song) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Night-Watch

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

Outside the wind howls as if it will never find rest,
jerks on the oaks and in the wild stormy rain I am half blinded
but stumble to the door of a great old farmhouse but it's open.
I want to knock on it but do decide to walk down the long corridor
where portraits of ancestors do hang and they are all know to me.
In the glare of a hurricane lamp and out of the cold I am almost shivering
while the yellowwood floor do creak under my feet with every step
but something forces me to walk on and an unknown power sweeps me along
while those strict bearded faces almost do glare at me
and a single one of a beautiful lady hangs on the wall.

In the bedroom a python's skin is curled around a dried out tree,
a stuffed lion stand with its jaws open as if it wants to roar,
various hunting rifles hang on the one wall and do fill it up
and in my stomach there is a dark painful spot
where over the skins of antelope I walk to a bed with an old man in it
who when he notices me entering do come erect and do strain himself
but he is without power and he gasps and pain is written all over his face
and his glance is friendly, as if he does recognize me and sincere.

In a dream I am right next to the bed of an ancestor
Peter Swanepoel and there is nobody else
where against the onslaught of death he tries to stay alive
but I am there alone when he grabs me on an arm,
from the leopard that had jumped on him some of his fingers are missing
and I note that the legends out of my childhood days are not nonsense
where the hurricane lamp does throw shadows over his face
and his words do hold meaning but I feel somewhat flustered:

"I waited on you to come from another time and era
as it is in your blood to fight, to carry your name high.
Your enemies sneak around you like skunks going here and there
but they are sly and leave no distinct track on the ground
as if constantly they try to tread your name down
but do always stay in the shadows that they cannot be caught in the act
where you do not deserve the things that constantly do come your way
and where your blood is boiling you stand still and astonished

but it's time to go to action
to destroy every single one of them."

He coughs and there is blood on the sheets around him
and suddenly it's as if others that are already passed away do come to life
while he is near to his end and every one of them do treat me with sincerity.
It's as if the most important of my ancestors are suddenly present
and each one of them looks at me with eyes that do burn into the soul.
Clothed in his black armour with a bloody sword
the legendary Teutonic knight Vinnulph stands close to me
do slap me on the shoulder as if he is greeting me and walks past
the Scottish knight Sir Samuel William Smith walks up and down in the room
as just after the third crusade with a maul
where he has come from his lord Richard (the Lion-heart) ,
and there is authority to him.

Sirs Christopher and John Henry Brand do nod with the heads,
both are with hunting rifles in their hands and without words they look at me,
Joost Strydom with a rapier in his hand does go and sit on the bed
as if he has got great sympathy and love for the dying man,

The lovely Catharina Ustinx from Denmark (also known as Trijn Ras)
has to my surprise a spear and is clothed in mail armour that goes neatly with it
and I am surprised that all of them come with weapons to my aid
where here they all are suddenly at their prime and alive.

"My lad, why do stand back when the war rages all around you,
take my maul to protect your honour and name and our blood."
"No you are a knight of the black dragoons, take my mighty sword
and hit everyone down and do destroy them in great rage."

The lovely Catharina Ustinx talks with a calm controlled voice
where she holds her long spear:
"He has got his own Moses-staff that hits with blue thunder
and nobody, but nobody, can stands before his words."

All of the men do laugh while they look unbelieving at her.
"Words you say, words" says president Brand
while he strokes through his beard with a hand.
"But he keeps it back for the sake of Christ."
"For Christ's sake you say? For His sake I did spill blood, "
Vinnulph explodes and shakes his head.

"We were almost in Jerusalem did beat the Moslems, "
Sir Samuel William Smith answers
with a unholy light in his pale blue eyes
but as if he is praying his head is suddenly bowed down.

"But then he must jump out with it
and bring his whole world back into control, "
Vinnulph roars as if it's a war cry and all of them look at me searching
as if mere words can stop all injustice in my world.

[Reference: "Nagwaak by die ou man" (night-watch at the old man)
by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Nine Eleven 2002

(after Sheila Cussons)

Tower-buildings in America lie in pain in a television news report
Arabs, Moslem terrorists are responsible according to a rumour
where the towers burn with hellish fires and do collapse,
where heroically people try to rescue others and become part of the rubble
themselves.

America land of many opportunities has got scrap craters in the firmament
and its not as some Moslems do rejoice and think that it's God's will,
where death do come shocking almost by chance
these revolting things do astound the whole of humanity
staccato, totally blunt rigid steel remains after the onslaught
and a person does wonder what now awaits humanity?

Where that place for Americans are now holy ground
as heroes and heroines are missing in that disaster
it's almost like a modern cathedral
where they find bits and pieces of human beings for identification
and in the highest earthly power innocents do lie killed and devoured
were attacked without being able to give any kind of defence
as if an earthly angel of freedom and choices and opportunities do fall
and the explosions of the terrorist do resound into the future
through the revenge of others and from the cosmos the Lord God does notice the
choices
of every human being, nation and people and do know their destiny
and where doves do now at times descend there in swarms,
I do know that America is going to take the terrorist out of every Moslem with
force.

[Reference: "1945" by Sheila Cussons.]

Gert Strydom

No Angel Does The Sweet Passion Know

(for my wife Daleen for Valentine's Day)

□

No angel does the sweet passion know
that in my heart does brightly glow
and in the courts of divine heaven above
no bittersweet tears do ever flow

when at times relationships deal out blow after blow
and no harpy or angelic being does ever know
the intimacy with which I do you betroth
and in the sexual act how time moves so very slow

or the pleasure or the beauty that comes with it
as together we do perfectly fit
when we do become one
and at that moment all other things are gone

as intensely together we do both move
when we do make passionate love.

Gert Strydom

No Feather From Woeperdal

No feather from Woeperdal,
no fox's hair that falls somewhere,
no African marigolds in the spring sun
urge me to be as much in love
as you can.

I'll rather write to you about flowers
and the curves of your body,
than putting African marigolds in a posy
and mocking other poets.

White, yellow, crimson and any flower's
colour and smell let me be wordless
and petals leave on leave is nothing
to you coming to my garden
and matchless you are there.

Gert Strydom

No God Has Ever Love As Much As This

No whip has ever lashed
such an innocent man
who did choose to suffer punishment
as the Lamb of God
where He could have called upon
legions upon legions of mighty angels
to come to His aid.

No nails have ever pierced such mighty hands
that created all that is,
that controlled the wind and waves
brought healing, food and life
to mortal men.

No thorny crown was ever set
on a more noble head
as a mockery to being king
while He is and had been the Lord of lords
and even can wake up the dead
and His kingdom is everlasting

No God has ever love as much as this
and made the punishment of all sinners His
and soon in the clouds he will come
to take us to our eternal home
and with my own eyes I will see
His love and great mercy.

Gert Strydom

No Longer Can You Brake My Logical Reasoning

No longer can you brake
my logical reasoning through your sensitivity
the central part of me stays
and throws you out bit by bit.

You heart that could confuse,
that had chased me around, which had challenged me
and sometimes could provoke me
will in no strategy succeed any longer.

With your nurturing I have made myself orphan,
while your irrationality has brought all reason into confusion
but now you can read the writing on the wall
and I will cause no more anarchy that penetrates to others

I will rather live without standing the whole time on the abyss
and without fear than to be purposeless forever.

[After Elisabeth Eybers/Reference: Krisis (Crisis) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

No New Horizons Catches His Eyes

No new horizons catch his blue eyes
when he gets the command for his freedom,
just the wide sky stretches out far above
where the sun blazes yellow in the blue
and he in boots, battledress and beret
gives some officers a few last handshakes,
some others, now as civilians loudly cheer
are joyous, quite happy and with long steps

he walks over the dusty parade ground,
taking a short cut up to the main gate,
while shots ring at the big shooting course
as if he is escaping, tired of killing,
he wants to get away to lead a new life,
but still is not really free from the army.

Gert Strydom

No One Can Remove

No one can remove
God's great love
and even though odd
that great love of the Lord God
is forever mine
and nothing beats that love divine.

No words can ever describe every bit,
the depth and sincerity of it
as it goes beyond time and space
and is present in every moment and place
and I do know
of His great grace that does glow

brighter than the sun's rays
and even in my darkest days
His love is strong and pure
and the power of it does endure,
every morning it is fresh
as if of all people God does love me the best.

Gert Strydom

No One Could A Time As This Foresee (Italian Sonnet)

No one could a time just as this one foresee
where during a lock-down I would miss you so,
are by government restricted to you to go,
where from this virus there is nowhere to flee

while for a time you are away from me
and time passes so infinitely slow
while of your true love I do know,
as if by destiny it is meant to be

that in the world a deadly thing is at play
and chinamen unmoved as if unknowing
did not just there restrict it when they should.
Daily I pray that you do safely stay,
while all of the world moved and knowing
now far too late do not know what they could.

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Gert Strydom

No Other Better Summer (1)(Free Verse Sonnet)

Weavers do twitter, warblers chirp and doves coo
and the summer overflows with joy
but for the cat that do try to murder the birds
where from the branches of the fig tree the birds peep
and in the days of the summer I am swept away
by all of the birds that so cheerful do sing in their choir
and do notice them splash and drink at the water bowl
when they do flutter down and I do feed them crumbs
and every bird does sing an own love-song
that continually does sound up with joy
as if all of creation do enjoy this summer,
the birds land as if the fruit trees do beckon them,
know that they do offer seed and fruit to them
and I can think of no other better summer.

Gert Strydom

No Other Better Summer (Free Verse Sonnet)

Weavers do twitter, warblers chirp and doves coo
and the summer overflows with joy
but for the cat that do try to murder the birds
where from the branches of the fig tree the birds peep
and in the days of the summer I am swept away
by all of the birds that so cheerful do sing in their choir
and do notice them splash and drink at the water bowl
when they do flutter down and I do feed them crumbs
and every bird does sing an own love-song
that continually does sound up with joy
as if all of creation do enjoy this summer,
the birds land as if the fruit trees do beckon them,
know that they do offer seed and fruit to them
and I can think of no other better summer.

Gert Strydom

No Other Painting

I also wanted to see your beautiful fairies
and when you painted one it was a reality to me
but when it got a name
coincidence was a maybe
and that painting was my property
but when you did cut it up and burn it
I was upset, angry and you were impudent and stupid-cocky
and I totally astonished
and no other painting could match that one.

Gert Strydom

No Place For A Courting-Candle

A girl's voice laughing softly
cuts through the night
and enters by the room's window
and wide awake
I (six year old child) sneak out
to find the source of the excitement.

Gardiël studies with Martin
that boards with us
and both are matriculating
because he complains
that his eyes burn
from the old paraffin lamp
that gives light
at their farm house
where there's no electricity.

A bright electric lamp
burns in the room
hanging ten centimetres
beneath the ceiling
and big moths
fly dark brown around it
caught in flight paths.

Another table lamp
throws a bright yellow glow
that brings heat in the chilly
highveld winter.

I see them through the window
drinking coffee and eating rusks,
before both of them
again turn pages in books

and crawl into the shelter of a bush
to stay hidden from them
and suddenly somebody moves
next to me

and I see her bend
to pickup small stones
that she throws lightly
against the room's window.

The window opens wide
and I hear them talking softly
without hearing what they say
and the girl again laughs
before she walks to the front door
that opens noiselessly.

¶Envoi

It must have been only ten minutes
before uncle Hendrik (Gardiël's dad)
comes running along,
open the garden gate with might
almost run the front door
out of its sockets
and with a walking stick in his hand
(that is stronger than a broom)
smashes out the light in the roof,
the table lamp
and the window
in Martin's room

and I hear lashes
with thudding sounds
fall on both boys
and the girl
screaming hysterically
while she
also get lashed
and he shouts in anger
that this is no place
for a courting-candle.

[Reference: The word uncle used here out of respect and local custom and not
to point out family relationship.]

Gert Strydom

No Police Station

At a time
I lived in a suburb
that lies
on the east of Pretoria
and they wanted to turn
a huge double storey house
into a police station
and the people
in the suburb were angry
as it would become a thoroughfare
for undesirable people
where people do
just what they want.

Who wants to sacrifice peace
for sirens
that wail
in the early hours of the day
and law enforcers
laying on your neck
that knows less about law and order
than the man in the street?

Nobody wanted the nest
where they breed out
near to that suburb
and the house prices to plunge
and a petition was drawn up
to leave that house
unclaimed
and it's still empty
with out any occupants.

Gert Strydom

No Red Rose

But once bloomed that crimson rose
which could stand with her head held high,
against life's darkest sky.

Just once did that delicate petals spread
and soft lovely fragrance scent,
before she dropped her head.

Just once the blush on your cheek,
and the light in your eye
had a thousand words to speak,
but never could it hide the pain
- and drops not of rain -
did vanish behind a bright new day,
but every pleasure it's a price to pay:
since no rose could forever stay.

Gert Strydom

No Rite, Enchantment Or Any Kind Of Quaint Spell (English Sonnet)

There is nothing in this world that can deface
the way that you in beauty do in this world excel
or even the expressions that do behold your face.
No rite, enchantment or any kind of quaint spell

will be able to in your happy heart to linger on,
no ill-omen will ever find a willing place there,
as never in this life our eternal love will be gone
as it is like the spring in its presence everywhere

and as sure as love does imbue poetry and all art
it does leave its mark from the aeons into posterity
and in this way our heartfelt feelings will not depart
while true and sincere in this life you are to me:

nothing in this life and in this world can ever impair
the way that we do for each other feel or way we care.

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Gert Strydom

No Second Helen

I loved a woman
who was beautiful
just like Helen of Troy
and with pills and depression,
she was plagued under my own eyes.

Our love nest became a dark cave
and at times it tore through me
when the sun
was blocked out from the windows
and I saw her suffer there.

With time she hanged her cloak
somewhere else
and I wonder if at times
she catches a ray of the sun?

Gert Strydom

No Second Troy

How could I reproach her
that she brings destruction to me,
turns my whole life upside down
and aimless hate rather than love
radiates from her.

How was she able
to estrange me from work
and the people in the street
with slander,
that goes over whole continents,
with robbery, lies and curses
that rain down purposelessly.

Where could she find peace
with a spirit that devours
every thing around her
like a fire from hell,
while she thinks that she's honourable
and her beauty greater
than that of the girls of today,
was enough to drive any man
to madness.

No second Troy would she burn,
no, the whole world would be aflame
if she could reach her hands to it.

[Reference: No second Troy by William Butler Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

No Secrets Do Any Mirror Reveal

No secrets do any mirror reveal,
but to age impacting, the years leaving impressions on my face
and no urgency do I feel
to make haste

and to this I am not blind
and I am the only one
and have no heed to form another of my stock and kind
but my poetry, my words are left when I am gone.

In war I have seen the jeopardy of man, his courage
on a senseless cruel earth
but in this time and age
let others bring children in the world, give birth:

my time shall come to rise again, when my Lord come
and with Him to go to an unspoilt home.

[Reference: Sonnet 3 "Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

No Turning Point

Up ahead I see
the sky and sea
on the horizon
becoming one.

The blue into blue
fading into each other
and you and I
are looking
from the window
of a airplane
as if we can fly.

Roads turn, twist
and cross
and run in all directions
and nowhere
I can find
a turning point
that brings us
back to each other.

The warm touch,
the breath on my cheek,
the magic of eye
dissolving into eye
are broken with tears.

After this flight
our travels will go on
into different directions
and from my life
you will be gone.

Gert Strydom

No Winter Can Chill

Grey clouds gather in the sky
with the promise
of some more rain,
but my sunshine is gone
and your smile
falls somewhere else.

How I wish to share
this early winter with you,
to gather your auburn hair
in my hands,

to shelter against the cold
and hold you close
and get a tender kiss,

but the falling red-brown leaves
has an own reality
of the distance between you and me

and still no winter
can chill what lies
between us.

Gert Strydom

No Winter Will Destroy The Coming Spring

(after John Donne)

No winter will destroy the coming spring,
between you and me
and the feelings that are rising
come with raging passion and with dignity

and gently flowers unfold on every branch,
while birds are singing,
there is something deep in every glance
in every small token that you are bringing

and those who laugh at love poetry,
do not dwell deeper still,
in the words see only you and me,
do not know love as we do and will:

To me you are the one that love affords
the one I have to praise in all my words.

[Reference: "Love's Growth" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

Noah And His People

When grandfather Noah came out of the ark at mount Ararat
the whole world around him was still wet
and just there he wanted to build a house
but Ham and his people took the road to the plains

did not want to trust on what the rainbow does signify
as they were making their own plans
and in their thoughts were
to build a tower and a city
that goes up to the portals of God
but later when the thunder roared
when their tower did fall in flames to the earth
they did speak different languages and scattered apart.

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Gert Strydom

Nobody Do Understand Me

(after Paul van Ostaijen)

Sometimes it's as if nobody can understand me,
although everything in my life is simple
and for others I do go on dark ways
but in all of this I do need you.
Nobody has over my state any advice
where I do touch things and it does bring no comprehension,
not even one out of all the people that do talk to me
and in all of this I am very alone between everyone,
when my whole body do tremble in an unknown fear,
where that which comes to me is evil and totally lawless
and I wish that things could be turned around
but still I do realise the greater goal and meaning:
where that which strikes me comes as the human lot
and on my knees I stand before God.

[Reference: "Niemand" (Nobody) by Paul van Ostaijen.]

Gert Strydom

Nobody Even Dared Him

Nobody even dared him
but Harry S Truman gave the command
to drop two atomic bombs
in quick succession

while relaxing in his lounge chair
and the Enola Gay flew away
while Harry played with his grandchildren
to far off Hiroshima
and another bomber went to Nagasaki

and the people of those cities
were no longer there
had been obliterated in two blasts
with the intensity of exploding suns

with mushroom clouds rising in the air
right into the upper atmosphere
and two hundred and forty thousand
men, women and children
had been evaporated, shot to bits,
fried and incinerated

and those that remained were contaminated
with gamma radiation and suffered terribly
from the effects of it
and poor Harry did not know
how to use a rifle nor a gun
to win a decent war

and thought that dropping atomic bombs
would be great fun, displaying American power
to the world, with weapons
incinerating like the sun
and would greatly retaliate the losses
at Pearl Harbour
and by ordering it became a mass murderer.

[References: They Dared Him by Kevin Myhill. Anybody that views this poem as a

attack on America, or Americans in general, do not really comprehend what it is saying.]

Gert Strydom

Nobody Like Her I Have Met Before (Stave Stanza Sestets)

Her smile was quick, her anger very slow
and lovely innocent did her bright face glow,
she was a shelter against the first rain,
a sweet girl who seemed to know no pain;
nobody like her I have met before,
she was so very easy to adore

as we met she smiled sweet, caught my glance,
seemed happy in any circumstance
but had a kind of unreal tenderness
and it was not only loneliness
that brought me to her, that made me feel more,
she was so very easy to adore.

So very strange was our first togetherness,
every look being a kind of caress
as if we had known each other quite long,
as if our lives did together belong
her sheer radiance I could not ignore,
she was so very easy to adore.

Gert Strydom

Nobody Saw Him

(after Stevie Smith)

Nobody saw him dying
when he was moaning
but still he was lying
in the park as a forsaken thing

where the ambulance did him drop

through many a day through the dark
he was homeless and always on his own,
always somewhere in that park,
even still right there, when the last visitor was gone

nobody did at him stop

while he was moaning full of pain
where the elements in winter he was weathering
and for weeks right there he did remain
while birds did peck around him and did sing.

[Reference:"Not waving but drowning" by Stevie 's note:This poem was inspired by a article in the local newspaper, "The Springs Advertiser, " entitled:"Left to die."]

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Gert Strydom

Nocturne

With eyes that are gleaming like the stars outside
you whisper about how much you miss me at times,
the rays of the silver moon splashes over you face,
hanging for moments gleaming on your forehead, chin and cheek

where it catches a teardropp that glitters like a dropp of dew
while my hand folds loving over yours
and around us the night is full of insect noises, croaking frogs
and cooing doves

but you sigh when my lips find yours,
for moments the depth of passion blinds us
and your breasts are hot, soft and round
while a smile hides at the shades of your mouth,

your figure is slim and naked
while you make unforgettable moments for me
groaning in self-satisfaction and the dark night
stretches far and wide with the coming goodbye,

where moments of moonshine are filled with fear,
about when I have got to be away out of your life.

Gert Strydom

Nocturne 2

When the candlelight with leaking tongues
falls orange over your body
with the moon
rising yellow-golden over the night,

when the stars glitter like diamonds
against the heavenly dome,
the odour of gardenia
glides sweet on the evening air

and in these silent moments
where your eyes secretly glows,
I know that I am living,
there is passion hanging over us
unembellished like electricity.

Gert Strydom

Nonkala (Ballade)

(after I. D. du Plessis)

For three days Nonkala works alone under the summer sun
and she would have followed her husband if she could
where carefully and slowly she hoes out the weed,
he comes into her thoughts with muscles strong like rock.

Chorus:

In front of Nonkala stands the brave induna, her husband fiercely:
"I will come back with the skin of the male lion over my chest,
too many cattle that cruel beast has already caught"
and it's clear that he yearns to kill the lion.

Around her the maize stand in green row upon row
and endless until into the late afternoon she works
while she yearns and longs for him,
for another lonely night throws out his bedding.

In her thoughts she notices the induna's spear-point gleam,
how he swings his battle-club and his war cry does roar loud
where undaunted he stands among a horde of lions
and his spear does sink away into the heart of the male lion

but where the sun hangs in the middle of the sky
she suddenly hears the other women's joyful-song,
do notice the brave heroes returning from the hunt
and suddenly she feels wavering and scared.

The heroes sing their song of his heroic death
and their reverence and honour for her husband is great
where they do carry him with the lion skin over part of him
where his mangled body is uncovered.

[Reference:"Nonkala" by I. D. du 's note:The word
"induna" here means "a member of the body guard of a
paramount chief, that is also a officer in the tribal army and a counsellor of the
paramount chief."]

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Gert Strydom

Nonqawuse

Slowly almost solemnly
the silver glare
of the bright sun
reflected on a sacred pool
where Nonqawuse stripped from all clothing
walked naked into the cool waters
bedecked with gold brought to her as gifts
shining bright on her black skin
and suddenly she saw something there
in the reflection, something apart
from the white-hot sun.

At first she thought that a huge serpent
had come to life in the glare
and glistening water,
and she was somewhat afraid
of it being a crocodile
but something else was there.

It was the faces of ancestral spirits,
of heroes long dead
and they were talking in her head
promising help in a great battle
against the white man
if her tribe, her whole nation
would kill every animal they posses
and destroy all crops
as a sign of faith
and the tale and commotion
spread like wild fire
among the Xhosa people
drawing them to gather at the pool,
to pray to their spirit gods,
to talk to the beautiful native girl

and the day came
where most of the Xhosa nation
obeyed the spirit ancestors
and killed all there stock,

burnt all their crops
and the tongue of death
spread through their land
in a terrible dawn
on that 18 February 1857 morn
while the sun rose from out of the Indian Ocean
as it always did
reflected on that holy pool
and ruination and starvation
came in the wake of this foolish act

and before the sun went down
Nonqawuse was arrested by European police,
and in obscurity lived on a farm
at King William's Town
and the white man reached out his hand
in the Christian way
and fed them

and still that pool with its cool waters,
troubled surface and wild surroundings
in the Gxara River
surrounded by wild red aloes
remains a sign of man's folly
and a place of great evil to some.

Gert Strydom

Not A Yellow Or Blue Iris

Not a yellow or blue iris
that flowers in a cup right through the winter
not a pepper tree
that throws shadows the whole time

but to me you are
purple-blue morning glories
that folds open with the sun,
trailing everywhere

and when the dark days come,
with rain falling almost unstoppable
your grow densely
and with the first sunshine
there are flower upon flower.

Gert Strydom

Not At Liberty (English Sonnet)

At a time you promised to be true
where now together we do live on,
with happiness between me and you
while the years of heartache is gone.

With you true sincere love I have known,
you have become an important part of me
but now in this time we are on our own,
locked-down by the whims of destiny,

where separate we are by a virus infection
there must be much more to life than this,
where loneliness brings its own dejection
and being locked-down away is every kiss,

During this time I do miss you so very badly
and at the first instance I will meet you gladly.

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Gert Strydom

Not In Any Whim I Imagined Death Like This (Terzanelle)

(after Ian Emberson)

As the loveliest girl with me death came to flirt,
death wanted to dance me to the end of my life,
she wore the shortest kind of mini skirt,

did not want to care about my mother, brother or wife,
took her advances to the depth of my heart,
death wanted to dance me to the end of my life,

almost tore it and my lungs apart,
burned like fire breathless in my chest,
took her advances to the depth of my heart,

touched me with a lingering kind of caress,
she startled remarked that with her I a not smitten,
burned like fire breathless in my chest

and she was more like a tigress than a kitten
I remark that not a person do imagine her like this,
she startled remarked that with her I a not smitten,

she was not saucy but a sincere kind of maiden miss
she almost did me right there beguile,
I remark that not a person do imagine her like this

and she looked at me with an impatient kind of smile,
as the loveliest girl with me death came to flirt,
she almost did me right there beguile,
she wore the shortest kind of mini skirt.

[Poet's note: "Danse macabre" by Ian Emberson.]

Gert Strydom

Not Lying There, But Dying

Nobody saw him, the dead man
but still he was there
lying in the sun in the park
as he did the day before.

Poor guy, homeless, always was alone
a weathered man, some would call him a hobo
weathering the sun, sometimes the rain,
the winter chill,
having nothing to eat
and suddenly he was dead
and thought by everyone to be lying in the sun

and the last part of his life
he was weathering the elements
caught a nasty cough,
was days without food
and wasn't lying there but dying.

[References: This poem was inspired by a article in the local newspaper (The Springs Advertiser) with the title: Left to die. Not Waving But Drowning by Stevie Smith.]

Gert Strydom

Not Too Long Ago (English Sonnet)

Not too long ago we both knew a time of woe
but then into my life you came
and your smile on your face did glow
and never was a single day since then the same.

It feels that since ancient times
we have known each other from somewhere before
and these feelings are sublime
while daily we do love and adore each other even more.

There is something know and perfect to your face
something familiar, well loved in your speech
and I know how our feelings do daily linger as we embrace
as if forever we have know each to each

as if our feelings as a principle can never wear down
and I am glad, proud and honoured to call you my own.

Gert Strydom

Not With A Machinegun, But With A Pen (In Answer To Breyten Breytenbach)

Not with a machinegun, but with a pen
I write this prayer
since Your might is greater than any weapon:

What am I able to tell You, Jesus Christ,
almighty Creator, God and upper Lord,
I who are only an Afrikaner in my forties,
since You know every thing, even before it happens
and there's nothing that I can teach You.

How my country was taken away
by people who pray to ancestral spirits
(who probably are demons) ,
that a man with more than one wife
sit in the highest chair,

that I still pay taxes
when and where I have a job
and that it is difficult times
and work is very scarce
for a white man.

Would I have to tell about a government
that sings give me my machinegun
and a bullet for a Boer
and kill the farmer,
kill the white
as You know every thing.

That my people were disarmed
by the government
and by barbarians
are hacked into pieces
with panga-blades and axes
like you were sacrificed

and even in death

they are humiliated
by pulling their pants down
like You had to hang naked on the cross,

that women are raped
as if every white woman
is a sex slave
belonging to the hordes

that they still throw knucklebones
and think that it brings them invincibility
and freedom from blame.

¶Envoi

All that I am really asking
is that all of these deeds
and the things that they do, say and sing
go into the cup of Your wrath

and please help
my people and me
to serve You better
that the wide world
(like with our ancestors)
can see Your might and salvation.

[References: nie met die pen nie maar met die masjiengeweer by Breyten
Breytenbach. Murder on Eugene Terreblance. Murder and violence on white
people.]

Gert Strydom

Notes About The Situation In Our Country

(in answer to Johan Steyn)

I. In the times that we live

In the times that we live
darkness sometimes gets the upper hand,
with tragic things happening in this country
while we still strive for a better place

we go into a life
where innocence is missing and we are off guard
stripped from opportunities and halfway beached
where we have to live in the bustle

where people are killed, tortured and robbed,
where the ruling party is singing inciting songs,
where we cannot decide on a plan of action
and even being humane is curtailed
while the harsh reality penetrates
that alone we cannot stop the overwhelming enemies.

II. During the night we hide in yards that are wired with electricity

During the night we hide in yards that are wired with electricity,
behind walls and steel palisades,
taking notice of the neighbourhood,
making daily adjustments to our lives

and when car hijackers strike at us on the road
we pray and hope to survive,
we let them just go on
while we are dumfounded by fear

and some of our family members and friends are tortured to death,
are raped and robbed while the police cannot stop these crimes,
but we encourage each other and tell one another
that every thing is all right and things are totally out of control,

but Satanists behead people
and there are criminals walk away from raping children.

III. People of our friends and family with qualifications are without work

People of our friends and family with qualifications are without work,
while it is now almost impossible to find something,
with jobs being restricted to black people by affirmative action
and so time passes, years pass

while impoverishment sneak in among white people,
with people begging and looking after cars on the street,
with hundreds of uneducated people getting jobs
and somewhere everything honourable

has been lost with time
while misfortune and decline is appearing everywhere,
we hear about the wretched lives of others,
people come with a confession

that life has caught them off guard,
with their existence only hanging on a thin thread.

IV. When we laugh it only hides bitterness

When we laugh it only hides bitterness
the blue sky, flowers in our gardens pass us,
we hear of some more Afrikaners dying on farms
and in towns and slowly but certainly the destruction spreads.

Out of despair husbands kill their whole families and themselves
(shot after shot resounds)
from them who still have firearms,
after the new laws.

The black government is afraid, that we will resist them
and arrests people left, right and centre
who they see as terrorists
and hold them forever and a day

while the planters of bombs
sit blessed in parliament.

V. There are some people that lay their hands on liquor

There are some people that lay their hands on liquor
and live as if everything is just for today,
they fornicate with the wives of others,
trampling their own people into the ground,

walk over each other to get somewhere in life
or to chase after money
and we live in times of great darkness
where love for the fellow man, awe and respect are missing

where children bear false witness against their parents,
(when they themselves do criminal deeds) ,
turning against their own culture, people and even religion,
using drugs, are fornicating while at school

and overnight our world has changed
to a place where crime and darkness has the upper hand.

VI. Even God is on sale

Even God is on sale
and people jump up and down in churches,
trying to feel the presence of God
in a experience religion

where everyone places his own things in the trolley
as it fits him,
grouping around somewhat in darkness
forgetting to consult the Holy Bible,

Jesus Christ is declared to be only human
and a relationship with him
by some is seen as absurdity
that only people with superstition do

and some wants to trample Satan himself under their shoes
while he is walking free next to them.

VII. Now we wonder from where this decay comes?

Now we wonder from where this decay comes,
while our world suddenly is turned upside down?
With the new government the school structure has been changed,
the cane has disappeared from the classroom, respect has walked out

and religion, the trust in an almighty God,
an own culture, the urge to follow own values,
to speak our own language and to retain a own identity
and the commandments of God has been systematically substituted

by human rights, children's rights and the following
of a science where humans through theosophy
and new age doctrines are seen as equal to God
where man becomes a god in himself

and now suddenly we see darkness
when the darkness and decay is everywhere.

VIII. We cannot exist in darkness

We cannot exist in darkness,
we have the witness of our fathers, from a time when escape was impossible,
where God in a covenant Himself stood with them
and still everyone is protected by the mighty hand of God,

He draws His laager around everyone that fears Him,
who faithfully keep to the words of His holy word
and still we have got to be brave
in this time where we witness the destruction of our brothers

as God Himself stays true,
His kingdom cannot waver or crumble,
even when the thickest darkness folds around us,
nothing can wheedle us away

from the salvation that God is going to bring,
even if it looks as if darkness is stretching wider and wider.

[Reference: Kanttekeninge by 'n vers van Brecht (Marginal notes at a verse of Brecht) by Johan Steyn.]

Gert Strydom

Notes Of A Hot Pursuit (Haiku's)

(after Bernard Odendaal)

The bush is silent
fear flies up with a black coot,
each weapon does train.

*

The radio screech
with its aerial tree high;
a meaningless halt.

*

Equipped with just
light skeleton type webbing;
the spoor becomes faint.

*

The sun burns hell hot,
the rifle, bullets are heavy;
we use the compass.

*

Boondock night is filled
with reconnoitre of the heart;
half ration tastes bad.

*

Without some water
in the scorching heat and wind,
the track disappears.

*

Like a dragonfly
a helicopter swoops down
and we leave the bush.

*

Cannot find hostiles!

In situation report:

still searching the heart.

[Reference: "krabbeling van 'n hakkejag" (Writings about a hot pursuit) by Bernard Odendaal.]

Gert Strydom

Nothing Can Compare With The Beauty Of Spring

Nothing can compare with the beauty of spring,
with branches filled with blossoms
in clusters of pink, yellow and white
and every day has a bright sunny look

and everything is pure and lustrous
with fragrant cups that are opening, everywhere it lives
with new energy, as if everything is filled with joy
in the branches birds sing a tribute

bees and butterflies caper,
the sky is open and sapphire blue,
birds fly up and down
and my heart is overflowing
from every loving glance from you,
is knocking stormy almost out of control.

Gert Strydom

Nothing Can Make A Day Last Longer

Nothing can make
a day last longer
but being in love
with the sun.

I long to live
in Cape Town
when it's summer time,

where at eight
the sun still hangs high
as it did at three

but in winter
when the chill sets in
give my Pretoria to me

and then you can have
your Mediterranean climate
with intermittent rain

and north of the Magaliesberg
I will bask in the sun
and look at a blue sky

unless you invite me
to your lair
and we share
a Cape winter there.

Gert Strydom

Nothing Can Sweep Our Feelings Away (Italian Sonnet)

Even when the shadows increase
on this lovely sunny summer day
nothing can sweep our feelings away
and its something that never cease

the power of love does only increase,
its presence is without any decay
and your dear face do portray
its impact, its caring and its peace

its something powerful passionate
yet at times it's wise and meek
and it takes many a guise in gentleness
while actions do its presence indicate
and continually people does it seek
as it can forget and forgive in its genuineness.

Gert Strydom

Nothing Of This Virus I Do Like

You are absolutely beautiful to me
and nothing of this virus I do like,
where a lock-down do separate us

and the world feels upside-down and in anarchy.
I do continually pray that it will pass
and nothing of this virus I do like,

where you and I are almost handed over to it,
while death does tear apart families and people in love.
I do continually pray that it will pass,

that a new better time will come,
that a person can start once again,
while death does tear apart families and people in love.

and do continually wonder what is hidden in all of this?
I wish scientists would find an anti-virus,
that a person can start once again

and you are never out of my thoughts,
you are absolutely beautiful to me.
I wish scientists would find an anti-virus,
where a lock-down do separate us.

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Gert Strydom

Nothing Will Be As Wonderful

Nothing will be as wonderful, as that spring had been
the trees were full of flowers row upon row
the water in the channels reflected bright like glass

in the distance seagulls turned around a ship's mast
flew away in lines above us.

Nothing will be as wonderful, as that spring had been

where your hand had fitted fine and precisely into mine
where I fell more intimately in love with you
the water in the channels reflected bright like glass

we had seen an otter splashing at rocks in the sea
while the boat floated recoiling over the sea.
Nothing will be as wonderful, as that spring had been

where now I reach in vain for you
and forever you are separated from me,
the water in the channels reflects bright like glass

while the hot spring rain, wash away my tears
with dire pain cutting through me;
nothing will be as wonderful, as that spring had been
the water in the channels reflects bright like glass.

Gert Strydom

Now

When ecstasy's utmost thrill
is at the core of our existence
and you are above, or under me
with feelings, senses and experience
the moment feels as if it can be eternal,
stretching right through time
to when Adam first adored Eve like this
and when this perfect present experience
filled with rapture captures us together
then I know that it is love.

[Reference: Now by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Now Do Your Worst

Now do your worst, if you hate me,
and bring me new sorrow
before I even see a new tomorrow
while I am besieged by calamity

or let me from further indignities be free
while in humility I borrow
courage from a life true and narrow
and find holy sanctity

as loosing you love now
will make every other distress
insignificant as it will foreshadow
what destiny holds, its impact digress
will deliver your final blow
and will not come as duress.

[Reference: Sonnet 90 "Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Now I Am Looking With Other Eyes At You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after A. G. Vissier in answer to André letoit)

I met you at college
and always you did greet me with a smile,
you were my own prophetic Letitia
and your lips and mouth was sugar-sweet
where the way that you did look at me,
how happy and beautiful you were
did predict my future, my love with you
and all the ways were open and even,
our love was something big and unique
with the sun in your eyes and I were constantly admiring you
as a Letitia euphoria
in a stretched out summer days with a very late sunset
but now that I do know you through and through
I do once more try to win your heart.

[References: "Letitia" by A. G. Visser."visserman" (fisherman)by André letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

Now I Do Wonder Where Everything Is Going

Each of my forefathers stood their man
and in the evening with a Bible they sat around a table,
from the dark early hours they did already farm
and they stayed trusting the heavenly Father.

Now I do wonder where everything is going
while I dig in my own small garden,
while with sunny eyes my wife watches me
and wavering I do try and cling to the hand of God.

Gert Strydom

Now I Look In Another Light

When I am caught in thoughts
when my eyes see an old vista
and other times come alive and back
I look in another light,
see the changes in the city
the cataclysm, the new regime's warp and woof
in decay, decline, in hovels, in shacks
and I am not anymore unguarded
when fatal forces come together
to ravage the past for me
and do only awake more crime and evils,
when there utopia of abatement comes to life
and at times I hope not to return again
to this old rubbish dump.

Gert Strydom

Now I Pray (In Answer To Matthews Phosa)

God, help me, You did not create me
to beg for crumbs
and I bend my knees to nobody
but to You who deserve it

and even in my misery You walk on the road with me,
see the boots of the oppressors,
how they trample
my humanity and that of other Afrikaners,
leaving indelible impressions

that begs for your judgement,
that asks that You even break rocks,
destroying them,
who do not consider myself and other Afrikaners as human beings.

Let Your judgement fall as was prophesied,
loosen the winds of Your battle,
let Your broom wipe clean
and free my people and me
that we also each can have a place in the sun
and stay forever free in Your protecting hand.

Gert Strydom

Now In The Very Late Summer Of Life (Wreathed Octave)

Now in the very late summer of life,
you are my wife after many years
and without fears in tranquillity and strive
I am truly alive in happiness and tears
as if in arrears our true love catches on,
all heartaches are gone while without fright
our love seems right, as if set in stone,
as you are the one in every day and night.

Gert Strydom

Now Is The Time Of Our Awakening

I

Now is the time of our awakening
in world where things are beautiful,
with the first caressing touch
of the morning's refreshment

where the sun falls bright and hot,
where birds are singing together in joy,
in the blue jewel of the universe
about the glory that summer brings,

the earth is fresh after the first summer rain
with every tree, plant and flower
that grows much more powerful than previously
in the glory of their maturity

in every touch, colour and scent
we find nature at her prime.

II

We find nature at her prime
with birds singing joyous in the branches,
and we cannot draw ourselves away
of a world intruding into us,

every morning has something glorious
that we only have got to discover
and every time that you look at me
your glance wants to draw me into depths,

the essence of love is caught
in every day hanging around us,
we celebrate our intimate connection
in every wish and urge

that we yearn for in this world;
now your smile falls brightly.

III

Now your smile falls brightly
over the darkness of my life,
shining like a glorious day,
you bring new meaning each day

when your hand folds finely over mine
you look fragile, modestly
and I see the heavenly cobalt blue colour
in the bright gaze in your eyes

your voice is pure in every sound of it,
you are prettier than the most beautiful flower,
when your arms stretch round my neck
with everything coming out of the depth of love

our existence, our summer becomes holy
with an indistinguishable bright light.

IV

With an indistinguishable bright light
in the blinding bright ardour
of Your Godly omnipotence
that breaks right through our wavering courage

we both want to see You in our foolishness
even if days, nights, times has got to shatter
where You keep the world in Your mighty hands
past seasons of summer and winter

but in no thunder or raining stars
we could really see or find You,
in silent illustriousness You come
where every flower and animal serves you out of there own

from past the age old beginning, in the shining light
in the glory of sunshine.

V

In the glory of sunshine
you are in every bright summer day,
in the stars shining at night,
in the sovereign blue sky.

To me you are the most beautiful woman
who can understand me entirely
and there's a kind of nobility that I see in you,
with comprehension you know where my life is going.

You are given to me in this summer sun,
as if happiness is bounded to this moment,
in the things we wish for and can do
for a whole lifetime's meaning

when nature splashes down in moments;
the smell of your hair is like sweet grass.

VI

The smell of your hair is like sweet grass
baking in the summer sun
or ripe red peaches on a branch
that is washed clean in the drizzle

and the way that you reach for me
is like the brittle fluttering
of the wind singing through the trees,
is caressing like sun on glass

and your unknown moving foot
is a butterfly fluttering between flowers,
that only touches here and there in her arrival

before it again in apprehension flies away
with brittle wings banging down;
you are my serenity of the veldt.

VII

You are my serenity of the veldt,
earthly and still noble and pure,
the sweet repeating refrain
that insects and birds keep on mentioning.

You are glittering like an awesome brooch,
with your eyes glistening like the shining stars,
with enchantment that cannot disappear
full of fire but naturally unaffected.

You are the fluttering of the wind
that rustles through the fields of grass,
with the soft touching,
the charm that you find in drops
that sieve down on you, hesitating on your cheeks;
now is the time of our awakening.

Gert Strydom

Now Is The Winter With Trees Stripped Naked

Now is the winter with trees naked
when there is cold and sifting rain,
stripped bare without leaves

and then you first come past and then to me
like a sun rising over the horizon
with a yellow raincoat, your pants splashed wet, laughing and glad

and your company is full of fun
in bands of gathering fog.
Now is the winter with trees naked

cutting off every ray and light
and I know our time is only borrowed,
like a sun rising over the horizon

but stopping the rays in this winter,
in a cold world without hope or pity,
stripped bare without leaves

where you shake out your hair like a dog does with rain,
whereupon I take the clips from your hair
and I know our time is only borrowed

but your are glorious like a poster
and for long moments time is missing.
Now is the winter with trees naked

with bliss descending between us
and you are only mine, with soft lips and big eyes
whereupon I take the clips from your hair

and I see your beauty
our passion goes to practical reality,
stripped bare without leaves

we shine like the world outside in vulnerability like rainbows,
where passion sweeps us away from uncovering
and you are only mine, with soft lips and big eyes

pretty, pure and untouched
in moments of ecstasy without fatigue.
Now is the winter with trees naked
stripped bare without leaves

and I am totally lost in you.
and then you first come past and then to me,
where passion sweeps us away from uncovering
with a yellow raincoat, your pants splashed wet, laughing and glad.

Gert Strydom

Now It Is Winter When Trees Are Skeleton

Now it is winter when trees are skeleton,
stripped bare and have no more leaves
as if they are lifeless
and the weather is grey as if

there's only chill and sieving rain
with banks of covering fog
that cuts the sun and light,
into a cold pitiless world

and then you first past and come to me
with a yellow raincoat, your pants splashed wet
where you shake your hair out, like a dog does with rain
in a blizzard of spray, getting it out of your hair

and I know that our time is only burrowed
when you stretch against me, cuddly and slim, just you and me alone
and you are hot like a ray of light that unexpectedly comes down,
we are one in passion, in a moment

after which I remove the hairclips from your hair,
your eyes are gleaming like shining pieces of steel
and you are only mine, with soft lips and big eyes
and bliss descends between us.

Gert Strydom

Now Life Is More Like A Sentence

I wish I could stand close to you,
where locked-down I am away
but deadly the virus does continue.

and your feelings I want to understand much better
where I am missing you terribly.
I wish I could stand close to you,

draw you against me and embrace you
and even your imperfections have got perfect meaning
but deadly the virus does continue.

Life is curtailed by measures
and of all of this we have knowledge.
I wish I could stand close to you,

I want to go to you with all the unsaid things,
that you can know of the depth of my love
but deadly the virus does continue.

where only for you I want to exist
but now life is like a sentence.
I wish I could stand close to you
but deadly the virus does continue.

Gert Strydom

Now My Body Do Know You

Now my body does know you
my arms know
how to hold you tight
and your arms know how to fold
around my neck
as if you are a part of me
while in my heart
a love burns
that cannot be distinguished.

Gert Strydom

Now That I Know The Smell Of Your Skin

Now that I know the smell of your skin,
and the soft touch of your body is known to me,
and the unmistakeable glance
with which you do look at me
it does look
as if you do love me more intensely
and suddenly it wipes out
all of the empty years in between.

Gert Strydom

Now That The Autumn Sun

pushes out its first fingers,
and the leaves of my life
are falling colourful,

while the winter wind
rustles somewhat cold through them
and I am of the opinion
that the spring and summer between us
eternally is in the past,

you do bring to my life
again new meaning.

Gert Strydom

Now That The Year Is Growing Kind Of Old (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

Now that the year is growing kind of old
when the true story of Jesus we are told,
we are living up to a day of giving
while daily we hear joyful birds singing
as when they did that child once behold,
now that the year is growing kind of old.

Now that the year is growing kind of old
our Christian faith we do at times uphold
while to others we bring some happiness
like messengers of God we try to bless,
sing happy songs on each friendly threshold,
now that the year is growing kind of old.

Now that the year is growing kind of old
while some live sheltered in a stronghold
in a world of chaos there is tranquillity,
when in God we find some serenity,
in our own lives we act cheerful and bold,
now that the year is growing kind of old.

Now that the year is growing kind of old
in our lives God's blessings are manifold,
while merrily bells do jingle and chime,
we tell of loving that goes past all time,
we celebrate Christmas in each household,
now that the year is growing kind of old.

Gert Strydom

Now That Time Flies Past

Now that time flies past
this will be seen
as Afrikaner history
and people will say
that it is past

but we know
he was jailed
like a criminal,

was later Prime Minister
and then President
(and it's not Nelson Mandela
that I am talking about)
this man was a true Afrikaner
and seen by some
as a patriot

Maybe planted bombs
to blow up railway lines
and held a gun in his hand,
seen at a time
by white people
as a terrorist
and was jailed for it
but wasn't a killer
like the terrorists of today

and later
he could take
the Big Black Book
in his hand
and on it make a solemn oath
before the Lord
and try to keep his promise,

until the big crocodile
snapped him in two
and walked into his shoes

and the total onslaught came

and eland armoured cars, later ratels,
artillery and rocket launching lorries
stood in Angola
to hit the communists
into pieces.

Gert Strydom

Now That We Are Apart (Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

Now that we are apart and divorced, again and again,
you do try to kiss me and embrace me
while the only thing in my heart is great pain
and from this life and living I want to be free

but the heart's persistence leaves no disgust,
only talks with its secret own sincerity
tries to find and device some trust
to affect in an unknown way how life is going to be

but like the sea washing out on the shore forever more
in my heart there now is an icy chill
in the place where I did you greatly adore
and it does beat with a broken will

constantly becoming more and less
trying to find a way out as it does know best.

Gert Strydom

Now That We Are One

Now that in thoughts, spirit, heart
and soul we are one,
every thing that is insecure is gone
as if we will never again be apart

and if loving is a kind of art
that turns a heart from stone
then we will never again be alone
never will we from each other depart

and who could have expected it to be like this
as if everything has a kind of perfection to it
and you are my perfect girl with whom I want to pursue
everything that life can be with happiness in what it is
while daily we grow closer bit by tiny bit
and you are part of everything I am and do

Gert Strydom

Now That We Know That Love Claims A Prize

Now that we know that love claims a prize,
that it brings a kind of liberation,
that nothing else has its kind of depths
and that it binds very strong when you do find it.

As if from the beginning of human existence,
pre-planned to meet each other
it is something strange and somewhat known
when our eyes suddenly meet each others.

Away is the loneliness and being separate
when we notice each other for who we are,
when suddenly we know there and then:
you are the one for who I have been waiting all my life.

Gert Strydom

Now That You Are Away

Now that you are away
days are falling apart
and I feel
like the stripped chestnut tree
that stands skeleton against the sky

and the colours of flowers are trying
to match your eyes
while a drawling sun
at of the beginning of winter
hangs in the sky.

The rest and peace
are suddenly gone
while I walk purposeless
up and down in the garden.

Bougainvilleas pierce me
when I cut the stems
and at places I am scratched
and there are other places
where I bleed
and I wonder what it takes
to let a perfect flower grow,

or do you look past it
while the glare of the sun
almost blinds you
and do not know how lucky you are
when you have all ready got it
and all others fade away in her shade?

Gert Strydom

Now That You Are Mine

Now that you are mine
I taste the sweetness
of your kisses,
while the hot water
of the shower
rushes past our wet bodies.

Now that you are mine
your eyes speak with meaning
and while we are among
other people,
just you and I
can decipher what they really say.

Now that you are mine
no other girl can entice me
and you have become
the most beautiful
of women to me.

Gert Strydom

Now That You Have Oozed Into My Heart And Soul (Free Verse Sonnet)

Now that you have oozed into my heart and soul
everything in my existence does focus on you,
while there are small signs that I do look at
and we act and speak intimate and cordial
while I do offer my body, soul and spirit to you,
as if constantly I am paying ransom for you
there are sets of clothes ready in a suitcase
for the moment that you do come to fetch me
where mere moments between us do become holy
while intimate we do know each other,
while God does pour out His love and mercy upon us
and in all of this we do know of the depth of our love,
where this is to us like no other time or place,
where everything is pure and noble in how love is.

Gert Strydom

Now That You Want To Go Away

For generations blood flowed,
and my ancestors fought
for this country to be their own
and it was asked from me
to carry a machinegun.

Still my country was given away
and opportunities with it
and what belongs to me,
robbers claim as their own
without the police trying to stop them.

My friends have left and gone into the world
and are far away from me
that still stays in South Africa
and now you my darling
also want to go away
to another place
that looks much better to you.

Maybe it will be much better
to read the newspaper somewhere else,
to paint brush strokes,
to compose music
and to play the piano and guitar
and to say your thoughts in poems
at another place,
but is it asking too much
that merit prevail for everyone
and to have my country back again?

Gert Strydom

Now The Winter Is Grey And Cold (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after George Weideman)

Now the winter is grey and cold
the birds are away to another summer,
days are dull and blunt almost ages-old
with you at my side I am privileged.
When you come in like a spring-flower
do carry the smile of the sun along
and so you do turn days and seasons around,
there is no season that does bother you.
You bubble out with all of your words,
are surprised when something does come to mind,
your jersey is yellow and white checked,
you are as cheerful as the falling snow,
while flames do crackle in the fireplace,
I am drawn softly into your arms.

[Reference:"En nou het alles winter geword" (And now everything has become winter)by George 's note:In the Southern hemisphere of the earth the seasons are the opposite of those in the northern hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Now You Are Only Memory

(for Riana)

With you I never did have
a thirteen year long war
and with all the heartache
and deceit I loved you even more.

I had never have to search for words
to work wonders for me
and in sincerity I loved you on and on

and now you are only memory
while our life together is gone
but still your bright smile stays in my mind
and you're yearning to be free
and I wonder if you are now really happy?

Life has set me on another course
and although the time we spent,
the years together seems wasted,
like water down the loo
maybe at times
I will want it in no other way
and it doesn't bother me
that someone else is loving you.

Gert Strydom

Now You Have Been In Love With Me (Quatorzain)

(For Daleen, in answer to John Donne)

Now you have been in love with me
for many a day,
you have filled me with tranquillity
have swept my fears away.
Even if change in the morning comes suddenly
still your eyes with the same fire will glow
and nothing will make this beauty slovenly,
will change the person that in you I do know.
Nothing can our marriage untie,
as our feelings are going to the centre core
and even if I set you free nothing will justify
an end and we will love each other even more
as what we now hold precious and true
has an own constancy, an own kind of glue.

[Reference:"Woman's Constancy" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

Nowhere Else My Heart Can Be Found

Nowhere else my heart can be found
as you are my true beloved
and still we remain sheltered in each other
although the worst destroying winds of life do blow

and even when the cold days of winter come in the cycle of life,
when the strength of youth runs into the days of old age,
our love remains rock steady in each other,
while daily I am astounded by your beauty and humanity,

and it's still as if God does determine our lives,
is the writer of our own story
and in the cold nights we lie together
when the days of shadow linger

but still I do wonder why I had to wait a lifetime,
to have you in every night and day?

Gert Strydom

Nuclear Bomb Dropping On Hiroshima

When the Enola Gay on command
dropped her deadly bomb
unleashing moments of hell in Hiroshima
and a nuclear blast went off in destruction

the co-pilot was thinking:
"God, what did we do? "
maybe through his life
could not reconcile himself with this deed,

the innocent women and children
was caught in moments of destruction
and blinded
while the massive power of the weapon was circling out

and all of mankind was hit by this tragedy
but Harry S Truman did not even realize his share in this misdeed.

[Reference: Anybody that views this poem as a attack on America, or Americans in general, do not really comprehend what it is saying.]

Gert Strydom

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Gert Strydom

Nürnberg

How shallow it is, that in a city
where once Kaisers
on a throne did sit,
where the master painter Albrecht Dürer
aimed for the Promised Land
and the great poet Hans Sachs
spent time
to set images
to picture and rhyme,
Anti-Semitic laws were drawn up
and German war criminals
were brought to justice.

Yet the greatest criminals
never set their feet there
and left their nation
to carry their guilt instead
and most of them
now probably are dead.

Gert Strydom

Nursery School / Toddler Verses

In the evenings I am sometimes afraid

In the evenings I am sometimes scared
and also for a spider and a snake
but when God is with me
then there is nothing that can catch me

and the leopard hanging over the cupboard
is just a blanket in the light of the room
and when at night I lay longing
and even when I feel like shaking

I know that a angel
with a flaming sword stands at my side,
that nothing can pass him
and after each evening's pray
I lay peacefully in my bed.

*

Some children

Some children are strong
and others are clever
but you my child are wonderful
and is someone special to me.

Some parents brag with their jobs
and others climb out of the most beautiful cars
but I know that God does just borrow everything
to each one of us.

*

I hear the rain falling outside

I hear the falling rain patter

against the windows
and smell the odour rising from the dust
while the drops are thudding down

and when I see a lightning-bolt
it is burnt into my inner eye
and I know that I serve a God
with mighty things in His hand

and wonder from where the colours come
when the storm clouds disappear
and a rainbow appears suddenly?
Are those colours also from Him?

*

This morning I am ill with a cold

This morning I am ill with a cold
and it's the marriage of Jackal and wolf
because the sun is shining while the rain is falling
and blue-white thunders resound one after the other
and I see the rain shining in dashes
and wonder what God is thinking about this scene?

*

Sometimes I hear our cat purr

Sometimes I hear our cat purr,
how the dog thuds down nearby
and wonder if a worldwide peace is about to start
when even dogs and cats
can love each other at times.

*

When mother came back from the hospital

When mother came back from the hospital
daddy had to pay a lot
and I wonder what it all did cost
to get and brother and sister from there
but then I heard from the minister
that every human being is priceless to God.

*

My baby brother

My baby brother
do not want to talk or laugh
or even sit or walk
and he is only crying and screaming
all of the time
where he is laying
and I wonder
what he wants?
And if God does know
what the matter is with him?

*

One evening something terrible happened

One evening something terrible happened
when as only a four year old child
a schoolteacher had torn the curtains away
where I was laying on my bed.

He was writing on the wall
and told me to read
while he was glaring at me
and full of fear

I looked at the cane in his hand
that was coming down on my small cars
causing them to scatter away
and suddenly I was totally dumbstruck

but when I opened my eyes
my mother was at my side:
'Wakeup my child,
we have got to get you ready
for your first day at the nursery school.'

*

When the chameleon saw a fly

When the chameleon saw a fly
he attentively watched him
where camouflaged chameleon
was clinging to his branch

and suddenly his tongue did shoot out
and to where the fly did disappear
you can guess.

*

I am totally astounded

I am totally astounded
about the things that are sprouting
from the ground,
over every pretty little bean
and every beautiful flower

and I wonder how everything
did come to life,
if God did make
the flowers and plants so wonderful?

*

This morning a chicken egg did break open

This morning a chicken egg did break open
and a small chicken did put its head out of the shell
and I was astonished
to see it coming out chirping
and when I did learn that chickens do lay eggs
nobody could tell me
which of the chicken or the egg
originally did come first
but I know that people
do forget that God is the creator.

*

Stormy weather

I thought that only fire come out the of the mouths of dragons
but when somebody told me that a dragon lives in the clouds
I was totally astonished
and I wonder if he maybe was mistaken
as there is an electric spark
that jumps from the clouds
and no dragon or a strange thing.

*

Hail

One morning white hard wet corns dropped upon me
while the thunder was flashing in the distance
and I wonder if the hail canon of a giant
goes off there high up in the sky
when those corns did hit me
and was falling everywhere around

but my dad did tell me later
that rain and hail are stored away in God's treasure trove
and that they bring growing power to the earth.

*

The mole

I see an animal that looks cosily
peeping out of a mole hole
and when it disappears under the ground
I wonder to where it's sneaking

but grandpa says that moles do avoid
ground that are mixed with dung
and that he gets no trouble with the moles
and I wonder what the moles are doing
deep down in their tunnels?

*

The falcon

There is a dot turning high up in the sky
and I wonder if it's maybe a crow
while carefully I am watching
the thing high up in the blue
and when a falcon comes down as quick as lightning
I hear the chickens screaming anxiously
and some do fall upside down
and the dogs try to tear the bird out of the air
where it's hanging for just another moment.

*

Mosquitoes

It's a strange feeling
when a swarm of mosquitoes
like a squadron of stuka bombers
turn circling above your head
and it then feels as if a war has been declared
when you try to slap them but miss,
when you want to kill all of them
before they come landing
and make a target of you

and you are chasing them with hands clapping.

My mother says that a person can push them dead
but I find it difficult when they speed away
and their buzzing shrilly are cursing me
while I am chasing them up and down
and almost dare my own life to destroy them
and try and slap them into the naught
with thundering slap upon thundering slap
and if you want to spray the simple things with poison
you may poison yourself
by breathing the poison in

and then there is the fact
that as any other thing in nature
the mosquitoes are necessary
for the survival
of an organism or a fish.

*

When I go to grandma

(for Suné Strydom)

When I go to grandma
there is always something that she gives to me
and I turn her around my little finger
while I ride on her back as if she is a horse,
as grandma loves me dearly.

My grandma is becoming very old,
does tell me about the loving Lord Jesus,
sometimes hits me on my buttocks
while I am trying to stop her with my hands
and that mischief I will never try again!

Gert Strydom

Nymph Oenone(Sonnet Corona)

(after Alfred Lord Tennyson)

I.

At Mount Ida in a place of bliss, a valley more lovely,
filled with more flowers than any other place on earth
was the nymph Oenone's place of birth
where for many years she did roam free,

lived at the cataracts and brook in great tranquility
with a braid of flowers tied around her girth,
as a semi-divine nymph stayed young by constant rebirth
and as the daughter of a River-God she had great beauty

where vapour rises up high from the glen.
Oenone was seen as divine by every wild thing
and almost as in a paradise she did live there,
she was unseen and untouched by mere men,
her heart did constantly with utter joy sing,
she was visited by no pain or care.

II.

She was visited by no pain or care
but on a hot summer day a Sheppard boy
did awake her did into the vale dare
and him she could enchant or destroy

but good-hearted she was to the utter brim.
His hair shone like that of an ancient god
where a kingly leopard skinned covered him
and beauty was in the way that he trod.

Enchanted and in great wonder they both were
where much more than mere friendship did grow,
with still greater happiness and utter joy there
as it a god did true love on them bestow

she cried and sobbed with the greatest joy

while he did a thousand kisses on her employ.

III.

While he did a thousand kisses on her employ
this happiness on another sunny day he did destroy
when with a golden fruit to her, to the valley did come.
"This gift is to you fit, " he said and held it like a toy.

"I would award it to you but then
this is not the work of mere men.
My loveliest Oenone, "for the most fair"
and yet you are semi-divine not like all women."

"By Iris it was delivered to me
to judge the gods and there are three:
great mother Hera, Pallas Athena and lovely Aphrodite
in wonder I do not know what the judgement will be."

Awestruck Oenone stood and stared at the fruit, the beautiful thing,
while with great love for Paris her heart and soul did still sing.

IV.

While with great love for Paris her heart and soul did still sing
where he led a black goat, with white hooves and white horns, away
it turned to the most foul and heart-rending painful day
when Pallas Athena, the goddess of war, appeared with lightning,

when Aphrodite suddenly was there fresh as if just awakening,
draw from her bosom her lovely hair did nothing say
where Hera with a golden cloud appeared and did enticing naked lay
and all of them did for his choice a special kind of gift bring.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me"
Oenone cried in her heart but looked at Paris silently.

Hera:"Sheppard, royal power, imperial rule and gold I am offering
you."

Athena with a godly spear: "I will make you heroic, battle-hardened and
free

will cleave to you, be in your blood that the greatest warrior you will be."

Aphrodite: "I offer the most beautiful human woman with love true."

V.

Aphrodite: "I offer the most beautiful human woman with love true."
"Paris, give the fruit to Pallas as a mere boy with a bow and arrow you are,
"
cried Oenone. "She will stand by you in war, make you the greatest man by
far."
With a warm smile Hera said: "Sheppard boy, your decision is now
due."

Normally icy but now warm Athena said: "Naked and divine we stand
before you
a mere carefully as this decision might your own life and nation mar."
Aphrodite: "Without love life is not a thing, no one can true love and its
power bar."
Turning against his promises to Oenone Paris suddenly knew what to do.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me, "
Oenone cried in her heart and looked at Paris expectantly with hope.
"Naked to the flesh and heart all three of you I did see,
before me a mortal all three of you were without a robe
and Palas Athena spoke of heroism and about duty,
I choose love and with an earthly woman to elope. "

VII

"I choose love and with a earthly woman to elope, "
his words hang in the air and Oenone cried,
Hera and Athena were angered at being denied,
but Paris did not think about his decision's scope.

While as if lifeless Oenone rolled down the mountain slope
Paris hastened with Aphrodite to Helena in the greatest lust,
Athena ascended with great lightning, Hera in a huge gust
and around Oenone gathered the beasts and all the antelope.

The lion, the leopard and panther growled their dismay
the insects the deer, and other antelope were crying with her
while even some of the flowers and plants in the valley did wither

and Oenone could not understand why Paris did their love betray.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me, "
I love him so very much but he does make me very unhappy."

VIII.

"I love him so very much but he does make me very unhappy
and now life is totally meaningless and I do want to die.
Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me,
as now for many months my life does go meaningless by.

Oenone cried night and day watched the pitiless sun in the sky
until on a day ten years later, mortally wounded, Paris came
begged her to heal him with bitter tears or remorse in his eye
knew that he had put her and his own name to great shame.

He even begged her to use her magic drug in Zeus's name.
""I choose love and with a earthly woman to elope, "
and here I was where you tossed me away and to her you do the same
where for many years I have been dying without any hope"

and she was crying while he was dying remained free
at Mount Ida in a place of bliss, a valley more lovely.

[Reference:"Oenone" by Alfred Lord Tennyson.]

Gert Strydom

O Captain! My Captain!

(in answer to Walt Whitman)

Captain, I see You steady at the helm,
steering the ship of my life through stormy seas,
and with You at the tiller I have no fear,

yet Your hands and feet carry marks
telling of the cruelty that mere men
had bestowed upon You

and by the glowing stars I reckon
that Your course is ever true
to that uncharted shore beyond the blue

over billowing, rushing waves
that are endlessly breaking
the ship never wavers and never falters

and on the wind, bells are ringing
indicating that the shore must be near
while steadily You still steer.

[Reference: O Captain! My Captain! By Walt Whitman.]

Gert Strydom

Oaks

Oaks are big, sturdy trees,
giving great shade in summer,
lining the way to the university
where students walk
with each other romantically

but in winter with the pouring rain
and strong storm winds blowing
they can be menacing
with branches falling on parked cars
crashing roofs, shattering windows

even more sinister
they kill students in winter,
tipped and uprooted
crashing down on a car
travelling in the road

blocking off a entire street
and there's uneasiness
around a dead oak tree
with its long roots protruding
lying like a fallen giant

as if it's wood is fit for coffins,
pallets holding nuclear bombs
and not fit for furniture,
cabinets, floors and barrels
that it's used for.

Gert Strydom

Obliteration

Somewhere in the bushes
we camped on that cold winter night
and later in the darkness
the cold icily penetrated our bones;

on military patrol we had to know better
but to break the cold
we lighted a small fire
while men at first lay ready with their rifles

and we knew that the fire pointed out
our presence and our position to the enemy
but after days without any enemy contact
and being tired of the ration packs

a fire was made
where the wood hissed and crackled
and a snake came burning out of its hole
as that hell burned

along with worms, insects and beetles
and when we dragged another log nearer
worms and ants curled in the powder ash
as they went into that blazing fire

and we looked at this scene
with hands stretched out
over the comfortable heat
when an enemy rocket grenade

buzzed nearer and drew a bright red arc,
exploding in a hellish glare
and it destroyed almost everything
to bits of sand and dust.

Gert Strydom

Occupation

To be part of you, to become one
of a silky kind of shuddering,
when emotions and words fail,
in the pure unity that brings everything together
is more than passion without pretension,
when your eyes arrow sharp go much deeper,
when we are swept away on an unknown way,
coming to a new kind of meaning,
then it is of both a kind of occupation.

Gert Strydom

Occupation (2)

Bit by bit you oozed into my life
did become a part of it again at your own instance.
When I found myself again you made yourself my offering
and with this self-sacrifice you do leave me speechless.

Gert Strydom

Occupation [2]

To have you
laying under me with green-brown eyes
that looks straight through me,
to be surrounded by your arms

and to be part of who and what you are,
to feel you move beneath me,
to feel the gasping of your breath
against my cheeks
and to pour my seed in you,
to tumble into your depths,
when the smell of a new beginning
hangs like rain around us;

to occupy you bit by bit
without pretence
to experience only pure passion
when your breast move up and down
causes this world to disappear
bit by bit
as if we are occupying a own kind of paradise

and when you lie nonchalant against me
with your eyes changing colour
to more green than brown,
then I know how intense I do love you
while I read the smile
that threatens to fold around your lips.

Gert Strydom

Ocean View

When waves driven by the wind
foam and do sweep in white,
then I do wonder what kind of catastrophe
do hide in the dark depths?
On the top it does bubble
en it's an image of wondrous beauty
with breaking waves that do slam against the banks of rock
do jump up as if the fingers of the water do reach for the heaven
but somewhere in the depths
seaweed and rotting material are dragged along
while predators, sharks and octopuses do sneak around,
while every natural thing is set to hunt,
when the entire world is decaying like things are
after Adam and man fall to sin.

Gert Strydom

October 1962

Missiles from hidden silos,
submarines, ships and aircraft
are ready for war
and the super powers of the east
and west is testing each other.

The world is poised
on the brink,
of eternal death and annihilation.

People see the sun
hanging in a blue sky
and wonder if it will be
the last time
that it will rise,
before suns out of man's hand
bloom with crimson flame
and white mushroom cloud.

Gert Strydom

Ode Of The Plain

(after Jan F. E. Celliers)

I

The plain lays streched out in its eternal rest,
is still in the slumber of everything on it aware,
are undisturbed by the going of the ages,
where the extend of it do entice man and animal,
where it stretches past mountains up to the coast,
where herds of antelope do graze on the savannah fields,
natives in small patches of land do work,
while it is in acquiesce by the natural going of things,
is still in the slumber of everything on it aware.

II

At a time the dark water did stretch out everywhere,
where the Son next to the Father and Spirit streched out His hands,
while the Spirit of God deep in thought did glide over everything
and from the words of God came everything that lives:
the newly created earth and everything that does cover it,
He brought forth earth, grass, flowers, plants and trees,
animals, fish, birds and dinosaurs created by their kind,
with rivers, waterfalls, and gigantic lakes at places,
where the Son next to the Father and Spirit streched out His hands.

III

Cycle upon cycle are followed by adumbration
and from the mouth of God came constant renewal
when things in a set format suddenly did exist,
where animals as male and female stood next to each other
and Adam and Eve were warned about sin
but through them came a fall to sin after which everything did come and go,
did constantly generate, did live and exist and again did perish,
at places the walls of the earth broke open with surging
and from the mouth of God came constant renewal.

IV

The plain lies in its rest but high and holy about everything elevated
there is the omnipotent Lord God who lives forever
and when in the morning the sun burns red on the horizon,
the darkness and then the twilight becomes brighter where it does gleam,
where the sun burns and scorches from days yonder,
while animals and plants do yearn for water, for thunder-storms that have to
come,
where without water death does ravage everything with the power of it
everywhere
but suddenly lightning do bash down blue-white when a mass of clouds do come
gliding,
while there is the omnipotent Lord God who lives forever.

V

When the rain falls continually for days,
everything on the plain does suddenly again become green and luxuriant,
when water in the lakes and rivers dam up and flow everywhere,
there are the bellow of the antelope and the lows in joy over the plain,
when nothing can stop their gambolling and great joy,
where constantly they graze on the new green grass in gathering herds,
where the hunter and the predator with a onslaught comes nearer and nearer
and in gigantic herds buffaloes, wildebeest and zebras do trek,
while everything on the plain do suddenly again become green and luxuriant,

VI

At night when the darkness pulls her cloak over the plain,
there is dew that falls on the stems of the stretched out savannah grass fields,
while unseen and unheard the sprouts do grow luxuriant,
when it is as if a tranquillity and rest do overreach everything,
when leopards and other predators like patches of shadow sneak near
and suricates and other animals do hide away in their holes,
while only here and there cries of fear do call out,
while there is dew that falls on the stems of the stretched out savannah grass
fields,

VII

far off beyond the horizon the veldt burns glowing,

silent the plain lies with all of this as if it does suspect nothing
and later the fire is smouldering and by rain does pine away,
with danger that appears and again does disappear
there is fear and sometimes blood is spilled,
while the birds sing to God their songs of praise,
while with a bellowing and bleating the antelope bring their thanks,
where daily He does still care and is protecting everything
and silent the plain lies with all of this as if it does suspect nothing.

[Reference:"Die vlakte" (The plain)by Jan F. E. Celliers.]

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Gert Strydom

Ode To A Yellow Speckled Barbet (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

At first light your knocking and twittering
do awake me while to God you do sing
like a joyous lively small spirit
and snugly you do into every morning fit
at the window do flutter each tiny wing
and by now I do already know your song by heart
where to my greatest memories it has become a part
where you tell me it's a joy to be living
do awake me while to God you do sing

II

Louder and louder you do welcome the day,
do beckon me to get on my knees and pray
while you sing out your heart's desire,
while the sun is catching its red fire,
where with your song every care is swept away
and your voice is sincere and bright
during the brightening daylight
where it's as if you do secretive words say,
do beckon me to get on my knees and pray

III

and with your song you hold the melody
while through the window you want to reach me,
and small you are but big-eyed like an eagle
you do hold your head somewhat regal
as if you can into the depths of my heart see
with its long pointed narrowing bill
where up and down you do the window fill,
do sing of life and of its great journey
while through the window you want to reach me,

IV

your long twittering song does fill the air,
it seems is almost everywhere
and unbidden you sing out you own poetry,

telling about a world where everything is free
as if somehow you little bird, do really care
and in you little bird, I do God's presence see
as if through you He is bringing tranquillity
as if with you He is right here,
it seems is almost everywhere.

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Gert Strydom

Ode To Adam's Time In Eden

(in answer to Thomas Traherne)

1

A life that is pure and holy and secure was my own,
where God did me as the first man with glory crown,
when brand new did everything around me appear,
and to me the animals, my wife and children were near
while daily to have companionship the Lord came down,
where untouched and happy earth seemed eternal,
with no sorrow, pain, heartache or any thing infernal
everything did chat with me and to all I were known,
where God did me as the first man with glory crown.

2

Perfect every created thing had great magnificence
and Eve, the children and I lived in simple innocence,
everything was so bright, holy, serene and pure,
as if eternally this world and all on it would endure
no evil, goodwill and only good could I in Eden sense
where lovely, rich, beautiful, sunny and fair
was everything of which I had been aware
nothing, no animal or person did each other incense
and Eve, the children and I lived in simple innocence.

3

With vigour and native health my body did grow
while God did His goodwill on everything bestow,
great bliss and happiness were constantly mine,
where everything had something of the divine,
soothing and cool and sweet did the rivers flow,
animals were accompanying me everywhere
and all of life was full of joy and without care
while I did truly my wife, children and God know,
while God did His goodwill on everything bestow.

4

Only the great and good did God to me reveal,
knowledge of sin, pain and heartache God did conceal,
but still great knowledge and intellect I had,

yet I was never lonely, hurt, unhappy or even sad,
did not have to go through and great hard ordeal,
new and great and better discoveries did me surprise
where God and holy angels did righteous and holy things prize
and this world was real and I filled with a kind of zeal,
knowledge of sin, pain and heartache God did conceal.

5

Every child, my wife and everything on earth were mine,
and so very happy were my whole family with God divine,
where everyone and everything lived in tranquillity
were of corruption and all bad things free and we were holy
while pleasantly on our skins the sun did daily shine,
and our judgements were fair and utterly sound
while the loveliest fruit on different trees did abound
with joy the faces of my family did constantly shine
and so very happy were my whole family with God divine

6

Amazing was our happiness and fun and great our bliss
and how I wish I could turn my life back and return to this
where everything was perfect and no lovelier have I seen
that nature's colours of brown, blue, black and green,
the intimacy and sweet savour of every natural kiss,
at a time I had the glory of God face to face behold,
but here now my years are running out and I am old,
where now there is great hardship in the way that life is
and how I wish I could turn my life back and return to this.

[Reference: "Wonder" by Thomas Traherne.]

Gert Strydom

Ode To Apollo (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(After John Keats)

I

As the god of the golden fire, lire and bow
Apollo did of the greatest poets and songs know,
knew about each one's struggle and their glory
and all about their lives and their story,
where in Olympus their words did glow,
while with splendour did gleam his golden hair,
their voices were one after the other in the air,
as if godly their poems did on them eternity bestow,
Apollo did of the greatest poets and songs know:

II

Homer trumpeted of Greek royalty from afar
before with words he twanged the bronze harp in war,
Maro's lyre in respite toned the sizzling blazing fire
of a ancient emotional burning burial pyre,
blind Milton did Eden, Heaven and Hell bar
while ravishing he turned it all to peace
and by his hand Shakespeare did the passions release,
while his sonnets and plays remain forevermore
before with words he twanged the bronze harp in war.

III

While in his godly listening prophetic state
Apollo heard of bravery the songs of fate:
martially Spencer on chastity had his silver trumpet resound,
like thunder Keats's odes had Psyche fast asleep found,
waked and recalled the gods while their power did abate,
as a radical nonconformist Shelley did strung his own tune,
was to the attacks of contemporaries immune,
of love and joy, madness, bliss, sorrow and hate
Apollo heard of bravery the songs of fate:

IV

Ardently Tasso's words in his crusade were lovely and fair

and where poets do about deliverance, love and pity care,
Wyatt, Browning and Browning, Rossetti and Rossetti, Byron,
endlessly from the past, today and the future the poets do go on
while the words, the lines, the verses are everywhere,
where still Apollo does love, truth bravery and prophecy divine
in his palace the power of song and verse do combine,
while heroically people sing songs in life's turbulent warfare,
where poets do about deliverance, love and pity care.

[References: "Ode to Apollo" and "Hymn to Apollo" by
John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

Ode To Cape Town (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

I stood away from the mother-city disinterred,
in the distance far away strangely thunder I heard
were I was high upon this flat tabletop great hill
and in my heart everything was tranquil and still,
seagulls screeched and there was the call of another bird,
in the distance I saw two great oceans meet,
one ocean's unending blue was far beneath my feet,
it was as if Adamastor was somewhere near interred,
in the distance far away strangely thunder I heard.

II

To me my love who dwells here were very close,
a sea breeze softly from far below arose
and like a old lover was gently touching me,
while to the far horizon over many miles I did see,
thought of the paths in life that I chose
where like my ancestors I did follow the divine
but this great city was no longer mine
and the ways of God I have never opposed,
a sea breeze softly from far below arose.

III

The sky and oceans were all almost holy azure,
at this place and to this city there was something pure,
with its endless motion slammed the waves of the ocean
and at this place my heart had a strange emotion
as if I was not anymore of my direction in life sure,
on the lower banks of the hills everything was green
and yet the moment was very serene,
while I thought here a person could endure,
at this place and to this city there was something pure.

IV

The natives in border-wars had for resistance my ancestors not forgiven,
away from here in ancient times by the British my ancestors were driven,
with their lives did make a very bloody sacrifice,
in far-off Natal never got their earthly paradise,
tried to buy some land and for their peace death was given,

in their Great-Trek tamed the great wilderness and civilised it,
tried to find a place into which they do really fit
and so it goes to this very day even,
away from here in ancient times my ancestors were driven.

V

This is the place where the slaves were set free,
in Cape Town, in dark Africa a bastion of peace an tranquillity,
but it's also the Cape of a thousand storms,
a cosmopolitan place with religion in just as many forms,
where any person at a time could anything be,
which became the Cape of Good Hope,
where together in hardships people learned to cope
and here I am standing in my country's uncertainty,
in Cape Town, in dark Africa a bastion of peace an tranquillity.

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Gert Strydom

Ode To God's Blessings In The Time Of Spring (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

By Your great unseen and secret power
Lord, you do nurture each shrub and flower,
while constantly butterflies and bees are visiting
where they drift away on each trembling wing
and luxuriant growth follows upon each thundershower
while the beauty coming suddenly draws the glance,
brings sheer joy to each countenance
where You do know about every bower,
Lord, you do nurture each shrub and flower,

II

while You do Your secretive care concentrate
as You do bring each plant to a glorious flowering state,
where silently even discreet it grows from the earth,
each spring arising as if from new birth
but without You everything would be desolate,
where You are the One that destines how everything is to be
and Your power, science and love stay a great mystery
of which the care do never abate
as You do bring each plant to a glorious flowering state,

III

silently and unseen through ages as ever
while You do touch each fruit tree's endeavour
covered in blossoms I do them see,
where You leave no chance to any mutability,
do never Your build in instructions sever
and we do experience each fruit as if given
while by tiny instructions it's constantly driven,
as you do into each fruit and tree its essence pour
while You do touch each fruit tree's endeavour.

IV

Never do Your care and love from us depart,
the loving of man you do take to heart,
some of Your time on earth is spent

where apart from this You are omnipotent
and by this unusual kind of secret art,
You do display Your handiwork in nature's scope,
do fill each new day with joy and fun and hope
and yet You are right here and form man apart,
the loving of man you do take to heart.

V

As summer draws near each day is almost holy and serene
while full of abundant fruit each tree is seen,
while the hot sun hangs in a cobalt-blue sky,
many other little blessings You do supply
and life is better and different from what it has been,
where constantly You are generous and kind,
abundant new surprises in nature we do find
and for life and living everyone is keen,
while full of abundant fruit each tree is seen.

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Gert Strydom

Ode To Heaven (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

Everlasting fortress where there is no night,
where the glory of God is the ultimate light
where known is the future, present and past,
where selfless love do past aeons eternally last,
where God does rule by love and not by might,
I hear God say that this is our wonderful home
see the glorious temple's high dome,
your golden streets and magnificence is in my sight,
where the glory of God is the ultimate light.

II

From this far-off place God do beacon me
where He remains eternally righteous and holy,
as if every person and I do right there belong
and in my minds eye I see the unending throng
who do keep with Him a very happy company,
where the sheer perfection do forever last
and His knowledge and might is vast,
where every act and thought remains free,
where He remains eternally righteous and holy,

III

where with mere words God sets mighty stars beyond the night,
He himself is the most intense and purest unerring light
and down on earth mere mortal men come to Him on their knees,
are stripped from all that is great and good as in winter the trees
and yet to Him every humble repentant sinner is a delight,
where He do install the ultimate hope, faith and love and tranquillity,
like a father want man always at His heart and His side to be,
where every being do serve Him out of love and not from fright,
while He himself is the most intense and purest unerring light.

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Gert Strydom

Ode To Spring

I

Lovely spring, like an enchanter freeing
the hard dry earth from being dead,
the first of your works I am seeing

while sprouts appear from winter's bed
on branches blooming flowers glow
in colours of white, yellow, pink and red

while the early summer wind does already blow
more flowers are rising from the grave by your magic will
while your powers works high and low

from the marsh up onto the hill
and there is new life everywhere,
that comes so suddenly from your great skill

while insects, bees and birds flutter in the air
and not a single leave is shed
while in flowering you take great care

while like a princess you veil covers your head,
your wedding dress over all of nature is spread.

II

Your helpers are busy with a big commotion
while into the air with pollen they surge,
while your kingdom stretches over land to the ocean

and from existence, time's verge
to earth you have constantly life given
with happy awakenings from winter's dirge

constantly to supreme beauty you have striven
as if by magic coming from fortune's height
and away you have the touches of winter driven,

away you have swept that dark dying night
while rain fell water are flowing in streams,
back you have brought frivolity and sheer light,

you have turned whimpering screams
into the magic of coming summer dreams.

III

Where you come there is no fear,
no suffering that you bring,
only the jolly songs that one hears

as more and more flowers are awakening
coming to the summing of what joy should be
while your presence is gorgeous and striking,

a gift with love that is coming totally free
while you rush about at great speed,
to nature are bringing growth and tranquillity

coming at a time of dire need
to transform over night when winter is gone
while unseen suddenly you proceed

bringing fruits and the summer on
as of all seasons you are the loveliest one.

Gert Strydom

Ode To The Bushman Paintings Of Southern Africa (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

I

In the caves with sandstone walls full of paintings there is quietness
where African historians and shamans do worship, life and culture express
it brings a person back to a primitive uncivilized happy time
with animals, humans and therianthropes more vivid than any rhyme
and ox-wagons with mounted men with rifles that they do witness,
the qualities of animals or men are exaggerated for emphasis in their shape,
dynamic battle scenes portray attacks on occupants of caves with no escape,
for powerful supernatural potency Eland antelope pictures are drawn in excess
where African historians and shamans do worship, life and culture express.

II

One can almost hear the people gathering about fires sing
where at the slain animals they are dancing and worshipping,
while in the sky the yellow moon hangs as a token divine
and men and animals are noted down in every fine line,
where they portrayed the things in their lives existing
drawing Voortrekkers with the Boer with a rifle and hat,
an Arab slave gang with colours mixed with fat
and pictures where the men with bows are hunting,
where at the slain animals they are dancing and worshipping.

III

The red Hartebeest has the kink to the horns in the way they picture it,
and their lifestyle is expressed on the walls in colour bit by bit
and humans are not true to life but lifelike with the buttocks enhanced
distinguishing Busmen from other natives who were more advanced,
the Reebok's ears and snout is exaggerated and the Oryx antelope do fit
and sometimes a shaman is pictured talking to God in a trance,
where the Eland could this experience somehow enhance
in pictures men do usually run, do not walk or stand or sit
and their lifestyle is expressed on the walls in colour bit by bit.

IV

Where the Eland is larger than cattle it expresses having plenty of food

and they though contributed to things being good,
when they do pray and sacrifice the Eland has a spiritual role
as portraying well-being, healing, beauty and peace on the whole,
faces were not drawn and this must not be misunderstood
as too difficult as they though it rendered them vulnerable to harm
and with even the paintings they wanted their god to charm,
even the roles of the lammergeyer, lion and elephant they did understood
and they though contributed to things being good,

V

They painted in colours of brown, red, yellow, white and blue
they used blood, ferric oxide, bird droppings and charcoal for the correct hue,
melted fat, beeswax or egg-white and used a brush of wildebeest mane
used monochromes, animal outlines and figures and drawings were mundane
but seldom did they paint the object, as it really was true
but never did they paint plants as in a hunter-gatherer society
this was the domain of women and in pictures only one white woman we do see
as the White Lady in the Brandberg and what she does there no one has a clue,
they used blood, ferric oxide, bird droppings and charcoal for the correct hue.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Ode To The Sun

You that heroic every single day are victorious over darkness,
flaming make your presence known to the whole wide world
with your brightness even burn banks of miss away,
while you watch over insects, animals even the whole of humanity
just for a time you are dulled, eclipsed as if extinguished
by thunderclouds that pack menacing, or by the moon
that let's you circle silver-white in a photosphere
and your diamond ring astounds me,
it is as if you are only resting for moments
and everything is aware of your absence
before you come back in full glory.

Mornings when you wake me, bursting through the window
when your rays fall loving over my cheek
the day is already welcoming fresh,
when you rise against the heaven in a white-hot ball,
I can measure the time from you
while children stream to schools,
people start their daily activities
and you burn scorching, hours long as if you are lingering,
birds chatter in branches of almost every tree
and people dream thought-struck in the their afternoon drowsiness
and later again wake up, duty driven.

When you go down in the late afternoon,
making a spectacle of your departing
and in lustre catch the eyes,
people go home to rest from their labour
with twilight creeping in
and I become aware
how essential your presence is
while people scuttle around, some sneaking
and others feel like lying comfortable against each other,
to spend the evening with wine or are drinking spirits
in parks, with the hope of a new tomorrow creeping into their hearts.

Gert Strydom

Ode To The Woman That I Do Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

More than severely I do relish you, my girl-woman,
with the words that I send I do want to hold on to you
where tonight right through the night I am dreaming about you,
where I do witness happiness and tears that do sometimes flow.
I want to plant a garden with love in your heart full of dreams,
of that which can be seen growing in the trees of our lives,
do want to find the sun in your eyes time after time,
do want to kneel before you with the faith and hope of a child,
do want to silence your lips with mine for long moments,
do want to take your soft hands in mine and touch their warmth on the inside,
with words of poems sing thousands songs of praises to you
and sincerely without any fear I do want to bring my love to you,
do want to tell you that you are really beautiful to me,
that I have been missing you for a lifetime.

Gert Strydom

Ode To The Woman That I Do Love (Free Verse Sonnet)(1)

(for Annelize)

More than severely I do relish you, my girl-woman,
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that I have been missing you for a lifetime.

Gert Strydom

Odin The Great Germanic Warrior (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Where admit a snow-storm he is outside his house and cannot sleep
in one person in Europe thoughts are breeding deep
and on the North Sea the waves are stormy wild
yet with his spear Gungnir in his hand he feels mild
where his glance do over all of Europe to tyrants sweep
in the wood there is no star or moon in this dark black
and nothing brings clarity over the onslaught while all evidence do lack
while he is ready to fight for all humanity and in the snow stands knee-deep,
in one person in Europe thoughts are breeding deep.

[Reference: "Die Germaan" (The German) by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Odysseus

I saw him, a brave man, a king
standing tall at the helm
wearing the armour of great Achilles
carrying a great sword on his back

steering against a stormy wind
and renown among his own men
as the man whose plan made Troy fall

but beside him I saw a maiden
in gleaming armour, with lightning bolts
intertwining like snakes just below her breasts
with flowing long golden hair blowing like a flag

and in a ravaging sea they journey on
escaping the wrath of the waves, the storm
and the monsters that dwell in it.

Gert Strydom

Odysseus [2]

The sea smashes angry,
thundering against your ship
with gigantic waves that gale strong
wants to crush the poop, the keel

before you fall into the dark depths
and with brute force you are spitted out,
naked stripped from all clothes
you lay half confused, streched out
on a unknown beach

where a princess and her girl friends
do find you and do have compassion
and they and the people of that country,
even the ruler
do lend a hand

so that you can sail back
to your own place
and your roaming journey
can come to an end.

Gert Strydom

Odysseus And Calypso

When he looked at Calypso, while she enticed him,
when the fire in her loins folded around him
he trusted his own humanity to her,
if he denied this he would be lying
that she did not block away Penelope
when together they called out, while she did cling to him
and her eyes were bluer than cobalt,
away from her his life was caged
but more intense than passionate fires
the longing of his wife, child and land
burnt in the depths of his heart
and for days long and many hours
to her shock he stared out over the distant ocean,
wishing to sail to his people.

Gert Strydom

Odysseus To Calypso (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to S. J. Pretorius)

Calypso here I do live in love totally free,
where you are sleeping against me in the dark night
and against me you are full of love, supple and soft,
a bliss for all of the my earthly desires,
still deep in my heart burns my old longing
of my country that waits on the other side of the ocean,
while I hear at night and in the day
the old afflictions of the sea and wind,
our passion makes everything bright and of nothing I am blinded
where constantly in my thoughts I do find new fervour,
do early in the morning notice the sun rising over the horizon,
do sometimes as a child and still as a man find you,
where you do free me from my own terrible pain time after time
but about the going away that is coming I am becoming without words.

[Reference: "Odusseus" by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

Odysseus To Pallas Athena

Maiden in armour
thy shield at thy side
and lightning bolts resting
in the place that they hide,
come talk to me
as companion and friend.

How many times have thee led me
and stood as sentinel
at the prow of my ship
and through huge waves
and storms guaranteed a good trip.

Through lonesome travels
like a shadow
you accompanied me
over land and sea
and as thy servant
I forever will be.

Pallas Athena, by the force
of my war bow
and bronze spears have I slain
those that tried to woo my wife
and untimely celebrated my death,
but only by thy appearance
victory was truly mine.

Gert Strydom

Odysseus: I Have Travelled Over The Raging Sea

I

I have travelled over the raging sea,
sat in the counsels of the greatest men, of famous kings
I have met disaster, havoc and the enemy,
helped open the gates of Troy, have seen many things

and now after my travels are done,
I live with an aging wife
the bravest of my men are gone
and somehow I still long for strive

but have only tranquillity
where I exercise righteous laws,
unto a heroic race that is both brave and free
and I long for danger while my life is at a pause,

before the darkness beacons me
to take the last journey.

II

I want to cross the last barrier of the wide ocean,
through thunder, rain, hail and sunshine
challenge the eternal silences,
lead my mariners to another great victory

pull my sword, the string of my bow
feel the grasp of the armour that embraces my body
and even if wounded I bleed,
I will be truly living.

I want to experience another thrill,
by sheer determination sail to the beyond
before the eternal sleep catches me
and I in glee embrace Achilles on the other side.

Now I am brandishing his shield,
am determined to search, to conquer and never to yield.

(After Alfred Lord Tennyson/Reference: Ulysses by Alfred Lord Tennyson.)

Gert Strydom

Of All My Days The Happiest These Are (Italian Sonnet)

At a time you were distant like a star
while destiny did its way with me run,
where my life in its trickery was spun,
while true I did love you from afar.

Of all my days the happiest these are,
where the pain of yesterday is undone
and you are of women the loveliest one,
while no one can my humble words bar

while I follow you in all of your ways,
memories flood my mind from the past,
they are full of joy and not of pain
and now in the high summer of our days,
you are with me and I with you at last,
while only the beautiful things do remain.

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Gert Strydom

Of All The World's Most Lovely Daughters (English Sonnet)

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

Of all the world's most lovely daughters
none exactly as wondrous as you I do see,
while you voice has the murmur of waters
and you are vividly enchanting to me,

where your glance in my mind is causing
tranquillity as a sea lying silently gleaming,
and thought-struck at your sight I am pausing
where in your sight I am about you dreaming,

where over the main a chain the moon is weaving,
while your eyes goes into my soul into the deep,
as your breasts like gentle waves are slowly heaving,
while a single nipple does against the material peep

while in my heart, spirit and soul come emotion
where our relationship is unpredictable like the ocean.

[Reference: "Stanzas for music" by Lord George Gordon Byron.]

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Gert Strydom

Of All The World's Most Lovely Daughters (English Sonnet)2

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

Of all the world's most lovely daughters
none exactly as wondrous as you I do see,
while you voice has the murmur of waters
and you are vividly enchanting to me,

where your glance in my mind is causing
tranquillity as a sea lying silently gleaming,
and thought-struck at your sight I am pausing
where in your sight I am about you dreaming,

where over the main a chain the moon is weaving,
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while in my heart, spirit and soul come emotion
where our relationship is unpredictable like the ocean.

[Reference: "Stanzas for music" by Lord George Gordon Byron.]

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Gert Strydom

Of Helena She Had To Be A Descendant [1]

(after William Butler Yeats)

So beautiful she was, so enraptured and intense
that although my life was miserable
as almost every man that got a glance of her
was driven to a frenzy, to something beyond mere understanding,
as men did fall at her feet,
did fall in love with her at a sight,
as her loveliness were beyond mere words
and yet I could not held her accountable
for something that only belongs to the gods
and when in the evenings she did cling to me in passion
she promised that she was only mine
and I did believe that such nobleness was unique,
while there was a unknown magic in each kiss
and I was aware of the depth of her love.

[Reference: "No Second Troy" by William Butler Yeats]

Gert Strydom

Of Life

Far too quickly time passes from baby,
young unbound child,
small primary school kid, high school pupil,
military recruit,
university student,
to grown adult,
as the epitome of civilization
with some power
and some respect, love and wealth
and it dwindles
to an old bended, broken black scarecrow.

Gert Strydom

Of Past Relationships, Plants And Things

If I have to find a plant
of her
she wouldn't have been a rose
as though it has thorns,
it has meaningful beauty
and it leaves an odour
that stays with you.

Although at a time
I thought that she's a beautiful flower
I have to stay
far away from flowers
and try and get another plant,
because I will forever
search to find
the right flower.

An Umbrella-thorn bush
with shafts of thorns for me,
is probably the best description
that I will ever find
and where she touches me
it scratches till the blood appears.

Gert Strydom

Of Winged Things (Corona Of Wreathed Quatrains)

I. A yellow weaver

Time and again I see it fluttering
a small thing on the gate of the driveway
each day stretching, shaking its tiny wings,
while it sings, it's as if I see it play

to portray a game that just weavers knows,
as the breeze blows it is twittering,
with feathers shining, quickly out it throws
in a own show paws and beak and its wing;

delighting with feathers yellow and sleek
somewhat meek I see it with colours shining,
with dogs wining giving me a small peek,
in the week I hear a pretty bird sing.

II. A black-collard barbet

During the week I hear a pretty bird sing
joy it brings to my old stuffy study
joy of being free, right where it's sitting,
it sings as if it is singing only to me

very sublimely it visits me daily
in pure glee with a voice quite startling,
it sings from early light happy and gaily,
in beauty the notes keeps on ringing,

something happens and one day it is gone,
it moves on and I watch until darkness;
missing its kindness, I am the only one,
on a stone it's out in the wilderness.

III. A thrush

To bless it is out in the wilderness

displaying goodness far from its own nest
singing at its best in pure happiness
without distress far away from the rest;

very modest I came upon a thrush
in the bush blessing me totally profound,
I did it found, in the veldt, deep into the brush,
in a holy hush I heard the loveliest sound

of unbound glory somewhere on a branch,
nothing could enhance its beauty on the eye
it was shy as on it I did then glance;
by mere chance, I heard a jubilant cry.

IV. A singing falcon

As I passed by, I heard a jubilant cry,
I felt as if I was very unworthy
in serenity it was ringing from the sky,
where high up it did fly and came to me.

Quite free I saw a forlorn bird trembling
a shadowing spectre against the blue,
reflecting its hue, it was again singing;
on a wing notes of its clear voice were true.

The sound did subdue, it was wavering,
becoming a small thing by its own choice,
it had poise with the high hill answering;
in spring in nature I heard a quiet voice.

V. A bush shrike

Not by choice I heard a very quiet voice,
a voice that was soft but still quite sublime
in its sheer prime outdoing all human noise,
turquoise the sky glowed at that time

like a perfect rhyme when least expecting it,
it did fit in its presence filled with joy,
without ploy it sang a song bit by bit

high notes it hit as a Godly envoy,

like a hidden decoy it was singing clearly,
it spoke to me, sang directly to the heart,
from the start it caught me very early,
bringing tranquillity in its joyful art.

VI. A raven

Apart from my life of some joyful art
in it did dart with a gleaming black coat
croaking like a goat, but looking quite smart,
it did depart with a sudden screeching note,

it was remote in the beyond that pleases him
getting dim past the old church's weather vane,
like a stain, but my eyes began to swim
my sight was slim like a dirty window pane,

I felt inane and at its chosen height
almost out of sight against the blue sky,
it went by in its strong travelling flight,
it might draw me, fluttering it does fly.

VII A butterfly

When it is dry, fluttering it does fly,
to catch it I try, as it searches nectar,
near and far using its curious eye,
as a spy or like a wandering star

going over tar and inspecting tenderly
quite free acting with care, acting with grace
it does amaze finding a medley,
a sanctuary as it goes from place to place

it's not commonplace, it's without anxiety
that I see a lovely bright fragile thing,
thriving on a special variety
with almost piety I see it fluttering.

Of You I Have A Kind Of Knowledge

Of you I have a kind of knowledge
that I still do keep safe
that never can disappear from my heart,
with time its still there,
when you still bring meaning,
even when my days are drawing to the end,
your love still wants to appear
and like this we love each other.

Gert Strydom

Office Workers

To the office we go together
the two of us

I do the figures and run them through
she sometimes looks at them too,
she brings me tea, answers the phone

and smiles at me and sometimes
catches my eye in a way
that says much more
as if begging it to stray

when she bends over
exposing the cliff
between her big firm breasts,
the smoothness of her slender thigh

and then blushes tomato red
when my eyes skim over
to the work instead
as if she's not really there

but the twinkling in her starry eyes,
the pout of her lips,
the intimacy of her perfume
and the swing of her hips

keeps me mesmerized and she keeps playing
with her wedding band
giving that diamond a unholy glow
and walks at times swaying into me

as if the attraction between the two of us
pulls us together by its own power
and I wonder if she knows the difference
between love and lust

and if this is just a little game to her
and where integrity

stands in the you and me
and the more that I ignore her
the greater becomes the electricity
and the more she wants me.

Gert Strydom

Often I Have Wondered About Destiny

Often I have wondered about destiny,
the thing that guards
that which is to be or not
and although God is omnipotent
I have realized that destiny
is not necessarily His will or His tool
and that we are living in a time of a savage war
between the forces of darkness
and those of good
that rages on
and I have realized that everything that hurts,
that destroys, that is full of pain and sin
comes from the side of evil darkness alone,
comes from somewhere where a caring living God is gone
and whenever trials and tribulations do come
there is already a way or an answer in place
in God's amazing grace
while the side of darkness
only turns a warm loving
and giving heart to stone.

Gert Strydom

Old Man On A Bicycle

Out of the mist and rain along the old road
down the slope of a small mountain pass
an old man rides with his bicycle to town
with a plastic bag in which bottles tingle
each time that he treads on the pedal
while the sun breaks through
the clouds every now and then,
comes over the edge
of the Outeniquq Mountains.

Gert Strydom

Old Photographs

Old photographs are dangerous things
if you have a jealous girlfriend, fiancée
or wife
who enquires when she sees them
and wants to know everything
about old flames,
why they left and with whom
and then tries to be a cleansing broom,
to sweep everything right into the dustbin

and when at a party, at the cinema, at a restaurant
or even on the sidewalk in the street
you meet someone who is depicted
in a photograph

the girlfriend, fiancée,
or wife
leers at her with killer eyes
as if a laser rays are going
to blaze to dissolve, to destroy
and old photographs are dangerous things
especially if they are quite revealing
and later they have the ability
to bite with a dangerous sting.

Gert Strydom

Old President Clinton (Clerihew)

Old president Bill Clinton
looks at the girls on Clifton,
notices here and there a lady
but does nothing shady.

Gert Strydom

Old Sir Gordon Davy (Clerihew)

Old Sir Gordon Davy
bought himself an entire navy,
but there was a big commotion
when he tried to get the whole lot in motion.

Gert Strydom

Old Table Mountain

Out of the fog
its peaks rose
from ancient times
and it's flat top
showed man land
at the southern tip of Africa.

How many couples
did its cable cars carry
that asks each other
to wed.

When the sun sets
and drops into the sea
and the light wind
plays through your hair

from above
you can almost
look into eternity

and also know
how picture perfect
the mother city looks.

Gert Strydom

Ominous The Branches Knock

Ominous the branches
of the giant avocado tree do knock
on the roof
and in the silver moonlight
its clear outside and I see something
like a spectre moving past.

Outside there is 'n loud bang
when at the porch close to the front of the house
something falls and does hit the ground
and I am wide-awake,
do wonder if it might be a burglar
that wanted to climb on the roof,
to come in through the roof tiles.

Immediately I jump out of the bed
while the dogs are barking angrily outside,
I grab the survival knife
(hat some soldiers do carry in their boots)
as the police had taken both my pistol
and shotgun with the new laws
and I do not have money
for the new license procedures.

My darling is ready
to press the emergency button
of the armed reaction
at the alarm system
when with the knife in my hand
I do dare it to go outside.

The dogs become silent when they notice me
and the street is deserted,
only a big branch lies near the porch
where unexpectedly
it had broken from the tree

with broken avocados
laying everywhere

which the dogs do carry away
as their delicacies
and when I go back to sleep

I do know that the newspaper headlines
will report on a break-in, murder
and rape
at another place
as we do live in a country
where nobody's life is safe.

Gert Strydom

On A Beach Of The Wild-Coast

It was sweltering hot on that white unspoilt beach
while everywhere there were great numbers of shells
as if this place had been untouched and unvisited by man.

They were fragile as flower petals, others hard as steel,
with embouchures that were tiny and sometimes twisted
in colours of blue, pink, blushing red, brown and white

with iridescence glimmering from the mother of pearl
while slender brown lines were like ancient hieroglyphics
written in an undecipherable language that nature understands

where I sat down to examine, to enjoy, to touch and experience
this treasure trove that was washed out from the depths of the sea
and thought-struck that afternoon trailed away into twilight

on one of the beaches of the Wild-Coast that stretched out vastly away
and with the setting sun suddenly in that place I was not alone
some flamingos were pink-red flying past in the azure sky

and in the distance, you my wife, like a perfect sculpture was etched
against the setting sun with slim long legs, with round breasts and blonde
looking like a goddess while the shadows brought an enchantment to you

where you were picking up scallops and were intensely looking at them
and your movement reminded me of a crane or maybe an albatross or a heron
while in the now stronger twilight some of the shells were luminescent.

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Gert Strydom

On A Close-Up Of Anthony Delius, On His Questions To The Universe

So tell me Anthony you start
your wailing against the gods / God
with the sketch of a man gone mad

who does not know his own integrity
nor if he is in reality either good or bad
and maybe a little bit of both

does not know where he stands in life
if he's cruel to his kids or letting them run amok
if sex with his wife wedded or not

satisfies her or is she only acting it out
and is he a wimp or what, who wears a pink shirt
and hides behind her skirt?

Could he find any help from a doctor,
minister or priest to mend
or is he in the end only a waste to the human race?

Completely mixed up the anti-hero wants to lurk
in the basement as if looking for a replacement
or to find something in his heart or turn to art

and yet he sees a roving universal eye
looking down from the blue sky
somewhat like that of a colonel or a cat

(most probably a rat (if he's in the basement)
and I wonder to what army did this nut belong?)
and what answer does he anyway get but none
and he decides that it's up to himself and no one else.

[References: Questions to the Universe by Anthony Delius. My poem was written in reaction to Anthony Delius's poem: On a Close-up of Dirk Opperman, on the Jacket of his Komaz.]

On A Close-Up Of Louis Esterhuizen, On His Poem "winnie"

So tell me Louis, you allege:

"I went to look at the remarks
found in his biographical sketch:

"I love the work of various poets
and my favourites are AG Visser, Eugene Marais,
Ingrid Jonker, D.J. Opperman, N.P. Van Wyk Louw,
William Shakespeare, Dylan Thomas, John Keats,
Robert Frost, W.B. Yeats, Yahuda Amichai,
Hannah Szenes, Stevie Smith, Dorothy Parker
and even Homer.""

Further you say: "With the exception of a few names
under the English favourites, all the Afrikaans poets are experts
whom he probably encountered at school,
if a person looks at the verses on his page
you realise that Mr. X has never grown past the incidental
school-contact...In this he is alas not unique."

Still you are the great master
where it comes to the works of Homer,
as you make a comparison
in your poem "Winnie" between Me. Winnie Mandela
and Homer's character Penelope,
where there are in reality flagrant contrasts
and the masters canonise this poem
in the "Great Verse Book"
without even being aware of the contrasts?

Let me as just a unfolding poet
who "has never grown past
the incidental school-contact, "
point out the contrasts clearly:

The story of Penelope comes
out of Homer's Odyssey where the title
indicates a long historical journey or adventure
or some wanderings

that the main character Odysseus / Ulysses
undertakes before again arriving
at the island Ithaca
where he rules as the king.

For only a very short while
Odysseus / Ulysses is with the nymph Circe
on a island, but the greatest part of the book
is about his wanderings.

In flagrant contrast you write:
"And Penelope comes forward, impatient
and rude as Ulysses is only moving rocks
on his island."

Where you use the Roman name of Odysseus
to describe Nelson Mandela.
Your Ulysses is not wandering at that stage
or travelling on a historical journey full of adventure
he is busy "moving rocks."

At that stage your Ulysses
isn't a king, far less
your Penelope ever becomes a queen,
not even the wife of a president.

The original Odysseus / Ulysses
is only true to one goddess namely Athena
who at various times helps him,
even in his battles,
where your Ulysses divorces your Penelope,
takes another wife
and marries her as a Christian, a Moslem, a Hindu
and also as a Jew.

Still less the "UDF, AZAPO and also COSATU;
then there's also the Young Comrades -"
are princes and kings who are trying to seduce her.

Nevertheless you write:
"But while the crown-princes are wooing her
and the almost-princes gather around her

and rollick, the woman plays
in the three storey-mansion
with her last matches."

The real wife of the real Odysseus / Ulysses
was not involved with a "Stompie" character
who disappeared without a sign
and in the Odyssey the property of Odysseus / Ulysses
is wasted and devoured,
while the princes are fornicating with the maids
and Odysseus / Ulysses
along with his son Telemachus destroys
all of those princes and kings
along with the fornicating maids
that contrasts flagrantly
with the acts of your Ulysses.

Your Ulysses is moving stones, only walks
on his way to freedom a few steps,
divorces your Penelope
and marries another wife.

Nonetheless the original Penelope remains true
to Odysseus / Ulysses,
under the pretext of completing a shroud
that she is weaving for her father in law Laertes,
of which she continually again frays out the thread
and later the two are again together and happy
and it is the nearest
that you come to the original story:
"to again fray out the dream-cloak:
Oh, the endless undoing
of the endless doing, she lisps."

To my opinion your comparison
between Me. Winnie and Penelope
is rather shallow and totally ungrounded,
as there are just too many contrasts
that you did not think through

and now I am wondering
who is the person

that has “never grown past the incidental
school-contact” as far as Homer’s Odyssey is concerned?

(After Anthony Delius/References: The poem “Winnie” by Louis Esterhuizen, “The
Odyssey” by Homer. “On a Close-up of Dirk Opperman, on the Jacket of his
Komas” by Anthony Delius.)

Gert Strydom

On A Close-Up Of Louis Esterhuizen, On His Verse Novel "die Onderwaterweg, " (The Underwater Way)

So tell me Louis, you start your verse novel
of which the story line is very thin,
with a white man lying drunk and silent in hospital

after trying to commit suicide,
with memories taking him back
to events in his marriage with his white wife

who had been a left wing political activist,
where politics makes the marriage crumble,
rather than interpersonal relationships,

were marriages usually crumble
from a lack of communication
and respect for each other?

Where at times he is impotent,
where at times he gets it right,
where he loses her in consequence of a rebellious march

are cut from her leftwing circle of friends,
where she head over heels in the middle of the road
lift her dress; let her panties hang around her knees

where she has sex with a black freedom fighter
(how realistic this may be)
is pregnant with a child for Azania

while children in rags string along after her,
where they again sleep together
and he does not catch AIDS,

she is slaughtered in a pincher operation
or maybe by canister-shot
(again utterly unrealistic)

after which he buries her

along with her black friends.

On visits by a certain Jabula, fall in love with her,

he changes from white to black,

so much so that he takes a taxi to a hut somewhere,

where she is a labourer on a sugar plantation

where she makes love to him, they give life to a child

and I wonder if you want to draw this story

through to every white Afrikaner?

Especially where the main character in a prayer

to the almighty God wants to know

if the AK-47 and famine

is God's own way of controlling vermin?

A person can easily come to the conclusion

along with the thirst for heroes for the black struggle

and where you write "morning walk"

set against Ingrid Jonker's poem of the child,

that you view every Afrikaner,

every white farmer killed on a farm,

as plague or vermin,

that God kills through black people,

if white people do not mix with blacks,

as the main character in your story does?

[After Anthony Delius/References: Louis Esterhuizen, "Die onderwaterweg, 'n versroman, Human & Rousseau, (1996) Kaapstad. "On a Close-up of Dirk Opperman, on the Jacket of his Komas" by Anthony Delius.]

Gert Strydom

On A Cruel Cross Lord

On a cruel cross Lord, my sins became Thine
and were all the riches and power of nature mine,
nothing would befits You as a gift
and never could I repay a love so unblemished and divine.

Even if life does me degrade and around toss,
when I look on that terrible cross,
I can only give myself as I am
as the value of all other things are at a loss.

In my mind Your own suffering and pain
does continually remain
and although Calvary does my heart sting
Your cruel death is to life my greatest gain

When if only for me
Thy life was given as guarantee
to pardon a life unwholesome and full of iniquity
and now forever from sin I can be free.

Gert Strydom

On A Day God Will Take Account

(in answer to Fanie Olivier)

On a day God will take account
for every written word,
for every crumbling verse,
even for the skew ways
that people do interpret Him
and then some people will gnash their teeth,

those that do tread Him down
will view those that serve Him
as a contamination to others
but they will realise that He does really exist,
will be brought before His kingly throne

and those who dance around fires,
who call upon daemons, which do search for advice
from ancestral spirits
will come to a judgement before Him

and before Him every crime, rape,
robbery, murder and killing
will come to righteousness,
will claim a punishment
and even His enemies will praise Him
when He lets destruction loose
as a last blessing of love.

[Reference: 'eendag sal God nie langer bek kan hou' (One day God will not longer hold His mouth) by Fanie Olivier.]

Gert Strydom

On A Day That Felt Like Any Other

On a day that felt like any other,
where the sun was hot
in a Pretoria spring,
when the jasmine and almost every flower
were open and flowering

suddenly and unexpected,
three black men rushed
into a house in Pretoria's Capital Park,
found a woman painter busy in her studio,
painting a rural scene.

A pistol was trying to drill
a hole into the side of her head,
before a big black hand covered
the sudden scream
coming from her mouth.

Her clothes was ripped from her body
and for moments she was blinded in shock
smelled the stinking hot breath in her face,
while her body felt as if paralysed

and not being able to move,
the first black man entered her womanhood,
penetrating violently, tearing
and ripping her open
while his left hand
groped at her breasts
one after the other,
with the others laughing
and waiting for their turns.

Gert Strydom

On A Day That It Did Snow (Octave)

You were noble, white and pure as snow
when buckets full fell at your job,
to and thro people did in a hurry go
but for you and me the world did stop
when in writing we became man and wife,
the icy white did cover everything,
by God's grace we were jubilantly alive
while with utter joy our hearts did sing.

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Gert Strydom

On A December Summer Beach

What joy I see in faces,
but it's not in my heart
and I have not a part
of the December summer fun.

The beach is packed
with holiday makers,
but sadly the sea
goes to and fro.

There's pain
where your heart was
and a lonely gull
surfs the summer breeze.

In the silent places of my soul
there's an icy chill,
while the African sun
bakes my body.

Somewhere there's laughter
and a lovely girl smiles at me,
but there's only silence
brought by destiny.

Gert Strydom

On A Durban Street At Twilight

On a Durban street at twilight,
when lights started piercing the coming night
in winter with rain sieving down
like you would expect in Cape Town
a gorgeous girl walked right up to me,
and it's still one hell of a memory.

For long moments her eyes looked into mine
and she slid her slender arms around my neck
giving me much more than a peck
and her hair silky and fine

brushed against my face
before she kissed me even more passionately
and spellbound and probably surprised, unfortunately
I let her slip away unknown, totally without a trace

and still this bugs me, for what I do not know
and why I let her go?

Gert Strydom

On A Evening (English Sonnet)

In the sky an aircraft draws its line
while with roaring jets it does descend,
in the west the sun does slowly decline
where the sunny day is almost spend

nearby there is a burbling small stream,
the evening star is out where its twilight
and yet at this time of day of you I do dream
with you face smiling cheerful and bright

with a warm sparkle in each lovely eye
the moon rises as a golden shining sphere
and somehow the minutes into hours do fly
where as ever I do hold you very dear,

are yearning for your sweet and tender caress
and for our ultimate lasting happiness.

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Gert Strydom

On A Evening In Petersfield Extension One In Springs (Free Verse Sonnet)

My wife smiles and pours tea for both of us,
she gestures to me with her hand
and her smile and words do sweep me along,
I see her eyes glow and feel how she is staring,
she comes nearer to very close to me
and the expression of her eyes is suddenly soft
where from hot lips I get a kiss
and know that I can expect beautiful things,
the neighbours in the late night turn the volume of their music up,
become drunk and jolly near to the midnight-hour,
it's certain that it will go mad throughout the night
and I wonder how a person must endure something like this
but above us the stars are in the night endless
and we do remain people, insignificant, small and fragile.

Gert Strydom

On A Fishing Holiday

At the break of dawn
the neighbour has a visitor
pulling in with a small Nissan-do- it-all pickup
towing a small Venter trailer
with a blow-up motorboat on the canopy
and the two wave at me
when they set out
driving away to the sea
and shout aloud: "See you there"

and a day later I meet them on the beach
standing solitary
out of view from each other
on rocks jutting into the sea,
throwing whistling lines
straight into the deep
with sunglasses protecting their eyes
against the glare
as if searching for peace and tranquillity
at the edge of the blue ocean

and the two men speak few words to me
both determined to reel in something big
and in the distance the hues of sea and sky meet
while water touches, laps against my feet
and I find my own way to the jetty
casting a line in, waiting patiently
until a lovely girl comes over to talk with me,
sets my mind on different things
(spoils the tranquillity) ,
but I have a two legged mermaid
following me to a restaurant
while they still wait with nothing,
casting in with new bait.

Gert Strydom

On A Girl That I Did Meet (Collins Sestets)

I saw a girl with eyes shining, ablaze
with cheeks much softer than a single rose
and saw her on some pleasant summer days,
broken things do not fit, she did disclose,
with good intentions, trouble was my own;
I know no way to melt a heart of stone.

It was too early for of love to speak,
saw unhappy tears running down her cheek,
while I did not know how I did cause pain,
have no ideas of what actions remain,
with good intentions, trouble was my own;
I know no way to melt a heart of stone.

The good deeds and words which are very kind
at times speaks to the heart, the soul and mind,
nothing rekindles a quenched desire,
less it's some divine, Godly kind of fire;
with good intentions, trouble was my own;
I know no way to melt a heart of stone.

Gert Strydom

On A Higher Place

Some wait on pan
to brighten their night
with nymphs and styrs
and like in antiquity
believe that the book of the dead
have great powers of life
into the beyond
and wait on the devil or god to appear,
but mine eyes are set
on a higher place, of true light,
on the God that created all
of which the sun, moon and stars
are only implements and tokens
of His power and grace.

Gert Strydom

On A Hill Under The Blue Sky

On a hill under the blue sky
Your body once did bend under sin,
for long moments my glance were set tense,
did your crucifixion cling to me,

and I trusted my life anew to You,
while below Jerusalem baked in the sun.
On a hill under the blue sky
Your body once did bend under sin,

while I watched that city for moments,
and everything in the future I wanted to do with You,
in my ears was every curse and scolding
that after thousands of years still clings to the place
on a hill under the blue sky.

Gert Strydom

On A Hillock (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where the ground-squirrel hop up and down
there are guinea fowl in the bush and I look carefully
and again I am a carefree child,
notices a rock-rabbit jumping from rock to rock
and when I climb the small kopje to its top
the farm dam lies and gleams in the cliff,
there are turtle-doves cooing in the blue-gum trees,
cleverly the blue-headed lizards scatter and run
and in the adult-world I have lost all of this,
where I hear the friendly cooing of the laughing-doves,
notice a sunbird hanging at a sugar-bush tree
and wonder what does remain of this world?
In the distance there are machines roaring,
where gigantic vehicles groan under a mine's loads.

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Gert Strydom

On A Hillock Outside The City

On a hillock outside the city
a monument build from marble and stone
guards forevermore,
catching the sun's
rays one new day dutifully.

It tells true stories
of a nation's struggle to survive and be free
from oppression and a great trek
across the veldt and over high mountains,
of vicious wild men
and the belief
in the creator God
who came to aid
to save from total annihilation
when they called on Him.

[Reference: Voortrekker monument just outside Pretoria.]

Gert Strydom

On A Hot Summer Afternoon

On a hot summer afternoon
when buzzing bee after buzzing bee
pedantically visits flower cup
after flower cup
it is snapped up by the jaws
of the little jumping, dancing
Jack Russell that rocks to and fro
as it is backing up
and rushing forward in intent ecstasy
of the stinging sweetness.

Gert Strydom

On A Island In The Sun (Roundel)

You said that we would have a lot of fun,
even send me a picture where you laid
on a island, somewhere in the bright sun,
you said

I should immediately come to your aid
as your intense longing had begun,
even if I had to leave bills unpaid.

On the beach into my arms you did run
and your hair was knotted in a French braid,
of my hungry kisses you were not afraid,
you said...

Gert Strydom

On A Journey

One day I travelled with uncle Sias
and we were on our way to the bushveld
and his expensive German car was loaded,
but just on the other side of Warmbaths
we turned off.

On this trip I learned a few things
from uncle Sias,
that stays with me
to this day.

His car was very fast
and he had money
to pay speed fines,
but his foot was light
and we travelled decently.

We stopped next to the road
and I was puzzled at what was wrong
because the road was still long,
but he said
that the sun is drawing water.

The boot was opened
and we stretched our legs
and a umbrella, a folding table,
folding chairs, a gas stove
and a pot appeared.

It was evident that he made travelling
into a pleasant thing
and just then and there,
we brewed redbush tea.

At that moment I knew
that life is like a journey
and that things depend,
on what you make of it.

In the field next to the road
some birds were calling,
while we took life peacefully
and still to this day
I see that turnoff
where it disappeared in the distance.

Gert Strydom

On A Military Lookout Tower

I saw him peering
into the early evening,
watching the setting sun
on a lookout tower
behind a huge machinegun

and below us there was a bevy of activity:
soldiers walking around, military vehicles
driving to and fro, helicopters landing
and departing to and from missions

but we had tranquillity, that machine-gunner and I
and he talked to me, about another world
just behind the rim of the sky,
one where people did not deceive, lie to each other
or die, from the war
and I wanted to hear more
as at that moment
life wasn't the same as before.

Gert Strydom

On A Night

An orange-red sickle moon hangs low
above the light speckled darkened land
while all of the neighbourhood is asleep
and thoughts do into my mind creep
when I hear great paws walking outside on the sand
and in my heart a speck of fear does grow

as if something unknown wants to from the darkness reach
and everything outside is not how it does appear
when there is a rattling at the pane and a violent scratch
and in the blue-white glow of a lighted match
an unknown black predatory form draws near
while far away the waves roll in and out on the beach.

Gert Strydom

On A Night [2]

On a night I did ride through a dark city,
in the back of a yellow taxi into the unknown
and everywhere around me
there were buildings and jolly places
full of unearthly sound and pulsing light
as if all of life could be pressed into a tin can,
into one moment of passion and pleasure

and when later after a night of rest
I again did see the new morning
there was something in the sky's blue hue
another brightness,
that did lead me back
to You from whose hand
the true light and life does come.

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Gert Strydom

On A Night During The Covid-19 Pandemic (Villanelle)

A dark cloak does the evening fill,
people know a deadly virus by name,
throughout the world some are ill,

the strong wind to it has a sharp chill,
the world has changed nothing is the same.

A dark cloak does the evening fill,

there are marks on the windowsill,
suddenly a thunderstorm came,
throughout the world some are ill

and from China a deadly thing does kill
while the UN holds nobody to blame.

A dark cloak does the evening fill,

Scientists on television brag about their skill,
that people were not warned in time is a shame,
throughout the world some are ill,

outside everything is deadly still
all excuses now do sound very lame.

A dark cloak does the evening fill,
throughout the world some are ill,

Gert Strydom

On A Night Where Stars Flamed

On a night where stars flamed,
blood were pulsating between us,
your lips met mine
while the moon hanged bewitching silver,

while you fingers twisted through mine
and everything in our lives
were for a time
beautiful and right.

Gert Strydom

On A Rainy Night

On a rainy night with a gunmetal sky
I saw crisp leaves fly in the wind,
but your laughter was like a ray of light

and although the night was corroding
and the leaves were the colour of rust
we danced jolly in the rain that was falling

close against each other, just you and I
and lightning falling like gun flashes
lighted the street while we ran
to the porch of our house

where drops of rain shined
like jewels in your hair
and the hot fireplace was quite welcoming
and your passionate kisses were sweet
and we were without a care
while the fresh smell of the rain was everywhere.

Gert Strydom

On A Romantic Night

Come along to the place I love,
near the ocean and sparkling clear rivers
that is lovely as paradise
or a place in one's dreams.

Let us float in the blue lagoon,
go beneath the waterfall,
feel all of the water's kisses
while desire rises like the golden moon.

Then let us embrace each other,
while your naked skin clings onto mine
and I experience your gentle loveliness
as we continually get closer

to the very edge of the abyss,
let us be caring and totally careless
with every kind of tender caress
with water splattering over passionate hot flesh.

Let us intertwine
and meet in the centre core
of the body's heat
while around us the waters hiss

let this be much more than just lust,
and a kind of bliss
when we kiss and kiss,
while stars sparkles above us.

Gert Strydom

On A Spoor

We were hot on a fresh spoor
and the bushman tracker said
that the enemy were not far ahead

when we crossed through some dense bush
under some trees
and looking up I saw something on a branch

camouflaged, dappled into the shade
and yellow eyes peered down at me
filled with rage, with energy

and astounded more than anything
I brought the gun to bear,
but the pent up energy,

melted with languid grace
right into the tree
as if it wasn't aware of me, aware of us

and we walked on past a clearing
into the open veldt where hip high grass
was interrupted by some green thorn bushes.

A huge male lion came bursting
out of one of the bushes
with swishing tale running at full speed

and we all froze in our strides with weapons ready
and it was almost
as if the light machinegun's trigger was tempting me
to shoot the raging storming animal down

and at that moment I was relieved
that it was not the leopard that would jump,
from one of us after another at sheer speed

and at quick succession try to kill us all
being a expert at baboon hunting

and thus at killing primates

but the tracker had signalled for all of us
to wait when he saw it
and that party of special force soldiers

was ready to kill when that lion
came to a halt with swishing tail right in front of me
and I can still smell its foul breath

when it roared with wide-open jaws
and terror hit my stomach like a mighty fist
and I could have cut it down

blasting it right from the ground
but the ferocity, the beauty of that beast
halted me as if I was watching it in a dream

and I watched its yellow fangs and pink tongue
totally motionless trying to stare it down
and suddenly it turned around

walking back into the veldt
timid and kitten-eyed
disappearing into the grass, melting into it

Gert Strydom

On A Spoor In The Desert

The blue sky was azure without any cloud
with the hot sun throwing its bright white light
in the afternoon before the coming of night
and the calls of small birds were somewhat loud

as if the vultures were mocking me
while the night suddenly did fall and was black
and the bright evening star I did see
trying to find the Southern Cross to set track

while the desert was stretching everywhere,
my comrades thirsty as never before
with enemy tracks just running here and there,
as if they were going on forever more,

in the moonlight we followed the spoor austere
like ghosts wandering about without any fear.

Gert Strydom

On A Stormy Sea

When the waves of the sea
became bigger and the wind
started to blow at storm strength,
the boat didn't sail anymore
and it rocked in the waves
bobbing up and down in the water.

The men were afraid of death
while the Christ
walked on the stormy sea between the waves,
scared to sink and afraid of drowning
and also of seeing a ghost
appearing on the water,

but His calm voice brought serenity
to the wind, waves, sea and men on the boat.

Gert Strydom

On A Summer-Sunny-Day

It's hot in this high-summer
when you shake your wet hair out and merrily
back from Clifton beach in the sport-car do wind-dry them,

you keep your white-blond head upside down
and I see dreams and a whole cosmos in your eyes,
while the hot wind thirstily dries me out,

the landscape past Chapman's Peak Drive is moving past,
you smile at me charming and a blue ribbon slides loose out of your hair,
it flaps away and people at a concrete table eat their lunch,

the path next to the cliff and precipice is cut through rocks,
your laughter bubbles out as if this trip is freeing you from all worries
and on a summer-sunny-day I know that you do love me.

Camps Bay, Llandudno and Sandy Bay disappear,
the fragrance of sun-tan-liquid fills the car,
in your bikini you are past pretty in the hot sunshine

and you are carefree when you laugh joyfully,
like a small girl do wait in Hout Bay on an ice cream
that I bring to you in the car.

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Gert Strydom

On A Summer-Sunny-Day (1)

It's hot in this high-summer
when you shake your wet hair out and merrily
back from Clifton beach in the sport-car do wind-dry them,

you keep your white-blond head upside down
and I see dreams and a whole cosmos in your eyes,
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like a small girl do wait in Hout Bay on an ice cream
that I bring to you in the car.

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Gert Strydom

On A Sunday

(after Jules Laforgue)

The rain is sifting down for days now,
how depressing, the rain is, lover.

On the sea there's no ship to be seen,
only the grey sky and sea not even a bird.

At dusk no couples are passing,
only a car or two sprays water.

A girl with a big black dog passes
and they look cold and wet.

What a sorry sight while she sneezes
and both are shivering.

What is it with her? She is running
right into the ocean!

She drags her dog along,
flinging herself into the sea.

There's no one to rescue her
or the drowning dog.

The lights all over the suburb
is flickering on in this cosy town.

How depressing, the rain is, lover.
The rain is sifting down for days now.

[Reference: Sundays by Jules Laforgue.]

Gert Strydom

On A Sunday Afternoon

On a Sunday afternoon
there is a silence that lingers
when wild doves, weavers and sparrows
peck some seed from the back lawn,
while the two Jack Russell dogs
stretch out in the sun,
bees and butterflies buzz and flutter from flower to flower,
while the sun hangs white and bright in the cobalt-blue sky

and then your eyes sparkle when they catch mine,
while there is a restful tranquillity
when the shadows stretch out long
and roses, geraniums and gardenias
flaunt with their most beautiful flowers
and everything is lovely
like only a day with you can be.

Gert Strydom

On A Sunny Hot Summer Day (English Sonnet)

On a sunny hot summer day
your cheeks did in rosebuds glow
the last blossoms of spring was swept away
and fruit trees did their bounty show

a mere glance was full of romance
and a warm light was in your golden eyes,
a simple brilliant smile did your face enhance
and I knew that true beauty lies

hidden deep in the heart, that in you
I have found someone that is really kind
and that whatever I say or do
somehow my presence fills your mind

while my heart does in yours dwell
which does in kindness and love excel.

Gert Strydom

On A Sunny Summer Sunday (Villanelle)

when there is nowhere that I do belong
life seems lonelier than on any other day

and while other people are happy and gay
it's just another day that comes along.
On a sunny summer Sunday

while outside the kids do gambol and play,
for some kind of companionship I do constantly long,
(life seems lonelier than on any other day)

and I have lost my faith somewhere along the way,
while hour after hour the lonesomeness gets strong
On a sunny summer Sunday

none of my heartaches and memories does go away
and on the street I am only one among the throng,
(life seems lonelier than on any other day) ,

all of my thoughts do yesterday portray
and something tells me that I have gone too far wrong,
On a sunny summer Sunday
life seems lonelier than on any other day.

[Reference: "Sunday morning coming down" by Kris Kristofferson.]

Gert Strydom

On A Visit To Cape Town (Enclosed Triplets)

(After T.S. Eliot)

I was looking at the ocean, looking again,
I saw seagulls swarm under in the bay,
while standing for moments on Table Mountain,

in the air there were some tiny drops of rain
as it was quite a cloudy kind of day
with a storm that it could for days maintain,

more and more power the wind did gain,
to and thro boats and ships did sway
as if nothing, could the rising storm restrain,

a Japanese tourist did to me complain
as the wind swept his camera away
and his growing terror was quite plain.

At the Strand a moment did peace contain
until a myriad from busses came to play
in underwear and it went against my grain

when modesty some did totally disdain
and no attention I tried them to pay,
as the beach became their deafening domain,

from their whistling my ears were in pain
as some children were running relay,
while an elderly lady walked a dog on a chain

and my Pierre Cardin shirt got a stain
when a toddler with an ice-cream did stray
before her parents could control regain.

At Clifton most girls did topless tans attain
but some of them were lovely anyway,
coaxing, no modesty they did retain

and the failure of my morals was almost certain

while on my towel I did blushing lay
had a quick escape route to ascertain

as a beautiful blond did her eyes on me train,
with open eyes I did for guidance pray,
as another girl did on company bargain

and fighting her attention was in vain
as she smiling came my way,
while dumbstruck with her I did remain.

On the promenade from a working-girl I did refrain;
at Sea Point a man could go astray,
could almost any kind of pleasure obtain,

in the background was a sneaking villain
that had just come out of the subway
while rain again start falling as a curtain,

glitzy places wanted people to entertain
and a train rattled on the far-off railway
while from this kind of living few people could abstain,

to a taxi driver I did my destination explain
before catching a plane on the runway,
I was looking at the ocean, looking again...

[Reference: "Preludes" by T.S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

On A Wedding Day (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Jean Valentine)

I. After awakening

Today I try to see your lovely face
in the mind's eye,
nothing comes to mind; you are beautiful,
but my thoughts fly
to the time that I was but a mere child;
in the blue sky
the sun is bright, my innocence is gone,
this day is huge; you are the only one.

II. Early morning

Early I am dressed; my friends gather,
scared to loose
the friendship that had come with years,
like a huge noose
marriage is to some, but they are happy,
wishes they choose,
are the most compelling words for my sake,
promises of lasting friendship we make.

III. Arriving at church

My best man is more nervous than I am,
when we arrive
at the full church, see an ocean of faces,
I feel alive,
do wait to see you enter in glory;
far too active
beyond the edge my nerves are driven,
before our true loving oaths are given.

IV. At the airport

From the reception we do slip away
and hand in hand

our life together begins, as at the airport
we alone stand,
dressed in other clothes; our happiness
people understand,
as you in lovely enchantment do glow
of our new marriage they just do know.

V. Intimacy

As we land big palm trees wave us welcome,
we do caress
in the hotel room, where you do smile shy
as you undress,
as in our own flesh minutes linger,
in nothingness,
in our intimacy we are alone,
of each other in bliss we become one.

[Reference: 'A Bride's Hours' by Jean Valentine.]

Gert Strydom

On A Wet Day (Than-Bauk)

On a wet day
a small stray cat,
did play with me.

Gert Strydom

On A Windy Night (In Answer To T.S. Eliot)

I. It's Midnight

It's Midnight

and the wind brushes softly though my hair,
there are long drawn out shadows everywhere
under the street lamps and the bright light

is stringed out in white
beacon after beacon leading for some to somewhere
but to me it feels as if they are going nowhere,
as if this dark night

is endless without form or shape
and one lonely shadow is following me
while branches are caught in a macabre dance
and there's a chill at the nape
of my neck and darkness wherever I see
while I walk as if in a trance.

II. Half past one

Half past one

and the spluttering street lump did mutter
"so you had your fun, "
and no single word did I utter

and at my back fear was crawling
as if in the past night
I had done a unpardonable sin and wind was the singing
"do not look back" and above me the stars was bright

but a strange feeling was in me
as if something evil was following,
as if from it I would never be free
and I glimpsed back, in my daring caught a glance

of something without shadow sneaking behind
and I believed that it as a trick of the mind.

III. It was half-past two

It was half-past two
and while walking through the park
I did not have a clue
where I was going and the night was very dark

and a black thinned out cat sneaked past
with green glowing eyes
as if the tranquillity could not last
and all of the past goodbyes

where coming to my mind
of loved animals, friends and you
as if I was blind and never again to find
the place in the world where I belonged to

and with a leap of delight
the cat found something to eat in that night.

IV. The darkness washed over me

The darkness washed over me
falling like a old worn out cloak
and there were known stars that I could see
but with feelings wanted to choke

and it was half-past three
with a strange familiar howl in the wind
and the cat was eying me
as if in me it had find

a close compatriot
who is also a dweller in the night,
but in life I felt like a idiot
watching the bright

lights of cars passing in the distance,
praying for some kind of deliverance.

V. At four I was chilly

At four I was chilly
and did not want to wait in the park anymore,
the cat was still with me
purring much more in love with me than before

and I carried it while stroking it
as if I had found a new friend
and bit by tiny bit
I liked it and it was no fiend

but a tiny living thing
with shiny bright eyes burning
right through me and the wind did sing
the leaves on branches were still churning

and for a time I had company,
and it was great to be alive with something that loved me.

VI. The memory was crowding me

The memory was crowding me,
as if there was no escape
that on a similar night I did see
a glance of beauty peering from beneath a cape

and then it was somewhat chilly
not like now a summer night
and a strange passion did fill me
to see her full face in the bright light

but into the night she did disappear
with white cheeks and the fire of a eye
as if she was not meant to be near
and now with the sun in a bright sky

with a bird calling on its mate
I see her standing at the garden gate.

[Reference: Rhapsody on a Windy Night by T. S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

On A Winter Morning

This morning the sky is grey
and the climate is mad
and has gone into
a mediterranean spin
and drops of rain
are sieving down softly.

At places the wind
slams against trees
and whips them about
and chills to the bone
as it churns about,
but you are with me
and no man stands alone
when love burns as intense
as between me and you.

Gert Strydom

On A Winter Night

On a winter night
that lasts days long
our love was frozen,
as if the sun would not shine again
it wanted to fade slowly, slowly.

Then you surprised me like the sun
coming at late night
as if you want to stay forever
with sunshine looks
and before I could really comprehend,
you were mine again.

Gert Strydom

On All Sides

(after Jacques Prévert)

On the table there are apples, pears and peaches in a basket,
your dress hangs over the chair, your shoes are kicked-out over the floor,
and outside it's icy as if this winter eats through everything
but in the bed it's hot and cosy between you and me,
where you and I know truly that we do live together,
while everything in the night's chilliness tranquilly do rest around us.

[Reference: "Alicante" by Jacques Prévert.]

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Gert Strydom

On An Army Of Rebelling Mercenaries (Rondel) (In Answer To A.E. Housman)

Those rebels wanting heaven to be falling,
who before Michael and his forces fled;
had a demonic, destructive calling
and by there wages are worse than dead;

on earth their actions are still appalling
as they only bring some sorrow and dread.
Those rebels wanting heaven to be falling
who before Michael and his forces fled,

are trying almost everything to be stalling
as their corruption and evil they spread;
the high heaven they are still recalling
as to utter destruction they do head;
those rebels wanting heaven to be falling.

[Reference: "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

On Another Earth

On another earth
in another place and time
you will again be mine
but while your adult offspring
try to run your life
our marriage lays in shatters

and from their birth
they acted as if being divine
but to me they are without spine
and still the birds outside do sing
while all around me there is strive
and to them it does not really matter

but on this world you are heartbroken
while everything with meaning is falling apart
and the hurt lays unspoken
as a cruel kind of art

that you do not deserve
and to nothing there is any method, reason or rhyme
while the clouds of destruction are gathering
and although we are apart you are still my wife
and your children do gather

in their own kind of celebration
while I keep praying to the Lord of creation
to intervene but He is hidden in the shadows,
stays totally unseen and life moves on
and from my life you are gone.

Gert Strydom

On Approaching Fifty

I live in fear of the present years,
where the fifties draw near
and see the destruction that age brings
in the folks living with me
as if intelligence, good manners,
good humour and peace disappears
with the end of life drawing near.

I thought that at this present age,
I would be settled, wed with children,
a company man with money,
with his destiny set
and yet life doesn't always go
the way that we plan

and now worries consume me,
as if relationships, friendships
and my career
have all come
to a definite full stop

and I am not dead yet
and life goes on instead
and in my latter years
I am trying
to change destiny
with shoe strings
while with time
age is setting in.

Gert Strydom

On Christmas

the shepherds did see
that night a strange star in the sky
where they tended their flocks roaming free
and flashing bright like lightning on the eye
an angel appeared in great glory
and afraid to die

they met the messenger from God

who brought good news to all mankind
and all men where brothers even the stranger
when the angel told them to find
a baby wrapped in clothes in a manger

who is Jesus Christ the saviour

and a multitude of angels did appear
while the song resounded on the ear:
"glory to God in the highest and on earth
peace to men on whom his favour does rest"
and the shepherds had great cheer at the birth
of the child who did love without self-interest

and round and round their flock did trot

where they had left them without care
to find the son of God and of man
in a stable round pots of earthenware
and so the world's redemption began
while their great news they did share

and the world was different from before.

Gert Strydom

On Christmas Day (Sonnet)

we will set up mistletoe and kiss
every single girl that past beneath it in a kind of bliss,
will party as if it is the very last day on earth,
will act wanton as if we were destined to be like this from birth
and while celebrating Christmas we will laugh and play,
we will be giving gifts and be happy and gay

while we will act in denial of the humble Lord Jesus
as if His life did make no real impact on us,
as if we do not of His death and resurrection know
and our very lives to Him do owe,
we will celebrate his birthday
and His life in a heathen way

with our own self-centeredness we will begin
as if the greatest achievement and pleasure lies in sin.

Gert Strydom

On Christmas Day [2] (Sonnet)

I saw her standing at the traffic light,
shivering in the twilight at the beginning of night.
Thin her clothes was
while quickly cars from both sides did pass

and I was astonished at the placard that she did hold,
as she was not more than sixteen years old
and she was happy, in a jubilant mood
and it was on Christmas day that she begged for food,

as she had a baby boy to support,
licentious remarks were yelled at her for sport
but she looked as innocent and pure
as the virgin Mary did and smiled somewhat demure

when our eyes did meet
and there were sandals on her feet.

Gert Strydom

On Christmas Night

On Christmas night exploding fireworks light up the sky
and I can hear how the dog does yelp, moan and cry
while all of the world is awry
and at places war does still rage on
without any victories been won
and people have forgotten of the law of Jesus the Son

that called all men to be a brother
to each other,
to sincerely forgive one another,
that the man crucified
do in all men abide
and in these times the law of Peace seemed ruled aside

as if each man does this way of life accept,
as if the life of Jesus was inept,
as if His teaching was only in secrecy kept
and yet it's another Christmas day
where people do drink, laugh has fun and play
and the acts in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ
seems distant and very far away.

Gert Strydom

On Cold Winter Nights

With much weaker power the sun goes on its way
disappearing at night somewhere up high
while in winter everything living
is yearning for heat, to something that brings warmth

With the cold feeling as if seconds are jumping much too slowly
with you shivering later in the last part of the night.
With much weaker power the sun goes on its way
disappearing at night somewhere up high

When people insist on light,
with birds of prey gliding on the cold air,
lovers finding each other, giving love freely
until the next twilight
with much weaker power the sun goes on its way.

Gert Strydom

On Contract Work At A Black Transport Company

In City Deep at a black transport company
the managing director temporary shared an office with me
and at nine o'clock he parked his luxury Lexus
walked into the office with a cup of tea

where I was preparing several years of books for an external audit,
where I checked the reconciliation bit by bit
but the very first year I did not touch
was far too scared to get involved with it.

Into the company's premises pulled bus after bus,
where they were washed without any fuss,
where they lined up with hissing brakes
and in silence separately worked the two of us.

Horses and trailers was just bought brand new
and outside was parked some while mechanics serviced a few
but of the vehicles I did not take any notice
while I was hunting for figures that seemed askew.

At eleven a fund collector of the ANC came to collect,
for an amount of fifty thousand Rand the director did not object
it was for a leadership conference held in the north
and few words were said but Mbeki was the subject.

He was out and Jacob Zuma was in
and it seemed that he had done an unpardonable sin
but it did not interest me much
while with a new year's figures I did begin.

With satellite tracking the managing director was following each bus and truck
saw one that was double parked at a shopping mall where it was in traffic stuck,
said aloud: "I do know exactly where every vehicle does go";
and when he slammed his fist down in anger I almost did instinctively duck.

Suddenly outside a big eighteen-wheeler did roar,
came to a halt jackknifing violent and nothing was as before.
The driver rushed into the office, threw some keys over the director's desk
and it was clear that both of them did each other abhor.

Without a further word he walked out after he had dropped the job.

In Johannesburg and Pretoria the busses did run,
some were rented out for weekends of fun,
others were operating in the Northern Cape
while others took communities to enjoy the sea and sun

and drivers coned the wheel
transported passengers in their carriages of steel.

Gert Strydom

On Covid-19 And You And Me (English Sonnet)

I knew that it takes a great man to admit to mistakes
last night while watching the president's address
and a greater man still to rectify whatever it takes,
that the world and this country are in a great mess,

that this Corona-virus could be with man forevermore,
that the entire world is now facing unknown territory,
that now life and living is much different from before
but my love, in all of this you is still precious to me.

Life and liberty has much more valuable become
where restrictions and measures are in place
but to you sincerely in love I want to come,
where every single thing is still in God's grace

and I want to tell you to keep both faith and hope,
even if stopping the virus is out of man's scope.

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Gert Strydom

On Eve

(in answer to Robert Nye)

God did Adam and Eve betroth,
but after that original disobedience of both in the garden
where Lucifer enticed them with a lie into sin
imperfect the world did become,
life for all mortal men afterwards did harden
and a struggle for survival did begin
while sin made this earth very gruesome.

That original Eve, mother of all, along with father Adam,
brought sin and along with it all bad things like despair
but angels with flaming swords guarded that tree of life
and that madam certainly was beautiful past fair and sharp and wise.

Tell the omnipotent Lord God that you do not need to be pardoned,
call Eve Eurynome if you do want to, even call her true,
He perished and do live, did not leave Adam and Eve abandoned
but she is not to be found in this time and age anywhere,
death she did not yet survive
from the tree of life she did not become immortal,
is not godly or still alive
like all human beings she was mortal,
the moon she is not and neither in the upper air a place she has got,
do follow the moon if you must but it's only a piece of rock and dust.

[Reference: "Eurynome" by Robert Nye.

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Gert Strydom

On First Viewing My Darling (1)(English Sonnet Sequence)

(after William Wordsworth)

I

She was an image full of smiles and of my delight,
like a phantom from high heaven to me here sent
when she walking up to me se did draw my sight,
in this harsh hard world like a shining ornament,

her sunny eyes were like starlight gleaming fair,
as if from all women some of the beauty drawn
while silky were her glittering tresses of her hair,
she was charming with the faith and hope of dawn,

as a moving shape she was singing happy and gay,
while she walked right up to me and new my name,
did my attention draw my thoughts to her way lay
and after that moment nothing again was the same,

when I looked deep into those green-brown eyes,
I felt like Adam must have felt with Eve in paradise.

II

I felt like Adam must have felt with Eve in paradise
when she was face to face to me in a much closer view,
as if with the knowledge of evil, great and good wise,
everything was now in this world strange and new.

She was a spirit, soul and the most beautiful woman too,
acted with respect to me but her will was happy and free
and I realise anything was possible for her in life to do,
where she talked, walked, acted and stood in virgin-liberty,

where in her face picture perfect did all her features meet
and it displayed the personality and character of being good,
yet in her motions and ways she was courteous and sweet
but also very bright and for my heart its soul's kind of food

but full of happiness and without any sorrow or wiles,
she was made for love kisses, bliss, tears of joy and smiles.

III

She was made for love kisses, bliss, tears of joy and smiles,
while we talked I watched her act tranquil and very serene,
as a person that was pleasant full of joy without any riles,
a lovely living biological pulsing intuitive brilliant machine

that came closer to me with every moment of breath,
with a own personality, carachter and considering will,
thoughtfully passing in a world full of heartache and death,
with power, foresight, knowledge, training and skill,

as a lovely female creature by God perfectly planned,
full of spirit, attentive, decisive and yet obedient loving,
to hold, to comfort, enjoy and delight in and to command,
a mature, mindful, lovely and gorgeous female human being

and she was gleaming with an angelic almost holy light,
she was an image full of smiles and of my delight.

[Reference: "She was a phantom of delight" William Wordsworth.]

Gert Strydom

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Gert Strydom

On Fridays He'd Open A Six-Pack Of Beer

On Fridays he'd open a six-pack of beer,
after coming home
would tear the wrapping from them,
and sit on the porch with his white vest
stretching over his huge chest
and there were distant thoughts in his eyes,
long forgotten memories coming back,
sweat running down his face and cheeks

and the foam of icy Castle Lager was on his lips
and the silence had a funny way
of talking to me,
telling things about heartache, chances lost,
while he was trying to chill out

and the man in vest and shorts
drinking his beer on the porch,
I couldn't really comprehend
and the blue tattoos on his arms
told their own stories
of a converted hippie, a man converted
to the responsibilities of life,

and he was convinced
that my stories, my poems
would not lead anywhere
and I saw a man
who had lost
the words, the poems
that he once wrote

and he watched the setting sun,
the awakening stars
trying to catch the magic
of the moment.

Gert Strydom

On Games Of Death And War (Sonnet Corona)

I

Like the destruction in the white and black
of a chess board during nights and days
destiny makes its moves and plays
with the lives of men and women with a uncanny knack

and like mere pawns it demands where anyone goes
whether to move, to mate or to die as an act of fate,
it rolls its dice and makes its moves in love and hate
and without choice in the throes

of life and death we jump to it
going to and fro,
we are like marionettes happy to rise,
without thought, pity or any wit
just where we are demanded to go
when our country asks us to pay a prize.

II

When our country asks us to pay a prize,
to gain the enemy's territory
some have to pay with their demise,
as a man you are not free.

They send young men into the gates of hell
with uniforms and boots to clean with polish and spit,
while at home like kings they dwell
and lucky are the ones that come back from it,

but to children the ruling men tell tales of fun
while returning soldiers have shellshock,
from the beating of canon and gun,
think and dream daily about utter havoc

and not one was treated like a gentleman;
Lord, today I met a young man.

III

Lord, today I met a young man
believing that he has more power than You
he even cursed You and out of the blue
said that he could end anyone's lifespan

and this fellow wasn't from my own class or clan
with stripes and swords pasted on his arm with glue,
he even hated the things that I hold dear and true
mocked my beliefs; Your salvation plan,

tried to strip away my dignity
while lashing out with curses and gibberish,
every action and word did sting
and without cause he punished me
while dark vowels were flowing at ease
while on far-flung roads I was wandering.

IV

While on far-flung roads I was wandering,
far from home
my footstep did roam
and destiny was plundering

my humanity, every decent thing
with war's gruesome
impact and the trite welcome,
of wasted starving children without any blessing

who watched wide-eyed,
smelling like coming death,
where others had paid the cost,
walking past soldiers that had died
without a last bequeath,
what can I say about friendship lost?

V

What can I say about friendship lost?
That the lives of soldiers are insecure,
in weeks we have received no post
and it bares me no pleasure

to tell about a soldier, great and brave
who now is dead
who did crave
for peace and tranquillity but went to war instead?

That soldiers without stain
are the knaves of fools
and at their whim are slain
by politicians who like kings live and rule

to whom a soldier is just another toy;
at breakfast, the meal was filled with joy.

VI

At breakfast, the meal was filled with joy
your tender and warm caress,
the touch on your breast was sheer tenderness
and the war was far-gone, far off life a ploy

and you looked pretty dressed in green corduroy
as if with your eyes, your lips you could bless
could turn the outside world into nothingness
until the telegram came like reality's envoy

and in the bush at the front
I was beyond your smile, you sweet grace,
like a mere primed machine
and I was beyond your loving face,
the commander's voice had the usual affront;
what last notes at deaths did ring?

VII

What last notes at their deaths did ring,
when in war they met enemy armour,
but for the whistling
of bullets, rockets and shells that favour

some with shattering, exploding oblivion
and steel shredded like paper,
where they were caught, without salvation
and to the government they were just number after number

and not real living men, living human beings,
who were trapped in a Ratel armour-car like rats caged in
and it was only one more of those things,
when the destruction of the enemy did begin

and their game was played; those men will never be back,
like the destruction in the white and black.

Gert Strydom

On God's Holy Day I Went To Church

On God's holy day I went to church
and got a great sermon there
and there were strangers from everywhere

and I had been in company
with Him who knows everything
who sees my life for what it is
and peace, love and tranquillity
became my very own

Gert Strydom

On Guard Duty

On guard duty I hear boots crunch,
walking up and down
almost in a march.

On guard duty I hear boots crunch,
the wet earth smells fresh
and somewhere a tent flaps in the wind.

On guard duty I hear boots crunch,
walking up and down.

Gert Strydom

On Her Face I See The Light Play

(after Robert Browning)

On her face I see the light play
as it did the first time that we met
and her face is just as sweet as before,
but now love is lost from her eyes.

Still I am wondering what I have done
for love to be gone,
if it was in a words that I said?
As she turns her head

strangely she is still the only one,
with a gesture so similar
as when our love did begun
but there is also something unfamiliar.

How strange it is that love has gone away,
on her face I see the light play
as it did the first time that we met
while my eyes are suddenly wet
and her face is just as sweet as before,
she is still the girl, which I did adore
but now love is lost from her eyes,
and slowly the light dies.

[Reference: In a year by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

On Holiday

On holiday we went to
Blyde river canyon
with our own white Hillman Vogue
accompanied by a yellow minivan
full of school children.

First we stopped at God's window
and on that clear day
I could see from where
the name came.

We were like Moses
seeing the Promised Land
and could see the sea
in far off Mozambique
and the land
all the way to there
and what a great view it was.

We hiked a trail
that went along picturesque high cliffs
carrying backpacks
with sleeping bags
and below a river glittered
with fresh cold water
where we frolicked to cool down.

Somewhere high in the mountain
we lost the trail
and hiked on another new one
and took a much longer route.

There were potholes
washed out by the water
and we followed the river
till a camping site
where it met another
and it was by far
one of the best holidays

I had as a child.

Gert Strydom

On Holiday On A Island In The Sun (Rondine)

The ocean was clear as cobalt blue glass
while we swam far out in the greater key,
playing in the warm pleasurable sea,
some colourful small lonely fishes did pass
and no nasty predators did harass
while we both were very happy and free.
The ocean was clear,

some fish swam slowly in a schooled mass
while the small waves rocked only gently,
you teased, played and smiled with me,
there was nothing that did us embarrass,
the ocean was clear...

Gert Strydom

On Life (Rubiyat Sonnet)

In the sea of life we are blessed with individuality
and yet in all of this we yearn for company
for someone to love, to trust and admire
as to our same-self we are set with a personality

but although we are distinct like islands in the stream
of having a own place in the sun we do dream
of being accepted and fitting in somewhere we want
and to achieve, to be more, to be great we do deem.

The things called hope, faith and love is factored into this
while duty, honour and sincerity is part of what a great person is
where without them we do not really wholly exist
where life is much more than experiencing earthly bliss

we search for immortality be it what it may
and yet we are transient do day by day wither away.

Gert Strydom

On Looking Into Darkest Africa (Italian Sonnet)

I have travelled in Africa to places new and some old
have many pitiful states and despotic governments seen,
in war have through Southern African states been
which do to their ancestral forefather worship still hold,

oft of there enterprise, brilliance and expertise been told
that they rule democratic by popular vote in their demesne,
yet I have never seen soldiers and rulers so very mean
where they killed-off tribes and nations so very bold,

while women and children did watch the bush and the sky
for raping soldiers, helicopter-gun-ships destroying their men
dilapidation, havoc, poverty and illiteracy I saw with my very eyes
people without any civilization or knowledge or great ken,
and to the rulers of the great powers this is no big surprise
that by the power of the gun president's for life remain unbroken.

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Gert Strydom

On Love And Making Love

The act of love brings men and women to their delight
whereas the art of love burns
like a candle through the darkest night
and involves the mind, body and soul
and makes even broken people whole

and in a world where passions reign
and embodies the wonder of being alive
love does much more than making love contain
as at its heart lies a kind of sincerity
that binds and makes a person free,

that takes away the sin from sin
when with true love
mere men and women do begin
when making love is a mortal thing
and true love is a gift from the godly being.

Gert Strydom

On Loving You (Couplets)

The first time I loved you, you brightened my days
and you were so lovely and charming in many ways

but I drank heartache's most terrible bitter cup
with my head held high alone picked the pieces up

and for a time my life was full of pain
while my tears did fall like rain.

The next time I loved you the feelings were very deep
and in my greatest dreams you visited me in my sleep

and I realized that love is something that does remain
where it brings much joy and sometimes also pain

but still one after the other the days do slip by
and to love you much better daily I do try.

Gert Strydom

On Luca Signorelli's 'End Of The World' And 'The Last Judgement'

(after Eugene Lee-hamilton)

I

Under that sombre waning sun that shone overhead
I saw a strange kind of sight
that to mere man gives fright,
there was stirring the bleached bones of the dead

and chilling I had a feeling of utter dread
where I looked at a plane filled with strange light,
that had shattered darkness, had made day from night
while strange, flesh came to bones somewhere ahead,

while powerful an angel's trumpet blared in the sky
like thunder roared, made the whole world shake
summoned the almost ceaseless numbers to identity
the awesome power of God was under my eye
while multitudes at its call did wake,
before their Lord quite suddenly forever free.

II

Under mountains in the hellish glare
the evil rulers and wicked men did not repent,
to conspire together they went
while every evil general gathered their,

but in that kind of lurid air
all sanity, everything good was amiss and spent
as if demons from hell to them did descent,
while fear rose with a kind of dark despair

while they who were lost wanted to win at all cost
and to means of war they sought after being transfigured
while in anger they mocked the very host
when in judgement the sound of the voice of God was heard

before they were thrown in fires of hell or into utter frost
when they were no more, as love is heaven's final word.

Gert Strydom

On Manoeuvres

The nature of love is dazed, unknown
like a advance into enemy territory,
behind enemy lines

where you skirmish, reconnoitre the terrain
move from thicket to thicket,
leopard crawl, catwalk

through stretches of open ground
taking the risk, always at the ready
and in the enemy's midst

loiter in a dense bush
while watching like a hawk, relaxed
and half stupefied at the relative safety

smelling the cigars of the passing guards,
hearing them talking and walking around
without even knowing that you are there

and in the darkness to crawl back, walk miles
crossing streams and rivers
to the safety of your own camp

and in the following detail
to return to the same enemy positions,
you find the way easier, more well known.

[Reference: Map Reference by Douglas Livingstone.]

Gert Strydom

On Military Leave During War (Cavatina)

Stepping out of the train life seems quite strange;
another track
brings more happy shouting busy people;
to turn right back
to how life had once been is impossible,
under attack
he feels a stranger to his loving wife
as if he is dead while he is alive.

Gert Strydom

On My Birthday

(after Christina Georgina Rossetti written for the 3rd of April)

My heart feels like the morning breeze
that whispers through the flowering jacaranda trees.
My heart feels like a redbreast that dances before the rain
and sings its song of gladness again and again.
My heart feels like the first light of the breaking day
that burns intensely with happiness in each ray
but much more intense than these images is my joy
with the feelings that are between a girl and a boy.

Let I pray blessings to those that love and hate me
and from the iniquity of the my youthful past be free,
let my family and friends come from far and near
as there is much more to this day than does appear
as I am a grown man in the prime of my life
with a angel, companion and friend as my wife
and let there be rejoicing on my known earth
as my love is with me on the day of my birth.

[Reference: "A Birthday" by Christina Georgina Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

On New Year's Evening

(for M)

The carrot cake at your people
that they do serve with good intentions
are already weeks old,
that they have saved for us,

I eat it to give pleasure
to you and to them,
knowing well
that later it will chase me

and we wish each other best wishes
for the New Year
and the coffee that they do prepare
is much better

than any Wimpy Mega coffee
and I know that they are people
that is good from the heart
and together we do visit in great joy

until the late night stars do twinkle,
and we drink a last coffee,
do take the road home
and at that time you did probably love me still

but when you did play
your game of darkness with me,
your cousin did play along
while you did hurt me into the soul
and did send me to the moon.

Gert Strydom

On One Stormy Winter Morning

On one stormy winter morning,
I walked along Blouberg's beach
and out of the soft falling rain
a figure on a horse appeared
coming out of the fog
and riding from the sea
to land.

The waves crushed with
all their might,
but nothing could touch
that rider and its horse.

There was more
than a mere man
and animal locked to that scene
and shallow water
hanged in a spray
and wet sand and seaweed
flew away
when the hooves
found solid ground.

Just for a moment
the horseman looked me in the eye
and integrity and bravery
was etched deep
into his face.

I could hear the great horse breathing
before they turned
and with speed
went back into the sea,
where far away
the mast of a sinking sailing ship
went up and down
in enormous waves.

[Reference: The heroic story of Wolraad Woltemade.]

Gert Strydom

On Patrol

The AK-47 bullet
hangs as a pendant
with dog tags around my neck
(it could have been a memento
made of gold from you,
but our love is through,
shattered into pieces)
and it swings to and thro
while I bend to wash my face
in the cold water of the stream

enemy boot tracks
lay plastered in the mud
on the riverbank and in the stream
I spot two dots, barely showing eyes
where a crocodile drifts on the prow

and this morning the bush, the river
smells different, somewhat peaceful
as if no man has ever wandered here
but the sub-machinegun
next to me, keeps reminding me
that death lurks everywhere.

Gert Strydom

On Patrol [2]

On patrol I saw a leopard melting into a tree
and almost becoming invisible in the shadow of it.
One moment it was gazing silently at the group of us,
the very next the rasping purr did stop,
lightning quick with huge power it did jump down
and I was sure that it was going to try and kill
each one of us as at this that animal was a expert,
at splitting skulls, at spilling brains
at killing and hunting wild baboons
and here we were soldiers raising our guns
but it did not rush in,
it chose to leave and did fade away
into the knee-high grass and the bush.

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Gert Strydom

On Patrol In The African Bush

The LMG was getting heavy and hot
in my hands
and somehow the H-frame
became a part of my shoulders and back
and the stinging and unrelenting African sun
was taking the last moisture out of us.

From nowhere some gnats appeared
and hang circling,
above our heads

Thirst was burning my throat
like scraping sandpaper,
but we could smell the river
and its cold water
looked inviting to us.

We were spread in an attack formation
and the squad was armed with
two LMG's, a mortar
and R1-assault rifles.

The enemy tracks disappeared
near to the river
and we swerved to comb the banks,
to find the crossing point.
and we were at our nerves edge
and ready for fighting action.

Some tiny ripples appeared in the river
before the water at the riverside erupted
and three menacing happy snapper's,
came fighting mad from the tranquil river.

Out of the nearest bush
an angry young lion rushed,
dragging a young gemsbok
away from the river.

With snapping jaws three crocodiles,
went for the astonished lion.
The lion roared in anger
and stood its ground,
but there were three jaws
opening and closing
with snapping teeth.

We froze and stared astounded
and saw the lion
tearing away into the bush
and the crocodiles dragging the buck
into the water.

[References=> LMG=> Light machinegun, R1 rifle=> Similar to Belgian FN-rifle]

Gert Strydom

On Pretoria (Italian Sonnet)

On Pretoria (Italian sonnet)

I have not seen a city more fair
than Pretoria during spring
when on every street Jacaranda trees are flowering
and the scent of those flowers is in the air

and you might not find this kind of beauty anywhere
but in Pretoria where the faces of people are smiling
and to live in Pretoria during this time feels exciting
when any other city seems stripped, naked and bare.

From the outer hillocks history does its marvels display
where monuments rise as a token to existence
and churches, hero acres, offices and theaters lie
in the hazy beauty of the new day
while the people live their lives with persistence
as the days leap into years as they pass by.

Oor Pretoria

Ek het nie 'n mooier stad gesien
as Pretoria in die lente
as Jakaranda bome op elke straat blom
en die geur van daardie blomme in die lug is

en dié soort prag sal mens nêrens anders vind
as in Pretoria met glimlagte op haar mense se gesigte
en om gedurende dié tyd in Pretoria te wees maak mens opgewonde
as elke ander stad gestroop, naak en leeg lyk.

Van die buitenste heuwels vertoon die geskiedenis wonders
waar monumente rys as 'n teken van bestaan
en kerke, heldeakkers, kantore en teaters lê
in die wasige skoonheid van die nuwe dag
waar mense leef met volharding
as dae na jare spring soos wat hulle verby gaan.

On Science (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Archibald MacLeish)

She does not worry about why things are;
that they exist
to be contemplated or observed,
how they persist,
is far enough for her own simple reasoning,
she does resist
their reason, in rote produces answers,
perfect to devotions of her followers.

She thinks she knows where all things do come from,
far beyond her
kind of scope is metaphysics, physical
she does gather,
she is protected in her own dungeon,
nothing further
she knows about love, joy, fear and sorrow,
as she proclaims things for each tomorrow.

Beyond the stars, the sheer utter darkness,
shines a true light,
beyond the unknown, beyond a ocean,
out of her sight
are things like life to which He answers know,
to her its night
to comprehend the very soul of man,
as mechanical she does what she can.

[Reference: "Dr. Sigmund Freud Discovers the Sea Shell" by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

On Some Clear Days Clouds Gather Dark (Sonnet Corona)

I

On some clear days clouds gather dark,
bringing water showers
blotting out the sun, holding energy that spark
letting water sieve, pelt down on trees, bushes and flowers.

It wields the flail
of shattering lightning
lashing out with hail
destroying and smiting

and even a secret weapon belongs to it to yield
when sinister a tornado tunnels down
on town blocks, residential areas and any field
and with mighty strong winds things are blown

away, shattered into pieces and men run away in fright,
the clouds are dark as the night.

II

The clouds are dark as the night
shining through in open patches at places
and some are brighter and white
while lightning smashes down in blue-white blazes

as the sky opens it sluices
pouring down with wild bolts of blue-white thunder,
pouring down gathered juices
falling with creeping feelers, ready to plunder

splitting trees, setting the veldt alight
and man and beast is desolate
with some trying to flee in fright
struggling to survive, past fear, past hope, past hate

and hail and rain pelts down as if they want to kill,
there's rain falling upon the hill.

III

There's rain falling upon the hill
and maybe it will splatter down tomorrow
and the evening wind has got a chill,
as if it's weeping with sorrow.

In my days of tender youth
I have seen the blue sky
while I lived under my mother's roof
have felt the sun; have seen birds fly

and now I watch the sun setting,
and it seems like never ending rain
as if this endless whetting
will be back tomorrow again

and it streams down flower petals,
drops of rain sparkles like crystals.

IV

Drops of rain sparkles like crystals
before the rain begins again, splattering down
with the sun shining as if in nuptials
confetti from the sky is wetting every gown

and there's chaos around me
with a accident in the traffic,
on the slippery street people hurry
with another car colliding on the slick

wet streaming road
shuddering from the impact
with a crunching note

and a driver is blaming it on a Godly act

there's no such thing says cosmonauts that went pass the moon;
slowly moves the foggy breath of noon.

V

Slowly moves the foggy breath of noon
over the ice peaked hill
and the long shadows tell that it will be night soon
with the winter's icy chill

creeping in and the day dying in darkness
arriving on the town totally soundless
with the sun not seen in weeks
and rain still sieving down in its eagerness

and suddenly outside lights flicker on
like beacons in a sea of rain and fog
and inside I live in a world of my own
and outside there's the insistent croaking of a bullfrog

outside the light shimmer,
at the end of this summer.

VI

At the end of this summer
when autumn start to set in
and the chilliness of winter begin,
I still feel like a newcomer

in a world displaying its glory and the former
heat of days is washed away by streams of rain falling
as it did when things were mellow in spring
and everywhere strings of gossamer

hangs shining on leaves, on branches and trees
but with time my body starts protesting
displaying the signs of age, somewhat morbid like the sky,

the rotting leaves in the woods smell like lees,
the feats of when I was young are not inviting;
nothing outside is dry.

VII

Nothing outside is dry,
as if the soaking wet is creeping in to the entire
wide world and I have time to admire
your paintings, until late, to lie.

This is the time when you and I
cuddle together around a hot blazing fire
while the trees, plants and grass expire,
rain sieves down from a cloudy Cape sky,

where I lie in your embrace
with kisses raining down
and outside some dogs bark,
I am watching your eyes, your face,
while you are chasing away every frown;
on some clear days clouds gather dark.

Gert Strydom

On Some South African Afrikaans Published Poets (Catena Rondo)

(after Roy Campbell)

They praise there own elitist workmanship
then write a poem over and over again
until only their tinkered out words remain,
they praise there own elitist workmanship

then write a poem over and over again,
struggle along for more than sixty times,
abandon all love and poetics that rhymes,
then write a poem over and over again

struggle along for more than sixty times,
they despise a poet whose words do flow
while they struggle to complete every row,
struggle along for more than sixty times

they despise a poet whose words do flow
says that he types faster than they can write
does not even know the very day from night;
they despise a poet whose words do flow

says that he types faster than they can write
while the very words of other poets they copy,
are sheltered, from the rest of humanity,
says that he types faster than they can write

while the very words of other poets they copy,
they are fishes swimming in the tiniest pond,
are scared of the great world lying beyond;
while the very words of other poets they copy

they are fishes swimming in the tiniest pond,
their work is without any kind of profundity
and sometimes on them I have a kind of pity,
they are fishes swimming in the tiniest pond,

their work is without any kind of profundity,
they praise there own elitist workmanship,
they want others them as gods to worship,
their work is without any kind of profundity,

they praise there own elitist workmanship
then write a poem over and over again
until only their tinkered out words remain,
they praise there own elitist workmanship.

[References: "On some South African novelists" and "On the same" by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

On That Sunny Golden Morning (Flying Bird Sonnet)

On that sunny golden early morning
while the beautiful flowers of the spring
were opening and were suddenly flowering
closer to each other they were moving

in the field, under the sky in the hay
intimately did with each other play
to each other they were really hooked
while the day had a somewhat bright outlook
and from each other they looked away
early on a sunny glorious day.

While little birds were nearby chirping
they heard an enchanting small cuckoo sing
their intimate affections were stirring
content and spent the day was a blessing

Gert Strydom

On The Back Page Of A Old Newspaper

There's a newspaper which the wind blows,
round and round
until it hits against me.

I grab it out of the wind
and after getting into my car
I open it on the seat next to me.

I see your photograph
on the back page of a old newspaper
and it says that you live
in another country,
on the other side of the big blue sea.

I wonder what is going on in your world
and when I close the newspaper,
It's as if you were here with me
for a moment.

Gert Strydom

On The Battlefield

Bullets whistle past
and I wonder how long
my life still can last
with every blast
of exploding mortar bombs and rocket grenades,

with destiny playing its game
unfolding death that is creeping nearer
and the rifle in my hands become alive
chattering in its own stinking voice
and the dread of killing horrifies
while a rifle grenade
splits a tree in two
and the mind blanks
while like a machine I carry on.

Gert Strydom

On The Beach

You wanted to go to the beach
at the Strand
and walk the dog,
which didn't accompany us then
and feel the surf rolling in
touching your feet
with a wet kiss,

the wind blowing through your hair,
tugging at the auburn strings
and there was something in your eyes
as if you had captured the sky.

Some kites hang in a light breeze
frisking up and down
and the water was cold like always
with the beach stretching brown white,
almost endlessly.

You wanted to soak up the sun
like a goddess waiting
for her greatest admirer to appear
and we drank pineapple Fanta

while a superb smile
was on your face
and your perfect body
was smelling like coconuts
from the tanning lotion,

you became browner,
I turned red like an English European
and then burnt blisters on my shoulders
and yet, it was magic there

with people laughing, walking,
swimming everywhere
and still you and I
were on our own

with electricity running through
each touch and kiss
that I now truly miss.

Gert Strydom

On The Beach (Free Verse Sonnet)

Late in the afternoon over the sea
the day poured out the last out of its wineglass,
the bay, the wave is coloured red
when on the beach you do kiss me.
Next to the coast our love lays step upon step,
at high tide the moon is beautiful to you,
our castles lie scattered on the sand
when water in and out wiping all things of us clear.
The stars stretch almost unending wide,
the lighthouse at Danger Point limps on and off
and you find God's poetry in the night,
tell that in the universe a struggle rages,
far away dogs are barking continually
and in the moonlight your face glows softly.

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Gert Strydom

On The Beach (French Sonnet)

Where we were walking on that long beach
sand hit like sandpaper on our exposed shins
we gazed out at sea to where the horizon begins
and our thoughts were our own each to each,

of forgiving and living we did each other teach,
in life we realised a person loses and also wins,
it was if God did at that moment know all our sins
a paper-bag fluttered high just out of our reach,

while totally wordless we held each other close
to hunt for all kinds of shells I did to you propose
while you had been everything in the world to me

and at the time I did some poems to you compose
where maybe in this poem I am being very verbose
but I do remember the taste of your lips and the sea.

Gert Strydom

On The Bed She Lies Stretched Out Almost Naked,

On the bed she lies stretched out almost naked,
in a transparent night-gown
with her breasts and large nipples
immediately drawing my attention,

her love triangle
with dark pubic hair shines through
when passion causes her
to rip the front buttons of my shirt off

that falls like raindrops
pattering on the wooden floor
when my body is hot against mine,
with my hands finding her soft supple breasts

with her lips smouldering on mine,
with her hand leading me to her boiling point
and we are both shivering
caught in moments of lust

while she has difficulty
to unbuckle my belt,
to zip it down
and we both melt into each other nakedly.

Gert Strydom

On The Day Of My Birth

On the day of my birth
I am with my own love
and everything on earth
or existing in the heaven above
means nothing more
than the sweet company
of the one that I do adore.

Gert Strydom

On The Day That They Nailed Him To A Cross

On the day that they nailed Him to a cross
the shepherds went to the fields as they usually did,
eating that afternoon under the shadow of a tree
but when the sun suddenly
at three o'clock was setting they were dumbstruck

looking astonished at the animals
that were going back to the corral
and darkness fell across the earth
and it looked as if it was night
while nature rebelled at the death of its creator
and quickly they went home.

Graves outside the city was torn open
while the curtain at the temple ripped right through,
while people at the crucifixion
in darkness crowded together
and frightened soldiers were wondering
what was happening

when people without fear said
let His blood be on our hands,
they cast darkness over their descendants
and the whole of humanity,
over each one in every nation

and over the whole of humanity
there hanged a shadow
while He gave the last convulsions,
about the death of God
in which everyone shared
from young to the old,
even them in the highest positions.

Gert Strydom

On The Day That They Nailed Him To A Cross [2]

the sun did rise as it always does,
and shepherds did go to the veldt as they always do,

they did look astonish at the animals
when they were returning to the corral
when darkness came upon the earth as if it was night

and they were puzzled when the sun was setting at three o'clock,
and did wonder about the things that were coming upon the earth.
On the day that they nailed Him to a cross

shepherds did quickly return to their homes,
tombs were torn open outside the city
when they were returning to the corral

while thunder from heaven fell upon the earth,
when demons were disguised as men at the cross
and shepherds did go to the veldt as they always do,

and frightened soldiers were marvelled about what was happening
when mere man challenged God without any fear;
tombs were torn open outside the city

and the sun was dark in its orbit
when a scolding crowd came to the cross.
On the day that they nailed Him to a cross

mere men had His blood upon their hands,
darkness fell, over all of humanity there was a shadow,
when mere man challenged God without any fear;

and nobody cautioned against these acts and words
and for some time the Son of God was silent
and shepherds did go to the veldt as they always do,

while the creator God did die upon a cross
demons thought that they had won and laughed sneeringly;
darkness fell, over all of humanity there was a shadow

when God gave His own life in suffering,
when God died as a ransom for all of humanity.
On the day that they nailed Him to a cross
shepherds did go to the veldt as they always do,

when God saved man from the might of darkness
they did look astonish at the animals,
demons thought that they had won and laughed sneeringly
when darkness came upon the earth as if it was night.

Gert Strydom

On The End Of The World (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Archibald MacLeish)

Behind the scenes they act, while on the stage
life is a dance
and we fall for the show and laugh and play
in romance,
as in quick-time we are very smitten,
are in a trance
as some Bee-bee Bob the clown laughs and cries;
men go off to war to kill and some dies

and then still lurking are unseen beings,
in sheer darkness;
they poise, do mislead and cover their tracks,
with great aloofness
they turn all beliefs in nothing at all,
bring lawlessness,
try to drag most of humanity down
to wait on great disaster as their own.

[Reference: 'The End of the World' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

On The First Christmas

Where the sun burns almost without mercy
in the heavens of Africa,
and the tracks of drought stretch right over the continent,
a Bushman saw a strange star in the night
when the full-moon looked down silver-white from above.
Just after that the whole night-sky was covered with clouds,
he saw bolts of lightning coming down blue-white in the distance,
smelled the rain pouring down,
knew that on that night
God brought His mercy to the earth.
From far away in the East wise-men followed that star,
knew that this star indicated the birth of a king
and they brought to Him their most precious treasures.
In the veldt angels appeared to shepherds,
did sing about the good news to humanity:
sang about the birth of the redeemer,
who is Christ the Lord
and that child was found in a manger in clothes
when God came as a human to the earth
and still I am amazed by the love of such a God.

Gert Strydom

On The First Christmas-Day

(in answer to William Blake)

When Michael and His angels did the battle win
in the days of ancient antiquity
a plan was made to right iniquity.
while destruction came to be with sin.
At the time that Christmas did begin
the Lord God came to set all men free
and some do call it a story of mythology,
yet His love do my rocky-heart enters in.
As sure as the sun does in the heaven shine,
steadfast do stand the ocean and green hills
and men do chase after tin, iron and gold
the Son of God courageous and divine
did come to the factories, foundries and mills:
in the cry of a baby-boy God's mercy did unfold.

[Reference: "And did those feet in ancient time" by William Blake.]

Gert Strydom

On The Footsteps Through Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Petra Müller)

We exchanged years, innocence and labour
and in love we did spend our times together,
did picture faith, hope and love in our hearts,
did shelter together in a wild cruel world,
others wanted to keep remembering the hunt and the eland
but you and I did watch each other
did see and know the moon and stars
and our trust do still remain into our old age,
you could follow the honey-bird and so find treasures
and more precious than anything you are to me,
for days I waited on the eland and gemsbok
and in God's great mercy both of us are free,
I with only knowledge, energy, a bow and poisonous arrow
and you that do walk along with me mile upon mile.

[Reference: "onderweg 1" (underway 1) by Petra Müller.]

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Gert Strydom

On The Great Judgement Day

When Jesus does return and the trumpet of God does sound
on the great judgement day this world will tremble
and each eye will see Him with his presence everywhere,

everyone will see Him for who and what he really is.
Lucifer is the one who does devour everything
with his deeds, his words coming to full meaning

and he who could seduce and astonish the whole world
will suddenly loose all of his power and courage.
When Jesus does return and the trumpet of God does sound

then there is forgiveness for those who do know Him,
as His love is selfless and absolute.
Lucifer is the one, who does devour everything,

who stands malignant and jealous against him.
Every person will know that the omnipotent God does live
and each eye will see Him with his presence everywhere,

when He does make all things new,
even the dead will hear His call,
as His love is selfless and absolute.

He makes the earth again his property
when in the height he does glide with his angels.
When Jesus does return and the trumpet of God does sound

even Lucifer will call upon the mountains to cover him
as even he will realize that God is coming in righteousness,
even the dead will hear His call

and they will rise from the graves.
To those that worship Him, His righteousness will cling
and each eye will see Him with his presence everywhere,

the power of the prince of darkness will fail as being insignificant
and before Jesus Christ the redeemer and God he will bow
as even he will realize that God is coming in righteousness.

Lucifer will not be able to disguise his own guilt and shame
and he will recognize Jesus as the God sublime
when Jesus does return and the trumpet of God does sound
and each eye will see Him with his presence everywhere,

when the redeemed do sing rejoicing.
Everyone will see Him for who and what he really is
and before Him every person shall bow
with His deeds, His words coming to full meaning.

Gert Strydom

On The High Wire

I think no other person has a life just like this,
where continually I find myself on the high wire,
try to map the lifeline and every step could take me down
into the depths of the abyss

where distance is another perspective,
children without reason do take me on,
challenge me and do not expect that I will react,
I am startled at the thing called true love,

where every word and act has to be measured out,
even in church the head-elder and elders do gun for me
say things about the person that I am and my so-called friends
and mere lies bring them to their knees

where I have no pole to balance me
have to guess at the next step and the others beyond,
while my wife does see a threat in every other woman,
even when I am only being kind,

where unemployed life is hard and harsh,
while in this I do not beg and God does provide,
and I am under constant attack
while no one wants to take responsibility for their deeds

but then in all of this while the wire is taut
a sudden change does come,
while my perspective remains the same,
the perspectives of other people do change,

where the children love me when I land at the rim,
my wife still is hopeless in love with me,
slowly God does rearrange the things in His church
but at times I am balancing on a mere pin.

Gert Strydom

On The Highway

I who have traded
open spaces, fields
and the azure sky
for crowded pavements
and neon lights
find my place
to meet the Lord
on the dangerous road.

I have found the sapphire sky,
the breath of wind,
the white-hot sun
on lanes packed with cars,
busses and trucks
of every shape and size.

Every thing flashes by
as my motorbike catches speed
and accelerates
and men in cars sit irritated
stuck in rows of traffic
and I bob and weave by
while life throbs everywhere
and death grasp at my heels,

¶Envoi

I feel raw power
throbbing below me
and experience the majesty
of wind, sun, sky
and the countryside
that rush by
and life is great
and in silence
I pray to the Creator
and when it rains
it humbles me
and I slow down
and am cold and wet

and know that I am
just mere man.

Gert Strydom

On The Highway A Female Traffic Cop Pulls Me Off

On the highway a female traffic cop pulls me off
and with a book and pen
she trots to the window
which glides electrically into the frame.

I was careful
not to exceed the speed limit
and that little minx dressed in kaki
tests everything.

Suddenly she wants to get into the seat next to me
and wants me to open the bonnet
which makes me angry
as this sport-car belongs to me

and I do determine
who observes the inner works of it,
who rides in my car
and no speed-cop does seduce me.
On the highway a female traffic cop pulls me off

On the highway a female traffic cop pulls me off
and with a book and pen
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who rides in my car

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Gert Strydom

On The Hunt

From days of yore men did do the hunting,
did benison to the table bring
and did find the women to fill their lives
but slow or maybe faster still this is changing.

Nowadays some women are on the hunt for men
as debutantes by the Bishop blessed these women
as virgins in packs or sometimes battalions
like hungry wolves do snap at the heels of bachelors but then

they also use makeup as camouflage does on their own act
where hiding behind innocence soldiers they are,
do sometimes paint their nails and eyes black
and very, very wily do launch a attack
that leaves no mark or any scar
to find, capture and tame a man
as best as they can

until he does his fellow brothers leave at the bar
to be with her and drive her wherever she wants in his car
and intoxicated by her love his best friends he does forget
and before he knows it he does land in front of the wedding altar

but much more sly, cruel and with years of skill
are the older cougars that are masters at the kill
where constantly they are on the hunt with a kind of witchery
from which very few young men can escape,
do slap their fingers and they do dance at their will
and they do bend young men into their sexual rites
do have them entertain them through days and nights.

Gert Strydom

On The Hunt (Abcedarian)

A big cat darts energetically forward,
growls hungry, ignores juicy kangaroos,
lengthens mighty necessary obscure paces,
quietly rushes sneaking towards uncommon,
velvet, whinnying, zealous, yawning zebras.

Gert Strydom

On The Island

Cemented into existing
among grey buildings, long grey days
they listened keen on hearing any whispering,
even tried to hear the breaking of the sea,
the howling wind and rain sifting down

but everything was barred, as life in prison is
locked behind strong steel doors, shut in
where some people came as specimens
of a political cause gone beyond
civility with guns, bombs doing the talking
taking lives, killing
and time oozed on, as meaningless,
their lives were gone.

[Reference: On The Island by Dennis Brutus.]

Gert Strydom

On The Mountain Slope

On that very high mountain slope grass did cling
to our bare feet, some branches scraped us,
where we overlooked fishermen at sea,
where their boat suddenly rose up and down.

Below big waves washed against the hill,
I did not trust the cliff, the mountain side
and right there you firmly grasped my hand,
when the heaven became bluer than your eyes.

Did our open eyes deceive us right there?
or did somebody walk on the water,
as if the sea is an open grass field,
to the boat that was rocking up and down,
before Him the whole sea was wide open;
what a wondrous type of occurrence.

Gert Strydom

On The Move

With blazing lights they come
filling the mirror
before slicing past

helmeted men on machines
as if cast into saddles
become part of sheer speed

in black, blue or whatever colour jackets
some carrying passengers,
others driving alone

robustly swerving right through traffic
riding on thunder
under a blue open sky

with perfect control they drop a gear
or maybe two and in the distance disappear
as if dwindling into the horizon.

[Reference: On the move by Thom Gunn.]

Gert Strydom

On The Open Plain (Catena Rondo)

Some flowers rise up bright from tiny seeds,
blooms appear with heads searching for the sun;
on this earth so it's been since time begun,
some flowers rise up bright from tiny seeds,

blooms appear with heads searching for the sun
they rejoice over a day that is new
are fresh with the glistening morning dew;
blooms appear with heads searching for the sun

they rejoice over a day that is new
as bees and butterflies flutter along
birds do sing the happiest kind of song
they rejoice over a day that is new,

as bees and butterflies flutter along
wild deer graze at the soft tender green grass
while they in massive herds do slowly pass
as bees and butterflies flutter along

wild deer graze at the soft tender green grass
some flowers rise up bright from tiny seeds
grow to strength in a world full of big weeds,
wild deer graze at the soft tender green grass,

some flowers rise up bright from tiny seeds,
blooms appear with heads searching for the sun;
on this earth so it's been since time begun,
some flowers rise up bright from tiny seeds.

Gert Strydom

On The Other Side Of Known Reality

I

On the other side of known reality
there is a dimension that threads the world bare
and far away of the natural conversance and knowledge

reality is fabricated
and outside the terms of time
there is a place where another reality begins

and on the other side of midnight
time is totally lost
and somewhere in the late night

the subconscious tries to reach to it
and in dreams does built a magic carpet
that can find a bridge to it,

to a world that suddenly does appear
but usually with daylight does again wear out
and does disappear away into the nought.

II

Sometimes however unknown objects are seen,
people witness lights in the sky that does blind them
when unknown forces work in on nature
and people do believe
that other space beings want to find them

and others do want to measure energy fields
as proof that other foreign entities are on this planet
and its as if they do know something about these strange things,
are trying to do scientific research to unknown knowledge

but it is know that a great war rages each day
between Michael's angelic host
and the evil demonic forces of Lucifer
and sometimes the war spreads far and wide

and man stays caught in the middle of it,
when words and actions
lets the destiny of each human being
hang in the balance.

Gert Strydom

On The Other Side Of The Blue Curtain

Every day
the blue curtain appears,
unless white clouds
linen it off.

At dusk
the blue curtain,
disappears when it becomes transparent.

On the other side of the blue curtain
lies lights of ruby, sapphire and emerald
which appears in the heaven
and the black becomes full of dots
that twinkles and sparkles
and disappear
when the sun rises.

Gert Strydom

On The Other Side Of The Lomba River

There are flashes hitting in the distance,
bad weather hanging on the other side of the Lomba river
with tanks standing ablaze

nothing can stop the war clouds
(while the shots of enemy tanks resound)
or stop the slaughter of the angel of death

and Fapla, Cubans and Russians perish
and we also receive deadly shots.
There are flashes hitting in the distance,

where we teach them a final lesson in Africa
when the enemy appear
but olifant tanks and Ratel armoured cars are stuck in a landmine field

and howitzer canons fire
at the beginning of the slaughter
with tanks standing ablaze

and there are olifant tanks and Ratel armoured cars disappearing in the bush
with rockets raining down
when the enemy appear

which rip enemy weaponry into pieces
and division after division comes under restraint.
There are flashes hitting in the distance,

and the canons of howitzers, tanks and armoured cars fire continuously
while the smell of death is everywhere
with rockets raining down

with few enemy being still alive,
with some leaving intact tanks, fleeing to survive
with tanks standing ablaze

and I am conscious of the inhumanity
and feelings of powerlessness
while the smell of death is everywhere

and the slaughter goes on and on
and human life isn't important.
There are flashes hitting in the distance,
with tanks standing ablaze

and whatever you do or mean
nothing can stop the war clouds
and feelings of powerlessness
or stop the slaughter of the angel of death.

Gert Strydom

On The Other Side Of Yesterday And Today

Somewhere between now and then
I changed from a boy to a man
and had learned how sacred life is
and the Father can do anything.

Somewhere between then and now
I was participating in a war where I did not want to be
and saw how God
kept His hand over me on every single day.

Somewhere between here and there
my humanity was broken
and the horror of war
did not spare my soul.

Still between today and the other day
I again began to live, to laugh
and it was clear to me
that the Lord still like a Father waits on me.

[Reference: Verlore (Lost) by Lorinda Minnaar.]

Gert Strydom

On The Plain (Kwansaba)

On the plain a old lion searches
the world with his eyes and nose
before it stretch with nails spread out,
roars with thunder echoing over the cliffs,
causing the gazelle to tear away wildly
asking younger lions to come and fight,
while some cubs drink from their mother.

Gert Strydom

On The Platform

Suitcases, zipped bags
are present on the platform
while a train is entering it
and it stands and hisses steam
when adults and children
bustle and climb in
before the whistle blows.

Gert Strydom

On The Quay I Am Alone

On the quay I am alone
while fishing-boats sail into the green sea,
I hide behind my sunglasses
and some boats skip over the breakers
before they reach the calmer water
of the deep ocean,

seagulls hang screaming against the wind
as if they are a part of it
and the sails of wind-surfers flutter
while anxious some try to stay on top
when the wind changes direction
and are jerking them suddenly.

On the beach on the opposite side
a girl screams
as if she is barely alarmed
while her boy-friend sprays water over her
and a few lovely women
peep from behind their sunglasses at me
and I see the sun baking
their golden bodies,

high up cape gannets fly almost up to heaven
and I follow the sun
that is drawing lower over the dome of the sky
and try to see further
than where earth draws its horizon

and wonder what God does see
in humanity
where billions of us
teem like small ants
and everyone does lead a life,
gets hurt and do dream dreams.

Gert Strydom

On The Road To Emmaus

While we were walking
the seven miles to our house
that was in Emmaus
Cleopas and I were talking

about Jesus of Nazareth being crucified
about the life that he lead
and the cruel way in which he died
and this honest powerful man was now dead

thunder flashed down from the heaven,
the sun fled away
as if it wasn't day
and although the miles were only seven

our depressed walk felt like an eternity
and the things that happened in Jerusalem was frightening
laying like a very heavy burden on Cleopas and me
and then suddenly very exciting

another man was walking with us,
at first we did notice or even recognize him
and we told him, as we were so serious
why our lives seemed so dim

we told him how the women amazed us with the news
that the tomb was empty
and on this issue we both had our views
but some of our companions went to see

and the body of Christ was gone
they could not find him anywhere
and it felt as if we were totally alone
as his body was no longer there

but the man told us from the scriptures
about the mission of God the Son,
and we knew the things he had done
and even from his well known gestures

we did not recognize that Jesus himself had walked
and had talked
on the road to Emmaus with us
we only comprehended it later at the falling dusk.

[Reference: The Waste Land: V. "What the thunder said" by T. S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

On The Screen

On the screen the love struck way
that the woman and man
looked at each other with a kind of desire
brought the audience to that moment
when the two would become intimate,
the kind of magic imagery that the camera holds

as if every boy and girl,
every man and women watching
have suddenly become them:
where they are busy undressing,
in a kind of intimacy that is private,
while they are totally aroused
and the audience is caught, fused to them.

Gert Strydom

On The Small Hillock

On the small hillock the mist was swirling
opening only here and there
and then suddenly appeared a leopard
sneaking up some sharp edged rocks
as it came nearer and nearer
to a group of baboons
and there was something wild,
something dangerous and innocent to this
before the hunter and its prey
was suddenly swept away
in thick banks of fog.

Gert Strydom

On The Square

My motorbike is at a garage for a service
and when I return from work
I cross the square
to catch a buss
in Paul Kruger street.

There are hawkers selling sweets,
fruit, newspapers
and food
and people
walking to and fro.

This afternoon he is
on holy ground
with a shouting bugle
that yells to people
not to give money
but their hearts to Jesus Christ.

I wonder what uncle Paul
would think
about the neat black preacher
who is standing right against him
and the group
that listens soberly

and see grey-blue doves
picking up crumbs of bread
and I am glad
to drive my motorbike tomorrow again.

Gert Strydom

On The Street (Cavatina)

Daily I see bearded men with turbans
around their heads
dressed in white cloaks, women carrying
their prayer beads
in some colourful saris while in rags
a beggar pleads
and we are worlds apart from each other,
in their views and life some do not bother

and I am dressed in shoes, pants and shirt,
always wearing
one of several costly suits to church
have anything, ,
take a collar and tie to business
where I fit in
but are disregarding the poor old tramp
are viewing him as just another scamp.

Gert Strydom

On The Tips Of My Fingers

You are well-known to the tips of my fingers
and in the evenings when I lie right against you,
when the moon whispers secret things to the night
the being together becomes a great adventure
and then I am shaking.

When blood rushes through my veins,
your heart beat out love codes against my hand
then I notice the small things of you,
when your are at home in my arms
and against me all night long.

With the softness of your supple back,
the inter-twisting of leg over leg
we do lie together as one
and I feel the hot air

when your breath comes against my cheek,
when you are embracing me right through the night
and against me your skin is hot and soft
but somewhere at a time
we turn away from each other.

When words become bloodless
we do not even have to talk
when it's raining outside in the dark street
as love has got its own meanings
and its own way of saying things

but when I do wake up
you are right against me
when it's as if the whole day is only waiting
for the last magic of the night
and you smell like a spring garden full of new flowers

before the night disintegrates before the bright sun.

Gert Strydom

On The Veranda The Evening Did Suddenly Come

the twilight did turn to grey
before the stars broke out and filled the heaven
and slowly you fell asleep
while your eyes at times
like butterflies did flutter.

Your breath was hot against my cheek
while I carried you to the bedroom,
and just half-awake
in whispering words
you did further dream.

Gert Strydom

On The Way To Uniondale

One stormy Easter weekend
while I was driving on route sixty-two,
I found a beautiful girl
next to the road
just twenty kilometres from Uniondale
at the Barandas turn off,
the wind was swishing through her dark hair
and I heard it cry over the Kammanassie Mountain
and her thumb was out asking for a lift.

I brought the car to a standstill
and next to the road red allows were flowering
and she was dressed in a navy blue jacket,
and dark green pants
and I was worried that she was getting cold
and in the inside light of the BMW
she looked whitely pale
and smiled brilliantly
when we drove away
and when I asked where she was going
and she just answered
that she was coming along
which was kind of strange.

I still wanted to ask
what a lovely girl was doing alone
next to the road
when I smelled the apple blossoms
of her perfume
and she suddenly laughed shrilly
and the car door next to her
opened and closed and she was gone
and immediately I stopped the car
as I was sure that the woman
had jumped out.

Outside the car the road was empty
and while I walked up and down
without finding a sign of her

a police patrol car came along
and parked behind my car

and the constables were convinced
that I had given a lift to a ghost
and they called her Marie Charlotte Roux
and said that during Easter weekends
she wanders along that road
and to them my narrative
was an old well-known story.

[Reference: Accident on R62 where Marie Charlotte Roux passed away on the back seat of a Volkswagen Beetle, when her fiancé GM Pretorius lost control on 12 April 1968 in stormy weather. A year later he married and it is said that she started appearing from that time, but stopped after he was killed in a car accident in 1984, but who really knows? Maybe she will appear again.]

Gert Strydom

On This Amazing Continent

On this amazing continent,
that has been ablaze
with wars and killings
since man have dwelt here,
where some perish of hunger

and others live like kings,
I have seen things that are exciting,
have experience the most terrible things
but I cannot extinguish
the sound of Africa beating in my heart

nor my longing to be a part of my people,
the longing for my country that is part of me
and every single morning embraces me
with new life, with fresh air to breathe
and even under oppression I still remain free.

Gert Strydom

On This Dappled Dawn (Novelinee)

On this dappled silver shadowed dawn
you were in all my thoughts, were in my mind
and there was sheer loveliness in this morn,
without you to the beauty I was blind.
On different things my time I did spend
but in nothing could find any delight
and much too slowly along the day went
until the sheer black darkness of the night;
still I was lonely, you were out of sight.

Gert Strydom

On This Disintegrating Earth

On this disintegrating earth we try to reach answers,
while industry continuously contaminates every thing,
we try to see where everything fits

while no water washes away the dirt,
we half-blinded do not see the real causes.
On this disintegrating earth we try to reach answers

while we live in the pollution of smoke and gas,
as if we already have all the questions
we try to see where everything fits,

and the man in the street is taxed,
is hindered to the excess use of water and electricity.
On this disintegrating earth we try to reach answers

but do not see the skeletons in the cupboard,
not even the rich and famous that are resisting,
we try to see where everything fits

while with time our lives turn into ash,
nothing more can free us from this decay,
on this disintegrating earth we try to reach answers
we try to see where everything fits.

Gert Strydom

On This Early Summer Evening

On this early summer evening
outside the fish and chips shop I stop
caught by the serene colours in the sky

of the setting sun, the hues
of yellow and orange flowing into pink,
the clouds hanging white
somewhat like patterns
or connecting pieces of a puzzle

against the dark and light blue sky
with rays shining through
giving brilliance to them
as if falling in spotlights
or in broad bands at places

with the sun finally becoming
a small glowing ball
just here and there
appearing through open patches
of the now darker clouds and sky.

Gert Strydom

On This Lovely Hot Bright Autumn-Day (Couplets)

From your nice smile and life I am away
on this lovely hot bright autumn-day,

there are rain-clouds in the sky above
and in this lock-down you I do you love

where our own liberty is limited thereby,
where it's so sad that so many people die

from a small invisible kind of thing
that do to whole nations disaster bring

but still life and our love do go on
while this deadly thing isn't yet gone

and no one can travel to and thro
as we did just a few weeks ago

and this way of life may seem odd
but in this I entrust you to God

and every other person in our land
that does against this deadly thing stand.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

On Your Body There Are Scars

On your body there are scars
that does tell stories of you,
about pain and adventure,
of times that your blood did run
and a fan that sliced you
but away from those places
time and again I am lost in you,
your humanity lures me to look deeper
at the person that you really are.

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Gert Strydom

On Your Right Side You Become

On your right side you become
a glowing fire, right against me
and it's as if in this cold winter
I get shelter
and your touch is intimate and soft

and goes right through my whole being
bringing promises of far off horizons
and like a sailing ship
on the wide ocean
that sails through stormy seas
smashing without mercy

and suddenly see land
with a safe harbour:
you are for me, in this season of year.

Gert Strydom

Once At The Very Edge (Cavatina Sequence)

His thoughts went back to how it once had been,
to the last kiss,
a kind of mockery in her laughter
to times of bliss,
then to the final deceit with a friend
and then now this:
her language and body did her deeds vouch,
her arm hairs did rise at his very touch.

Pain had brought senselessness it was too much,
madness some say,
he then doubted if she had loved him,
a step away
some dazing heights brought him to no return,
a judgement day,
at the very edge he was lingering
as if still waiting there for something.

Gert Strydom

Once I Saw The Level Sea

Once I saw the level sea
rise and fall with an own tranquillity
but like it my life wasn't made
to act only obediently

and sometimes storm tossed on a reckless tide
where waters crashing rise and wane
I send out my love letters far and wide
to have you back with me again

and even if your loving does not humbly lave,
at times I yearn for the crushing crueller wave.

Gert Strydom

Once I Wrote A Kind Of Happy Song (Orléans Rondel Prime)

Once I wrote a kind of happy song
but could not record its sweet melody
and then I was longing for somebody
with whom my life did go terribly wrong

and the rhythm of that tune stayed, was strong,
while the words was somewhat like a parody.

Once I wrote a kind of happy song
but could not record its sweet melody

Now of that song I have lost the body,
lost it like a child among a throng,
do not know where any words do belong,
it could have been a kind of rhapsody,
once I wrote a kind of happy song
but could not record its sweet melody.

Gert Strydom

Once On A Hill

From His anguish the sun fled
the sky was dark as if shaded
and just before life completely left Him
He said to forgive them,
who do not know what they are doing

and this He talked about them
who had spit upon Him, mocked Him,
in nakedness degraded Him
and was glad to nail
an innocent very good man
to a piece of wood
in order to kill him

and still I wonder when
they realised if at all,
that they had killed
the creator God Himself
and inhuman, had lashed out
in great hatred
to one who loved selflessly?

Gert Strydom

Once We Were Kindred Spirits (Novelinee Sequence)

There was something catching in our first words,
in my youth as a student I met you,
something that the mind and body records
that leads to an unplanned rendezvous
while quite suddenly we were both happy
and for each other our feelings were strong
as if what we had could last into eternity
it felt as together we did belong,
as if the birds were singing a love song.

The cheerful birds were singing a love song
and stronger and stronger our feelings grew
as into months and years we went along
and separated days were very few
while you had the ability to know me
became the star in my sky, the morning light
and to the depths of your soul I did see,
cherished you both during day and night,
together our future looked quite bright.

Being together our future was bright
sunny Cape summer days did linger
we were inseparable, you held me tight
both had the same song, a favourite singer,
but that was then and many years are gone
while we have lived in different places,
with time differently our lives moved on
and by all the gods and holy high graces
at times you still do sneak into my phrases.

Gert Strydom

Once When I Go On God's Way

Once when I go on God's way
past the restrictions of this world
breaking away from this lonely existence
then I will find you on the other side of the further horizon.

Not straying between foreign fallen stars
but in the bright pure light
when He fetches me, fetches you
we will both be in perfect equilibrium in harmony

where everything always shines bright
no night, no darkness
disturbs the beauty, no evil entrenched
and everything is pure and sacred

and my beloved when you hear my words
after every thing our love still lasts.

[Reference: Gesprek van dooie siele (Conversation of dead souls) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

One Dark Night

I

One dark night
the sheep are restless
and not able to sleep,
but there's no wolf
or lion or other wild animal
trying to catch them
and there's a strange light
hanging high with the other stars.

It's as if the whole field around us
are waiting on something mystic to happen
and all the wild animals are awake
and here and there
lightning bolts are hitting white blue
out of an open sky.

II

While this is happening
we sit with anxiety around
a bright hot campfire
on which we put more logs
time after time
and gaze into the night
and wonder what is coming?

Suddenly a mighty being appears
surrounded by blinding white light
and it's clear that he comes
from the almighty God
and we are speechless with fear
and scared to be in the presence
of a holy being.

III

l'Envoi

His voice is clear in pitch and sound
and sounds more pure
than bells ringing
and he tells of a child
that is born,
a Son,
being called:

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father
and Prince of Peace
and that He is the Christ and the Messiah.

In Bethlehem, just over the hill
we will find Him
wrapped in cloth in a manger
between farm animals.

[References: Luke 2: 8-1, Isaiah 9: 6.]

Gert Strydom

One Dark Night The Moon Was Clouded Out

One dark night the moon was clouded out,
the raging wind was jerking the blinds,
tearing curtains howling hysterical
tossing papers, books onto the floor

crazy did slam the reading lamp down
like a angry lover, a woman with temper tantrums
and I closed every window, every door locking her out
where she whimpered with tears

on the windowpanes, howled in anger
at the outside doors
and I witnessed something,
like a ravishing beauty with wild hair
while the trees were rocking
in the flashing thunder that she was calling,
calling down on me.

Gert Strydom

One Day At A Waterfall

I went to a waterfall
in the drakensberg mountains
on a sunny day
and there was something,
in the sound of the pouring water.

a Song was cast in the water,
but the words were gone
and just the thundering tune was left.

For a time I listened to the rushing sound
and the rhythm,
went deep into my heart.

Was this how David Livingstone felt,
when he stood at the Victoria Falls
and the thundering smoke
opened before his eyes.

Gert Strydom

One Day In Jail

One day in jail
and the next
on the throne,
and unlike Joseph,
as the ruling Faro.

From prison
straight to parliament and cabinet
and to live
in the President's mansion.

From one man's terrorist
and the leader of bomb planting killers,
to another man's freedom fighter
and the leader of a nation.

From a prisoner
to someone with integrity
and dignity and a passion
for his people.

All of this may sound
like a really mad plot,
but the truth is at times
much stranger than fiction.

Gert Strydom

One Evening I See A Thing

One evening
I see a thing
that let's my blood boil,
while I watch the news
on the television set.

I know a bold man
without hair
that stands before a big crowd,
his country, the world
and the God of gods
and lays his hand
on the holy black book
and lies a promise down and gives a solemn oath
to be true to his country and fellow man.

His government drove me to Angola
and back again
and all of the oppressed
really did have to get freedom,
but where did he stay
his brother's keeper?

Now it seems
that he really doesn't have a clue
about how a white man
with a degree and lots of experience
has difficulty
to find a permanent job at forty five
and to put food on the table
and all of government
falls apart
through people that have no clue
how to do their work.

Thousands of rands of tax
are subtracted from my contract work
and tax pays
his fat pension.

I want to blister
like a hot potato,
because he has the impudence
to say something about affirmative action
and I pray for him
and ask God to change him
and for him to be blessed,
as it is the way
that my mother taught me
to do to my enemies.

My contract is finished
and I have to find another job
and from that,
he stands totally free.

Gert Strydom

One Hell Of A Ride

With ears huge like satellite dishes
Johnny worked at the roadhouse
and it was a place where you could drive in
to get your take away food
and when he noticed a green V6 Cortina
nobody was in the car and the engine was running.

In a moment Johnny got into the car,
shifted it into gear and the tires screamed wildly
while he raced down Voortrekker Road
and there was fear and emptiness on his stomach
when a lorry suddenly swerved in before the Cortina
and the plate at the backside of the truck gleamed

and there was just on big bang,
when everything turned into darkness,
when the engine of that Ford crumbled
and Johnny's destiny had been set between heaven and hell
and this is how it's with humanity
where no one really knows what waits on the other side.

Gert Strydom

One Military Hospital

At Klipdrift military base
just outside Potchefstroom
where now the kaki bush,
other weeds and grass are knee high

through ash holes, rubbish, broken glass
barbwire, tins and stones we went
with fire in movement exercises
and live ammunition fired over us.

We ran, cat walked, leopard crawled
and was sent to and fro
with bullets hitting up dust around us
and some grenades were tossed
a distance away.

The very next day my left knee
was busted good and well
and when I reported sick
the PTI-corporal
almost busted his gut
and touched the crossed swords
on his arms

and told me if by any chance
I came out of the sickbay that day
he would see to it
that I would really take a beating.

The doctor at the sickbay,
called in another one
and yet another one
and the three of them
didn't want to treat me

and said that there was a big chance
of me losing my knee
which was swollen like a rugby ball
and they sent me by ambulance

straight to One Military Hospital
at Voortrekkerhoogte in Pretoria.

I was wheeled into casualties,
where I had to wait some time
while shot up people
flown in straight from the war
was treated first.

When they finally got to me
they took one look at the leg
and wheeled me into
an operating theatre
where they asked
if I wanted to walk again?

I just said heal me
and they removed my uniform,
strapped me down
with bands around my feet
hands and legs

and gave two injections
just above the knee cap
and said that it was local anaesthetic
but wouldn't help much
and that nothing would really
take the pain away
of the next procedure.

They pushed a big syringe
with a large needle
in under my knee cap
and the pain was great
as they pulled out puss
but I didn't make a sound
while tears of pain
were in my eyes.

The laboratory identified
the infection that I had
and they said that I have got

septic arthritis
and everything was swell
while I got a drip
with the right antibiotics
and some pain killers,

watched television from a set
on the wall,
had my own radio
to choose music from
and could even order
from a menu
and it was like staying
in a great hotel
where they fixed me properly
and after two weeks
that was like a holiday
I walked out of there.

[PTI=Physical training instructor.]

Gert Strydom

One More Time (Free Verse Sonnet)

One more time through the veldt I want to walk with you,
where the sweet grass do everywhere stand knee-high and green,
where everything is untouched and open
as if this world is not slowly going to the abyss.
Come my love, let all our days become like summer
when the thunderstorms do come in the afternoon,
let God pour out His blessings on holy moments,
let faith, hope and love always soak through our hearts,
although there are times that the thunder do flash blue-white in your eyes,
let every day be full of sunshine and pure thoughts,
while all words and events flash back and forward
and we do live together in sincere love without any fear,
where love passion, emotion and more than this is principle,
let we bring light to others in a world full of darkness.

Gert Strydom

One Morning I Sat At A Ridge

At the bank of a stream
one morning I sat at a ridge,
surrounded by ferns, under an old oak tree

in a wild garden, never spaded by man
with aloes, protea's and lilies that grew by themselves,
one morning I sat at a ridge,

where branches were not pruned by man,
an earthy scent hanged there
with aloes, protea's and lilies that grew by themselves,

I was caught by the creation of God,
as if I could stay there until eternity
an earthy scent hanged there

and later I put a line or two into the water,
roasted fish on the coals,
as if I could stay there until eternity

away from the city's noise.
At the bank of a stream
I roasted fish on the coals
surrounded by ferns, under an old oak tree.

Gert Strydom

One Morning I Saw A Man

One morning I saw a man
who looked at me
with red eyes
and his beard,
was unshaven and grew
rough and untamed.

The man looked familiar
and in the look in his eyes,
was something that hit
into my very soul.

Years was etched into his face
and it told its own story
and I almost did not recognise him,
but the mirror showed my own face.

Gert Strydom

One Night (Terzanelle)

One night I recalled
the picture of your majesty
where over me you sprawled

and the sweet memory
burns in me with energy and grace.
The picture of your majesty

revives the sweet embrace,
the treasured caresses
burns in me with energy and grace

and my eyes see your auburn tresses
and I still feel them against my cheek,
the treasured caresses

and kisses flowing over me as if from a creek,
tears of joy that gently came
and I still feel them against my cheek,

as a sign scrawled over my frame.
One night I recalled
tears of joy that gently came
where over me you sprawled.

Gert Strydom

One Night At The Movies

When you just started working
I took you on a date,
with the candlelight in the Spur
your eyes burnt deep dark brown.

Your hand was soft
and maybe it was to easy,
to make you laugh
and life was just another game
and you were excited about your dreams.

On the ice rink we skated
up and down like teenagers
and you got me tired
and I almost
fell in love with you

Yet that times were innocent
and you were,
just too young for me
and I wanted nothing more
than a kiss.

I see you at the movies
and you are a mature woman
and there's sincerity in your eyes
when you greet me
and something that can go much deeper,
when your lips touch mine for a moment.

I almost wish
that we can be alone for a few moments
when I see heartache behind the mask,
but the commitments of life
set its claims
and I buy popcorn and cool drink
while two boys wait for me
and you are buried in my memories
and just a photo in a album.

Gert Strydom

One Night I Dream

One night I dream
about ratel armoured cars
that looks different
and are almost as impenetrable
as American tanks

and can shoot accurately further
than G-6 howitzers while moving
and can drive right through
landmine fields
and we are fighting
in a enemy territory

There are enemy weapons
burning everywhere
and their aeroplanes
are grounded in rows

and when we win
I have already for a time
being wishing for it to end
as I am fed up with war,
killing and people that suffer

but this dream
and many others
that really happened
stays with me.

Gert Strydom

One Night I See Him

One night I see him
glaring in through the window
before he sneaks past
and he is totally unaware
of the dog
that noiselessly is following on his heels
with jaws wide open
ready to bite,
while he walks further
with his evil intent

and I am ready with a weapon,
are ready to go out
to face the criminal,
the night-marauder,
with my torch
and when I move
both of the dogs do growl
before they do jump and bite
and that sneaker
does harrowing roar and scream.

When I come out
there is something unpleasant and evil about
when I look into the bloody-red eyes of the tikoloshe
for mere moments I am astonished, do want to shout

silently do pray for the monster to be gone
but curiosity dares me to look and it's the only one
when in vain the dogs do jump, growl and bite
while my heart wants to turn to stone

but quickly he does jump over the six-foot high wall and do escape,
and infatuated I walk up and down in yard looking for the man-ape
but the monster is away, as if it has melted into the night,
and in the distance I hear a woman scream as if she is being raped.

Gert Strydom

One Night In The Tranquillity I Heard Him Pass

One night in the tranquillity
I heard Him pass,
for long moments nature was silent,
as if all things had come to a standstill,
when the sun was setting lingering He was near;
the bright moon
suddenly caught me later like a child,
as I was shaking and blinded by my sin.

Gert Strydom

One Night We Walked

When it still was there
one night we walked
hand in hand on the white beach
at Uvongo
and there was no wind
on the lagoon
and the waves crashed from the sea
and I could hear the waterfall
splashing into the lagoon
and a great yellow moon
was magical in the sky
and somehow that world
was just made for you and me.

Gert Strydom

One Perfect Rose

A single flower she dropped when we met
and in her hands she held a pipe, a water hose
that splashed me by accident quiet wet
while at my feet lay a perfect rose.

I wanted to take her for a spin on my motorbike,
to experience the sun and wind in a special way,
wanted to give her a present that she would like
but she giggled and with a garden hose began to play

and like little children we ran up and down
laughing and having fun
and never such exuberance I have known
from the time that my dating had begun

and later when I returned her rose her eyes did propose
a tender embrace, maybe a kiss and I held her close.

Gert Strydom

One True Darling I Do Implore

How much I longed for her to be different
but still through the ages it stayed true
that no girl was heaven sent
and to the ways of love there was nothing new,

while a boy and girl each other met it was the same
and like all others they did kiss and kiss,
while being for a time in bliss, believing no other was like this
and who is to blame when suddenly the parting came?

Helen smiled in sheer loveliness,
while the man that swept her away was somewhat reckless
and one true darling I do implore,
but probably will wait forevermore.

Gert Strydom

One Winter At The Sea

Meters under the surface lies rocks that are rough, black and shining
where everything is caught in a twilight that trickles through from above,
where sea-grasses and bamboo gambols in the swell
when seekers with diving masks and oxygen swim still deeper,
try to decipher a broken surface that is covered in coral
and they only find rotting chests, the skeleton of an age-old ship
but when a shark passes to near a diver clings to his knife
and when it disappears from the scene again looks at the sea bed.

Gert Strydom

One Winter At The Sea [2]

Meters under the surface lies rocks that are rough, black and shining
where everything is caught in a twilight that trickles through from above,
where sea-grasses and bamboo gambols in the swell
when seekers with diving masks and oxygen swim still deeper,
try to decipher a broken surface that is covered in coral
and they only find rotting chests, the skeleton of an age-old ship
but when a shark passes to near a diver clings to his knife
and when it disappears from the scene again looks at the sea bed.

Gert Strydom

Onlooker (Free Verse Sonnet)

The eye measures everything in colour and black and white
but do not see that which is deep in the heart,
where love gets an own kind of stature,
I do own the beautiful of you in memories,
you do remain constantly in my remembering,
as I do cling to the present and the past,
while destiny brings me back to reality
and I entrust our love and you to God,
where after years I look much deeper at you
and nothing of your humanity does escape me,
where deep in my heart I know about your love,
you still as an angel look pretty:
in a broken world I know who you are,
as only you do bring my life to meaning.

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Gert Strydom

Only A Photograph Could Hold The Moment

Only a photograph could hold the moment
with the rainbow appearing at the harbour
falling over the jetty
as a iridescent brilliant thing

while in the background
yachts, motor liners and cruisers
were drifting on high tide
right next to the pier

and you were smiling
while some gulls hang screeching
and the clouds were opening
to a dull blue sky
and we could be forever here
with the smell of the sea around us.

Gert Strydom

Only Darkness

Coming out of the theatre
I find an oxygen pipe in my throat,
I am strapped down on a wheeled bed
with people swarming around me.

When the pipe comes out of my mouth
I look at them and they look at me
and they are rather astonished
that I have come to my wits and my throat is sore.

You were dead for moments,
far past unconsciousness,
your heart stopped beating,
you stopped breathing, one of them says
and want to know what I am seeing now?

People standing in a circle
around me clothed in green jackets
I say hoarsely
and answer the question: who I am.

Then one asks somewhat nonchalant
what I remember from the other side?
When I look at him without comprehending
someone else wants to know
how it is to be dead?

On which I answer:
only darkness.

Gert Strydom

Only For You I Have Got Eyes (Persian Quatrain)

Only you I do really in my mind and heart see
as you are more than any other woman to me
and you can trust these words as utter truth
where to my humanity you do bring a new ability.

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Gert Strydom

Only God I Do See

On the battlefield with bullets whistling,
beyond enemy lines without food or shelter,
under a harsh unrelenting sun
You were the only One that accompanied me.

At the shops where I do business,
at the bank while I stood in long queues,
at work under a unrelenting boss,
You were my partner that worked with me.

In the love of my spouse,
in the smiles on my children's faces
even when I contemplate the lines of my verses
only God I do see.

[Reference: "In the market, in the cloister – only God I saw" by Baba Kuhi of Shiraz.]

Gert Strydom

Only In Your Lovely Company

(after Danie Marais)

You are as straight as the N1 through the Karoo
and in your promises I can believe and trust,

with sunshine-glances you do smile at me
and I look past all of the dark places,

you are not only spirit
but truly flesh and blood,

your kisses and breath are fresh like the mountain wind
and our passion is like a fire that wants to devour,

when I am naked before you I am like a god
and as human you are infatuated by me,

when we chat my days are full
even if the world falls apart and things are a mad rush

and only in your lovely company
hours and days do go into the naught.

[Reference: "As jy wil" (If you want to) by Danie Marais.]

Gert Strydom

Only Once In A Lifetime

There is a kind of flower
that only once a year
opens her buds
and when the moon rises full and bright
shows her colours
while people await
the appears of her flowers
in silence in a temple
as if she is holy.

Only once in a lifetime
there is a girl that is like an angel
without any match

and that woman
I have found in you.

Gert Strydom

Only Words (English Sonnet)

Blessed is the time that we do together spend,
where much more than the world you are to me
and sheer magic do nature to your beauty lend
where with you every day of life I do want to be,

where your loving I will never in any life refuse,
while just words are the trifle gifts for me to give,
where day upon day we do the things of life use
and in your presence I do really abundantly live,

where pitiful is life when we are apart and I alone
and that our love is not true no one can us deceive,
where its impact and its essence will never be gone
but of us do to eternity its presence in words leave

that does after we are gone still live on in a legacy
from destruction remaining forever truly totally free.

Gert Strydom

Only You And Me

The time that we pray,
in work and play,
the bustle in our house
each morning and each day,
is the way that life goes.

Still you are dearer to me
than any friend or comrade
and remain my hope and destiny
and in the reality
what really matters
is the relationship between us.

Gert Strydom

Only You And Me [2]

In the fine spray of the Cape's winter wind
we look at the foaming horses
that breaks in the distance on the beach
and here and there, there is a lost light that burns
but you are smiling very happy
while you pull your jacket tighter
and we are alone;
only you and me.

Gert Strydom

Onslaught

When water falls as streams
out of the air,
when thunder roars ominous
from the blue sky
the earth at times
are covered by clouds of fog
that blots out everything
and somewhere in this world
you and I are caught up
in our own small existence
while God folds His hand over His world
and constantly controls the weather
and it feels like an experiment
into which we are cornered
while a fierce struggle,
rages about the earth.

Gert Strydom

Oozing Water Of Being Human

When the sun rises at half past six against the horizon,
when it looks if it's drawing a bloody line
right across the ocean up to the land
then the old sergeant jogs with his brush-moustache
to swim in the sea
before every working day.

Some of the lights of Durban are still burning
and streets and buildings
are lighted up across that golden beach
that lies right from him
where the gates of Natal |Command
do swing close behind him,
where the guards do greet him like on every morning

At the jetty boats are set on the water
where the tiller man stands at the wheel
at something that looks like a pulpit
and the fishermen do kiss their wives
before they do drive away
with the pickup trucks and trailers

and those boats do sail into the sea
over the first wave do jump high into the air
hitting the water with a thud and spray
and then they sail to where they think that the fish are

while the seagulls do land
to look around curiously
and are searching for something to eat
where his bags with towels
and his clothes and shoes lie.

An engaged couple
do celebrate their engagement with champagne
on the beach
do kiss each other big eyed and full of love

while the sandpipers

do land quickly and peck and run
where the sea draws back
and do fly up again
before the next wave breaks.

The water is cool
where it washes over the whole body of the sergeant
where it does embrace him like an old girlfriend
as if the whole sea did wait only on him
while another couple do walk on the beach
with a toddler and a dog
and he hears the child's laughter
of the joy of being at the sea.

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Gert Strydom

Op 'n Koppie Buite Die Stad

On a hillock outside the city
a monument build from marble and stone
guards forevermore,
catching the sun's
rays one new day dutifully.

It tells true stories
of a nation's struggle to survive and be free
from oppression and a great trek
across the veldt and over high mountains,
of vicious wild men
and the belief
in the creator God
who came to aid
to save from total annihilation
when they called on Him.

[Reference: Voortrekker monument just outside Pretoria.]

Gert Strydom

Open Letter (Parody)

(with apology to Koos A. Kombuis)

Are you still living?
Do you sleep peacefully during the day,
while at the work being totally nuts?
Without being able to do a single stitch?
In the battle you fight
against everything that is orderly or looks white,
in back street
at your whorehouses?

Is there a little bit of dust
in your kitchens or behind your cupboards?
Is your black PA full of emotion?
Do you sit comfortable on the porch?
(Mind it, with too many ignorant people you have got trouble,
that lets a company go down and makes people call on God.)

If you do not care and have wiped
all the murders from your hands
or do really understand
or sell it like a burlesque on television
and without people knowing it are resting
while unholy fire burns in your beds,
you can break eleven commandments
and put guns to the heads of people
while you kick them
against their shoulders saying:

"Good, we will go further,
this is how it's supposed to be
when some winters come to the white man.
Take everything and invade without mercy
even rob the poor and the drunk,
even insult an envoy of Bill Clinton
while spit runs from your mouths."
(but be very angry
and killers and thieves without any ambition.)

Do you political role players
really find equity for the injustice and crime that are gnawing?
Can you instigate the masses still further?

(for heaven's sake)

"Does God not hear our prayers? "

[Reference: Ope brief aan die body corporate (Open letter to the body corporate)
by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Ophelia

I saw Ophelia standing in the wood
next to a lovely pond
covered by water flowers
and some white lilies bloomed
on the bank while she looked
innocent and holy.

There were small white flowers
in her fair hair
which hang past her bosom
and she smiled radiant as the sun
while picking purple and white flowers.

She waded into the pond
like a nymph
blessing every thing
as far as she went
and her perfume hangs heavy
on the soft breeze
and willingly I could have been
a disciple baptised by her,
someone that would follow her anywhere
but I didn't want to disturb her there.

Gert Strydom

Orange Blossoms On A Tree

Orange blossoms on a tree
catches my eye,
where it stands alone
in the inner city
and there's a blinding bright sun
that is already hanging quarter height
in a cloudless sky.

It's Wednesday and half week
and it's spring with green leaves,
trees full of blossoms
and almost summer
because the sun's bright rays
are already early hitting my eyes

There's a woman with a pink blouse
and purple skirt,
that crosses the street
and are not looking out
for the oncoming cars and taxis.

Doves crowd around a man
that throws pieces of bread
on the ground next to him,
at the art museum
and the sun is now rather
bright white than red.

Gert Strydom

Origin

The great universe as it does exist
with pulsars, stars and nebula do insist
as do the moon at night, the sun at day,
that the great Originator did his power display
and when all of these are in man's sight,
do constantly tell of an omnipotent God's might

and everything upon this earth
do proclaim their origin and their birth,
even do tell of the impact of sin
that did with the fall of man begin

and yet in the heart of reasonable man
self-important he does protest just where he can,
have no comprehension of God's inexplicable ways
while each human's life do run out in numbered days

while still God does create his marvellous designs
do leave of His presence everywhere the signs,
from nothingness brings forth whatever is in His will,
do the whole universe with his great wonders fill.

Gert Strydom

Orion

In the sky I see at night
the hunter Orion
lurking nearer
with his club raised
ready to bash
and its oblong shape
becoming clearer
and the belt shines bright
and sword dimmer
where it points away.

Gert Strydom

Orion [1]

In the sky I see at night
the hunter Orion
lurking nearer
with his club raised
ready to bash
and its oblong shape
becoming clearer
and the belt shines bright
and sword dimmer
where it points away.

Gert Strydom

Orpheus And Euridyce (Refrain Stanza)

Everything animate and inanimate heard his lire
while his music brought to the heart desire
his songs did enchant with great beauty
and did set the spirit and soul free
but when a viper killed Euridyce whom he did love and admire
Orpheus went down into the under-earthly hell,
played with the lire to put Hades under its spell,
regained Euridyce but looking back her life did expire
while his music brought to the heart desire.

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Gert Strydom

Orpheus And Eurydice

High up in the Sugar-bush hillocks on a knoll
the alfalfa field lays picture beautiful under me
when a striped cobra does lie upside down next to my boot
and I do trample the head of it before it can get life.
Around me the sugar bushes do flower,
while wild plums and wild-peaches do grow anywhere
when I jump from boulder to boulder to the top
and bloody-red aloes do astound me with their colour.
In the alfalfa field Hein is busy playing on his guitar,
is trying to steal a kiss or two from his girlfriend Suzette
but her eyes are closed as if she can hear and see nothing
when the guinea fowl go silent and I wonder if I am imagining it
and I jump down some boulder to have a better look
where to me they look much like Eurydice and Orpheus.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Ort Jan Van Hunks

Many years back an old pirate
Ort Jan van Hunks lived in Cape Town
and he had gathered enough loot
to live an honest life.

Just above the company gardens
he bought some land
and he thought that trustful slaves
would do the work for him
while he would watch his vineyards grow
and it would be possible
to give attention to his weaknesses.

The loneliness caught up with van Hunks
and he got himself a wife
but in Cape Town
at that time the choices was slim
and he was married to a huge woman
that was so broad
that she could not enter a door
without turning sideways
but he thought that in the cold winter evenings
she would keep him warm.

The trouble with his wife
was that she was a strict person
who drove their slave girls
to polish everything,
she had driven him away
from his own fireplace
with a hard hitting elbow,
as she was scared
that the ash from his pipe
would fall on the beautiful yellow-wood floor.

At the trees high up against the saddle
where Devil's peak joins Table Mountain,
van Hunks found a big rock
that was flat like a settee

and there nobody would bother him
as the Citizens thought
that only a lunatic
would climb the peaks of Table Mountain.

With a barrel of rum and a heap of tobacco
that he had carried along secretary
van Hunks was dreaming
with his pipe in his mouth
while he saw the shadow
of the mountain
creeping blue over the meadow
during the late afternoon.

The silence and rest, with the sliver coloured trees,
the small white houses stretched out beneath him,
the castle holding its ground,
was like balm to his soul
and his gaze went to the harbour
with the huge sailing ships
and the deep blue ocean.

On a bright summer day
when he was drawing pleasing on his pipe
and was taking one shot of rum after the next
an irritating sharp voice said:
"Good morning old chap,
what a lovely day we have got."

Van Hunks turned his head
and saw a small fat man
dressed in a black frock-coat
with a black hat on his head
and an expensive walking-stick in his hand.

Van Hunks growled
"Who the hell are you
and what are you doing here? "

The man smiled and said:
Some people call me Nick,
but I have many other names

and at times I come up to catch some fresh air
and to smoke my pipe

and he removed his hat from head
while he bowed over
and van Hunks
saw two small red horns
while Nick gestured into the direction
of Devil's peak.

"I know that you are van Hunks
and I have your old companion
captain Roedolf van Boons
and all of his men with me,"
which hit van Hunks hard
as they were all dead.

"You have got to meet my wife,
she is a hell of a thing," van Hunks said
while he watched
the small fat man carefully.

"I have heard about her,"
Nick said with laughter
and he took out a good iron pipe
while van Hunks gestured towards the tobacco.

Van Hunks removed a pair of dice from his pocket
of which the weight was so
that he always was winning and he asked:
"Do you want to play?"

"It will be great," said the small man
"let us see your money"
while he placed a bag of gold on the rock.

Out of his pockets van Hunks took
a hodgepodge of golden franks, golden guilders,
golden sovereigns and golden rings.

"I did not expect us to play
and do not have a lot of money with me

but we will see who wins.
We will really see, " van Hunks said
while he stroked his pair of dice.

"Great stuff,
I can always give you credit on your soul, "
the devil answered smiling.

Just when the game started Satan said:
"Here's Peter as well, "
and van Hunks looked up astounded.

"I have come to warn you, " Peter said
and van Hunks became angry and replied:
"Leave me alone.
I get enough warnings at home."

"Peter, you will get nowhere with him.
Do you also want to play? "
The Small man asked.
"It will be really nice, " Peter answered
while he gazed upwards.

Van Hunks took some more tobacco out
and another pipe
before he did shake the dices in his hand
and threw them.

They smoked and played
and played and smoked and cleaned their pipes
and started to smoke again
while the game went on
and van Hunks smiled at himself.

With time the air got thicker
and still thicker
while they were clouding the mountain
with so much smoke
that the rock-rabbits, lizards
and snakes fled from their holes.

Suddenly it became dark

from all of the smoke
until Peter could not see the dice clearly
and he started to slap his wings slowly
to blow the smoke away

and the more they did play,
the more they did smoke
and the harder Peter was hitting his wings
until a strong breeze was blowing.

Beneath the mountain the citizens
decided to go home
to get in their hot beds
with their wives
as it was the strongest South Easter
that had blown in many years

and down in the bay
the colour of the water changed
from blue to green and later grey
and the waves was getting bigger
causing the ships to throw out some more anchors
and the captains to return from the bars
back to their heaving ships.

Up high on the saddle of the mountain
the game went on
and the more they played,
the more they did smoke
while the cloud got bigger
and kept growing.

Later van Hunks rose tiredly
and stretched out while he said:
"Friends, I have got all of your money
and a halo and a tail as surety, "
while both Nick and Peter
looked downhearted back at him.

"The old woman is waiting
and I will have to go
or she will knock me around out of anger, "

van Hunks said
before he took the twisting road down the mountain.

"It looks as if he has cheated us
but the games was really great, "
Peter said to Nick.

"Hey there van Hunks, " the devil called.
"We want to play again at another time,
as we are now friends? "

"Hallo, " van Hunks called back
certain that they want to find out
how he had won them

but van Hunks agreed to play again
in the summer on a sunny day
as he had trouble with rheumatism.

On the next occasion
each one bragged
that he could smoke
much more than the others
and the winner
would receive a ship full of gold
and after days of smoking
the old pirate
won both the devil and Peter

Thunder suddenly erupted from Devil's peak
hitting just where van Hunks was standing
and he did disappear
and there was only a scorched place
where he had been

and on a summer day
when clouds cover Table Mountain,
the game of smoking
and gambling still continues.

Gert Strydom

Our Communion

When I rub lavender balm into your feet
it's every time,
as if we go praying into communion
and in peace stand sinless before God.

I wash your feet in coarse salt
and there are things fitting neatly into our lives
and other things that we talk about
that breaks open a person's heart.

Sometimes a candle or two are lighted
and the jasmine scent
comes in from outside
and it smells fresh like a new start.

There's garlic bread of which I get slices
and the smell hangs in the air between us
and we discuss things suspended between us
that a person has difficulty to express in words.

The bottle St Celine
produced by Douglas Green
tastes to you like bitter blood
and you tell me about your pain and bliss.

Gert Strydom

Our God

Our God whose powers eternally does last
set His tracks in the midst of the worst storm,
His power supreme is present in the lightning's blast,
daily all of nature does his miracles perform

many aeons are like mere days in His sight
while the whole firmament, the utter darkness,
sways before the purity of his holy light
as the same He remains endless

and whoever knows Him cannot deny that He exists
unfathomable His knowledge, presence and power is;
through all the ages, from begging of time, His love persists,
He is even there when couples meet in joy's purest bliss,

in Him remains our hope and strength in time to come,
as our divine leader, the one who leads us home.

Gert Strydom

Our House

You made changes to the house,
did again paint it on the in and outside,
hanged new curtains and lace-curtains,
and the roof-tiles are another colour.

With new gutters and down-pipes
and new floor-tiles on which I walk
everything is so perfectly beautiful,
at a Pierneef-painting I am speechless

and while the rain pours down outside we are alone.

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Gert Strydom

Our Intimate Joy (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Our intimate joy, the great tenderness
has something much deeper than just gratefulness
and in every touch when we are in bliss
it's as if we are truly one in each caress.

Gert Strydom

Our Little Hillock

When I was but a boy
not going to school yet,
my brother and I
climbed the rocks
of a green hillock

found our own little cavern
hidden behind some creeping green bushes
and the earth, blue sky,
the sun and rain
were our playmates

and with small catapults
we could let stones fly
like whizzing bullets
hitting anything that we found

and we were kings of that hill
sending baboons back on their way
and that farm was a boy's dream,
and we were catching
yellow fish and carp from the stream

and at times we were just as wild
as our world
making lions leap yellow and wild
from our eyes
which roared thunder clapping in rage

when the neighbouring boys
ganged up on us
wanting to take our little hill
and stones would fly to and thro
missiles of clay whipped
from willow canes
and our little knoll would stay our own.

Gert Strydom

Our Love Is Immune To Decay

With all things running into dilapidation,
when even the strong, the wise, rich and influential
at a time go into trepidation,
at the possibility of destruction coming in all of its potential

only our love is immune to the decay
and even when life sweeps past,
is fading away at the end of its day
when nothing can longer last

this sweet principle, this deep emotion
is far stronger in its course
than any other thing, any other notion
and outlasts even death and divorce

as God blesses from above
those that truly love.

Gert Strydom

Our Love Is Like No Other Love Has Ever Been (Rondel Prime)

You did out of the blue come to me suddenly,
changed my life to excitement that was once serene
and the feelings between us is passionate and keen,
as if from creation for each other we are meant to be,

from all other desires my heart is suddenly free
and you are like no woman that I have ever seen.
You did out of the blue come to me suddenly,
changed my life to excitement that was once serene

and life and living and existence is suddenly joyful to me
while our love is like no other love has ever been,
and it is pure to the core of it and in all things clean,
from all things free that brings pain and hurt and iniquity.
You did out of the blue come to me suddenly,
changed my life to excitement that was once serene.

Gert Strydom

Our Love Is Something Divine (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I

Our love is something divine
and sincerity and hope is mine
where I do not fear a single kiss
or the great unfathomable bliss
as our love is something that cannot decline
where with joy and faith my spirit is laden
where to me you are the gentlest maiden
with every gesture and expression a sure sign
and sincerity and hope is mine

II

and I do not fear your love or your devotion
or any kind of sincere heartfelt emotion
even if passion does burn with its own hot fire
even if every touch is full of great desire
when words and acts are set in motion
and nothing and no one can our feelings remove
as our love is a great blessing from God above
and it's an ultimate fact and not a notion
or any kind of sincere heartfelt emotion.

[Reference: "To- I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

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Gert Strydom

Our Love That Was Lost

Our love that was lost
has been again found,
but at a terrible cost
heartache drove me into the ground.

Our garden is again blossoming
while in love we carefully plant
kisses and caresses,
swear to each other to be true

and somehow I forever new
that this day of happiness would come,
even in the darkest night
dreamt of you.

Gert Strydom

Our Meeting Was

Our meeting was a great decision of God,
like sunshine
that comes overwhelming after the rain,
as a wedge against pain
that for years had held onto our lives
and when you did appear
there was a deep gloss on your face,
and a smile with a heavenly kind of light.

Gert Strydom

Our Own Serenade (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I

I did have a lovely dream of you
as if to life it was really true
while outside the stars were bright
and we were in rapture and delight
where afterwards the thought did me pursue
as if really last night we did meet
and your voice was pleasant and sweet
and I loved you and you did love me too
as if to life it was really true

II

and in the room now your fragrance is faint
while outside the weavers twitter without complaint
still runs the bubbling yet otherwise silent stream
and I am sure that it had been a dream
but then it was without any restraint
while this morning small signs of you do remain
and in my heart there is happiness and no pain
where with the daily duties I do myself acquaint
while outside the weavers twitter without complaint

III

and in thought in moment to that bliss I am back again
where you kisses poured down on me like rain
so overwhelming that I am speechless in how life is
and if I do not know love then it must be like this
as if the effects of it I do forever retain
while you were truly with me and mine
and it was something past the divine
and of thought of that experience I cannot abstain
where you kisses poured down on me like rain

[Reference: "The Indian Serenade" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

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Our Time Is Measured Out Fleetingly

Our time is measured out fleetingly
as human beings on this sunny planet
which is a showcase for the universe
where daily we do search for new meaning.

Without realising it
the days and nights do turn over
and far too quickly the years do pass
from birth to a high old age.

Sometimes a person's life is caught
in moments that do linger, that keeps hanging
where blithe and happiness
is experienced in mere moments

where love do come unselfish and free
and even if humanity is at times cursory like a flower
throughout you whole life, mother,
you have time after time astonished me.

Where time after time you did show me
what true love really is, that it is free without any price
and forever I would want our days to be together
as characters in a lovely story

but destiny does do its own thing,
which brings me to the core of this verse:
may all of your days be beautiful and full of flowers,
may your days last almost endless.

Today that you do have a birthday; I do thank God for you.

Gert Strydom

Our Time Together Has Passed

I cannot understand you
and love that's vaporized and is suddenly gone.
It's quarter to twelve at night
and you have broken my heart
and I can't close an eye.

You say that I must leave you and go
and I do not know
where to go from here
and life squashes me
and my contract is finished
and I have no fixed job
and cannot find it at any place
and every thing ends
just like my work..

It's a hell of a thing
to look at someone
and to see how it looks,
when love is totally gone.

Suddenly every thing that was right
is gone from you and I do not know why
and it cuts me in two,
but maybe I just tried too hard
to make a life with you.

I do not know when
I hurt you so much,
that the walls
are folding in on you
and how our relationship
can be destroying you
and you want me to go
to find yourself again.

On a day you write a wonderful love poem
and two days later,
there's nothing of that love left

and I get no answer
and do not know why I have lost you
and still I pray about it,
but you laugh when I cry
and beg you to try one more time..

Later you are crying
and my heart breaks for you
and you say goodnight
and I do not know,
how to say anything back
while I go and lie in the lounge
and this is the most painful goodbye.

I remember your voice
of moon drops in the night
and wish
that I still could stay with you,
but darkness folds around me
and our time together has passed.

Gert Strydom

Out In The Veldt

Laying with a couple of bushman trackers
in the darkness of a almost starless clouded sky,
not being able to make a nice hot fire,
being too near to the enemy

I listened to their stories
and it was almost as if they
were wooing the moon
to shine through patches in the clouds

are able to identify any animal
from the sounds of howls, snorts
or even movements that it made
and later silence covers us like a cloak.

Gert Strydom

Out Of Everything That Is Beautiful

With the eyes of a poet I wanted to look at you
and out of everything that is beautiful
I wanted to bring you something as a tribute
and with knowledge I was looking for deeper meaning
but I could find no flowers
that truly does reveal your gaze
and gardenia and jasmine on the wings of the wind,
the night's starry lights that I did experience
and not even the sun in its full glory
or spring in her abundance
does reflect your laughter and sadness
and the feelings that you bring to me
but now I am totally mute
as no words want to come to me.

Gert Strydom

Out Of Military Boots

Out of military boots

I come moulded to be a different person
and in nature could finally find some serenity
with the hot sun blazing above me
catching the birdcalls on the breeze.

From battlefields I did rise,
astounded to be still living
with hundreds of stories
of fools and very brave men

and the silence is almost deafening
with no rattle of any light-machinegun
no exploding rocket propelled shells
and I dream about a world
that is free from any disharmony

where the judgement day,
the outbreak of war,
exists no more
and everyone is free
to live a life in respectability.

Gert Strydom

Out Of The Aeons Legends Come Alive (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

It's winter and the wind howls crying through the trees in the night,
no one knows what is hidden and everything is out of sight
and angry is the night-sky where everything flees why the sky burn
but out of the aeons legends come alive and the heroes do return:
on such a night Thor did travel and his glowing hammer was in flight,
the great German did go and stand against the portals of hell
when hellish flames in the whole country fell
Odin went out against the onslaught in all of his might,
no one knows what is hidden and everything is out of sight.

[Reference:"Verlange"(Longing)by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Out Of The Aeons Legends Come Alive And The Heroes Do Return (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

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Gert Strydom

Out Of The Times Of Remembering

Out of the times of remembering
I will paint a word-painting of you
that tells the world how wonderful you are
that where others do despise me you are still trusting in me
when you do love me in my most wretched times
and for this reason I will begin with everything that is beautiful,
with the depth and loveliness of our love
and nothing that will derogate or fabricate
will be in my words,
not even my own pain and fear,
only your sacrifices and how you build your own life around me
and only the most beautiful things from your spirit and soul
and that which really does matter will be in my words,
and the depths of your humanity I will paint.

Gert Strydom

Out To Sea A Big Passenger Liner Is Passing

Out to sea a big passenger liner is passing,
two slim white yachts are flying past
with some people surfing to and thro
on excellent waves

and on the beach the white sand is inviting,
while high up in your office
you go on with the tedium of work,
in order to earn a living

and before you know it
the sun outside is setting
dipping into a tranquil sea
and at your desk you are still hard at it.

Gert Strydom

Outside A Church

While we walk around the church,
I tread on the lawn at the painted flint-glass windows
and see her calves with three doves as her company,
there is some gravel, in the distance a train whistles.

With a reaching hand Jesus hangs on a cross,
He is vituperated where blood flows down in a puddle.
She takes my hand while we walk all over the garden
and fear is seen, like it was at the time.

Still she holds onto my hand while bees turn around us,
branches swing in the wind and the sky is dull blue,
some drops of dew glistens and the lawn is cleanly cut
and her eyes shine while she holds onto my hand.

Gert Strydom

Outside A Myriad Of Leaves Begin To Fall (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Outside a myriad of leaves begin to fall,
in yellow and brown, some are large and some are small
while old age sets in, days fade into oblivion
but it seems that I have not truly experience life at all.

Far too quickly the years wander by,
like nestles birds off they do fly
and life completely changes from what it was before
at times I laugh, play and cry

and then suddenly you do appear
bringing joy and peace where there was fear,
and it seems as if we are parts of a greater whole,
that the sun always rises beyond every tear

while like children we both do trust in a love
that nothing on this earth can remove.

Gert Strydom

Outside A Wild Wind Is Blowing

Outside a wild, warm west wind is blowing
but in the depths of your arms I did find rest.

Gert Strydom

Outside A Wild Wind Is Blowing [2]

Outside a wild, warm west wind is blowing
but in the depths of your arms I did find rest.

Gert Strydom

Outside Autumn Is With Falling Leaves At Its Zest (Sicilian Sonnet)

No thunder, wind, earthquake or rain
can interfere with how to me you do look,
where your sincere love did me hook,
in my mind your image does still remain.

During a lock-down I yearn to see you again,
I cannot concentrate on reading a single book,
people do die; the world has a dim outlook,
and everywhere there is sorrow and pain.

Outside autumn is with falling leaves at its zest
where colourful are the garden's many trees,
calling the rain fluttering is the tiny redbreast,
among the flowering sage there are huge bees,
it's hot as if late summer days are at their best
and all of the beauty of nature not a person sees.

[Poet's note: The seasons are opposite in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth
from
those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Outside Daisies Are Flowering

Outside daisies are flowering in the bright sun
white Iceberg-roses open their cups wide
but I am scared to say a word to you
and would have said deeper things if I could

but between us everything has become earthy
and far too fleeting is the hour
as if the highpoint of love can last only for moments
as if time, obligations and life constantly does us curtail

but still you are far past beautiful to me
although to eternity time flashes past.

Gert Strydom

Outside Every Word Echo (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen on her birthday)

You run quickly into my arms,
you are astonished with all of life
when wonderful things do start everywhere,
when I push flowers into your hands.
Our feelings are in accord
and here you are back in my arms again.
Outside every word echo and echo
and the twilight is somewhat bright.
The sun is setting and you look around us,
in your dreams and thoughts everything is well known,
our relationship is build on steady ground,
God is of it the only foundation,
I have faith and a lot of hope
and before us and around us life lies open.

Gert Strydom

Outside The August Wind Is Playing

Outside the August wind is playing
swinging branches up and down,
grabbing on flowers that are still standing
with fingers which are desiring
and I wait upon birds to appear again
after their around-the-world journey
while knobs are on the branches of fruit trees,
ready to unfold in blossoms
in early spring
but the cold is making its presence known
with ripe lying spread out in the early morning
while the winter season
is still doing its icy thing.

Gert Strydom

Outside The Café

Outside the Café
where I was having coffee,
a red BMW without number plates
died on the driver
and was flashing lights
and its hooter went off.

Inside of it I saw a face
of a ugly white man,
with a wig upon his head
and the look in his eye
spelled out dread.

Be careful
he's got a gun,
the café's owner warned
and I looked away
as if the man was not there.

Thrice I called
that one zero triple one number
from my cell phone
and no police did appear,
while the criminal was near
as if my calls was in vain.

No cars are available
they said
and on the next morning,
a squadron of police
was knocking my door down
and eight cars and a helicopter
was waiting outside.

Gert Strydom

Outside The First Spring Rain Is Falling

Outside the first spring rain is falling
while it is still piercing winter
and there are flowers already blossoming,
sparrows singing cheerfully in a group,

rejoicing already about the magic that spring brings
and in my heart there is love that wants to flower for you,
a feeling that pierces the separation
and around me new life is emerging

and speedy I want to take you in my arms,
show you the beauty of my garden, the beauty of my love,
piercing the chilly cold,
bringing life to that which is still frozen.

Gert Strydom

Outside The Rain Sieves Down All Of This Winter

and while you are slumbering the wild wind jerk,
doves flutter up suddenly on the garden bench
but you are snug and safe like a child.
Where the bougainvillea reach out against the window,
a small birds tries to find its nest
and stretched out your arm is supple and slender.

Gert Strydom

Outside The Snow Is Falling

Outside the snow is falling,
are gliding like pieces of paper coming down,
the icy wind is biting
when I brush off some flakes
and now it falls continually
when you phone, quite amused,
with the signal sometimes growing faint
while you say that you desire me.

Gert Strydom

Outside The Spring Is Blossoming

(after Dorothy Parker)

Outside the spring is blossoming
while a myriad of birds sing,
later in the afternoon
it might be raining

but it matters not,
even the summer days that I have got
are far too quickly passing
and some are cold and others hot.

There's a new lady that I might adore
waiting at my front door
and I wonder what will be
her impression of me?

I see her sparkling eyes and shining hair
while she looks lovely and fair,
if she stays or leaves, such things have happened before,
she will be only one more.

[Reference: "The new love" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Outside The Waves Crashed Breaking On The Beach

(for Riana)

Outside the waves crashed breaking on the beach
and the beach, the sun, the sky
waited in vain on you
and so was I waiting.

You were laying a darkened room,
with curtains pulled shut,
crawled up on the bed
and for one or other reason
wishing to be dead.

I opened the curtains
to let the sea breeze
and the summer sun in
and you said
that it was like search lights
in your eyes
and I said that it's no holiday
acting like this

but somehow a little smile curled
around your lips
and dressed in a beach jacket
covering your black bikini
and slender hips

you followed me to the beach,
splashed with your feet
in the wading surf

and giggled when
I pulled you in deeper in,
dipping you wet
and the summer sun
had hit into your heart.

Outside The Wind Did Blow

Outside the wind did blow
while the first blossoms of spring did appear
and I could swear
that there was a whispering,
a kind of message from you
and the stars glittered like your eyes
as if they like you
were looking at me in love.

Gert Strydom

Outside The Window Something Moves Suddenly (In Answer To Johannes Prins)

the door is closed
locked tightly with a safety-gate,
a own calls out
when for moments I keep my breath in
but it's nothing, gosh,
I have only been startled by the cat, I think,
but someone is sudden in this room.

Gert Strydom

Outside There's A Brigade

Outside there's a brigade
of yellow umbrellas in the sun,
covering the white-brown beach

and on the bed you lay just out of reach,
sleeping with a innocence
that lies about our intimate acts

and on the wall I watch a line of small ants
running past on their own tracks
before you turn and reach out to me

and I feel your heart beating
while one of your breasts
are pressed against my face

and know that my goddess is awake
and just now we will shower together,
prepare for the day, have a great breakfast,
take some towels and make this summer
sun and sea our very own.

Gert Strydom

Outside Thunderbolt Upon Thunderbolt Smash Down

Outside thunderbolt upon thunderbolt smash down
drawing flashing blue-white lines against space
during the dark night
and when the shower pours down
it rains for days without end
while the yellow grass suddenly gets green
and the first blossoms of spring
comes pink and white.

Gert Strydom

Over The I Am, The Original One, The Great All (Sonnet)

(after Charl-Pierre Naudé)

Where he cannot proof God, man does
by reasonability and reason and the collective debate do hold the delusion
that they can reduce the omnipotent omniscient omnipresent
to a empty nothing that do fold into a page of a myth,
where no one can press such a being into a test-tube
or do know His principles and laws from which life and everything does come,
they easily do get the incorrect and wrong impression
and do take Him and His authority, His omnipotence out of the books
to let Him decline to a mere deceased man that the dogs did eat
where He the endless, immortal being as a mere human being comes to death
while living in a relationship they do not know Him or anything of His love,
do know that all things even the laws that they do follow are signs of Him
and totally purposeless do exist the fundamental secularist
where he or she is the god of his or her own will and existence.

[Reference:"Inversie" (Inversion)by Charl-Pierre Naudé.]

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Gert Strydom

Over The Things Of God (Free Verse Sonnet)

I saw the stars, star-clusters, nebulas and pulsars in the night
planets, moons, comets and the asteroids in their glittering-play
and wanted to tell about the great unnamed secrets of God,
the water-masses of oceans and rivers did tell about omnipotence,
I wanted to comment about Your holiness, Your greatness with awe and respect,
You do exist outside the realm that time sets for man,
in the endless struggle between the forces of heaven and hell
and constantly I searched and sometimes waited upon Your inspiration.
The man-made idols, pyramids and sphinx could say nothing,
of the unswayable wisdom that do bring about things do set and guide them,
I remembered that at creation You glided over the formlessness
and this I wanted to uncover to all humanity
but then I prayed to You to touch my words and for greater insight:
You told me that You died for humanity as a ransom and do live again.

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Gert Strydom

Over What Love Really Is

There are so many things that I still wanted to say to you
but how do I carry it over, over what love really is?
Maybe the most important is how I do miss you
that I do want this life totally different.

Together we did try to invest in a future
and of our plans everything is now without meaning.
There are so many things that I still wanted to say to you
but how do I carry it over, over what love really is?

Hours we could lie spooned together
but between us and there far where you are, everything is missing
and sometimes I ask forgiveness for my defects
as binding promises we had made to each other.
There are so many things that I still wanted to say to you
but how do I carry it over, over what love really is?

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Gert Strydom

Owl

It's a high veldt evening and an owl hoots
lingers with flapping wings,
stretched out claws and beak
and its eyes glow yellow
under the silver moon.

Does it follow the tropic of Capricorn
not weary or worn
follow the actions of the turning earth,
determining every small living thing?

Gracefully it flies on
in clear sight
as if the darkness is brought daylight
and then finding a new direction
zooms in on something, a tiny mouse or rat.

Gert Strydom

Ozymandias (In Reply To Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I saw a traveller coming from the desert
wrapped in white cloth
and the man greeted me, asked for water
and told me about Ozymandias, the great king
whose broken statue still commanded respect
whose kingdom was now laid bare
from the covering sand

and suddenly the sky darkened
as if the sun for moments took flight
and far of out in the desert
the red dust hang like a huge sandstorm

but the size of it was severe
and I saw something rising, materializing
getting form
the huge legs of stone blazing alive
and the entire body of it,
that colossal wreck became whole

and around it was gathered
a might crowd of armed men
bowing down to its honour
and praying to it
while a voice like thunder
cried out for the entire world
to despair, to bow before
before its supreme reign,

before it turned north,
marching with its army
right into Europe
to destroy, to enslave
and to take with force.

[Reference: Ozymandias by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

Pacing Off The Steps

At times the stretch
to the jumping board
and landing patch
lay magical
in front of me

and without real strain
I glided through the air
and a slit second
almost lasted for an eternity.

In that moment
the interaction of no competitor,
no coach,
no cheering onlooker
was with me
and the white
sand glided past
before kissing
my landing feet.

I paced off the steps
for the next long jump
and there were admiration
on some faces,
frustration and maybe hate
and fear of loosing
on others

and when I started my run
the crowd roared
before the air and me
was again one.

Sometimes my steps were out
and I overstepped the board,
or had to launch myself
from too far back

and no correction
in either direction
could bring
the absolute magic back

and the frenzy of the crowd
the sheer determination
of other competitors
was cutting like a knife through me

but when I closed my eyes
no pain from cramping legs,
no broken middle toe,
no coach or opponent
could stop me
from taking the magical leap
when God paced
the steps with me.

Gert Strydom

Pain (Etheree)

Pain:

a wound

that does hurt

as if there is

no ending to it.

Some people cry out in you,

heartbreaking with a wet tear

in a huge busy hospital

but the open wound that love does leave

is invisible deeper and more intense

Gert Strydom

Painful Thoughts

Like a lightning
striking from a azure blue sky
and hitting where nobody expects it,
is the pain
when a Afrikaner hand
hits another Afrikaner down.

The bullet that bursts through Jopie Fourie
nobody can stop
and still that shot rings out
and are deafening.

How is a great Commandant General honoured
who for a day was President
of the Orange Free State
and taught the British a thing or two
about warfare?
How many women had to suffer anguish
and chained themselves
to free Christiaan De Wet
out of a nation's
own prison
and his people
that buys his freedom
will forever stay with me.

By himself Jan Smuts changed
from a Boer hero,
to somebody
that lifts his hand against his own
to get worldly fame
and for his own benefit.

Today I wonder
where you and I
stand in these things?

How easy it has become with affirmative action
and BEE

to destroy the careers
of innocent Afrikaner men
and to push their life's
on the rubbish dump
and I wonder how many Afrikaner women,
sit in the front chairs
while Afrikaner men
are praying to find a job?

It cuts like an unknown pain through me
and I wonder when merit
will again find a place
as a measure of fairness
and I see that my people are torn apart
and own benefit
is leading before integrity
and I wonder what are my people becoming?

[Reference: Jopie by: Jan F.E. Celliers. BEE=> Black Economic Empowerment.]

Gert Strydom

Painting

Painting calmed you,
brought tranquillity to your soul
more than a cup of tea could do

and with every brush stroke
of the painter's pencil
faces got form
and character and soul,
eyes got colour
and followed me anywhere
in that room.

Tuscan streets came to life
with little cafés,
people sitting at tables,
selling bread and arranging
lavender flowers
against the backdrop
of the sky, the sea
and villas on a hill.

Abstract paintings reminded me
of scenes under the sea,
or rural villages
with people in front
of a old TV-set,

black girls smiled charming,
carrying pots on their heads
or children piggyback
looking cute
in a comic character way
and with every painting
I saw your skills grow
and pictures stroked
to the finest detail.

I watch your measuring eye,
you confident hand,

colours being mixed
on a palette board
and part of your soul
became part of me
and we shared
long moments together.

Gert Strydom

Painting [2]

I see how a fairy
under your slim fingers
gets a face, a own life
and it's as if she comes alive
do want to tell something
to the whole wide world in water colours
and when her eyes follow me somewhat examining
I do wonder why up to know
she had been hidden somewhere?

Gert Strydom

Paintings And Painters That Come Alive To Me

I

As if he could break time into pieces
Salvador Dali did bend watches
where one hangs over a branch and another
is over a bodily thing and its as if time jumps back
while everything gleams very bright
with the open landscape in the background
and only a branch and a cupboard in foreground
so as if the white sun is climbing golden over it
and he did wonder what Gala would think
did forget for moments about the painting
but that energy did have its own power,
he poured a glass of wine to have with his cheese and bread,
did wonder if she knows of his love?
And he did put his hat on his head.

II

He did put his hat on his head,
saw the light of God falling through the window
and it was more golden in colour than just white
where he was exhibiting light and shadows,
and from it depth did just appear by itself
and the face was glowing almost alive
and was totally free against the black background
while he was caught, seriously riveted
by the art coming from his fingers
and he did wonder if God at the creation
did stand back from His great works, was astounded
with the earthly dome
and before the master gleams an image that cannot perish
while he paints with opaque paint.

III

He paints with opaque paint
is busy with a water-colour
where he does sit in the sun at the back of the yard
and tell me about the course of events.
To my astonishment it's a landscape
of a misty dark wood
where a couple are wandering
with a small road that meanders in its simplicity
Those later runs into gigantic trees
with bright flowers still fresh
with drops of dew and big splashes of sunshine
that burst hot through at some places
with drops hanging on the trees on the bright day;
while the whole world is laughing at him.

IV

While the whole world is laughing at him
its as if God Himself is taking his hand
in every line, every colour that splashes down
while everybody does not care about his art,
not even the great beauty of the starry night
and when he paints sunflowers his tears are flowing
when voices, people do stain his life
and he paints the most beautiful things,
perfect picture upon perfect picture
and its as if he is expecting nothing that is good,
the darkness grows in his soul while he dresses,
when he chops off his ear, does disfigure his face
and tired he stands alone against a force majeure
when my eyes do enter that sombre room.

V

When my eyes do enter that sombre room
it feels as if I was walking on the cool wooden floor,
and about this painting he maybe is shy
as if it is personal when I walk closer.
The small table next to the bed is loaded
with painted clay pots, a bottle of wine and a glass,

paintings hang on the walls almost up to the ceiling
while light comes in through the yellow curtains
that brings warmth to the earthly room,
the purple walls do stand out
along with the bright red blanket of the small bed
and I cannot understand any gloominess
while I see him stuck in his thoughts in a wheat acre
with the hot sun burning without any mercy.

VI

With the hot sun burning without any mercy,
he wears a straw hat to block the bright rays,
at times does shade his eyes with his big hand
and paints with masterly form and balance.
It is God's wheat acres and cypress trees
that he becomes aware of there in front of the mountain,
monsters that suddenly appear like in dreams
do come as great storm clouds in the sky
with two bushes and some tress half blown to a side
the wheat acre is so yellow, the seed so ripe
that in his fingers he can turn the grains of wheat out
and against the bright light he has to close his eyes
while the wind blows where he is painting and at times it does annoy him
and alone I see a figure standing, minutely small.

VII

Alone I see a figure standing, minutely small
against the catastrophic evil that waits like a lightening bolt
that is ready to bash down, but is still hidden
while a unearthly texture or something is breathing in your neck
and its as if total destruction is waiting,
is focused on everything living,
is hidden in a somewhat evil power
that wants to strike as a kind of judgement
in that forbidding environment,
as if the mountain is going to exploded in mere moments,
in lava or with a earthquake
will bring everything back to pieces of dust

and there is evil jumping out of the painting
as if he could break time into pieces

[The paintings: I: "The Persistence of Memory" by Salvador Dali, II: Etched Self-portrait of Rembrandt with his hat on by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, V: "Vincent's Room" by Vincent Willem Van Gogh. VI: "Wheat Fields and Cypress Trees" by Vincent Willem Van Gogh. VII: A landscape by Hercules Pieterszoon Seghers]

Gert Strydom

Palm Trees

There's palm trees that grows in a row
down Nelson Mandela drive
and I wonder how they survive
and are full of life and vibrance,
while the one or other pest
destroys the rest of the palm trees
and eats them from the inside
and my neighbour's palm
is yellow brown and dead.

Gert Strydom

Pansies (Novelinee)

Far away hidden in a secret grove
yellow, purple and black as the dark night
pansies grew to express someone's sweet love
and on my eyes there was a blessed sight,
a more fragrant picture I hardly knew,
suddenly life was lovely and strong
where a myriad of lovely flowers grew,
I heard some birds singing a happy song
and strange it felt as if I did belong.

Gert Strydom

Paper

That paper or the white page
on the computer screen can stare so bleak
I have not experienced up to now

and I do write about any kind of thing,
that which does build
as well as that which does break down,
about sounds, even symphonies full of music
and the silences that comes sometimes

and somewhere between the remembering
about how things were at a time
the forgetfulness does come
with the dreams
of that which may still come

and everything
I do put at a time into words of meaning,
and even do write part of my soul onto paper.

Gert Strydom

Parabats

Smiting death when we parachute in,
flying on silken wings through the sky,
gathered in a brown storm
that sweeps in
and the enemy like puppets perish
where we land.

We cannot give back life
like God to tformed clay,
yet we are forced to take away existence
day by day
with machinegun, mortar
and rocket propelled grenade.

Fearless men ready to endure,
trusting in God alone.

[Reference: Parabats=> South African airborne soldiers.]

Gert Strydom

Parable For A Certain Treasurer (Allegory)

Oh ponder, friend, the lion
when he roars all the games scatters,
runs away and on and on
are scared that he will rip them to tatters.

How powerful is he
and where he hunts there's trouble,
for most frailer animals a kind of emergency
as he rushes in for a kill at the double.

Yet as age encumbers him
he is driven from the pack
and loses his self-esteem
while in vain he tries to get his position back

and when old, wounded and in pain
at a time he gets real thin
and even fears the thunder that comes with rain
while it's a pitiful position that he is in

as through the years he had developed his skills
but a time comes that his kingdom to him is lost
while he not apt to make anymore kills
and finally he has to pay the cost

while every vulture, hyena and jackal
runs circles around him while he snaps in vain
and continually the struggle is for nothing at all
while he doesn't find anything to gain.

Gert Strydom

Parachute Drop

Speed wants to
pen me in to the earth,
but the ballooning material wins.

Dots run around
like ants in a nest,
but it's enemies
who like hornets
have lancets.

I try to get direction
in the strong wind
and to stay alive
in the hellnest
and to plant
my boots on solid ground.

Gert Strydom

Parachute Jump

While I stood at the door
I noticed
how the depths can suck you in,
can paralyse your heart and soul.

With parachute
strapped to me I learnt
that there are things
much deeper than fun
and that pain and pleasure
has a very fine dividing line
and that reality
is the master of situations

but that the heart
talks its own language
sometimes past reason
and almost unwilling
I was dragged along,
did I dare me
into your depths

to fall into you
past slippery cliffs
and read the wind, the weather,
the change of atmosphere
deep in your eyes
and you converted me
from explorer, scout and soldier
and taught me something about life
while I tried
to make a safe landing
and we were still
lying in each other's arms.

Gert Strydom

Paradise

In the Lucerne field
just beyond the hedge of the berry trees
she takes my hand

and her eyes is more blue than the sky above us
where she watches me
from under a straw hat

with some of her blonde strings of hair cheeky hanging out
and her hand is soft in mine
while she smiles

and I tremble right up to my lower body
where she stands right against me
and her arms go around my neck

and I am caught, enticed
when her lips open soft and hot under mine
and that kiss does awake things

and I see that some of the buttons of her blouse is open,
her glance does follow mine,
she hits in my direction that I must swerve out of the way

and then she dares me
to swim with her
naked in the tributary

and she leads me right up to the stream and I think
that I am dreaming
when she removes all of her clothes

and I follow her with my thought at that time pious
where we splash and play
with the cold water streaming down her body

and suddenly with horse hoofs thundering
we see Gabriel with a weapon in his hand
and do escape into the bushes

while he rides past, does gallop into the distance,
with hearts beating wildly we stand close to each other
and her arms stretch around my neck

while she holds me tighter and I am astonished,
notice her lovely breasts, how they get hard big nipples,
her soft fig with its double fold

and there is something strange to the way that she looks at me,
when her glance goes down
to the part of me that stands erect

and we are well hidden when Gabriel passes again
with astonishment, caught in passion and pleasure
we walk into the adult world.

Gert Strydom

Paradise Hotel

Thousands of people were dead,
fanatics had flown
jets into two towers,
crashed another
into the Pentagon military headquarters.

I watched the news on CNN, the BBC
and Sky News until my eyes were red,
could not sleep although tiredness
made me feel hazy,

I ordered strong hot coffee and a great meal,
took a shower and went out for fresh air,
came across a beautiful blonde in the elevator,
who gave me a business card
and smiled dazzling and showed
really great legs
while she went to the suite next door
and my hotel suite swallowed me,
I forgot to close the door
and so did my next-door neighbour.

I was at an expensive hotel, with deep carpets
but could hear her receiving hungry kisses
and ripping the clothes of the body
of the man next door
and moaning and screaming in pleasure

and the card said:
"If you want me to spread my legs,
give me a call"

and I closed the door
ordered a Johnny Walker whiskey on the rocks,
tried to find some decent music
on the television, but except the tragedy
everything was boring
and I felt numb, as if feeling too much pain
had turned my feelings off

and the flashing television screen
made me doze off.

Gert Strydom

Paradise Shuttle Travellers

(in answer to Eveleen Castelyn)

When the Russian cosmonaut
Yury Alekseyevich Gagarin
did enter space as the first human being
he made it known
that he could not find the Lord God there

but he was too blinded
to see Him in every living thing,
too impudent and cocky to realize
that man does yearn for a more omnipotent being

and still we are searching for life,
for something, for someone
in the great universe
like paradise shuttle travellers

as if we who are full of iniquity
are able to see the God of righteousness
and are able to live on
after such a experience

and are able to witness His perfect creation
that is sinless
as if He will leave us to enter such places
and do irreparable harm
as if He does not in a way
keep us away

as if some men do disregard a relationship with God,
as a certain way of preparing for interstellar travel

where the omnipotent Lord God
does laugh at man's primitive science,
at man's inadequate intellect and methods
where some people do regard themselves
as being equal to an omnipotent Lord God.

[Reference: "Paradyspendelaar" (Paradise shuttle traveller" by
Eveleen Castelyn.]

Gert Strydom

Paris And The Judgment Of The Fairest

A golden apple came with light-footed Iris to me from above
with an inscription: "for the fairest" and I saw it as a gift of love,
I thought of giving it to the nymph Oenone as no one could my love remove

but here I am a Sheppard and a mortal man
and before me in great beauty are three goddesses
and judge them they all think that I can

where they are without their dresses
naked, slender, slim, with curves and breasts that delight.
Every one of them standing luring and enchanting in my sight

where they are eons old
but of such great beauty and charm
I have never been told

and with my decision will come no harm
while great things each do promise me:
Hera: the strongest ruler in the entire world to be,

Athena: that the legends would bare my military fame,
Aphrodite: that the most beautiful human woman would be my true love
and each did promise in Zeus's name.

I thought of giving all three of them each a go
but that would their true anger on me bestow
and from the loving of Oenone I was still aglow.

How to make this decision I did not really know
but there was something to Aphrodite that did my heart move
and to from the Greek king Menelaus remove

his beautiful wife Helen sounded like an adventure,
something to make Greek power a mockery
and her true love for me would be sure

and the romantic that I am, I chose the goddess Aphrodite
who later from a fight with Menelaus did protect me
but he sailed a thousand ships into war out of spite.

Gert Strydom

Park Street Sunnyside, Pretoria (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Sheila Cussons)

There is a large park outside my flat
where the palm trees are anchored or they are going to fall
as they are cellular phone towers
for all the people that do call with their cellular phones
and the neighbours beneath, above and around me
do really like to live right here,
as they are holding parties through the day and night
and dozens do ride in the lift with me.
At the front door there is an iron-gate where people do walk past
that I do draw shut to be funny when others do come to talk with me
and the people are so friendly and helpful and kind
that overnight they do strip my car down in the road
and on the street I can find almost anything:
women and drugs and even stolen cars.

[Reference: "Woonstelbewoner" (Apartment-dweller)by Sheila Cussons.]

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Gert Strydom

Part Of

How do I love you,
more than I know how to do
and how do I give love more unconditional
than I do receive from you?
What do I do when I do not read love in your eyes
and how can I exist and go on with my life,
if it cannot be with you?
You are so much a part of me
that you do live in my deepest substance.
These words I do not write out of fear
but what I see in your soul when I look at your eyes
is more than I know how love looks like.
Part of you I do hear in the wind
and can find in the things around me,
but also deep inside of my body.
Part of me is what remains in you
and do get stature in your heart
and you do make me
better that I am
and do know how to be.

Gert Strydom

Part Of You

Part of you does remain a part of me
and never does come loose from my existence
while with time
I get a deeper appreciation

of how precious you are to me
and do daily see your sacrifices,
do love you in every moment
in times of heartache and in happiness.

Gert Strydom

Passing Time

A man with dark glasses,
and a bulge under the left arm
of his sports jacket,
was dropped off
by a four by four
with darkened windows,
with a black official looking briefcase
got on the bus as the last passenger
just before it left the curb
and his eyes went to his wristwatch,
as if making absolutely certain of the time
and I wondered about that executioner, spy, agent,
provocateur or civil servant
or whatever he was
and I call him that because of the officious
reality that he brought with him
and why he was taking the buss
to this day I still do not know.

Was he there to meet somebody,
or to get off somewhere?
His eyes
was filled with a strange energy
and he was looking everywhere
without really focusing anywhere
and when he spoke to me
it was about something quite indistinct
and I got the clear impression
that he was just passing time
as if somewhere
it would catch up again with him.

Gert Strydom

Past A House

We yesterday
drove past a house
near a shopping centre

and at the front wall
the plaster was broken,
the garden that was something
at a time
was treaded to pieces
and left uncared.

The front door hanged decaying
and when my eyes
walked down the corridor
some of the ceiling was missing,
and the wooden floor
was being used for firewood

It seemed as if the house
was now really becoming a ruin
and a naked black toddler
were crawling outside

and a very thin dog
looked as if it never got food
and my darling said:

"We stayed here at a time
and once this house
belonged to us
and it was a beautiful place
and just see how it looks now."

Gert Strydom

Past Beaufort West

Past Beaufort West, at Leeu-Gamka
my yellow BMW gets a flat tyre
and while I am looking
for a jack in the boot
at that god forsaken place
it's extremely hot

and an old rusted white pickup
stops behind my car
and a big ghastly man
dressed in a blue overall with oil marks
walks up to me
while I lift the wheel out.

"Lad, I see you are from the Transvaal
and are certainly on your way to Cape Town? "

Then he gives a dry cough
and his breath smells of brandy
and he says much softer:
"I have got a huge problem.
Santie, has to go back to Stellenbosch
and you can take her along."

And still softer and somewhat dull:
"You are big enough
to be already screwing around.
She can pay for the trip
with her nice body."

I am perplexed, dazed
and alone on my way to Summerset West,
just past Stellenbosch
and look at him
as if he is coming from the moon

and say that I will anyway
past that way
and I am studying nearby

and that she can travel with me, totally cost free

and then I see her

blonde, pretty, slim and she blushes

and I know that she overheard every single word

and I say hello to her and she blushes even more

and I carry her two suitcases, that look decent,
to the car's boot

and she greets the man, her dad

who is divorced from her mother

who is living in Bellville

before we drive away

and the conditioner cools the inside of the car,

she loves Neil Diamond

whose songs are playing on the stereo system

and she's dressed in a mini skirt

that rides up against her long slim legs

and she looks at me

with a sultry unholy light in her blue eyes

and I think: hell, what now?

Gert Strydom

Past Forever I Can Lie Next To You

You lie beside me
with your hot soft body
touching mine
and I wish for the night
to last eternally
and stretch into infinity.

This night is a world
with only you and me
and bright blue stars
sparkling like precious stones
against the velvet sky.

Past forever I can lie
next to you
while you cuddle
against me

and I can almost
feel every breath
that you take
and your heart
pounding against my chest

and you and I
are intertwined like one
as if our bodies
cannot come apart

and love and passion
becomes pure art
creating feelings
in places that up to now
I didn't really know.

The first rays of the morning
fall in patches
over your beautiful face
which is filled with tranquillity

and there's a bee
buzzing at the window needlessly,
trying to fly
to where it belongs
but blocked from its world
by glass

and on the other side
bushes covered
with pink flower cups
wave in the morning breeze
and I freeze
in a perfect moment
with you.

Gert Strydom

Past Skeletons Of Steal And Concrete

Past skeletons of steal and concrete
I came this morning
and saw people small like ants,
between yellow cranes groaning and bended.

Where white smoke poured from round chimneys
and people struggled in the half-light
or glowing in a hell like fire
of iron and metal
lost between ovens cooking glowing,

people where captive and caged
by walls, doors and roofs that surrounded them
and lost in the circles drawn by the city
attracted by work from rural places.

The day was cast over and grey
but still they kept on building
and cement lorries were parked in the road
while workers were clinging to black pipes.

On the other side of the road children laughed
caught by the tinned pleasure pulsating
day and night without end
and beggars waited with stretched out hands.

Gert Strydom

Past The Almighty Commander

I hear soldier's boots
marching rhythmic
and they past in rows.

There's no marching band
that accompanies the slow march,
just a bugle
that sounds melancholic.

The minister says his words
and I hear: "he's now with God, "
and something of dust to dust

The last trumpet's notes
catches my ear
and there are some rifle shots
that I hear reporting.

An Orange, white and blue flag
is folded around the chest
that slowly disappears into the grave,
while tears stream down the cheeks
of a woman and some children.

The wind starts blowing
and some doves fly past
and I wonder what God does
with brave heroes?

Are there legions of angels
of the Lord
that return with flaming swords
from battles
with the darkness?

Do they also march in rank and row,
past the Almighty Commander?

Past The Nonsense

Past the nonsense
I find you and you find me
and I wonder
why small things wants to scratch,
and you are
so deep in my heart.

Fear of getting sore again
now has to find another place,
since where I am with you
and where our relationship stands
is at a place that wants to go
much deeper.

For me you are the sun, the moon
and more than the big blue sky
hanging above us
and in every star
that rises blinking each night
I see something that tell
how wonderful it is
to know you.

Promise that I can get a kiss
from you tonight
and you make me already happy now
and the day
becomes open and wonderful to me.

Gert Strydom

Pastor (Sonnet)

You that have got to be the voice of the Lord God
stop with your huge car of which the boot bounces open
and a whole sheep, vegetables and fruit for a month is loaded in
while you try to teach the members of your congregation to fear Him,
to stay far away from the things of the flesh,
with a deep kind of sadness your eyes look fixedly
and you do (not) see how a forty year old woman swing her buttocks for you,
do believe firmly in God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Ghost.
From the pulpit you seem timid in your black cloak
and nobody does notice when at midnight you sneak into your daughter's room,
how with pastoral visiting you turn into each widow's yard
while your congregation does sell pancakes and spit-roast
and right in front of the pulpit in your church an auction is held
and you do sell homemade-brandy and communion wine in the church building.

Gert Strydom

Path Into The Bushes

There's a road like out of a dream
or a fairy tale
that twists into the bushes,
but it's white and pure
with innocence where it snakes
into the undergrowth
and the sky is open
and blue white to the horizon.

I walk pass a great white tree
with orange brown leaves
that rises above me
and a long dried out tree
of which the branches
reach like fingers into the air.

I follow the path
to the long blue gum trees
that are covered
with dark green leaves
and the odour of the trees
and the wood
hangs heavy in the air
and there's something concrete
that's stronger than a dream

[Reference: Wooded landscape by Mandi. Look at the painting on my web page:

Gert Strydom

Patient

Will an ambulance come and fetch him today,
to take him away to the hospital
where everything is different and smells of iodine
where they will radiate him once more?
Will he free from the treatment of radium
see the sun splash through an open window,
will he be allowed to eat a piece of stake
that was prepared medium, to his taste,
before his health does totally fail,
will he have the chance to notice weavers on the branches outside
with someone serving him tea or coffee?
Or will his wife's voice clap like thunder
when he nears the end of his life
and force him to the cancer ward?

Gert Strydom

Patrolling Raging Neighbourhoods

Doing military patrols
in raging black neighbourhoods
at a time it felt
as if there would be peace no more
and that nothing
could end the mindless killing.

Humans necklaced with car tires,
sprinkled with gasoline
and torched alive
and the killing crowds'
inhuman laughter sent a shiver
down my spine.

Hatred shrilling madly
out of female voices
urging the killing
to go on
and the tragedy
of having to stop the slaughter
with a bullet and a gun
and graves with wreathed
pale white flowers
stretching up to the sun
made my soul to die
while I was still alive.

Gert Strydom

Peace On Earth (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's strange how people around Christmas
and New Year does long for company,
long for the star of God to hang over them,
do again dust of the Bible and read the ancient story
of Mary pregnant from the Holy Spirit,
also try to catch the light and peace of His presence
and some are like small children scared
where their hearts are full of sin, guilt and fear
do come back to the Lord again
and no sheep or angels are necessary to experience
to find the man of Galilee,
to spend some time with Him,
where in great love He does forgive everything,
do cherish any person as His own, as His child.

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Gert Strydom

Peering Down Lingerin Lights

Peering down lingerin lights,
in star signs burn in their glory, twinkling
without any real meaning
while we chart our lives choosing the options

that destiny throws at our feet
without really knowing
where we are going
and even the elements are present every day

and rush and play with rain and thunder
and sun and wind
and moon and clouds
forever intermingling
while on the thoroughfare
we are mesmerized while we dare
and our trust and hope is in God
who we do not see but do know very well.

Gert Strydom

Peggy Mitchell

Your smile came so easily
as a rose unfolding under the sun
and almost carelessly were we
in a true happy state
falling for each other

and yet although pure with great dignity
love sprouted as a simple flower
coming to its own perfection
but the thorns that it carried
brought pain, mercilessly tormenting
in madness, glee and selfishly
and still as joy unending

and carelessly you wanted to be free,
just as easily you left me, senselessly
as stripped leaves wither,
to flower for another
to have his heart at your mercy.

[References: Peggy Mitchell by the Irish poet Rafferty, Peggy Mitchell by James Stephens, Sy by A.G. Visser, Peggy Mitchell by Eugene N. Marais, La belle dame sans merci by John Keats, Madonna (new version) , No Red Rose and La belle dame sans merci by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

Pelicans (Italian Sonnet)

At twilight during that first grey part of the day
the rising sun reflected on the water's translucency
while white pelicans stood for moments in serene dignity
while a mother coot did on the water with her chicks play

before with cormorants and crested grebes they did swim away
and the pelicans in a open circle did swim and with a inborn efficiency
were driving the fishes into the shallow water with great adaptability
and in a group they did feed and were eager for the fray

but much later they did swim right up to the shore,
did their feathers slowly and thoroughly ply,
stood like ballet dancers one-legged arabesque
and there were many of them maybe fifty or more
who took with flapping wings with an almost roaring cry to the sky,
reminding me of freakish-featured gryphons that are mailed grotesque.

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Gert Strydom

Penelope

She slowly braid the burial shroud,
while a hand strokes loving
on the material.

He loves me,
he loves me not,
and her thoughts carry their own rhythm.

I know him well,
I do not
know him anymore,
weaves with time
it's own woof in her heart.

Still she remains true
and her fidelity stays intact,
although for years
he does not return from the war.

When Odysseus on a day
returns disguised as a beggar
and takes the big bow,
and string it, and shoots accurately
and her eyes still do not recognize him;
only a intimate secret
reveals him to her.

Gert Strydom

Penelope (English Sonnet)

Far off to another land under a distant sun
setting his sails to the prevailing breeze,
far past where the horizon and sky is one
he sailed away on the Aegean seas,

with his men went to war against Troy
while constantly I weave the tiny thread
and he left me here along with his boy
where for years alone I do lie in my bed.

Every morning when the breeze is whispering
from the very first light of day I wait on him,
do hear gallant knights their songs to me sing
while now my hope, my faith do become dim

but I watch from up high past the furthest wave
as Odysseus truly loves me and he is very brave.

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Gert Strydom

People Are Afraid

People are afraid
of the year 2012 that are coming
and expect something to happen
that is going to tear the world apart,
but maybe man himself
is his greatest enemy.

At times I wonder about guns
killing in Afghanistan and Iraq
and bombs dropping from bombers
there on people

while a super power
like before
stand free from her deeds
and of nuclear bombs
exploding on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

not a lot is said about
and people look only
at the inhumanities
of Hitler and Stalin
and almost nothing
is said about Harry S. Truman.

Gert Strydom

People Conceive Me (Inside - Outside Poetry)

People conceive me as overly assertive,
making a stand in adversity,
the motor-biking, parachuting daredevil,
ex-soldier who is wilful, headstrong
and who will take the government,
or anyone on,
and on defending my poetry,
I have even being told
that I need psychiatric care,
must wait until a car kills me in on the freeway,
a established mayor Afrikaans poet have said
that I am selling my soul
for the wishes of my readers,
that my poetry is extreme poor,
written faster than anyone can type,
and totally without workmanship,
that I have not advanced
beyond high school level yet,
I have been told that I am politically incorrect,
that I am spreading hate speech
while I have been exposing the very truth,

while inside I want peace from adversity,
a chance to live a life in tranquillity,
to earn a fair and decent living,
to have a place like everyone else in the sun,
to write poems in any way that I want to,
to use rhyme or free verse
or any other kind of poetic form,
and I am constantly trying new forms,
am constantly trying to sharpen my skills,
I am constantly trying
to become a better person and poet.

Gert Strydom

People Lived Their Lives

People lived their lives
as they wanted
just caring for the same and self-

and time went by
with spring, summer, autumn
and stars and the sun and moon.

Some laughed and some cried
and life went by
and still the pain remained

while some rejoiced
and wed the ones they met
and life was life

to some different
but to most the same
as it went and came.

Gert Strydom

People Say

People say that there is no God
and I find it quite odd
as out of His hand does come
all the great and small blessings.

Gert Strydom

Percipient

(in answer to Thomas Hardy)

1

My Lord, I come to you in my iniquity
look at things that no mortal man did see,
faith is a great leap into the unknown
but also so is love and hope to me.

2

In righteousness near to You I have no place to be
but You do bring me to a life full of felicity
and Your lingering presence I call my own,
still Your persevering grace to me is a mystery.

3

With you I do dwell in days of tranquillity
as in Your mighty hand You do hold destiny
and Your feelings are to me sincere and known,
Your selfless love is filled with life it's not charity.

4

Like a gazer into the hearts of others I look willingly,
do note you on Your Judgment throne in great glory,
sometimes in this life into circumstance I am thrown
and right in times of wrong seems so inexplicably,

5

just as Your infinite might and the glassy sea
but as the true God, great is Your ability,
and with time our relationship have grown
in as much as I know that You do set men free,

6

that You do live a life in sincere truthful sanctity
and those innumerable beings do call You holy,
that only love in this world You have shown
and powerful You are in Your immortality.

[Reference: "The impercipient" by Thomas Hardy.]

Gert Strydom

Perfect Love (Sicilian Quintain)

Perfect love is such a strange kind of thing
in a way a kind of sublime paradigm
where we are searching something unending
that still stays even through the end of time,
as if it is eternally living.

Gert Strydom

Performing Magic With Words

I tried to perform magic with words
but I could not find the right ones
and somewhere along the way
I had almost lost my faith in our love

but still I remained true
while the thunders did roar about me
and I feel as if the darkness
was about to devour me

and still I did care,
kept faith in all of the tomorrows
that still has got to come

and maybe I took everything too seriously,
as if our love was a solution to everything

and now I do wonder
if you do still believe
that everything will come right

when with empty hands,
with only words and love
I stand before you?

Gert Strydom

Perhaps I Shot A Foe Today

Perhaps I shot a foe today,
I do not really know
and the bullet of my R1 rifle
went right through a teak tree
and probably an enemy soldier is dead
as no more RPG-7 rocket-grenades whine over my head
and silence now visits me
and all of this happened
when I ordered the armoured car
to stop to take a pee
and endangered everybody along with me.

I walk back to the Ratel-90 armoured car
and it starts up ready to go,
I get in through a hatch
and we drive off
and perhaps I shot a foe today
but I will never know,
perhaps I took out an enemy
who could have opened the armoured car
like a tin of sardines with a fatal shot
and still I do not comprehend
why any man should die
while somebody spots
an enemy T-55 battle tank
and we stop for a killing shot.

Gert Strydom

Persian Ginger Cat (Free Verse Sonnet)

I swear there is a soul burning in those agate-eyes
where the Persian ginger cat looks lovingly at me
but looks at the world like a shrewd hunter,
do make its purring sounds, are velvet-soft, under my right hand,
at night go and hunt with a sly vicious brain,
do entrust me with gifts of rats and doves,
lovingly tender sometimes hold my strongest hand among its paws
and against most dogs he is hostile to the extreme
but goes and lies snugly against the brown Labrador,
turns on its back and stretched-out draws in the sun,
sometimes his eyes burn intensely with an own deep kind of fire
while he washes his whole body
and where I go both the dog and cat do follow me,
the one stands at my side and the other rubs against me.

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Gert Strydom

Persian Quatrains About Church People

The pastor drives with his shiny Mercedes in at the gate
and long before he stops I know the collection cannot wait
because the boot opens before he comes around the corner
and it does his true intentions indicate.



There are people that build churches with two towers,
others do hold church under a tree for hours
and at times I do wonder in silence if they trust the same God
while some are open to the elements and rain showers?



When at church in suits and nice clothes people do cluck-together
then I do get very afraid, as things are not going to get better
and I want to flee away to find salvation
before they tempt me into verbal arguments by the Word's letter.



When the formidable evangelist does sent people to hell
"now is the hour, now is the hour" do people tell
then it's as if he triples and dances on the stage
as if his jumping around will save him from the last bell.



There is a totally hairless reverend
that in the middle of the service does to the front bend
do burst out: "you will burn if you do not come to conversion
and in the bar with the men his money is spent

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Gert Strydom

Persian Quatrains For Jeanie

You used to chase the tennis ball in a sudden dash,
would jump into the swimming pool with a loud splash
or would chase away the pecking doves
in your territorial clash.



When I came back from work, even if I was running late,
you would faithfully in the dark wait,
would leap ecstatic up and down
while barking in joy at the garden gate.



Perhaps in that last summer you sensed in your own way
that your time would be up, while I have got to stay
and followed and adored me much more
until the last sunny day.



In that last tick-fever finality
that came so very suddenly between you and me
pain stuck a raw nerve in my heart
when in your eyes the fight of trying to live I did see.



Who truly knows the Creator's plan,
the essence of friendship between dog and man,
the simple things that are binding an animal
much closer, than man to any human?



In the kingdom beyond I believe you are free
but I do not know it with certainty,
as we view God from a confined perspective
but I want you, to again be with me.

Gert Strydom

Persian Quatrains Of A Comrade-In-Arms

These oak trees grew before we were born,
we used to climb them in another dawn
but I miss those youthful military days
when time was young in a youthful morn.



On parade I saw you proudly stand
ramrod straight saluting with an extended hand,
in the entire world, to me you were
brave far beyond your years, a true hero of this land.



In all my life I never saw such loyalty,
to a country where we wanted everyone to be free,
but politicians true to their core opened Pandora's box
and nothing turned out as it could be.



Happiness, sorrow and utter joy came and again went,
in pristine uniforms we were proud and content
and for each other we did care
but on a secret mission your life was spent.

*

Sometimes it's as if you are standing at the door,
with your kitbag lying on the floor
but life only returns with the reality
that you are dead and will be with me no more.

Gert Strydom

Peter

At times Peter came to visit
before it was properly light
and we wandered off to go fishing
under the full moon,
at school he threw a brick
into a nearby bees nest
and during lunch break
the whole swarm stung me
and I ended up in hospital
but still as friends
for a time we were inseparable.

Peter had his own radio
on which he listened to a radio program called "squad cars"
and the police were heroes to us.
I do remember how the people
living in a rondavel and white bus fascinated me.
I was interested in Peter's brother Johnny's black motorbike
which made a dust cloud on the dirt track
and their old red DKW, which did run on petrol and oil,
with which I sometimes traveled along to Heidelberg
when his father did buy the Sunday Times
and a lucky packet for each of us.

We moved away to Natal
and after school I met Peter again
at a church camp meeting gathering
when he was a member
of the Special Forces Recce battalion
but that was the very last
that I had contact with him.

[Reference: Recce = Reconnaissance Commandos.]

Gert Strydom

Peter And John At The Temple Gate

At three o'clock in the afternoon
Peter and John were on their way to the temple
at the time that prayers were being said
and a man that had been born lame
was laid down to beg
at the entrance of the temple
and they just wanted to enter
when the man asked for a contribution.

Together Peter and John said:
'Look at us'
and expecting some money from them
the lame man looked at them.

Peter said to him: 'I do not have
any silver or gold
but what I do have
I am giving to you.

On authority of the name
of Jesus Christ of Nazareth
do rise up and walk'

and Peter took the man by the right hand
and immediately his feet and ankles were healed
and he leapt up,
walked up and down
and entered the temple with them
while a crowd that witnessed this
gathered at the Solomon's porch

and Peter said to the gathered people:
'why do you look at us
as if our own power or religiousness
caused this man to walk?

It is the God of our fathers
that has given godly glory to His Son
Jesus Christ

whom you have rejected
and delivered to Pontius Pilate
when he decided to release Him

and you denied the holy sincere and righteous One
and rather asked for a killer to be released to you,
did kill the life-giver, the Prince
but God did raise Him up from death.

The name of Jesus did heal and strengthen
the legs of this man
and by faith in the name of Jesus
this man is walking
and you do know how he had been born

and I know that by ignorance
you and your leaders did kill the Son of God
but Jesus did suffer as the prophets did predict
and do therefore repent and convert
that your sins may be blotted out
and times of refreshment may come.'

[Reference: Acts 3: 1-19.]

Gert Strydom

Petersfield Extension One,14-Hours

The light is bright in the blue with more white
where the sun do bring heat to the afternoon

and in this summer there are everywhere flowers blooming
where in our garden you do come to me

and I cannot long for better days,
later we pray for rain while the clouds hang pitch-black

we see the lightning coming down blue-white in the distance
and it's pure joy to live with you.

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Gert Strydom

Petra

When a person visits the remains of the age-old city Petra
then you see steps that go up into the heights
and it does lie beautiful almost untouched as on a painting
but when you do at that place stand still for just a mere moment
and look at the city that was chopped from stone
you do notice a kind of curse
when you do look at the altars of a forbidding god

and then you do notice that everything in that city
is aimed at the sun,
that those tombs, temples and banquet halls
is in honour of the prince of darkness
and then a person does wonder why humanity does rebel
against a God that with compassionate love
does try to visit each person

and in silence Petra is still witnessing of its awful history,
of people sacrificing their children
to stop the vengeance of an evil god.

Gert Strydom

Petrified

Every girl avoids me
and of all the girls that I chase
not one wants to woo me,
although they can find real love.
No flowers or poems that I venture
makes any girl look at me.

Every girl avoids me
and of all the girls that I chase
passes me by,
as if not one will stay with me
and it hits me very low
that I cannot succeed with any woman or maiden
and every girl avoids me

Gert Strydom

Phaeton Holding The Reigns (Sonnet)

When Phaeton, the son of the god of the sun, Helios,
wished as a human to drive the sun-chariot over the sky
Phaeton was far too self-assured, forward and curious
and in vain Helios warned his son that he would die

but forced to keep his promise Helios yielded
where with the reigns held tightly in his hand
and against the radiant fire of the wagon shielded
Phaeton did in that wagon gloriously stand

but at speed of the flaming-horses he lost control
terrified did set the a part of the world ablaze
and above him in the sky Zeus's thunder did roll
and Zeus was filled with anger and greatly amaze

where Phaeton drove those horses without instruction
did kill Phaeton to save the earth from destruction.

Gert Strydom

Phantom Call

At the death of day
the phantoms come
from their river home,
like children that want to frolic and play

and they are ever hiding from the sun's brooding beam,
while they rise like fog from where the river flow,
sometimes are mistaken for vapour or steam,
but have fevering eyes that continually glow

whispering on the winds breath:
"follow me" and again "follow me,
I have gifts to bequeath, "
while ethereal they are in body

and come calling to claim the young and gay
in gestures that obscure the adult eye
trying to carry them away
under a brooding, dark black sky.

Gert Strydom

Phantoms In My Dreams

Another river flooded with blood
with thousands of enemy soldiers
wiped out, as if their lives
mattered not to man.

Almost a hundred tanks shot out,
more than three hundred
armoured cars destroyed
and some tanks,
(more than the fingers
on my hands)
just left behind
with the occupants running away
to hide in the veldt

and to this day
the shocking reality
of that battle scenes
are phantoms in my dreams.

Gert Strydom

Phenomenon

How dark the night has become
that even the Southern Cross fades away
for hours before daybreak

and with it all the other stars are gone
as if this darkness swallows everything
and even the moon is under siege

and stargazers wonder what awaits humanity
while the darkness challenges their science and equipment
and how dark night has become.

No science can explain it and there is something unreal
from which this darkness comes that even conceals the sun
as if this darkness swallows everything

and this phenomenon draws the attention of the whole of humanity
and there are politicians making wild theories
for hours before daybreak

and religious leaders get upset
since the secular world does not comprehend the impact
from which this darkness comes that even conceals the sun

and they lay charge after charge
and there are deliberated with the key question:
how dark the night has become?

Preachers rise and are convinced that man does not serve God right
and that judgement is at hand
since the secular world does not comprehend the impact

and that something is going to hit earth with a bang
and the destiny of man is loudly lamented
for hours before daybreak

as if God is deciding the lot of man,
as if the universe has come to a standstill
and the judgement is at hand

and people even think of an outer space invasion
and alarmed they drive up and down.
How dark the night has become
for hours before daybreak

and the darkness just keeps on and on
and with it all the other stars are gone
as if the universe has come to a standstill
and even the moon is under siege.

Gert Strydom

Philomel

At times a nightingale or swallow
visited me
singing sweetly

and with all the reckoning
that I did possess,
I tried to catch the words of it

and sorrowful was that gentle ode
telling about lovely Philomel
who did disappear

and how once she was young and beautiful,
so full of life, until her brother in law Tereus,
did his dirty deed
and then silenced her with a knife

and in the visiting bird there was something,
something lovely and sweet
while at times it pecked insects at my feet
as if Philomel, was coming back to life in it.

[Reference: "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd" by Sir Walter Raleigh.]

Gert Strydom

Phoenix

I see a bird rising from the ashes
and in the flames spreading its wings
while it gets new energy
and it does cry out as proof

that it is living
but it's only aware about life and death
and when it stretches its wings into the sky
its still caught in a sentence

to exist here on earth
and again to die
where it gets new life and later does die
are trying to break away from all of this

while it gleams like the sun,
does climb up against the stars
and in the darkness do scream
when once again it falls down to earth
like a lightning bolt.

Gert Strydom

Photocopy Machine

You lightning flash a moment
like a laser beam,
the image of my piece of paper
is taken off
and while you grumble
you spit it out at one side
and can make innumerable more
while most people view you
as a exceptional wonderful thing
but when you do get tired
and eat papers
people have to gut them out
from somewhere deep
in your intestines.

Gert Strydom

Physical Science

(after Antjie Krog)

Right at the front at the big old green board
the teacher waits with a strong wooden cane
while pretty girls peep at me
and here I am alone in my wooden bench,
where just here I can die in my chair
when the teacher starts to wander around
while the lesson drags on and on
and he is causing great fear among the pupils
before a crooked old finger points at me,
I see scientific formulae in chalk,
how that teacher throws down the board-eraser,
and gives me a hiding until I get all the answers right;
sometimes I wonder from where he comes,
and see the most devious fiend only in him.

[Reference: "Wiskunde" (Mathematics) by Antjie Krog.]

Gert Strydom

Piano In The Night (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to C. M. van der Heever)

The stream's babbling tranquil sound do disappear
in the night full of stars while the dull golden moon is unclear
when black shadows in the evening wind do sneak and spread and hide
like stretched-out fingers do further glide
and deep in the heart no fear or any pain is near
where in the dark hours everything is silent
while almost all the traffic is absent
while moments do flash in our lives as if anew they become clear,
in the night full of stars while the dull golden moon is unclear,

then the pure notes do cut right through the dark night
tells of a lover that after years do have her beloved in sight
and when the notes of the piano do stormy rise and suddenly descend,
caught in the story over the piano the pianist does bend
as if each one that hears do yearn for love with feelings burning bright
and when the sounds are soft they do tell of the might of love in strive
as if it brings change has got a real impact on life
and this song is almost something holy lifted up to a height,
of a lover that after years do have her beloved in sight,

still the pure sounds are bright and then soft but full of trust
and in the wind is the promise of rain and dust
while this song goes right into the starry night as something free
as if it gets an own life and does exist eternally
and it sings of the pain of love and to its praises do adjust
but when the silence comes suddenly
a person is astounded by the tranquility
but far away some fireworks do combust
and in the wind is the promise of rain and dust.

[Reference:"Die konsertina in die nag"(The concertina in the night)by
C. M. van der Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Picking A Geranium

She went into a rain shower
picked a geranium-flower
was in a kind of festive mood
and from getting wet it did her no good.

Drops of water trailed to her bed
and that flower was very red,
while outside thunder fell with a blast
with drops pattering against the window glass.

At first it was such a sunny day
and through it she was happy and gay,
but now she came to me still merrily
and very wet she kissed me

and all thoughts of the flower was lost
even if she got it at some cost.

Gert Strydom

Pigeons At Dawn

People make extraordinary efforts
to catch the essence of life,
to be truly living
and some visit third-rate motel
and hotel rooms
where they undress to ravage each other,
some read, watch television
into the early hours
and some just stay up
always thinking
as if searching for their souls.

I took the steps down
of the old dilapidated building
of which the elevators
were all broken
and it was chilly
with grey concrete under my feet

and the shop at the nearest garage was open
twenty four seven,
where I bought a bread and a half and milk
while the first orange pink glow
was creeping over the eastern horizon

and the world was as if on hold
and still waiting
for the bright sun before awaking,
with lights glowing yellow
in the rows of lamps in the street,
empty from cars and people

and it was a little cold in my shorts
but the doves in the park
at the art museum came down in droves,
landed cooing and bunched around me
pecking up hungry the bits
that I broke from the half loaf.

Pilgrimage

(after A. G. Visser)

In Goan beyond the entrance of Miramar
there is a desert full of danger
but the Sultan Mirza Khan goes to Isfahan
on a pilgrimage with every official.

Quickly his wife Fatima runs to the curtain,
she sends her mute illiterate slaves to and thro
look in the direction of the dry desert,
already hear the dogs barking in the distance

where Fatima is getting the palace ready,
for the Emir of the Bedouin her heart does beat wildly
where on an Arabian horse he comes for his own pilgrimage
as she does love that wild barbarian

and still today Mirza Khan is on his way to Isfahan:

My neighbour across the street
stays out at night to very late
as a very high freemason
and when he leaves the suburb

I see the curtains stir at his house
where his wife is peeping towards the road,
where a man comes riding in on a motorbike
and like a dove at the door she coos for him.

[Reference: "Divan" by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Pink Roses

There are pink rose
behind the razor wire,
the cups of some are already open
and the buds of some
still is closed.

Green stems protrude
over a white wall
where razor sharp wire
cordon it off

and the soft scent
of flourishing flowers
catches me while
I walk to the post box
to get some letters.

Gert Strydom

Pioneer Dwelling

Against the wall a lantern is burning
and the wick is turned high
making it flame brightly
and the thatched roof farmhouse

is cosy on this cold winter night,
the big old family bible is folded close,
there's a fire of hardwood in the fireplace
burning red hot

and the dim half-light
draws shadows over the rows of portraits
hanging in the passage
and some of the drops

of the rain shower that suddenly falls
(unusual for this time of year)
hiss on the coals
while a lightning bolt falls blue-white on the outside

and there's tranquillity
that you only find on a farm
while the frog choir sings outside
and the night is getting darker and darker.

Gert Strydom

Planting African Marigolds (Cavatina Sequence)

Under the summer sun's harsh glare I hoed
and I weeded,
to and fro I planted the seed in rows,
flowers I needed
to like their mother grow almost waist high
but unheeded
of all my efforts not a single one
appeared as the soil turned to stone.

Some more seeds I harvested from dried buds
as spring came on,
some the weavers might as their food devour,
they may be gone
with the whispering churning rampant wind
but some alone
would burst through the earth, would no season mar,
like blazing flaming yellow and red stars.

Gert Strydom

Playing Mig Roulette (Cavatina)

Playing Mig roulette, along we would drive
without cover,
listening for reports from commandos
then pull over,
to hide under trees and camouflage nets,
then recover;
after the futile enemy bombing
again armoured cars would be driving.

[Poet's note: Mig here refers to Mig-21 and Mig-23 fighter bombers flown by the enemy Cuban / FAPLA air-force.]

Gert Strydom

Playing Solo

Every time that I visit
a casino
the sign admission restricted
catches my eye.

It's better to play blackjack alone
against the table and the house,
to avoid other players
that can be seen
as a team of card counters.

Still better sometimes
not to press your luck
when you start winning,
even if it's the only game
where you can beat the odds
by using your own intelligence.

I watch the unseen eye
of the camera
that like big brother
gazes at me
and make as if
it isn't there

and play the game
in a way
that the casino
does not consider fair.

Although there is nothing
wrong in being bright
and sometimes
just for the hell of it

I will stare up
into the camera
and wonder what
they think

on the other side?

Gert Strydom

Playing You Act As If You Want To Flee Away

Playing you act as if you want to flee away,
while you do entice me;
with your pretty perfect
summer dress
you skip flaunting
like a springbok
but run back into my arms again
and do fill all of my thoughts and sentences.

Gert Strydom

Please Do Forgive

Please do forgive all the sin that I have done,
even that heart-held unmentioned one
and all of the vain and evil thoughts, which came before
of which the effects do in the lives of others still run

Please do forgive the sin which fortune for me has won,
also the ones that I in my heart of hearts do shun,
where in innocence I took Their name in vain
and those when out of control I do spun

and all the thoughts that were impure and many more
of which your just record does keep score
and all of the times that I have caused pain,
brought trouble to another's door.

I know that You do sin utterly deplore,
but please take me safely to heaven's far off shore.

Gert Strydom

Please Do Forgive [2]

Please do forgive all the sin that I have done,
even that heart-held unmentioned one
and all of the vain and evil thoughts, which came before
of which the effects do in the lives of others still run

Please do forgive the sin which fortune for me has won,
also the ones that I in my heart of hearts do shun,
where in innocence I took Their name in vain
and those when out of control I do spun

and all the thoughts that were impure and many more
of which your just record does keep score
and all of the times that I have caused pain,
brought trouble to another's door.

I know that You do sin utterly deplore,
but please take me safely to heaven's far off shore.

Gert Strydom

Please Do Remember Me (Rondeau)

Please do remember me when I cannot stay,
when by destiny everything dear is swept away,
when things do not go as we have planned
and then do please still believe and understand
that all the things for which we do hope and pray

is still in the omnipotent Lord's hand
and that there will come a day
where we will be in another land.
Please do remember me

when separate you do go on your way
and be life with hardships as it may
between us there is still a strong band
and even if people act underhand
please do remember me.

Gert Strydom

Ploughing

While walking on patrol,
busy with military service
I saw some natives ploughing
using a horse or ox or donkey
that never seemed weary
with a ancient blade thing
saw the neatly dug furrow

and remembered the first time
that I did plough on a tractor
with the clutch the deciding factor
and pulled away much too suddenly
drawing clouds of clay and grime
and it seesawing on back wheels
almost tipping head over heel.

Gert Strydom

Ploughing [2]

At night the tractor lights burn
on the field
where it opens the furrow
full of dust and water vapour

and so the farmer ploughs
through the early red-day
until he has to get some more diesoline,
do quickly eat his breakfast

and do draw some more furrows
with the dust clouds hanging out
from the back of his tractor
until he is finally finished
and like someone walking in sleep

very tired arrive at home,
do barely notice his wife and children,
do give her a kiss
and when he wants to go to the bedroom

she does chase him to the bathroom
before he does close the door of the bedroom
and falls upon the bed
and immediately is swept away by sleep.

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Gert Strydom

Poem For A Child That Was Never Conceived

Somewhere at a time
I thought that you would be part of my life,
but the relationship
in which I wished you to come forth was shattered

into broken pieces
and then when I met somebody
who would have been a perfect mother,
who knew how to love selflessly

destiny brought her to an early grave
and maybe from then on I did not truly want you,
it's not that I have not desired
to have you in my life

but I have lost myself along the way,
have raised someone else's children
as if they were my very own
and have lost them too

when their mother
moved in with her new lover
and sometimes I think
that your presence would have been a joy

but I am living in a world
on the brink of disaster,
with nothing to continue my legacy,
but the words that I leave

yet at times you are present in my dreams,
at times its as if your tiny fingers
fold around mine,
as if you are throbbing in my blood.

Gert Strydom

Poem On Honeymoon (Sonnet)

Today I am your darling and your hero
who does accompany you everywhere,
maybe a man with fame and money
that who pays for a holiday at a hotel
and even in your dreams you do see my face
while my hand rests upon your side
and you are bewitched by the words that I say
by the wild passion in each kiss
when your blood flows wild
in the loving between us
where our lives are growing to the most beautiful dreams
and you do discover every thing and part of me
but how will you feel in the days of old age
when hardship or illness may come unexpectedly?

Gert Strydom

Poem On My Birthday

I see lightning bolts hammer-flaming down
before the rain
falls down in force like drops of hail
and on my forty seventh year
under a white hot sun
while the autumn is already busy
to skeleton at places around me,
rays burst through the steel grey clouds
while the storm subsides right there

swallows, finches and sparrows
flying up and down are calling
and some are sitting a lamppost full

and it feels as if my life's cloak
is starting to unravel
and the cotton thread of it is thinning out
until it is almost worn through

and then you come
to decently wish me well
and it's as if everything round me changes
to fit into this scene
and suddenly life is open and free

while we embrace
and I smell the freshness around us
and look deep
into your loving eyes.

[Reference: Poem on his birthday by Dylan Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Poems Talking About God

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

I. God's love does stand firm

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

The whole Bible do witness that God is the light,
with Him there is only absolute truth and no darkness
where He does organize the infinity according to His will,
we do not just exist for a kind of catharsis,
where He the omnipotent One does love man,
do not curse man to be a comical clown,
do exist from the very begin into all eternity
and although we do not know the details of His science
in His eyes we are very exceptional and special,
where we do always have the ability and potential
to become greater or to bring everything to destruction
as our choices and humanity is not determined by fate
but without His carachter, His law that makes love alive
which some see as rigid, we will be lost in the darkness.

[Reference:"Non Liquit (a) " by M. M. Walters.]

Bible says clearly that God is going to wipe-out sin

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

It's strange that people with reasoning ability
do make a mockery about God and his omnipotence
as if He can and also cannot and will and also do not want to,
as if they do not truly believe in Him as God.
The Bible says clearly that God is going to wipe-out sin,
that His intentions are full of love, full of mercy and noble,
that He does give everyone a fair chance to life
even are in search of those that do wander off and are missing,
also that evil and suffering come from nothing else than sin
where the human decline do constantly astonish me
but man can look past Jesus and despise Him

where He comes as the only Lamb of God with the solution,
believe that He was but a mere sinful human being
and then try to fit everything into the puzzle of life.

[Reference: "Non Liquit (b)" by M. M. Walters.]

our personal relationship with Him goes

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

The soul that is the full living human being,
is unfortunately determined to only exist for a while
where at a time God wants to take us out of this earthly swamp,
where God in His eternal love without secret
do change our existence to have great meaning,
or if we do despise and mock Him and are lost in our sin
and say that He who is eternally righteous does constantly fail us
and then wonder why He is missing in our hearts?
How our personal relationship with Him goes
to what through our choices we find our as satisfaction
where by our own rebellion we constantly do astonish Him.
Our attitude towards Him do determine how we do stand with Him,
if we do follow Him like a obedient child
and if our love with His love do come to fullness.

[Reference: "Non Liquit (c)" by M. M. Walters.]

is above all things love

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

God is above all things love and the expression of it,
where He does ban the one that brings catastrophe and destruction
and He is not a cruel, vindictive, resentful monster
that do gnash His teeth constantly and bite us wherever He can
and that we do come out as the digested excrement from Him
is a school of thought that astonishes me with abhorrence
and then I do wonder if the poet does really know Him,
does have any relationship with Him?
Or is contempt and blasphemy

silently brought into a poem
as if we can walk away from our own words and actions
and does this man regard God for a reaction too meaningless?
Where I know Him hanging on a cross for everyone,
asking His Father to forgive those that do despise and injure Him.

[Reference:"Non Liquit (d) " by M. M. Walters.]

our religion is only about rites and mannerisms

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

If our religion is only about rites and mannerisms,
then we are standing on very dangerous ground
and if we do not really want to find and serve Him with sincerity,
then life does continue totally meaningless.
If we do only find Him in academic words and concepts
then we do have no relationship with Him and are not His children
and if we then do decide that He did not rise from the grave,
then by our self focussed science we are totally blind
and if we want to ascribe the way that the world is to Him,
do replace the concepts of His eternal light with darkness,
do not know that our age old ancestors had an impact just as we do have,
then as mere humans we do not have any understanding or insight,
that continually a hell of a war is waging
between light and darkness and good and evil.

[Reference:"Non Liquit (e) " by M. M. Walters.]

Gert Strydom

Poetess In Labour (Englyn Proest Dalgron)

While in pain, in labour throes
was ill with diarrhoea,
she wrote some good poetry
and did read some great poems.

Gert Strydom

Poetry

(in answer to Fanie Olivier)

Sometimes inspiration comes
from the most paltry thing,
words are stringed into poems
without any superfluous baggage

and sometimes in comes in protest
but totally bloodless
where you put the government and others under stress,
people do become angry

and big-eyed children are taught
to avoid your works, even to avoid you
and sometimes you cannot stop the words,
when freely they come by themselves

when those that do oppress become questionable
even under the new liberated generation.

[Reference: "oproep tot hoër digterlike spesialisasie" (call to higher poetic specialization) by Fanie Olivier.]

Gert Strydom

Poetry (Cavatina)

Long before I had experienced strive,
a force unknown
when I was young in life took my own thoughts,
suddenly grown;
not from sin or a search of fame it came
in words full blown
as a constant companion in my life,
more cruel and dear to me than any wife.

Gert Strydom

Poets Of Love Have Sung (Crystalline Poem)

Poets of love have sung from the heart,
you they did imitate in their art.

Gert Strydom

Police Intimidation

Today while in Springs
walking on the sidewalk
on my way to home
there was a police roadblock

put up right over the main road
just at Werda School
where you leave the shopping area
where eight armed policemen were standing

and when I got a call
from a wrong number
the one in the middle of the road
rushes to me; saying that I have taken a photograph of him

and the whole lot of them close around me,
I am even grabbed
with a hand into the back of my pants
that holds onto my belt,

I am searched
with hands being put
into my pockets
and my two cellular phones are taken

whereupon I say to them
that I have broken no law
and I am taking record of police intimidation
and a black police captain

(if military ranks are the same)
grab onto my arms holding them
and say that he is going to lock me up
and he stands so near to my face

that I am able to smell his sour breathe.
Whereupon I say to him
that I have broken no law,
that he has no grounds for arrest

and that touching me
is as good as assault
and then a white policeman
with two stars (a military lieutenant's rank) walks nearer

and the captain let go of my arms,
some of the group gathered around me stands back
but the one at my back
is still holding on to me

with his hand on my belt
into the back of my pants
while another one
is busy going into the data
of my cellular phones
and the white one threaten

to assault me,
to hit me into a hospital
and I say to him
that surely in his eyes

it is illegal to tape
this conversation that they must let me go
as I have not broken any law.
Then he says if I again

spit him in the face while I talk
he will hit my teeth out of my mouth
and I say that the one holding me
is already assault

and that I will let them lock him up
in his own jail, if he touches me
and he says that he will not
touch me even with gloves

and that man stands so near to me
trying to intimidate, that I can smell him
and it smells as if for a whole week
he did not bath

as he is stinking of rotting sweat.

Then they want to know my name
and address from me
which I refuse
to give to them.

Then the white lieutenant says
that it is illegal
not to give my particulars

and I to him
that they do not have the right to it
as I have broken no law

as I am wondering
if the lot of them
want to come and assault me
in the middle of the night or something?

Then he says: "you that have swallowed
a whole law book, you know
that you have to give
your name and address."

Then I say again
that I have broken no law
were just passing
and I am tacking record of police intimidation.

Then the white lieutenant says
that I do not even know what my name is
also in what street I am walking
and exactly in what town,
at what place
I am in the world.

The black policemen
stand laughing
as if it's the joke
of all jokes

and I say that I want my cellular phones back,
that they cannot come
and steal them from me
and he threatens again to hit me.

When they can get no photograph of them
on my cellular phones
they give my cellular phones back
and the white man that they call adjutant threatens

again to assault me
and says away with you
that I must be on my way
and says record this now
and I will hit you like thunder!

Then I say that this type of thing
only happens in a police state
and that they are Gestapo
busy with police intimidation
and that I am going to publish this incident
and they laugh at me.

Envoi

Now I wonder as a citizen,
who pays my taxes
when and where I have a job,
what rights does the law representatives claim
to themselves
and how good, are they at their jobs?

The two cars that had being stolen from me
have after three years
not been found back
and this lot is fast

to stand and threaten with assault
and I scoff at them and know my rights,
but three thousand farmers have been killed
and where are their killers?
Surely walking around freely?

Surely one can only expect an incident like this
in the new South Africa
where things are only going
from bad to worse.

[This incident happened on Saturday 11 December 2010 at 09h15.]

Gert Strydom

Pontius Pilate

When you washed your hands,
did deliver a righteous innocent man,
the creator Lord God
to a angry, revolting crowd

did you think for one moment
that the destiny that was measured out
was not due to Him?

Were you too stupid to know
that you did bind yourself
eternally to darkness,
while Lucifer
wanted to destroy God?

Did you not know that no one
would forget your gesture,
that through the ages
people would view you as a murderer?

Nevertheless as the ruling symbol,
you did wash your hands and brought them together,
for your own sake did deliver the Son of God to death
and did choose to go to eternal damnation.

Gert Strydom

Poor Soul

Poor soul, why have you chosen this body,
decided to dwell in me? A human being
while you could have had anybody
and you could have inhabited a more divine thing?

Yet you those someone on this sinful planet called earth
a mere speck in the entire universe
and from my very birth
had to struggle in a world perverse

from what it had been designed to be
and what will you inhabit when
time and destiny brings a end to me
and where will you be then?

Or will you just vanish with the thing called life,
fading into the naught without strive?

[Reference: Sonnet 146 "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Poplar Bush

Now you are just a bunch of skeletons
where you are only stripped canes
that point like fingers into the air
as if seeking you can find something
out of the cobalt blue above you.

Your branches are still straight
and do not twist into each other
when the icy-cold August winds
do jerk you to and thro
blowing dust
and dead grass against you.

Still when spring does come
all of your branches will be covered in leaves
when it seems as if new life rushes through you
and the summer wind comes rustling.

Gert Strydom

Poppies (Cavatina)

Red they bloom as if coals from flaming hell,
they do glitter,
are shivering in the slight wind, I do
sometimes titter
at their emblazing beauty, while bees buzz,
birds do twitter;
God must have made them to be so lovely,
they awake feelings of longing in me.

Gert Strydom

Powerless Surprised And Blinded

The cold winter wind cries like a child
when the black ripe spreads with devastation
as if it will find no comfort anywhere
while nature acts without mercy,
cries like a girl that has lost love
when tears glitter bright in drops of dew
as a bird is without a nest, without a companion,
there is even a yearning in the cobalt blue.

When drought devours the last grain,
when lines of dust hang red-brown full of seeds
that only blows away in the rough stormy wind,
then there is no power in all your deeds,
it is even if God is leaving you alone
while you want to cling on to His hand,
it feels if nowhere you can succeed,
there is even a yearning in the cobalt blue,

people become powerless surprised and blinded,
while they see birds comfortless on wires,
they feel as if God does not love them,
they notice despair in their wives;
there is harassment, a type of hatred
that wants to fold around every heart with darkness,
destiny strikes fatally, secretly accurate,
there is even a yearning in the cobalt blue.

Gert Strydom

Prayer

Lord even if You send
both pain and suffering,
or love, happiness and liberation
help me to be content
with whatever fate you decide on
and stretch Your hand out over me.

I would my self choose the middle way
and lead my life to it
but You will take the best decisions for me.

[Reference: Gebet by Eduard Mörike.]

Gert Strydom

Prayer (Cavatina)

Words spoken in thoughts silently or loud
do travel beyond
the hemisphere, space, to the Lord of grace;
there is a bond
that is unseen, that's between man and God,
that corresponds
in conversations with a Godly being
while all other things fall somewhere in-between.

Gert Strydom

Prayer (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Where lonely I kneel before You,
You know every word of mine and know everything I do
where I do not only ask for mercy
but that You will protect and with my darling be,
above me Your stars glitter forever true
and where aeons do turn into many years
I ask that you straighten her way in a life without any fears
and You do know my sincerity do know me through and through,
You know every word of mine and know everything I do.

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Gert Strydom

Prayer [1]

Lord even if You send
both pain and suffering,
or love, happiness and liberation
help me to be content
with whatever fate you decide on
and stretch Your hand out over me.

I would my self choose the middle way
and lead my life to it
but You will take the best decisions for me.

[Reference: Gebet by Eduard Mörike.]

Gert Strydom

Prayer [2]

Paint every single word
like Your flowers
that grows wild in the veldt,

let my poems sound
like the Messiah of Handel,
like angels singing about your glory,

translate my words,
so that others can see the world
through my eyes, can feel what I do experience,

safeguard me against criminals
that constantly sneaks around, against murderers
that destroys without a conscience

deliver me from a government which is set for only its own interests,
from creditors, door-to-door salesmen,
vagrants, friends who do not know me in the bitter years,

forgive me for the sin
that I commit knowing and unknowing,
for the way that I sometimes act with my fellow-men

and please do give me Your insight and Your light
which brings truth to darkness,
a circle of friends which goes wider and wider
let Your hand fold around me like a fortress.

Gert Strydom

Prayer For A Ruined Earth

I. You that are almighty

At the beginning You that are almighty
spoke mighty words,
reaching Your hands out to the darkness
and defined the existence of all things

letting light come out of total darkness
with the first morning breaking
causing stars, comets and planets to break free out of nothing
and with Your immeasurable power and knowledge

caused life to come forth from the nought
forming man to your own image
and long before this,
even before the fall of man, forgiveness already existed,
You had already decided
in love for the sake of man, on Your own death sentence.

II. You left the wide world to the care of man

You left the wide world to the care of man,
to maintain, to care for it
but in every word and deed man only wanted to profit
with that which declares his glory

and he treated the earth as if it is substitutable
stripped the sea, chopped the woods down
and to man the earth was no heritage
he caused the atom to escape from its nucleus

thought that like a god he was treading in Your steps
chased after unknown devastation,
saw the hydrogen bomb explode with a bang,
dared the destruction of everything living

and on a ruined planet man is trapped,
in a world where everything is starting to hang in balance.

III. Still we know

Still we know that Your almighty hand
rest on all things
and You are aware about a world that is declining,
are aware about evil and hold everything in check.

Out of You who once made our paradise perfect,
there constantly flows wonderful light
while You watch the words and deeds of man,
keeping our existence in equilibrium.

You prepare the way in advance for every human being
and where man fails
destroys each other, cursing one another,
You have already prepared the outcome in advance

and still You determine over the lot of every man and thing
and in wonder we are waiting on Your return.

[Reference: Gebed vir die aarde (Prayer for the earth) by Johann Lodewyk
Marais.]

Gert Strydom

Prayer For Military Pilots

Dear Lord please take control today
of my life and of the jet,
with which I cross through Your airspace.

Let today occur according to Thy will
and make me silent and humble before You
who rule over all things
and if it comes,
that I fly today against an enemy,
help me to stand my man
and still then fly along with me.

You that give every thing that we have got
may You make us thankful
for all Your many blessings
and touch every one of us
to know that You are with us
and that this food,
also come out of Thy great hand
and let us really be people
that know how it is
to know You

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of A Prisoner In A Extermination Camp

Maybe I will never see you, Jerusalem,
still I yearn to walk in your streets,
at times I have hope,
at other times my heart tightens,

when I see every face, hear every voice
of them that have got to die and I am forced
to strip my own people from all dignity
to help destroy them, to breath in their fear of death.

In how many extermination camps their are people like me,
who lead their own people to the valley of death,
who themselves yearn for their own certain destruction
have to undress corpses
trying to stay alive crying, vomiting,
are praying to You, are waiting day upon day for salvation?

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of An Unborn Child

Oh Lord, when a husband and wife
in love yearned for each other
I was roused out of undetermined rest
and on a day
placed into this dark place to take form
and they do wait
that I appear in a world of decay,
somewhere in Your great unlimited universe.

You who form all things from the beginning,
who also knows everything,
I ask that where You measure out
the punishment of life to me
that You will in great love always stay with us
that You will forget the sins
that we make here as mere humans,
that You touch my parents with great joy.

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of Thanks In Human Bliss (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

I want to thank You for one moment in an hour
where we did not speak a word with each other,
for lovely expressions on my wife's face
where it feels as if it can last into eternity,
where the candles throw shadows on the wall,
where we do find bliss in a world full of hatred,
where You let nothing through which is on semblance
and passion comes like an intimate kind of fire,
where we both here naked and exposed
come to the greatest moment together,
realise that it's holy and almost eternal
and this moment is enrapturing great,
where we are both happy and speechless
in love's greatest secret.

[Reference:"Gebed van verstarrende siele"(Prayer of rigid souls)by
Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Prayer Of The Bones

Lord, You have promised
to let the bones rise again
and to bring them back to life
and everywhere people are robbed,
while death comes far too quickly in our country
as if evil touches everything

and around survival a struggle rages
while your people does stumble and fall
and everywhere bones are lying around
and work opportunities for my people
are stripped to the skeleton.

Lord, draw the line and erect my people again,
You have got the power
to let rulers and governments come and go,
to fold Your hands
around the bare bones of my people.

Lord, I ask that You do restore my people
to also be able to lead a free life.

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of The Bones (Iv)

My Lord God, your reign goes everywhere
observing the living rulers you a right here,
on your day you will reconstruct the dead
while some people do for you second coming prepare.

The President's Indian friends and all their business you do know,
the acts of African leaders and their wives do in your eyes glow,
also the corruption right through government to up very high
while in great love still your goodwill on them all you do bestow

but you are witness to the great oppression in this fair land
and still in mercy you do withhold your destructive hand
while my people are robbed, raped, pillaged and murdered
where at times speechless to all of this I stand,

where Eugene Terreblancé was unfortunately right,
was slaughtered and tortured because he was white
and like thousands of farmers and townsfolk
as a minority there is no justice or any escape in sight.

I have read your promise to bring back life to the bare bones
to raise a great army out of your valiant ones,
to again afresh reconstruct them with veins and flesh
to fight against those that do not to your law atone.

To escape the revenge of the dark peoples in this country,
to be from this unending great oppression totally free
some of my Afrikaner people are scattered throughout the world
but too stuck to this nation and land are others like me

but I do believe that the majority of all colours and creeds are suffering,
that this oppression is much more than a black upon white thing,
that great evil and Lucifer's will is at the core of it,
that it does challenge everyone who are existing

and I cannot bow down to men or beg for anyone's charity,
do want an own place in the sun and total liberty
to live a life to your will and to its fill and to earn a living
and I beg you to consider us poor sinners and to let your will be

but much more I do beg you to hold to your promise and to act,
to with your unconquerable forces the evil to attack
to give all people in this country equal rights and liberty,
to help us turn our country to you and your will back.

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of The Bones II

Away are the orange, white and blue
and there is another flag that I observe fluttering
as a sign of our country
and continually this country is stained with blood,
while millions of Afrikaners are leaving it
and the others are clinging to their land like I am doing
while the hand of a dark spirit does beget abdominal crimes
and my Lord, I am still trusting on Your mercy
that You like in the ancient times will again bring flesh to the bones
and will erect people, who stand as loyal as Gideon Scheepers did,
although they are scattered from work, from a home and their loved ones
and Lord, I want to insist upon a great change to come
and although we are one nation an unreasonable settling is constantly being
forced down
and in the cities and the rural areas people are being affected

and Lord, I know that you do keep record of those that follow you,
that You do have knowledge about every single thing
that Your rains of destruction will fall at a time
and that You do measure out a time for all governments,
that You do notice where innocent people wander around scattered,
how a new government does disinherit people from their future,
that you do observe sincere people of all colours that are trying to serve You,
also those that are murderer, are raped and that does die in the hands of robbers
and may the whole world know about our sincerity and Your salvation,
that to the bitter end true to You and our duty and blood,
we did not want to forget our people, our ideals and our God,
that we do only cling to Your salvation
and that although the enemy wanted us to forsake everything
we trusted that You would heal and mend our country.

Gert Strydom

Prayer Of The Bones Iii

Lord, the blood of the innocent trickles in the sand and clot
on the farms and in the cities of South Africa,
the beaker of the sorrows of Your people is running full
and I want to ask for deliverance and for much more than just mercy,
I am asking for Your peace and for true rest
as according to reports people are being murdered and robbed,
from the most distant northerly farm right up to the coast,
and some people flee and loose themselves under neon lights,
famous people are seen at objectionable places
while some people do pray to ancestral spirits and to rocks
and a future and a free life is much less than a maybe
as thousands have been buried with their shattered bones
and murdering shot after murdering shot is being fired
while people are begging and do wander through the land,
criminals do continually kill
and people do die without respect or mercy

It's clear that a dark force is bringing evil over my people
and even at the church,
at government hospitals
crime and recklessness is being seen
and people do show signs to each other with their thumbs,
cellular phones and jewellery are being robbed with firearms
and factories are polluting the grey blue sky of the old Transvaal
while illegal shacks do stretch from hillock to hillock
and farmers are waited upon on Sundays and hunted down
from the Limpopo river to as far as flat Table Mountain
and at distant places and on farms robbers do strike at night
causing innocent people to die throughout the country
and passengers are threatened on train upon train
as if the police does not exist
while criminals use robbed medicine
to create their deadly drugs.

A politician tells naked lies and do excel in fraud
while robbers, criminals and murderers do never go to jail
and everyone that stands against these things is being seen as a rebel.
There are great abominations in the country like in the book Ezekiel,
people treat each other much worse than their animals,

some Afrikaners are rotten deeper than the core,
while black people dance naked to ancestral spirits in the veldt,
and a dark force is bringing its ungodly practices back.
Each criminal gang see themselves as soldiers,
some people are blindfolded against the walls of their own homes
and others dig holes for their own bodies
while most people are only searching for peace and a own life
and that You are going to intervene my Lord, is something that I do know
as like a David, I did also go through a valley of death
when communists wanted to destroy everything that is holy
and did suffer great losses against a much smaller army.

At the hand of foreigners Eugene Terreblance did die
and laws that oppress my own people are every day being seen
while municipal labourers do strike and rubbish heap up to the yard
and people without hope do visit dancing places and each and every bar
while those that do govern think that their dominance does last eternally
but you do notice the corruption that is being swept under the rosemary,
and You do see my scattered people and the bones of their struggle
as the Afrikaner does know humiliation, oppression, nemesis and pain
and thousands have being killed and lay in the grave
while the wind of abatement does blow continually and people do sob.
Lord, do hear the cries of them that are still following You
as some have become feasting places for the vulture and the crow.
and I pray for peace a place in the sun for everyone
from the rough back-veldt to each city,
and that Your bright light do splash down on the urban buildings of glass,
that everyone will reflect Your love, mercy and righteousness.

Gert Strydom

Praying Mantis

On your hand
small and somewhat brittle I am,
another insect ready to be squashed

with protruding tentacles
sensing the air
attentive like the rising hairs

on your arm,
charming like an innocent
green little thing

but to other insects
deadly I am
always prowling

ready to hunt
with eyes protruding
being erect like in prayer

but then striking
at the next moment
is very near.

Gert Strydom

Precautionary Measures

(After Elizabeth Eybers)

To live unhindered in your house
you only need to get two good guard dogs
and the postman keeps his arm out of your yard
and every salesman will go past,
even religious zealots that want to convert you
only test their luck once
and those that pillage, plunder, poach, rob and dirty vagrants
are immediately warded off
and blessed you are in your own house,
baking what ever you want in your kitchen
when all knocking evils keep past
and do not know when you are at home
but when the angel of death comes home
then nothing stops him.

[Reference: "Voorsorg" (Precaution) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Precious Jesus, Take My Hand (Rubiyat / Persian Quatrain)

At one of the great precipices in life I do stand
and I ask: "omnipotent Jesus, take my hand,
lead me with Your great unending love
all the way to that blessed Beulah Land.

Gert Strydom

Precursor (Couplets)

(in answer to Lina Spies)

Love is much more than to kiss with spit
more than a glance doing wonderful things is in it,

your company and your smile
I do cherish for longer than just a while

I cannot forget the intensity
that semen and sweat through the years brought to me

where you made moments eternal and lasting
when I touched your soft skin

but more than this there is something honest and true
when for a moment I think of you

your smile and your glance
do for years my life enhance

and in the lovely memories you do remain
in all the days of joy, sorrow, bliss and pain

and as if a precursor of the future days
you do bring joy and happiness in so many ways.

[Reference:"Voorbode" (Omen)by Lina Spies.]

Gert Strydom

Predictions

The lost book of Nostradamus
suddenly is found and quoted
and even predictions
from extinct people
that the hour work
is hitting near the end
and that man
is standing on the brink of disaster
is given.

Astrologers and old prophets
leave people dumbstruck
with predictions
about what is going to happen with humanity
and people look up into the sky
to see what the stars are telling.

¶Envoi

Great Lord, of all of this I know very little,
just that all things begin with You
and that Your hand
is still around the world
and Your love and compassion
still reaches out to man.

Gert Strydom

Pretoria

I look at a city,
a city once modern, new
and progressive, the cultural centre
of a nation
but now poverty
and mismanagement
is taking its toll.

Where ten years back
people could live in its apartments
now is a ghetto,
with prostitutes on the street,
primitive men urinating against buildings
and teenagers walking with ghetto-blasters
playing music at full volume.

Where at traffic lights
windows are smashed with bricks
and valuables are stolen,
parked cars are taken,
where cars are hijacked
with the barrel of a gun
and cars are even stripped
at the police grounds.

A capital city in a country
that has thrown its borders
wide open to the rest of Africa
and every criminal
has headed there
and gangsters live in paradise

but in the suburbs
people still are making a living
in fortresses guarded by dogs
and security devices,
with panic buttons
for the nearest rent a cop

and people still pray
and go to work and play
as if crime is the norm
and the inadequacy
of the new government
doesn't really matter.

Gert Strydom

Pretoria (Cavatina)

(after William Blake)

I walk the street, impoverished people
do catch my eye,
marks of hardship and woe are on their faces,
whores wander by,
(some once decent women forced to sin) ,
a baby's cry
sounds very helpless and I have pity,
there is some great heartache that I see.

[Reference: 'London' by William Blake.]

Gert Strydom

Pretoria (In Answer To Mongale Serote)

You are like a father to me,
and probably I will not find
a more honourable father
than that which I have in you
where you stand strong, with well-planned streets,
great learning at your schools and universities
filled with churches, with God loving people

with a holy place
on the hill, commemorating the struggle
of a nation, against nature,
against savage human beings
and even the British Empire
and the salvation by the hand
of the almighty God
and with the statue
of fearless uncle Paul Kruger
still facing north.

My military service and my second job
and most of my employment
was knotted to you
and you determined my destiny
in the halls of government

and now father, you frighten me
with syndicates of foreign criminals,
making you their domain,
with drugs and prostitution
offered on your streets

and you wear expressions that brings fear
and threat to me,
being driven from my job
by new laws,
where through affirmative action
you see other people as your own,
even black foreigners from other lands
and now to you I am nonexistent

and now I have left you, have gone from you
to try and make a living
and yet like all father's
I cannot replace you
and long to be at your side.

[Reference: Alexandra by Mongale Serote.]

Gert Strydom

Pretoria At Half Past Four

At half past four
while the civil service employees
are going home
blue-white thunderbolts crash down
while an afternoon shower begins
and the road becomes a skating rink.

Pedestrians run into the shelter of buildings,
the road workers stop their labour
where they are repairing the road,
while the main roads run like small rivers
with water flowing knee deep
and housewives in the suburbs take cover
behind closed doors.

Inside the shelter of a small church
you are peaceful on your knees
while you pray
and a few lost teenagers
sit scared on the back benches
and the banner in the church
proclaims that God saves.

Some light fall radiating white on your face,
while outside lightning bolts are crashing down,
while somewhere in the distance sirens below;
you talk like every other day
with the God of the universe.

Gert Strydom

Pretoria, 20 May 1983

It was an autumn day
and times will never be like that again:

We who are in love
having a lunch at a restaurant

and the half carelessness
after the promotion that I got,

the war days on the border
that for me is over for the here and now

and then, we just miss the bomb
that explodes in Church Street

and know we are living in times of war
and see the innocent

of any sex, age,
language and race

murdered, maimed, blown to pieces
and of some, just pieces are left

and somewhere our old world
has lost its meaning and has gone insane.

Gert Strydom

Pretoria: Evening

After stringing along for a hour or more
in Voortrekker street
the traffic decreases
until silence falls over the city
and in the dull blue sky
for another while the sun hangs high.

A swarm of doves turn in their flight,
at the schools boys are still playing rugby,
some girls are just finished with netball
when the first cars of parents
are there to pick them up

before the sun does stick out
its last fingers over the Magaliesberg Mountain
when patches of long shadows do cover everything,
while twilight suddenly falls,
as the evening star and moon
do both hang bright
and it's the end of another day
while above me the Milky Way glitters
in all of its beauty.

Gert Strydom

Pretty Things Sometimes Do Come Suddenly

(for my wife Daleen Enslin-Strydom)

Pretty things sometimes do come suddenly
and at times do last only for a moment,
like light that falls like a stream of bright rays
through a opening in the clouds,

the variety of colours
with a sunset
where a few white clouds
still do hang in the blue sky,

the bright colours of a rainbow
that suddenly does frame
the clouded dark sky

doves that grey-blue
in a swarm in a park decent around you
in a rustling of slapping wings

and so are the facial expressions
of jubilation and joy,
things that we do never find in words
but do relate to great moments,

and the light in the glance in the eye
that is already radiant
before we see the smile
around the lips

but it's different with you, who do love me,
where a moment does change a lifetime
to how life does really need to be.

Gert Strydom

Prevailing

I wrestled in the darkness of night
and the moon was gone
as if plucked from the sky,
by him that laid his hands
on me and twisted my arms
almost out of their sockets.

We rolled to and fro
and weakness came upon me
and still I tried to overcome
and hang on to him
with all of my strength.

A Terrible mighty hand
had smitten me
on my hip
and my leg hurt terribly,
but still in strength
I clung to him
and didn't know
with whom I struggled
and wouldn't let go.

"Let me go, " He said to me,
when the sun started to rise
over the hills in the East,
but I wouldn't let Him free
until He blessed me.

[Reference: Genesis 32: 22-30.]

Gert Strydom

Previously We Were Together

Previously we were together
and your gaze, the way you shake your head
is well known and I must except
that I cannot shake off this feeling.

Previously I had been at this place
and surely this meeting is destined.
Maybe I have embraced you somewhere
while emotions now clench me

and now that you also recognize me
your eyes are heavenly blue
and suddenly I have won you back
with unending love

and let us stay together
slowly but surely get all the lost years back.

Gert Strydom

Prickly Pear Hedge

How long it did seem
as if day after day you were pining away,
vainly wanted to reach maturity
as if ravaged by a hidden pain,

were waiting on a sign or maybe a determined time
or something to happen in nature,
yet there were greater leaves throughout
and now you are in your prime.

For many years you do grow
as a hedge in the garden
with nailed leaves
and suddenly you bear fruit up to your top

and you are everywhere covered with them and I am astonished
from the harvest that did come with your growth.

Gert Strydom

Prince Abadin Tadia Tjoessoep (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after I. D. du Plessis)

I prince Abadin Tadia Tjoessoep, high-priest, Pangéran, do here swear
where I do bare witness over God's wondrous salvation and His care:
When Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa the ruler of Java asked me for support
to save the kingdom, my people and I were his last resort.
against the Dutch my people and I in Java had to dare,
his son's links with the Dutch East India Company I had to alienate
and in war as the most prominent general the Lords Seventeen did me hate
while no chance to regain our country from the fierce Dutchmen I did spare,
where I do bare witness over God's wondrous salvation and His care.

After Ageng's surrender I knew that further fighting was in vain
I was as a prince banished to the Stormy Cape but did in life remain.
When Ageng was forsaken without a throne, Haiji was a marionette of Holland,
against the Lords Seventeen who secretly seized the spices alone I did stand
and they were scared that I would start a war for freedom all over again.
When the Voetboeg wanted to sink the captain and crew begged me to pray,
a great storm was raging and I did set everything in God's hand on that day
and the storm immediately did abate but I did let God the honour retain,
I was as a prince banished to the Stormy Cape but did in life remain.

[Reference:"Die versbundel en gedig: "Sjeg Joesoef""
(The poetry book and poem "Sjeg Joesoef")"by I. D. du Plessis. Poet's
note:The "Voetboeg" was 'n Dutch ship on which Prince Abadin Tadia
Tjoessoep and his people were transported to Cape Town to live there in
banishment in the time of governor Simon Van der Stel and in this way the Malay
people did arrive in the Cape and he was received in full honour as a prince on
their arrival on 2 April e Abadin Tadia Tjoessoep was married to one of the
daughters of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Abadin Tadia Tjoessoep wasa Sheikh in his
own right as he was nearly related to Sultan Alauddin of Gowa today Makassar
where as close as a own son he grew up in the e Abadin Tadia Tjoessoep who
grew up on Celebes island at Gowa today Makassar studied in Mecca under
various pious scholars but when he wanted to return home the kingdom had
been captured by the Dutch and he headed for Java where he was welcomed by
Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa and lived there for sixteen years as a prince, religious
leader and advisor.]

Gert Strydom

Princess Of My Heart

If you were the rays of the sun bringing light
and I the darkness that blots out everything to black
we would have met each other at daybreak and sunset,
we would have greeted each other for moments
when the earth turns in its eternal orbit
and you would bring light to my darkness,
if you were the rays of the sun bringing light
and I the darkness that blots out everything to black.

.
If you were the stretched out ocean
and I the sky that goes up to space
we would have constantly touched each other
and at times I would have made your waters my own
and at times your waves would hit threatening
while my breath draws tracks over your surface,
if you were the stretched out ocean
and I the sky that goes up to space

If you were the spring that explodes in blossoms
and I the summer that comes with maturity
your lustrous glory would sing of my coming
while insects and birds frolic in pollination
and we both would draw strength from light, rain and dust
and I would be able to bare your fruit from each pretty flower,
if you were the spring that explodes in blossoms
and I the summer that comes with maturity

but you are my princess that I adore as my wife
and I am a writer of verses that keeps longing,
if you only knew the depth of my love
you would never be able to forget
and still my love sneaks into you
and brings meaning and maturity to every desire
but you are my princess that I adore as my wife
and I am a writer of verses that keeps longing.

[Reference: 'Princesse Lontaine' by A.G. Visser.]

Princess Of My Heart (2)

(for Annelize, after A.G. Visser)

If you were the rays of the sun bringing light
and I the darkness that blots out everything to black
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if you were the spring that explodes in blossoms
and I the summer that comes with maturity

but you are my princess that I adore as a woman
and I am a writer of verses, who keeps longing,
if you only knew the depth of my love
you would never be able to forget me
but still my love sneaks into you
and bring meaning and maturity to every desire
but you are my princess that I as a woman
and I am a writer of verses who keeps longing.

[Reference: 'Princesse Lontaine' by A.G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Princess That's Far Away

At a time I could say my words
face to face to you,
and you knew
how deep my love is,

but now you are to far away
and I wonder if my poems
still make an impression on you.

Like the night
and sparkling stars flee
from the sun in the day
we are separated

and a shadow falls
drawing long lines
between us

and still you forever remain
the princess of my heart.

Gert Strydom

Prints (Cavatina)

(after Eve Merriam)

On all my fingers are some tiny whirls,
a own design
that is unique, part of me alone,
as when I sign
in the way I make my name as my imprint;
God did consign
some things like feelings, my flesh and my mind
that a person does in no other find.

[Reference: "Thumbprint" by Eve Merriam.]

Gert Strydom

Prisoners (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to André Letoit)

Every white man is seen as an enemy to the state
(where they do only serve the black multitude)
are as people from life and opportunities denied
and it does not bother them if we do this deserve.
The iron curtain has been in place for decades
and in secret meetings doors are shut
where the black people do conspire and plot for their own gain,
do only set the table for them and their friends
and every white person is now set for own survival
where constantly the government twists the truth
and unemployment and farm killings comes to a fullness
while politicians keep sing inciting songs
in a illusion of a world where they do promise freedom to everyone
but secretly do pamper themselves over others that murder and plunder and rob.

[Reference: "inmates" by André Letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

Probius (Nonce Sonnet)

Probius was whipped by guards until bloody,
then chained and locked in the dungeon
to convince him, to offer to gods
and when they saw him shaking with sheer pain

his capturers thought it would make him broody
bring sense to him with a hard bludgeon,
then they were betting and drawing some odds
thinking that his faith in God was in vain,
that by this time he would be quite moody:

“I am better prepared than before
and you can send to me your whole army
but now I am only convinced more,
that nothing to your dead gods will force me
the devil, your true father, I deplore.”

Gert Strydom

Progress

Dress your legs with nylons
with cat eyes in between
glowing next to huge pylons
never serene, just weirdly obscene

and destroy every patch of green
with shopping malls and every chain store
disrupting how towns and cities had been
and plant power stations by the score

and be a age totally foul
with scores of minibus taxi's asunder
acting as if without a soul
to kill and to plunder

with the monsters bellowing
smoke like gallows, energizing electrical strings.

Gert Strydom

Prometheus The Titan

How many days, weeks,
months and years
have I been chained by a supreme god
to this hard unforgiving rock?

The sun, the rain, the wind
and even lightning found me here
and I the benefactor of man
could not even keep myself warm

when winter snow covered me
and this indignity had befallen me because
I really loved man, had taken my task to heart
to make him strong and smart

and in giving him nobility
I wished, I hoped that just one,
a single one of his kind, would come,
not as a servant but as a friend

and then you Hercules arose
shattered the preying eagle
with one blow,
ripped my chains apart.

Gert Strydom

Proof Of Existing Hell (Cavatina) (In Answer To Czeslaw Milosz)

As soldiers we have smelt the scorching flames
of man made hell,
witnesses to the effects of exploding
shell upon shell,
know the destruction that man can bring
only too well,
have stories to tell of a kind of hate,
when mere boys are thrown to the care of fate.

[Reference: "Proof" by Czeslaw Milosz.]

Gert Strydom

Proud Songsters (Terzanelle)

Birds sing while the day is dying
black-collard barbets, finches and doves in pairs
with sincere sweet voices crying,

in beauty raising my arm hairs,
acknowledging the beginning of spring
black-collard barbets finches, and doves in pairs

in profound beauty sing
before all other beings knowing,
acknowledging the beginning of spring

as if the winter at last is going,
without any further resistance
before all other beings knowing,

smelling the rain in the distance
singing to their hearts content, bright and clear
without any further resistance,

claiming that spring and summer is near.
Birds sing while the day is dying,
singing to their hearts content, bright and clear
with sincere sweet voices crying.

[Reference: Proud Songsters by Thomas Hardy.]

Gert Strydom

Proudly Of You I Write (English Sonnet)

(in answer to William Shakespeare)

Proudly of you I write the truth in my verse,
where I try to beguile to me much-loved you
and to woo you I do need no rite or any curse,
to make the feelings in our hearts come true.

I do not needs spirits to teach me how to write
while omnipotent God does lead the way ahead,
away from occult compeers I do stay by night,
where with memories to you I do love spread.

Neither do I need the help of a familiar ghost
to be able to write to you with some intelligence
and of my verses I stay silent and do not boast,
where I am constantly longing for your presence:

where by God's will to you I do write line upon line
and no lack of inspiration by His grace do infirm mine.

[Reference: "Sonnet 86 Was it the proud full sail of his great verse"
by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Psalm-Poem (In Answer To Cornelius Van Der Merwe)

Lord You who are the eternal shepherd
notice the evil things in our country,
how cars are being stolen, are hijacked,
how some malignant men rape women,

how they do not regard any of Your laws,
how they have already tortured and killed
thousands of people in anger
and where we have already lost hope
I ask that You lead us further,
through the valley of death intact,

where Your body is the temple
that had been raised again in three days
my eyes are still drawn to You
and I ask that You reach out Your hand,

to cover every house, every property and farm
from these wicked people
(even everyone else that serves You)
with the power of Your mighty angels to protect,
that You draw Your impenetrable laager around us all
who stand faithful on our knees before You.

Gert Strydom

Psyche

I

Far too many of Cupid's arrows have struck my heart
and where I am wandering in the veldt on an open plain
from all of those lovely maidens I am now apart,
few of the effect of the lost loves do remain

II

when suddenly on two naked lovers I do stumble upon
lying with their limbs intertwined in a deep sleep
as if all fear of interruption or discovery is gone.
For a moment I consider to take the bow and it to keep.

III

That they are not mortal and from a far off realm are clear
and the lovely women's face so innocent and full of grace
let me think it over and in the shadow of another tree quite near
I sit both happy and puzzled to see them in their intimate embrace

IV

where they both lie in the shadow of a very huge tree
probably an Yggdrasil that binds heaven, earth and hell
and I know about myths do not believe tales from antiquity
but right here are two gods or I am under a kind of spell.

V

I am thinking about taking the bow and quiver and shooting
some of those damned and blessed arrows at him where he is at my mercy
and that would make him fall in and out of love and would be something
but reason tells me not to annoy the gods and to let them be

VI

and what's more most trees hereabout are acacia's and all of them I know
but this one is different and very unfamiliar to me and somewhat strange
where its shade even has some odd tranquility that it does bestow
and when I was near to the bow something in my soul and heart did change.

VII

That the fair lady had wondered throughout the earth on a quest
I can see from her clothing that lies in a bundle near to me

as there are some things from France, Spain all of the very best
and here in her sleep she looks so thrilled and very happy.

VIII

I would not be able to get it over my heart to do her any harm
and I decide to walk away and in peace to leave them and let them lay
but my eyes catch the movement of a slender female arm
while with open lovely sky-blue eyes she looks and we have got nothing to say

IX

while like the summer sun her gaze and benevolent smile do follow where I do
go.

[Reference: . The Nordic "Yggdrasil" legendary tree is a tree that
connects the under-earthly (hell) , earth and heaven with each other.]

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Gert Strydom

Psychiatry Or Is It Not? (Parody)

(with apologies to Johan Steyn)

The smiling tribal witchdoctor
with his bitter cure has got me under control,
everything does not begin and end with me:
with something he says he will fix my small thing
and I become aware, that I am different
but near to being unhappy
and aimless I walk back home.

The balance I can tell you
and now I do not walk the straight way.
My friends come to steal my things!
my wife is passable and during the day
when I whisper to Tristene and Isolde
and wake up they glare at me like wide mouth dragons
and scream that they do not "alls wille." (do not want "to do everything.")

I shiver when I can,
suddenly feel strange,
are unreliable for the slightest thing.
If it goes on longer I will probably cry,
make a confession to the elder
and with my conscience and face clean
I might reaffirm my vows.

This is a bad situation,
everything I am striving for, are moving to,
is unsafe against my young pen
and I have suspicions about every thing
(remember I do not talk the language
of that witchdoctor fellow)
everything does not begin and end with me:
and I live without peace and I am loose.

My life is now playing off in parts with fun,
without the absence of this and that girlfriend
and their demands in winter stir me
and I am not able to page through Chausson or Thomas.

I get time to read Rilke though
and in silence with nuances I lie and slobber.
Only taking notice of the wind blowing each day.

I whistle, after days walk straight past every rubbish bin,
know the taste of water from a urinal
and in a big jam
I am begging to get back my anguish
of cleanliness and God fearing virtue.
Let every angel that can
late at night call me in vain.

[Reference: Psigiatrie (Psychiatry) by Johan Steyn.]

Gert Strydom

Publishers

I write letters, cut cd's,
mail parcels and let emails heap up,
but my words are blown away
like specks of sand in a gale.

I sometimes wonder
why feelings and life
can blind you for a time with hope
and if the haste for profitability,
lets merit die along the way
and if everything
has to be eaten by the power of reality.

Gert Strydom

Pucelle Of Orleans (Known As Saint Joan Of Arc)

The French heroine of the Hundred Years' War Pucelle,
as a relapsed heretic was burnt on a stake in a manmade hell
and most of the world does call her Joan of Arc,
being a apostate sorceress in her face they did her tell

where she was only following the Lord God
and being an excommunicated catholic I find it odd
that where she did not follow that church they made her a saint
do wash their hands from her death free and up the aisle they trod

where on her day they named her a demon from Lorraine
killed her as a sorceress and a witch in great flaming pain,
hated her for her masculine way of dress
and yet the facts do through the ages do remain

that where the church and state is one
all mercy and responsibility is gone.

[Poet's note: This poem is a prime example of where man do err where the state and church is one institution, where religious freedom and other freedoms and rights that do define humanity have been oppressed and it is not a attack on the Roman Catholic church.]

Gert Strydom

Puff-Adder

Camouflaged in the veldt,
with its khaki colour
melting into the rocks and grass
its flicking tongue caught my eye,
made me froze in my tracks
where it was lying looking obese

but a puff-adder attacks lightning quick
and do not like other snakes
try to get away,
but is a cocky deviant thing
and your limbs rot off
where it bites.

A startled grey field mouse
was unaware of lurking death
fled out before me
with a peeping sound
and disappeared down the throat
of the once hissing snake.

Gert Strydom

Punishment Parade

I was in residence in Salisbury house
at the private university
lying at the foot
of Helderberg mountain

when in my fourth year
somebody with a master key
broke in to my room
stole clothes
and some bottles of cool drink
and even took a cake
out of the refrigerator.

Nols, a first year friend,
who was studying the same degree
was fresh out of the army
where he had been a lieutenant
and caught the thief red handed
stealing from his room

and to this day I do not know
how he convinced him
to confess,
but like a military prisoner
he and his roommate
marched that thief
right to my door.

His race was Coloured
mixed with Indian
(and why I address race here
will later become clear)
and sorry wasn't enough
and what he didn't sell
he drank and ate
and Nols asked:
"what do we do,
with the prisoner? "

I made a joke
about a punishment parade,
which they took very seriously
and every day that student came
as their prisoner
and did push ups and lifted weights,
until he was convinced
to pay me back,
but it wasn't the end
of the story.

Six o'clock one morning
on a winters day
the dean of Salisbury house
called me in.

"Who do you think you are
to call the Rector
at five in the morning
about your car
that was defecated on
and threaten with
a racial war? "

My face was blank,
as it was the first
knowledge that I got
about faeces
on my yellow BMW.

A master degree student
who's nickname was Ouboet (big brother)
walked in
and took the responsibility
for the call on him

but I wanted gibe that dean
and said that I am going
to the police to lay charges
and to let them take samples.

He took me very seriously,

tried to argue
and prayed for me
and both Ouboet and I suppressed laughs
and immediately I knew
which people had tampered
with my car
and I used a red fire house
to spray it off.

I didn't have to wait long
before the responsible party
drove his new white Golf gti
straight into a big oak tree,
landed in hospital
and left the university.

Gert Strydom

Pure Mathematics

(after N. P. Van Wyk Louw)

As if a mere moment is captured
in a photograph but much more than that
out at sea just before the wave splashing breaks,
just coming out of the barrel
the surfer and everything is frozen,
with drops of water hanging
almost in a iridescent veil
where they were falling
from the twisting wave.

On the pier a fisherman has a hammer
high above his head where he was
beating a octopus to almost to a pulp
even the cruelty of this deed
everything is motionless
while on his face there is concentration.

In the sky in a prolonged screech
five seagulls call as if even sound
is still hanging in mid-note
and above them a helicopter
that was throbbing at full speed
hangs as if it is going to decent
while the chopping sound of its blades
is right in the middle of a chop

beneath the water a shark
quite near to that surfer
has penetrated the protective net
that runs along the beach
to keep dangerous predators out
and with its mouth open
it's ready to bite at a bleeding injured tuna-fish
that tuna lives while that moment
of its death has not come just yet.

[Reference: "Suiwer wiskunde" (Pure Mathematics) by Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

Putting In The Seed

Your body is soft and hot
where you lie,
stretched out on the bed.

Every part of your body
draws my eyes
and somehow there's more,
than just need and lust
that awakes between us.

Two mounts with tipped peaks
rise up and down
and respond to soft touch
and your neck is slender
and slim under my lips.

You shiver as I touch your ears
and something in your eyes
make my manhood raise
and your soft fingers
lingers magically over me.

A curling patch
with tufts of black hair
draws my fingers,
down to the hot and soft intensity
of becoming part of you.

a Hallowed moment hangs
between us
and when I enter you
there's magic,
that envelops me
and we twist and rise
and sway
and your cries and moans
drives me wild
and I feel you shudder
under me

and the seed frizzes out.

Moments drag on and on
and I am putting the seed
into fertile ground
and I hear you breathe
and feel your heart beat
as part of me
and I am yours
and your hair brushes
soft and tickling
over my cheek
and there's sparks
deep down in your golden eyes
and somehow I can feel God
in the love between us.

Gert Strydom

Pygmalion

While he hated every woman to intensity,
nothing good in womankind he did see,
he could find not one as a mate
but he did masterly out of marble chisel the perfect wife,
did not trust fate,
but did pray that someone would fulfil his life
and when Venus heard his prayers
suddenly Galatea came alive.

Gert Strydom

Pygmalion (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Where he despises and do hate women he chisels the rock
to skilful free the trapped image,
where the supple lines do go against his perceptions
and enraptured he stares at the rock that is becoming an image,
where the most beautiful woman do look upon him lifeless,
where that image becomes to him more than just a rock,
where he looks upon her out of pure love,
thought struck the hammer drops from his strong hands
and he admires every perfect womanly contour,
prays to Venus to send someone like the sculpture,
stand disconcerted when the sculpture moves
and alive is Galatea from that hour,
where constantly he do regard her, love and adore her
and do start a brand new life with her.

[Reference:"Pygmalion" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Pylons

Like watchtowers stretching
far past the horizon
big giants of naked blue-grey steel
cut across the fields back to the source of raw power.

Interwoven in houses as a part
of the construction wires run
back to poles on farms,
in villages, towns and cities
and people have the use of electricity
in lights, appliances and machines.

How primitive does life feel
when the spark of lightning for a time is gone,

from the pylons
that hose it down into our existence.

Gert Strydom

Quadrature Of The Circle

Now suddenly there are dinosaurs appearing,
and they do tread deep tracks and bite with their jaws
before they disappear again in the distance
and immediately you can realise the impossibility of this.

Even when people do say that dodo's are appearing everywhere
and that they are walking through the woods,
then it becomes a great experience
but in the proof of it
a great lie is exposed.

It's impossible (however you do try)
to only with a pair of compasses and ruler
construct an identical area
than that of a given circle

and so I can take this view further
as something containing impossibility.

Gert Strydom

Queen Victoria

When little Victoria played
at the lake in Claremont Gardens
as a child long before she became queen,
did she capture a large swallowtail butterfly
from a reed and then pulled off its golden
and black veined wings
or was she then, innocent of such a thing?

When little Victoria played
at the lake in Claremont Gardens
as a child long before she became queen,
did she trample the flowers
pulling the white and yellow water lilies
out of the lake
or was she then, innocent of such a thing?

When little Victoria became a powerful queen
did her government go to war
against the Orange Free State
and Transvaal Republics?

Did her soldiers force women and children
into concentration camps
where twenty thousand died?

Did her soldiers kill three thousand
Christian farmers after demolishing their farms?

And did her government loose
twenty eight thousand soldiers
of its own?

Or was she then, innocent of such things?

[Note: My own great grandmother died in a British concentration camp and my great grandfather was sent by the British to St. Helena as a prisoner of war and as a result of this, my grandfather(Gert Strydom) grew up in a orphanage.]

Quest

Somewhere we lost the power
with which change,
could not touch our humanity.

Destiny and time
creeps slowly right through
the world in which we are
and to find solutions,
fades away
like red dust
before a wild storm wind.

We are caught blinded
in our own country and time
and laws that hang
suppressing over us,
without being able
to see the bigger picture
in sharp detail.

Still we strife
and seek for deliverance
in the darkness
that fold around us,
to see a bit of light somewhere
or to get the first rays
of a new tomorrow.

Slowly the pointers
of the clockwork
keeps striking evermore
while our country
falls to pieces
and the hand of the Almighty
or fate,
are continuing pressing
to make us part
of the solution
while criminality, lack of electricity

and ignorance
tears the oppressor
to pieces.

Gert Strydom

Questions Around Nine Eleven

There was a moment
where merciless people did strike at others,
where aircraft was changed into deadly weapons,
that without any humanity did carry many to death,
did hit two tower buildings
like bombs that explode and flame
where burning people fall out of two skyscrapers,
like angels without wings,
where firemen heroically
tried to rescue others in vain
and many did sacrifice their own lives,
where destroyed
two tower buildings did collapse

and the world did change
into a place where a bullet for a bullet
is measured out,
into a place where bombs do rain down,
where they do fall in revenge,
where continually people are sacrificed
in a growing death toll.

People talk about explosions
that report on the bottom storeys
of those two towers
and there is even television image material
that does show other explosions
from above and from below in those towers.

It does seem as if both buildings
after the attack by the aircraft
was stripped with the explosive 'nanothermite,'
where steel was melted against the ground,
did stand pointed and toothed,
where doctor Steven Jones
(a professor in physics)
does confirm that the dust particles
that he did examine
did contain some remains of 'nanothermite,'

that a controlled demolition did take place
in those two towers
while they were full of people
and in building number seven

where the evidence of the criminal scene
was openly removed immediately, as scrap metal,
as if the lives of own citizens
maybe had been sold out,
for a dark purpose to change laws,
to declare war

and who will know the absolute truth?

CIA agent, Malcom Howard
an explosives expert
does know that building number seven
in which the American military,
the American Secret Service
and the CIA had offices
did suddenly collapse,
was drawn from the foundations
with "nanothermite" explosives.

Mister Howard who was trained as a civil engineer
and who has got only weeks left to live,
does confess after his release from a hospital in New Jersey
that he was a member of a CIA cell of four operatives
and that he did take part in operation "New Century."

He says that fine military grade
"nanothermite" explosive was used
at strategic places to hollow out building seven,
to weaken the steel structure
when that building did collapse at seventeen twenty
without any resistance.

What will be able to be determined
when American politicians and others that are powerful
do in secret conspire and plot?
When they do sacrifice the lives of innocent citizens
for dark plans?

Still the facts do remain that it was a terrible slaughter
in which innocent people did die,
where firemen did act heroically,
an event that had a big impact
on the whole world,
around which uncertainty does hang without any answers.

Gert Strydom

Questions Without Real Answers, Or Do They Have Some?

Who killed six million Jews,
during the second world war?
in the books you will find
the name of Herr Adolf Hitler,
but was that man alone? To where
did his many helpers disappear?

Who killed millions of Russians,
put them in penal camps in icy Siberia,
you will say that it's Joseph Stalin, for sure
but how can a single man do such a thing?

Who dropped two atomic bombs
on cities in Japan? You will say
the United States Air Force did
to preserve the armed men
fighting for a just cause,
but the man that ordered it,
Harry S Truman is innocent, and those who
build those bombs?

And then a man sends his military forces
into the Middle East
to stop weapons of mass destruction
to explode on the civilized world,
or so it was claimed
and innocent men, women and children
pay the price
and to the rest of the world it's quite clear
that oil reserves was the driving force
and who can believe
that American President anyway?

Did he not say: "Read my lips?"

[Note: This poem is not aimed as a assault on the United States of America. It just illustrates how people are in the power of the leaders of political systems.]

Gert Strydom

Queuing At A Primitive Bus Stop (Englyn Proest Gadwynog)

Then there was some fear in us
and in them we had no trust
while they caught the old big bus
with its grease dripping like puss.

Gert Strydom

Racing To Another World

One afternoon in Bedfordview, Johannesburg
we were leaving to go to a restaurant
and were in the parking lot at work,
when a black man on a bicycle
came down the hill
in Kirkby avenue,
pedalling as if possessed
and racing to another world.

He passed the motorbike
of a Links Pharmacy delivery man
and went as fast
as a racing bicycle could go
and at the t-junction
with oxford street
took a forty five degree turn
at great speed.

The man had a blazer on
and was still pedalling
as he took the turn
and the jacket opened
on his sides like wings,
before he hit the
stone edge of the road
and went straight
into a sign warning
about a stop street up ahead.

With arms spread out
like a human scarecrow,
or a shop mannequin,
he hanged with the jacket
on the sign,
as if dead
while the bicycle somersaulted
before landing against
some white stemmed blue gum trees.

Kids playing in the park were astounded
and and the people with me
and I laughed,
while he stayed motionless
hanging in the air
and other people gathered there.

¶Envoi

Within minutes an ambulance stopped
and I started feeling guilty about laughing
while they laid him down,
tried to help him in vain,
pulled a grey blanket over his body and head
and took the bicycle along
on the ride to the morgue.

Gert Strydom

Radiating You Smile At Me

Radiating you smile at me
as women from the age old existence,
cobalt blue it looks like a wide open day,
slowly but surely you climb into my heart.
Our eyes catch each other human upon human,
between things suddenly become silent
unspoken between us lies a wish
as we together do not waste any more time
love becomes between us a single kind of thing.

Gert Strydom

Rain

Come like a blanket to cover me
in a soft sieving mist
and even if the sun
still shines,

come fall down
from the grey sky,
hang in sparkling drops,
on the leaves of every tree,

bath the drooping willow
in a shower of spray,
let your drops in water flow
and make the black road steam,

catch me in the open
and ruffle through my hair
and let your blessing
be everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Rain (Lanterne)

down
rain splash
in drops that
splatter as they
fall

Gert Strydom

Rain [1]

Come like a blanket to cover me
in a soft sieving mist
and even if the sun
still shines,

come fall down
from the grey sky,
hang in sparkling drops,
on the leaves of every tree,

bath the drooping willow
in a shower of spray,
let your drops in water flow
and make the black road steam,

catch me in the open
and ruffle through my hair
and let your blessing
be everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Rain [2]

The rain was suddenly pouring down
in the late afternoon
a thing that we used to call
civil service weather
when everybody was going home

Just two thunder claps was followed
by a torrent of rain
and red roses was blown against the window
looking almost like a painting
with the drops running down in little rivulets

and I was dry inside, cordoned off by windows
and a door, being separate from those outside
who was running past in the street
trying to find some shelter.

Gert Strydom

Rain Drive

I see a big storm
hanging dark against the sky
and lightning bolts,
that hit smashing to the ground.

There are big drops
that hit whipping down
and the black road
wet and somewhat slippery.

There's no way
to ride away from the storm
and the traffic
stand still in front of me,
but with a motorbike
you can cut past cars.

It's as if clouds of steam
rise out of the hot tar road,
but the screen
of the helmet
is covered by the rain
that I have difficulty seeing
to where to go
and which cars are moving or standing.

With Soutpansberg avenue that lies open before me
I open the throttle
and there's wind, rain
and thunders that fall flashing blue
around me
and resound somewhere behind the motorbike
and the rain on my hands
hits like hail.

.

The leather jacket keeps the top of my body dry and warm,
but the bottom
is soaked and wet
and I feel the coldness

rising from below.

There's busses coming from the front
that throws water whipping
as far as they go
and somewhere in the left lane,
there's cars stopping for a pothole
and my motorbike catches speed
past in the right lane.

Gert Strydom

Rain Falls On Every Afternoon (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Bernard Odendaal)

Rain falls on every afternoon in the High-veldt of my heart,
the windmills turn quickly in the strong wind
and this is the place where a person finds cattle and the sun,
where green maize fill the fields without sorrow,
together and happy on the fields white and black do work,
but it's actually the living place of my lovely wife,
everyone is cheerful, happy and totally in harmony
and my woman and I are never from each other separate
but reality turns things totally upside down
where unemployed I may never find a work again,
where people are urged to take away property,
where I still do believe in the salvation of the Lord God,
as no affirmative action does make my God and I fall
and in all of this I do remain alive and do not get dismayed.

[Reference:"Harmonie, distrik Bloemfontein" (Harmony, district Bloemfontein)by Bernard Odendaal.]

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Gert Strydom

Rain In The Early Summer

(after G. A. Watermeyer)

The house stands steady and in it I am safe
while I write verses to a darling-woman,

the roof's plates are tightly bolted down,
compost and seed have been spaded into the garden,

the storm-drains are clean of leaves
when thunderbolt after thunderbolt do accentuate the terrible bad weather,

the doves, the yellow barbet, the black-collard barbet and yellow weaver frolic
fill the windowsill when the first drops shine against the window,

while the days of constant great rain do come
and with the sprouting vegetables I am astounded:

beans, spinach, red peppers and chillies do appear
and through the rain the redbreast sings and dances until it does end

where comfortable inside I do find shelter with two old people,
do trust on Your mercy and provision like a child,

outside the lawn and sidewalks has been mown,
the flowering lilies are growing past knee-height

the apricots, peaches, plums, figs and prickly pears fill the branches
the white, red and yellow Iceberg roses flower frantically.

[Reference: "Reën in die voorwinter" (Rain in the early winter) by G. A. Watermeyer.]

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Gert Strydom

Rain In The Early Summer (2)

(after G. A. Watermeyer)

The house stands steady and in it I am safe
while I write verses to a darling-woman,

the roof's plates are tightly bolted down,
compost and seed have been spaded into the garden,

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the white, red and yellow Iceberg roses flower frantically.

[Reference:"Reën in die voorwinter" (Rain in the early winter)by G. A. Watermeyer.]

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Gert Strydom

Rain In The Late Spring (Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Long ago you did put your love into the soil of my heart
my dark-head, my sun-eyed woman
and still the great and sometimes hurting recollection do remain

as for many years I did tend this small garden,
did measure others to your image,
sometimes did cling to the lost dreams
and now you are once more a perhaps, a maybe,
which may again come to stature and you may trust me again
to hold onto you in this life
and outside the yellow-weaver does twitter the morning red,
do tell me secret things about the most beautiful girl,
the doves peep and coo right through the night
and the rain does fall day upon day softly
where for years I am longing my heart into bits.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Rain In The Winter (In Answer To G.A. Watermeyer And Pirow Bekker)

With steady walls sheltering against every wind,
cosy against the blinding afternoon sun

I and my darling sit next to the hot fireplace
and time lingers as if moments can last into eternity,

the cat is busy throwing wool to and thro,
the dog lays stretched out and do admire the red flames

that are licking as they hiss in the sieving rain
and each one of us

are far past happy, our cups do overflow,
while we hear the peaceful swirl of the falling rain.

[References: "Reën in die voorwinter" (Rain in the winter) by G.A. Watermeyer, "Winter in die voorreën" (Winter in the first rain) by Pirow Bekker.]

Gert Strydom

Rain, Rain Falling

Rain, rain falling
from a thunder clad sky
with rockets, projectiles and blood
and the oncoming enemy
almost everywhere
in ironclad armour

coming to the day
of their slaughter
receiving sizzling thunder
to the tune
of howitzers, rocket trucks,
armoured cars and tanks
and rifle machineguns
and the Lomba River runs red
while there's havoc everywhere
and the venom of vomit
fills my mouth
while I struggle to breathe
in the face
of annihilation
of a deadly enemy.

[Reference: Rain by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Raindrops Fall From The Sky

Raindrops fall from the sky
at their own intensity
at their own time
sometimes in a hurry,
sometimes sieving down,
sometimes accompanied by hail,
sometimes together with lightning

causing steam to rise
out of the hot tarred roads
sinking in, washing away,
streaming, flooding

like a living thing deciding
when and where and how much to shed.

Gert Strydom

Rapture

The sun barely comes through the curtains
kicked-out shoes lie skew
next to our big bed.
Your soft blouse, denim skirt,
brassiere and panties
are nearby, spread all over the floor
and on the bed you are stretched out and naked.

Rapture goes through me
while your eyes burn into mine,
when your breasts draw my eyes
and their pink nipples
are upright;
your Moondrops perfume
reach out to me
when your arms draw me down
into your soft heat
and between us passion does flame.

Gert Strydom

Rebirth

With the end of every relationship
that with a woman I have had
(but the one that I did loose)
it feels as if I do die
as if nobody really knows
the real me,
or did discover my real true self
but later when I am far away
time and again they
want to start all over again
when it is far too late
and of them I do not carry any hate
but have learned to forget
as if that old feelings
and all of the memories are dead.

Every time I have got to move
to somewhere else
to begin anew
have to reinvent myself
and I am not fleeing
or do want to find escape
just want a life
without bickering, fighting
and arguments
over things that do not really matter,
do want some respect and love.

Where I do drive away with a car full of clothes
I see the burnt veldt between the power masts
where everything is black and burnt to the ground.
Some plovers do cry about their destroyed nests,
lost eggs and chicks,
somehow some of the ash is on my fingertips
and on my hands
while they do land among the new sprouting grass
to build other nests.

Rebirth (1)

With the end of every relationship
that with a woman I have had
(but the one that I did loose)
it feels as if I do die
as if nobody really knows
the real me,
or did discover my real true self
but later when I am far away
time and again they
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Some plovers do cry about their destroyed nests,
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somehow some of the ash is on my fingertips
and on my hands
while they do land among the new sprouting grass
to build other nests.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Reckless You Wait In My Dreams

Reckless you wait in my dreams
with a pouting mouth
and at times I dream of us both
being together on holy ground
where the mere presence of God
does fathom love
but in life day and night interchanges
while love does bind us
with a kind of magic power.

Gert Strydom

Recklessly The Seeds Of The Pod-Tree Explode

on branches outside
and one after the other
they go off like crackers
when the pods burst open with force.

It's as if I see the sun glows
in your golden eyes
and time lingers, almost forever
when I feel your heart beating against me
and blindly we both reach to each other
with a new autumn
starting deep in this winter
and feelings and passion move past time and sensibility
and you and I into each other.

Gert Strydom

Recognition

After twenty years I will recognize you,
when you wait at the airport for me.
I will recognize your green-brown eyes,
your autumn hair
falling on your shoulders
and the way you draw your mouth,

even your perfume will welcome me,
the way that you throw your hair back
and it will be as if I am breathless.
For hours long I will look at you,
catching the sound of your voice
finding meaning out of small things.

Do I dare to tell you
how much I yearn for you?

Gert Strydom

Recognition: Now Your Silence Is Always Part Of Me

Now your silence is always part of me,
where you lie naked on the examination table
before they slice you open after your death

and much too quickly life frolics past
and now I want it so much differently.
Now your silence is always part of me,

with past moments that I cannot avoid,
when a holy man says some words from scripture,
before they slice you open after your death

and totally separated are you and I
where my hand rests on your breast,
now your silence is always part of me,

you that once full of life, carelessly free
could bind your love as a oath to me,
before they slice you open after your death

and I wonder what remains in these moments
where I have to lie down that, which had been between us,
now your silence is always part of me,
before they slice you open after your death.

Gert Strydom

Recollections Of Spring

(after H. J. Pieterse)

I remember your disconcert when the starling stripped the apricot-tree
of its pink-white blossoms,
when the jacarandas dropped their purple-blue flowers,
how you still do remember that colour and fragrance.

How the curtains was pulled tight with every blue-white lightning-bolt,
when the spring-rain constantly for days long were pouring down,
where the earth smelled intensely of new life while we slept together.
Also: it's in our intimate memory. I do remember you and you do remember me.

In the garden the black-green starlings
picked all of the yellow-gold fruit of the loquat
where you stood dismayed at the tree
and still do remember that incident.

Starlings, the grey lourie, bush-doves and weavers
flew everywhere up and down and did twitter-sing
until the babbler provoked the Jack Russell
and Carla does remember how she jumped that bird out of the air.

In between all of this our lives went on
into a summer full of peaches,
where doves and weavers ate the chillies to the small pits,
where thunderstorms did come every afternoon.

In this summer, the apricot-tree
is without any fruit
with a speckled barbet that sits in it
where the tree remembers the starling in the spring sorely.

Where we notice the redbreast calling the rain,
we are like morning glories twisted into each other,
while outside lightning-bolts bash down with the storm
and with us the spring's sore and beautiful memories do remain.

[Reference: "Elegie" (Elegy) by H. J. Pieterse.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Reconnaissance Commando Night Patrol (Novelinee)

Where enemy soldiers in tents do lie
in the darkness of night, the early hours
slowly, carefully we scout we sneak by,
pass fences, armed patrols, guard towers
and where they in bliss unaware sleep
during the midnight's sombre icy chill
we reconnoitre, sabotage and peep
while they lie dreaming under wool and twill
we do apply our very special skills.

Gert Strydom

Reconnoitre Expeditions (In Answer To Johan Myburg)

The time for reconnoitre expeditions
to icy remote places, to the highest peaks
and the to the depths of the primeval forests
are archaic and past.

The time for reconnoitre expeditions
to neighbouring countries
where military fighting was present
are seen by some
as vague legends and vague victories

where every moment could hold death
but any facts about those discovery expeditions,
reconnoitre of the inhospitable wilderness,
discovery of battle tanks, armoured cars,
helicopters that buzzed along like beetles
and the military action that followed
are avoided in this time of peace

and all that remains
is to climb to the peaks of the wind
with a oxygen mask;
to jump from very high
into the blue space
or with similar breathing apparatus
to explore and discover
the depths of the ocean.

Gert Strydom

Recurrence

(After Dorothy Parker)

Time after time dies
The new buds of the rose,
And the seasons fill the skies
As life passes on and day after day goes.

I love you with all my heart,
With unselfishness
And never we will part
Or be able to love each other less

And there's something in loving again,
While every day is different from before,
Some are full of sunshine other full of rain
And every day we do adore each other more and much more

While days string on and on
And sweep us along.

[Reference: "Recurrence" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Red Carnations

With big brown eyes
she watches him
where he is sitting
right opposite her
and outside yellow brown
dried out cornfields flash past
as a sign of this winter
and there's something carefree
in his bright blue eyes.

Next to him on the seat
there are two bushes
of red carnations that she can smell
and she would gladly
received such flowers
from a loved one,
but he's a stranger
riding along on the train

and she's thought struck
when he receives a SMS on his cellular phone
and it suddenly feels
as if the whole world folds opens
in front of her
when without words
he hands her the flowers.

Gert Strydom

Red Riding Hood

In the jungle named city
Johnny and Sally
dressed in their church best,
(she with a little red jacket and hood for winter)
one Sunday evening walked to church
when the cruel wolf
(a black monster) ,
drew a long knife
to take God's money with violence and force,

but unluckily for him
they made him cry long howls
even before the moon did appear
when one two three
they chopped and kicked him using karate
and walked on quite unimpeded
before the church bells were even ringing.

Gert Strydom

Red-Blonde Your Hair Gleams And They Are Delicate

Red-blonde your hair gleams and they are delicate
when together we walk to the church
and suddenly the world feels pretty and open
when the sun glistens and shines in a blue sky

and the last signs of winter are disappearing
when you start a cheerful conversation
and your eyes, your smile is full of new hope
and you are lovely, pretty and sophisticated.

Gert Strydom

Rediscovery (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

I did know that it could be the place
where the past we both could forever erase,
I saw you walking up with the steps to the loft
outside it was snowing the light was soft,
you came back with a gentle smile on your face
while uncertainty and a kind of fear came to me,
only promises I the depth of your eyes I did see
you came to me lovely and full of grace,
where the past we both could forever erase.

Gert Strydom

Reflections In A Country Churchyard (Cavatina Sequence)

At the very foot of some green hillocks
covered in
orange flowering aloes and proteas
some rows begin
in a place of tranquillity and rest;
avoid of sin
my father and some saints await the call
of God's clarion gathering large and small.

Some cypress trees are waving in the breeze,
wild doves wander
cooing in the trees, in some rocks a small
salamander
hides from the heat while grass covers the veldt,
no noise slander
through the aeons the rest of forefathers
while that graveyard them together gathers.

Those people had a true great compassion
for fellow men,
were religious zealots but different,
they did know when
to stand back and be selfless in their love,
to find Eden,
daily in sincerity they walked,
of much greater Godly things they talked.

Strange it may seem today but all their time
and wealth was spent
to follow their Godly master's calling;
sacred, decent
were their lives in their love of Him and man,
each small talent
went only to the Lord's eternal cause
for themselves they did not even pause.

Reflections On My Time In The South African Defence Force During The Bush / Border War

Forethought

There is in my memories sacred, holy and quiet places
where only the happy, expectant and painful faces
of men that will be forever young belong
and do return as if they are still with me
as in the time that they served their country.

Now during a time when few do understand,
do not even know the complexities of the people of this land
I do not let people easily enter that holy ground
its laughter, pain and destructive sound
of broken fragments are lost and forgotten to most
although the great majority of those who had served still survive
that savage border / bush war and are alive
but are somewhat shell-shocked
with lives forever changed and rocked
and I remain one of them,

in thoughts do live through experiences of war,
with its destruction, heartache and gore,
and the way of life where I had being forced to obey
and had to live out monotonous day after day
in sweltering heat and unending dust
with the enemy ever present and near to us

and those moments when men were forced to be friends
were ostracized by the world and used for political ends
remains in my memories and cannot be erased,
nor the faces of the buddies who shared what they had
or the times that were both good and bad
when we waited in the predawn morning quietness
for the enemy to attack or to start firing,
standing firm with reserve and aloofness
and that moment was almost a shivering living thing.

*

Basics

During the time of hurry up and wait
when entering National service
the only perspective that I got
was that time was wasted
and of it a great lot

but then that nasty PTI-corporal came along
and he looked somewhat mean and strong
and we had to run and exercise to get fighting fit
and during movement and fire tactics accurately hit
the targets that we were given
although the terrain was full of obstacles and uneven
while we were being fired upon with life ammunition

and obedience and respect
was expected with immediate effect
while discipline and tidiness was a never-ending thing
and to fit in and to work as a team
was the main theme
and days of harassment to break the individual spirit
(as I was not the instructor's favourite)
stays with me
and probably will do so eternally.

[Reference: PTI is Physical Training Instructor.]

*

Guard duty [Italian sonnet]

During basic training
my first time being on guard duty
is something that stays with me
and that cloudless evening

when I was walking
up and down on patrol and tried to see

anything that should not be
and then suddenly there was something:

a match lighting up and the flare of a cigarette
next to the big old oak tree
and in adventure my spirit did exalt
at finding instructors acting against military etiquette
and perhaps in great glee
I cocked the submachine-gun and called halt

*

At 12 Medical Supply Depot

At 12 MSD in Durban
the commanding officer, Commandant Caruthers
was a professional man, a great leader and person
and at that military unit so was every officer
with whom we did serve

and it was while I and corporal David Barry was on guard duty,
(at the time before we became non-commissioned-officers)
that we were talking about Irene the CO's civilian secretary
whom Dave said liked me a lot and she was really lovely

when we noticed an old blue Datsun car acting strangely,
driving up and down and past slowly,
as if the person's in it were observing our facility,
stopping to drop off men to seal off the road
and then that car drove right up to the roller shutter door
that led into 12 MSD.

We could not reach our head quarters by radio
and Dave went to phone Natal Command
while I went to that roller-shutter-door
to observe what the people in the car were doing.

That car's doors opened and men armed with AK-47 rifles
and a RPG-7V rocket launcher got out
and that was the cue to me
to ram the barrel of the R2 submachine-gun

right through the opening next to the door,
to cock it while saying halt
and to be ready to open fire.

At that instant I prayed that the Lord would provide
that I would not have to kill a man or several men
to be able to survive
and then something strange happened.

Those men got right back into that blue car,
with screaming tires it reversed
and drove off.

[References: The rank of Commandant is equal to that of Lieutenant Colonel.

'The 7.62mm R2 (3 Gewehr 3A3) Assault Rifle: is designated the G3 by its German originators, Heckler & Koch, this rifle fires the NATO 7.62 x 51 mm 'long round', in common with the R1, and is in use as a standard service rifle in many armies. A development of the Spanish CETME design, which is in turn a development of the German World War Two StG45(M) , the G3 is, like the FAL, a reliable weapon, if somewhat less attractive and robust. It is designated the R2 in South Africa. The rifle is made from sheet metal stampings and plastic fittings, making for simple and economical manufacture. Like the R1, the R2 has a grenade launcher incorporated into the muzzle design (firing the same grenade) , and fits a 20-round box magazine. In contrast to the R1, however, the R2 has a rotary V-rear sight as opposed to a sliding peep-sight With a cyclic rate of between 500 and 600 rpm, the R2 has an automatic rate of 100 rpm and a single shot rate of 40 rpm.'

'The 7.62 mm AK47 (Avtomat Kalashnikova) : Originated in 1947, the AK47 was the first generation of true Soviet assault rifles. Manufactured by most Warsaw Pact and Eastern Communist nations, the AK, the newer, modified AKM, and the SKM-S (folding metal stock version) have reached a production total in excess of 50 million units - the most extensively manufactured small arm in the world. This highly efficient gas-operated, selective fire weapon delivers the Soviet 7.62 x 39 mm Type M43 round at a cyclic rate of fire of up to 600 rounds per minute, translating to an automatic rate of 100 rpm, or single shot rate of 40 rpm. The AK47 fits a 30- or 40-round magazine and weighs 5,1 kg, as against the AKM's 4 kg.'

'The RPG-7V (Reaktivniy Protivotankovyi Granatomet-7) Anti-Tank Launcher is the standard man-portable shoulder-launched, short-range anti-armour weapon

of the Warsaw Pact countries and their allies, the RPG-7 replaced the RPG-2 in 1962, with devastating versatility. The shoulder-rested launcher fires a 2,25 kg 85 mm calibre projectile (termed PG-7) which, powered by an internal rocket, gives short flight-time and flat trajectory. Accuracy, aided by an excellent range-finding Type PGO-7V optical sight, is possible up to 400 m, given good weather and a stationary target - but still largely dependent on the ability of the firer. Beyond 400 m accuracy decreases, and in windy conditions can be as low as 200 m. It is accurate on moving targets up to 300 m. The PG-7 round is a hollow charge anti-tank round capable of armour-penetration up to 200 mm to 230 mm, while the portability of the RPG-7 makes it one of the world's best anti-tank weapons. However, its support and attack versatility in the insurgency role is of greater interest in Southern Africa: it has been used (in Rhodesia and South West Africa) against homesteads, administrative buildings, civil and military vehicles, and as an ad hoc infantry support weapon with equal effect.'

*

Oblivion

They did drink themselves into oblivion
or so it seems
where I lay without dreams,
are full of emotion
from the last letter that I did receive

and the rest of the bungalow drank without instigation
where throughout the night they turn, roll and stretch
as if meeting a somnambulant requirement
and they smell like sour rotten beer
while I wish for all memories and my love of her
to fade away into the naught.

*

Across a dried river bed

Galloping across a dried river bed to the other side
sand shoot up under the hooves of the horse
while the R-4 on its swing band keeps hitting me
and I have got to be careful to avoid any branches
on the other bank

as they are full of scratching, stinging thorns
and then suddenly the horse senses something,
tenses under me and I see a glint
before all hell breaks loose in a cacophony of enemy fire
and we are right upon them
where I draw the horse to a sudden halt with stones flying
and see white eyes in pitch-black faces
while the R-4 comes alive in my hands
and I feel muscles quivering below me,
smell the sweet-sour horse smell with the acrid smell of gunpowder
and everything is deadly silent.

[Reference: 'The 5.56mm R4 Assault Rifle is the result of international operational study, and a blend of advanced 5.56 mm technology, the South African-manufactured R4 is in all respects an ideal assault rifle. Combining the best features of the Russian AK47, the American M16A1 and the Finnish M62 assault rifles, the R4 integrates many refinements to provide unusual versatility: a folding bipod mount provides for steady, accurate selective or automatic fire - as well as providing wire cutters and a bottle opener. The muzzle flash-suppressor acts as a grenade launcher support, while the sights are luminous for night use. Sufficiently heavy barrelled to double as a light machine gun, the R4 also features a metal folding stock, well suiting it to mechanised, airborne or mounted warfare. Weighing 3,5 kg unloaded, the R4 fits a 35- or 50-round curved magazine, and its stripping and assembly procedures follow those of the AK series. It fires the 5.56 x 45 mm cartridge at a cyclic rate of 600 rounds per minute, or 105 rpm on automatic, and 40 rpm single shot over an effective range of 500 metres.']

*

The ritual

That ritual to do things in a certain way
that is right from a military perspective,
to constantly clean and prepare
gives a certain kind of comfort
and self-confidence to the boy-man
who jumps from airplanes,
who rush out of Puma-helicopters
into the hell bound firing fray.

*

The vigil

With binoculars I watch across the river
that teams with crocodiles,
that has got a few hippos
and unconcerned they go on with life
while that river churns and flows on
and on the other shore there are dark shadows
or is it just my imagination?

More clinical I reexamine the enemy territory
that can far too easily become a killing ground,
notice a female lion stretching out with her two cubs
and it seems peaceful in that hostile vista
when we are ready to cross the river
and a single fully grown acacia tree on the other side
is sculptured against the cumulus.

*

After takeoff

After takeoff
strapped into harness,
I meet a sea of eyes
see the pre-jump tension
while alone each man
is stuck in his own private thoughts,
and the air out of the bottle strapped on my back
oozes cool through the breathing mask
and we are together and yet I feel alone
with the thundering roar of the engines
going on and on.

*

Contact

Jumping down from the puma helicopter
we went down crouching
ready to fire

while the others completed
the defensive ring
just below the whining blades
that chattered away.

The tracker was like a hound on the enemy spoor
silently followed the tracks watching the shadows,
becoming one of them
with his R1-rifle cradled in his arms.

Kneeling at the unsettled leaves
waiting on the shadows of men to join him
for the warriors of his fathers
that went with assegais to do service for
Shaka and Dingaan
as the amaZulu people
and tensing he beckons me to join him,
points out the enemy that does not notice us.

Ready we meet on the killing ground,
our mortars rain down
and the chatter of their return fire
kick dust up around us,
the LMG clears the bush
with bursts from my side
and the smell of death and blood
is with silence in the air.

[References: 'The 7.62mm R1 (FN FAL) Assault Rifle is one of the most successful of the weapons produced by Belgium's Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre, the FAL (Fusil Automatique Legere - light automatic rifle) has been adopted by over 70 countries, and remains the principal assault rifle of the NATO Alliance. Manufactured under licence in South Africa, and designated the R1 it is a reliable and robust weapon. Capable of selective or fully automatic fire, the R1 is also fitted with a heavy barrel and bipod thus converting it into a squad-level light machine gun. It delivers the standard NATO 7.62 x 51 mm 'long round' from a 20-round magazine, and weighs 4,31 kg unloaded. The FAL was originally available in a selective-fire only model, designated the R3, but this has subsequently been converted to standard R1 configuration. The R1 will ultimately make way for the 5.56 mm calibrated R4, which is a lighter and more compact weapon. Interestingly, the R1's muzzle velocity, at 840 metres per second, is 125 mps faster than the Soviet AKM assault rifle at 715 mps, but 140 mps slower

than the R4 at 980 mps. The R1 has a cyclic rate of fire of 650 to 700 rpm, an automatic rate of 120 rpm, and a single shot rate of 60 rpm over an effective range of 600 to 700 metres.'

The light machine gun (LMG) 'FN MAC (Mitrailleuse a Gaz) is yet another product of Belgium's Fabrique Nationale and, like so many other FN products, demonstrates first class engineering ability. This weapon combines the operating system of the Browning automatic rifle with a belt-feed mechanism similar to the German MG42. Developed and introduced in the mid-1950s, it was rapidly recognised as one of the best general purpose machine guns available. Designed to be used as an LMG on a bipod, it is also used as a heavy machine gun when tripod mounted. The FN MAG is gas operated, belt fed, has a quick change barrel and fires the standard NATO 7.62 x 51 mm cartridge from a 50-round disintegrating link belt. Its cyclic rate of fire is adjustable from 600 rpm up to 1 000 rpm, with an automatic rate of 250 rpm. Its muzzle velocity is 840 metres per second, with an effective range of 800 metres bipod mounted and 1 400 metres tripod mounted. At 10,8 kg the bipod mounted MAG is light enough to be carried by an infantryman, while spare 50-round belts weigh 1,47 kg each.']

Gert Strydom

Remarks On Foreign Soldiers From A Superpower / A Foreign Secret Service

It's strange that some foreign soldiers
seems too illiterate
uncommon with signs,
even with the alphabet
in places which they occupy and conquer
to comprehend
the universal phallic finger that is raised

and think that candy bars
and money will buy goodwill

and still the foreign secret service meddles
into the affairs of other countries
and one message is not understood:

to return to the motherland,

whose enemies
are treated without dignity,
whose enemies are abducted
from foreign countries,
(where the citizens of that countries
who want to interfere
with these criminal acts
are threatened by their very lives
with machineguns being pointed at them) ,

where those abducted
are thrown without trial or any avail
into huge secret jails
and the star speckled banner flaps
while the lamb roars
and belches fire like the dragon
that she in reality is.

Gert Strydom

Remember

This morning there's empty glasses
with the smell of St. Anna
standing on the table.

The long right-angle candle still flickers
as a sole witness
and its as if your scent
is still clinging to my body

and I remember your tongue
that twisted round mine
and how big your eyes looked
in the candlelight

how pretty your hairless labia
looked this morning
while your hand was stroking
over the hairs at my sex,
how you folded open like a flower
and how we melted into each other
when I exploded in you
and heard your heart beating faintly

and now that you are
back at home again
and I have to do my thing here,
are you still remembering
this morning and last night?

And when the sun sets tonight
will you then also think of me
and will you heart
still gambol?

Gert Strydom

Remember Me

Remember me for the person
that I was,
rather than for the words
that I leave behind.

Remember that I really loved you
and when they lie me down
in the grave
and you forget me at a time,
then it's much better
that you only know joy.

Gert Strydom

Remember Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

Remember me when you lie in your fluffy-soft bed,
when the gardenia blows in on the wind,
when you say your prayers to God
and in a restless sleep turn over and over.
Remember me when you fall asleep,
when the doves outside do sing their love-songs
and everything around do slowly disappear,
when the night brings magic to you
and when the morning comes suddenly
where you wake up full of new hope,
when the handiwork of God do leaves you speechless.
I wait that you do walk into my arms,
then you do know that I do love you,
when I hold you so painfully tight against me.

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Gert Strydom

Remember Me! (Limerick)

Remember me! Remember me!
You wrote, said and would not let me be
and destroyed our love with your paramour,
acted like a cheap whore
and thank God now I am free from thee.

Gert Strydom

Remembrance

As a child I saw the sun
hanging over the marsh,
when it caught the first red rays.

In that marsh land
long-tailed widow-birds
glided deeper into the reeds.

Plover's pretending
to have broken wings,
tried to entice me away
from their nests.

In life's marsh
there were enemy soldiers
that was stone-dead,
while I had hidden deeper
into the reeds.

Groups of enemy patrols
cut past following the river,
to find my comrades and I.

Every time that the sun
hanged new over the reeds,
the enemy became less
and the chance to catch us diminished
and mosquitoes swarmed around me.

Gert Strydom

Remembrance (English Sonnet)

A long hot lovely fruitful December
when in that summer you were with me
I do over and over now remember
as if no such summer will ever be

and nothing can our days of love destroy
while in my heart I do you deeply cherish
where still daily you do bring me joy
and even if this new summer does perish

they say love is something lasting forever
and truly I believe from God you were given
that not a thing on earth, can our love sever
and all of the hurt of the past are now forgiven

in my heart, soul, mind and spirit you remain
in all the joys of happiness, bliss and in pain.

Gert Strydom

Remind Me

Remind me about how it once was
when we were newly in love,
about how neatly our lives fitted into each other's
before the time when the hurting did begin.
Tell me about all the old stories and tales
that with time still does linger with me,
about fairies, dwarfs and angels
and a God that endlessly does love,
about dreams of travelling to distant countries
and some things you can even fabricate
before everything that is precious
is lost with the approach of time
and sometimes in this old world I feel as if I am lost
when my heart is constantly full of pain.

Gert Strydom

Rendezvous (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ian Raper)

I wait on you in Burgundy's in the Colonnade
where candles burn on the fourteenth of February,
somebody plays "Ballade pour Adeline" on a piano
and there is a small sincere gift in my hand.
I am an accountant and poet and am totally sober,
the dress of the waitress is short and her buttocks sway enticingly
when she brings a large pot of tea and I do pour some in a cup,
it's very romantic and the light is faint,
I wonder if you are coming when she smiles as if she wants to swallow me
but the moment that you enter everyone is dumbfounded,
heads turn when men look at you and women secretly do glance
but all other people disappear when you come near.
Love at its best is that people really do trust each other,
it's more than just a liking; it's an intense way of regard.

[Reference: "Die rendezvous" (The rendezvous) by Ian Raper in his
poetry-book: "Oorlopers."]

Gert Strydom

Report From A Commander Of A Ratel Armoured Car (Cavatina)

(after Randall Jarrell)

From my mere childhood I was called-up
to the army,
found myself in walls of armoured steel;
the enemy
roared in with Russian battle tanks,
never free
from projectiles that were exploding,
life was a very rude awakening.

[Reference: "The death of the Ball Turret Gunner" by Randall Jarrell.]

Gert Strydom

Requiem For A Marriage

Far too short it took you
when you started to be estranged from me,
when you found another lover
and we both found ourselves
where that which you did see in me
was only for monetary purposes,
daily you stopped laughing,
you were gone from me during the night
while you were charging on after happiness
and I dared my life for you
but still at times you loved me,
somewhere the end did begin
when our love suddenly did die
and I was astounded by all the pain.

Gert Strydom

Requiem For A Rainy Day

In stripes the drops splatter against the window
while others join them in a rainstorm,
the blue white of a thunder flash
that falls instantaneously
stays brightly caught on the inner eye
while some drops are still hanging.

On such a drizzly day,
it is said that my dad
was carried to his grave,
with the wind
drawing on mothers black veil
cypresses whipping to and thro
and tears were pouring down,

while the pastor read again
from the Bible and prayed,
people said their last words,
lying rose petals down during the rain,

but in my memory (that of a three year old child) ,
I remember it as a sunny day
on which black cars in a procession
parked just behind our house,

with people with shining shoes
walking on the dirt road
to where the cemetery
was situated across from the house.

With every rain shower
the one side of that grave
now wants to cave in still further
with the branches of the tree that was planted
thoughtlessly on mother's place fluttering.

[Reference: Requiem vir 'n reëndag (Requiem for a rainy day) by H.J. Pieterse.]

Resolved To Say Nothing (Terzanelle)

What I have learned to know
I will forever keep with me
to no one, of it I will show

something, and hidden it will be
and to others it will stay unknown.
I will forever keep with me,

even if my wife quarrel and moan
where my vision range to the beyond
and to others it will stay unknown.

I will keep to my word, my oath and my bond
even when the grim reaper comes to collect his toll
where my vision range to the beyond,

not even to the most beautiful doll,
I will show nobody what I see,
even when the grim reaper comes to collect his toll

and in honesty, integrity and truth I will stay free.
What I have learned to know
I will show nobody what I see
to no one, of it I will show.

Gert Strydom

Respite

When the winter chill comes
with the transience
of each beautiful flower
in a own vulnerability
the winter rain pours down
as a kind of respite
for a time on every one.

Gert Strydom

Rest In Peace (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

It's in the eighties that a call up instruction comes,
later the military police do arrive at the house,
they stop with a pick-up van at your old address,
at hearing about your death they seem somewhat stupid,
do not want to accept that you are in the hereafter
but they do find your grave in the cemetery
and your death is for nobody a secret
but old letters and accounts do blow in the wind.
Many letters do come and some are pink or white
and from that sender they later become blue.
The post is sent back: address unknown
and are returned into the red box of the post-office,
a Sheriff of the Court arrives who does not trust the peace
and somebody has violated the marble of your grave.

[Reference: "R.I.P" by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

Restaurant Fragments

That day we were in Burgundy's
and somebody played the notes
of "Ballade pour Adeline"
on the piano
and it was peaceful in that restaurant
while a waiter brought the menu
and I ordered a bottle of white wine for you
and drank a glass of golden Hunters.

You were busy with your notebook
and were searching for a shopping list
as if suddenly it had disappeared
but everything was inter-textual
and our life played out in small happenings.

Much too quickly the time between us
was running out
so as if you already
had other greener pastures
and you were busy with the list
of things that we have to buy
and the quietness of the restaurant
came to lie in my heart.

Gert Strydom

Restaurant Incident (Gogyoshi Sequence)

1

Where you and I cross the road
the neon lights of the restaurant flash,
cars make a din on the busy road,
you smile cheerful when I take your hand
and we walk to the entrance.

2

Not with the sound of a Japanese racing motorcycle
but with a deafening thunder-roar,
a black Harley Davidson motorbike races straight at us
and the beetle that drives it with the high-handlebars,
turns with a wide arc right across some cars.

3

He laughs boisterous that his whole body does jerk
while a girl on the back clings for life and death
and gives a almost hysterical scream
where like chewing gum she is stuck to him
and it's suddenly silent when the motorbike dies.

4

He wears a black second-world-war Hitler helmet,
is clothed in a black leather-jacket and black pants,
wears high boots and the girl look similar
and I wonder if it's a kind of informal uniform,
while leather-tassels rocks at the motorbike's handlebars.

5

We enter the restaurant and are received friendly
as our place has been booked and reserved in advance,
you wear a rose-red evening dress,
I am dressed in a black suit with a wine-red tie
and you smile your thanks when I draw out the chair.

6

He enters the restaurant
like a real breaker,
but looks as if he has got more money than intellect

where on his right arm he carry-drag the girl,
with contempt do look through the other people.

7

He is far past angry where he has to wait for a place.
"Iron, we can go to another place..."
His glance lets the girl swallow her words
while our drinks do come
and from the menu we order your favourite dish.

8

The atmosphere is charming and intimate between us
while I pour champagne and the gold in the glass does shine,
your breath is sweet near to my cheek
and we talk about the symphony-concert that is waiting
in the State-Theatre that is nearby.

9

We are again aware of the beetle
when he picks up the headwaiter by the neck
and everything in the restaurant comes to a halt.
Right there he wants a table like us,
while his girlfriend lowers her face in shame.

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Gert Strydom

Resting On A Very High Cliff Ledge (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

(after Ted Hughes)

Resting on a very high cliff ledge
my instincts are very sharp, at an edge,
while below me the world lies open-end,
as prey is caught by my telescopic glance
even if they hob, skip and away dance;
suddenly both my wings does straining bend,
of killing I have the greatest knowledge.

Gert Strydom

Resting On A Very High Cliff Ledge (Septilla / Spanish Septet) [1]

(after Ted Hughes)

Resting on a very high cliff ledge
my instincts are very sharp, at an edge,
while below me the world lies open-end,
as prey is caught by my telescopic glance
even if they hob, skip and away dance;
suddenly both my wings does straining bend,
of killing I have the greatest knowledge.

Gert Strydom

Retrenchment

How frail now every day unfurls
in my own little paradise:
the house full of people
keeping me company,
sometimes arguing over
non-essential things,

the garden with weeds
that appears after the first rain,
where in this early spring
almost everything is flowering,

the cats and dogs
in a welcoming committee
when I motorbike in
returning from job hunting
and publishing poems

and verses from other poets that I read,
the ones I that write
are overflowing
while I try to keep my sanity
in this world, this society gone nuts, gone mad.

Gert Strydom

Return

Returning to my Pretoria,
is like to stepping into a place
that is my own,
where I can feel
my own life beating,

where days run into remembrance
and passion does stretch almost endlessly back,
where life does take me back
to a place full of promises,

where flowering trees
does welcome me

as if that place stays part of my life.

Gert Strydom

Revelation

Worms had gnawed holes into leave upon leave
of my vegetables
and to me the vegetable garden was totally ruined
but about the intruders I wanted to know more.

I considered wiping them out,
to find a way to come to the rescue,
but to a new realization I did come
when the beauty of butterflies astounded me

where they were appearing from cocoon upon cocoon
with gauze-thin wings that were spreading out
and suddenly my aversion had ended
when I got a glimpse at the wonder of new life

and my attention was drawn
on a creature spreading its wings in flight.

Gert Strydom

Revival Service

Deep in dark Africa a revival service is being held at a gigantic soccer stadium with banner headlines shouting: "Jesus saves! Repentance is not necessary!"

The event is being broadcasted right across the world by satellite, handbills that were drop from aeroplanes are blowing all over the place:

"Forget the law, Jesus saves!"

The speaker raises his fist into the air and the crowd does roar rejoicing and some of them bend down before him

and do scream: "Amen, the Lord Jesus saves, Hallelujah!"

Like at a music concert brassieres and panties are thrown onto the stage, the T-shirts of some of the women are removed and thrown into the throng

and they scream: "God saves the whole of Africa!"

A muscled bald man bursts through the guards, does jump onto the stage and rushes at the evangelist and does rob him of his glasses, watch and ring

and he shouts: "forget the law," while he does resist dozens of guards and the police.

Pandemonium breaks loose.

Gert Strydom

Revival-Meeting

The stadium is packed full
with young and old people
and not to watch rugby,
but to hear
what a man from America says.

"God is now talking to Africa
and has a message for you, "
sounds deafening
over speakers,

so as if God up to now
was unaware
of Africa and the people in it
and now first knows about me.

We are reminded
that the Son of God
made a sacrifice
on a wooden cross

and the wind blows a magazine
selling cars
into me
and there are all types,
big and small
with prices that differ

and I am startled
when the man next to me
push a collection plate
into my hand
and I have to pay a price
to the man
that sells Jesus for a living.

Gert Strydom

Revolution

(for Daleen, after Etienne Van Heerden)

For the brainwashing with words
that you do repeat constantly
so as if too quickly I will forget the meaning
and the indoctrination of your laughter,
the way in which you do throw your hair back,
the things that sometimes let you cry in the church
or at the movies
I do love you,
with the uprising of your breasts,
the cries that are cried out in our intimate moments,
the unrest that comes with your
coming in and going out
of places that you do bring
make that you do climb deeper into my heart.

but the resistance against my authority
as if you do not regard me,
and the rebellion against my selfless loving advice
in every small word and act
and the contradicting
as if you do know better
are the things that I do want to forget
but where it does come to your own destruction
you do turn the world around to the wrong side
when constantly you do fire shots
and do want to continue as if you do not realise
how this is working in on you and me
where the bodies of our falling in love, love and respect
do lay as far as if it does reach up to heaven
and with these real things that do undermine me
you only do bring more and more pain.

[Reference: "Revolusie" (Revolution) by Etienne Van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

Rhapsody On A Night In The City

(after T.S. Eliot)

It's midnight and around me the lights pulse
there own rhythm in neon flickering
as if they are a part and parcel
of the unearthly fatalistic music
in the places where pleasure and company is tinned
into the precision of the city life
as if from this point on
clarity is brought to the humming depths of the soul.

It's one o'clock when I do reach the apartment
and do enter at the front door
along with a smiling inviting hesitating blonde
with small specks of sea-sand all over her dress
telling of a evening of either pleasure or distress
and the light, the invitation in her sky-blue eyes
burn into the depths of the groin,

there's a hidden story to be told
about the now empty beach
where her companion
walked away from her without a single word
and left her waiting,

when she walks right up to me
encircle me with her arms
draw my lips down unto hers
which is soft and moist under mine
and in the nearness her eyes seem brighter
with a close-up view of the specks in them.

At two we are kissing on the bed in my bedroom,
before she rides me like an unbroken stallion
as if all of her life does depend on only
this one deed, as if everything in life is caught up
in one single divine moment.

At three she is asleep in my arms

with her long blonde hair
thrown like a golden sheaf half over my face
and to her there is great beauty,
a kind of unnameable grace
while the ginger-Persian cat
settles down on top of us
and tramples before it does lie down.

Its golden eyes gleam like windows
while the female smell and the smell of making love
smells like the rain on the earth,
while the cat dreams of the passed day,
about the birds that it had sneaked upon
in the trees in the park.

[Reference: "Rhapsody on a windy night" by T.S. Eliot.]

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Gert Strydom

Rhyme

So quickly you jump into my words
and from being small
you change words like a magical wand,
you appear unexpectedly in every sentence

as if I do not know from where you do originate
before I can even give other details,
so quickly you jump into my words
and from being small

before I can reflect on it
you are already working
sometimes sophisticated and correct or rather blunt
you want to conquer lines, want to conquer all of my verses
so quickly you jump into my words.

Gert Strydom

Right Across The Country From Me

(after Dorothy Parker, for A)

Right across the country from me
is the place that you call home,
a place where my spirit at times roam,
where you live in a kind of tranquillity.

Sometimes I do not know
how to put my feelings in words, to express
my utter loneliness
and at break of day and its end the horizon glows

in the place where you dwell
and under others skies
the day begins and dies
while of my thoughts I want you to tell

but maybe it's much better
not to say anything,
not even to make your telephone ring
and never to write a letter.

[Reference: "Hearthside" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Right Against The Morass

Forward I stride
in the mind's swamp
immersing at places,
bogged down
in the damp mud
struggling on
treading were feet
had stamped before
through painful thoughts
and more happy ones.

Curtained off by swelling fog
rising all around me,
blotting out the copious flow
of the river of the soul
and the only thing
I am able to see
is the treads that I leave
below my feet, ever trampling on
through foul smelling, rotting weeds.

In front of me emerging
from all of this
a little hillock rises majestically
and I see hundreds of rock rabbits
running to and fro
along its slopes
and the nearer I get
the earth becomes more firm underfoot.
Orange-red aloes grow here and there,
Sugar-bushes with huge blooming Protea-flowers
are cupped in splendour in colours of red, white
and pink, scented sweet,
are all around me everywhere
as if I have stumbled
into a little piece of heaven
right against the morass.

Right Between My Underpants

Just before opening the draw
big green eyes with black pupils
peep at me.

Right between my underpants
Felix has made his nest
and yawns with an open mouth
so that his white teeth shows.

When I get a pair of underpants out
the black and white cat
watches me amused,
as if now
he knows some of my secrets.

Gert Strydom

Right Refined Tine Ore (Parody)

Deserts are sunny and have no gardens -
Mountain hinder understandable with every precipice.
The sea agrees roguish: When it splashes in flood
crumbling next to boats, you cannot cast it out!
Dreams twang as if they delude with failing habits.
And the wind whirls all of the time.
Cities bring noise pollution, dust-clouds and the blues
and rivers finger mostly into deltas with water and silt.
The stars are just sometimes desirable and the suspicion
rises if you want to be a settled boss. If you could
scream bugaboo! According to the newest in acoustics
many sound thoughts become binary.
It seems as if all the fun is for the little dog that is spattering -
and for the spark of life? Refined tine ore is perfect!

Gert Strydom

Right Through The Night

Right through the night you did lie in my arms,
we both did cherish each other,
did not say a single word
and we were like the prince and Snow-white.

Darkness folded like a blanket over us,
at times you held on to me softly
and we watched the bright moon
until the starlight faded with the morning,
the silence had meaning
and nobody bothered us
while the bright sun peeped through the window,
and doves cooed in the great old oak tree.

Gert Strydom

Right Through The Night (2)

(for Annelize)

Right through the night with the moon and starry light
there is joy and peace on your beautiful face
when in the depth of sleep you do find rest
as everywhere the presence of God is close.

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Gert Strydom

Ringed-Necked Spiting Cobra

Where I lie on my back as if I am dead
you will think of me with somewhat lesser dread
but when suddenly from that position I do strike
with great poison and lightning quick I you do spike,

or spit into your eyes the venom that stings like acid,
wish that you with the power of your boot crashed my head you did
and many times away into the grass and veldt I will be slithering
while to you I may be a dreadful lowly dangerous thing

with hilted fangs and the power to with death sting
and unexpectedly and dangerous constantly I am arising,
you will want to clobber my head and spine
as to you I am indolent and supine

but I do remember another distant time
where once I had been a creature sublime,
for eons I have seen the falling rain experience the rising sunrise
and I do still remember the garden of Paradise

where the angel Lucifer came into me, treated me like a god,
but now I am lower than the lowest sod.

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Gert Strydom

Rinkhals Thoughts

I sail to wherever I want to be,
sometimes lie stretched out
in the hot African sun

always inspecting the air
with my forked tongue
sensing with my black shiny eyes

if there's movement anywhere,
something to spray with my deadly spit
a enemy to strike out at

before it can squash me
and forever I am free
to hit at the heel

to find my own way
through the undergrowth,
to prey whenever I want

with a deadly flash,
to end life, I am created for it
and nothing but death stops me

and sometimes you will find
where I have been
by the marks on the sand,

the remains of my skin
or victims that I have left
or turned right over

poising as if dead,
waiting on the right moment
to come to life, to hit with great speed.

[Reference: Rinkhals: Ring necked African spitting cobra.]

Rising So Low As If Falling From The Sky

Rising so low as if falling from the sky
the light of the silver moon is so bright
that it blots out stars, it looks as if
it is part of the high hill

gleams upon the snow capped peaks,
leaving them sparkling,
creates another kind of world
and your eyes catch me.

Sometimes there are sparkling stars
in your glance that turns my heart
crazily like a Ferris wheel
making it spin almost out of control

as if there are elemental forces
that are at your disposal
with the power of wind,
of rain, thunder and furious cyclone

or at other times the sieving tranquil rain
that brings refreshment and joy to the heart,
your eyes become the only stars shining
at me in this dark night with a own sheer light

and you really know me, know the road
that for years I have been travelling on
which always returns back to you,
even if it leads away from everything.

Gert Strydom

Rites Of Love

They loved each other,
more deep than emotions, mere words,
feelings, passion of care could go

with a appetite ripe for each other
as if trying to fill a hunger
that was unquenchable,

sharing moments, material things
as if knowing about a world,
a place that few really find
which reaches further than life

and they wanted to be completely
and forever part of each other,
but reality were part and parcel
of the equation called love

and there were destiny, which overrule life
governing with a steel grip,
which stripped them, from one another
into separate beings living and dead
and leaving him to live on instead,
robbing moments and turning them
into yesterdays.

Gert Strydom

Rites Of Passage

In the early winter frost lies white,
it almost looks like snow that is falling
and changes do come without a limit
where it falls on some people

and without any teargas or rifles
a lot of highly qualified white people are without work
while unstoppable the government does leverage it laws down
while no police force is stopping the murders and robberies

and driven to the utmost, without a income or food
some fire the last shots at themselves and others drink poison,
or want to hang on the branch of the nearest tree
while the slight hope remains that God does know about everything

and at universities no prayers is said to Jesus Christ,
new teachings run rive at theological seminaries
as if the whole Bible is a myth and the truth is missing from it,
faith is placed as an experience in the spiritual world,

revolts break out constantly at these learned places
where black students do not want to pay for their classes
and they tear down and destroy as if nothing can stop them,
as if they are expressing their own will on everything and everybody

and now a person does wonder how peace can still prevail,
when daily people are tortured by criminals and do die,
when everything around us do become black and somewhat dark
with the unobserved coming of the nearing destruction or is it perdition.

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Gert Strydom

Ritual

Tonight at sunset
it feels as if you will be back
and I prepare a place
at the table for you,
as if you are going to be there
to eat with me.

I am silly,
as I know that you
are visiting your cousin tonight,
but the dogs are restless
and the black cat
climbs on my lap
and I put two plates in place.

l'Envoi
With an additional chair, glass and candle
I wait till dark
and the food is already cold
when I eat it later
and tomorrow when you are back
still feels far and distant.

Gert Strydom

Roadblocks

You get used to them,
where at times in peak traffic
they intersect the freeway,
causing you to be late
for a appointment or work,

with annoying traffic cops dressed in brown,
searching your vehicle cockily
with some members of the South African police
standing with sub-machineguns at the ready
dressed in blue arrogance

and when finding nothing
the traffic cops
like a swarm of annoying hornets,
keeps circling the car checking everything
and wasting more and more time

and the Lord knows for what they are searching,
while some are crowding around your wife,
and your two daughters,
looking, keeping on looking
as if they are related to them,
or they in a way belong to them

with one remarking
that some coca-cola
would be pleasurable to drink,
after finding a six-pack
in the car's boot

which causes you to hand
every member of your family
a can of cool-drink,
with eyes blue like thunder
indicating to them
that this is only
for the family's personal use
and rather nonchalantly you open a can

drinking the sweet cold liquid
watching the gathered lawmen

until they bark to you, to drive off
wishing the ladies well
while you feel like sending
the lot of them to hell.

Gert Strydom

Roar (Ballade)

(in answer to André Letoit)

A part of the world is covered by darkness,
high above me the torches of God do burn,
where the moon hangs bloody red
as if it's fulfilling a prediction
and humanity is infatuated by pleasure and lust,

Chorus:

where people like hungry lions do roar at each other
and do eat each other to the bone,
as if they are forgetting God,
their husbands and wives and all principles,
do alive devour each other as if love is not even a side-issue,
when everywhere people do get hold of each other in wild passions

in a moral dilapidated century
where everyone do try to find meaning,
where people do make a living in any way
and I do smell rain in God's wind,
notice a string of beautiful women,
the most lovely that does exist,
walk into a whorehouse
and do feel in this city,
in this changed world,
lost like a child.

There are black whores on a street corner in Sunnyside
who do uncover themselves,
a thunder flash does hit down with the voice of God
and that ray is blinding and huge
and they are so friendly
and nonchalant as if they can bring a change
when a couple do push a baby-pram
with love past across the street

and I do wonder how did we now come to this place
as the presence of God is still everywhere,
where the churches are almost declining

and heathen barbarians do rule over the country,
where even the escapades of the leaders
of government do constantly astonish everyone

it's as if the music, the lights, the food and liquor
do take a person away to a magic world
and even in this city there are doves
that does coo to each other
are telling about the goodness of God
but everyone is blinded against this
and like gods are set on the self,
do not notice the war that has been raging for centuries
between the light and darkness,

do almost believe that a mere moment of pleasure
can turn a hellish life around,
when the darkness do creep into the heart
where only God can stop it totally
and I do want to roar out that the omnipotent Lord God
is going to come with a judgment,
do want to jump out
and affront the whole world with Him

but in the back streets the rubbish bins
do vomit the rubbish out,
where children are hungry without food,
and I do know that the Lord God
does constantly provide and do safe me
where I do have no income
and it's a difficult road of trust and hope
where other men are decades without work
and their women cannot stop the whoring

and still more intensely I do pray
for the self-focussed government to fall
do call to the omnipotent, omniscient
and omnipresent God of the universe,
do roar out my sighs
and those of every oppressed sinful human being to Him
where my country, my people
and my whole world does constantly decline around me,

do know that shortly
His Day of Judgement will come unstoppable
as actually in the final picture everything does turn around Him
when He will jerk everything in this cruel world to a standstill,
to come claim back every human being
and everything in love as His own property.

[Reference:"grom" (growl)by André Letoit.]

Gert Strydom

Robbery In Springs South Africa At 13h00 On 23 June 2020 (Sonnet Sequence)

I

In Springs, South Africa, at Lloyd Street
just as I was busy posting my poetry
afraid I heard my mother scream for me,
did an eighteen-year-old black-man meet

with my 86 year old mother near his feet,
with his hand on her mouth I did him see,
the other hand with a pipe threateningly.
At the moment he was going her to beat

he screamed and I clenched my fist:
"shut up or I will smash your head, "
of an armed robbery I got the gist
he stopped and did hit me instead.
"I will kill you, " he did again insist
he did threaten to beat me dead.

II

He did threaten to beat me dead,
while he swiped with a iron-pipe
(that pipe was not filled with lead)
I blocked both times he did swipe,

turned and ran back to my study
found a cap-gun, a mere child's toy,
while time ticked as if in a eternity,
bluffing as a strategy I did employ.

They dropped the new television set,
with two mobile phones they ran away.
I do not know if the police will them get
and it turned out to be a hell of a bad day.

People say I am lucky to be still alive,
that they did not have a gun or a knife.

[Poet's note:I have been reprimanded before by using colour where it comes to people.I am writing factually correct when I write and tell the absolute truth as it really had been three black men in the robbery.I am 56 years old, my mother 86 and her sister of the black men jerked the 92-year-old lady exact words to my mother by one of the other black men were: "White woman shut-up or I will smash your head until you are dead."His exact words to me were: "White-man I am going to kill you."The one mobile phone was a HuaweiY7 that my wife gave me for my birthday, the other phone was a Aspire5 Model" ZTE Blade A3 that I got as a gift for my mother and was still setting up for her of which she did already know.]

Gert Strydom

Rock Rabbits On The Hillock

Early morning rock rabbits sit
on the hillock in the sun
as if they are guarding the silence
and when you shout
your voice echoes back,
with hundreds suddenly fleeing
and it feels as if moments are frozen.

Gert Strydom

Rock-Fall

The winter rain was pouring down
while with the yellow BMW
I was going through the mountain pass
when suddenly the mountain came alive,
leaped towards me,
propelling huge boulders and smaller rocks
crushing all around the car
in a congealed second the Titan Adamastor
across time did range and materialise right there,
or I or this severe storm or something
had awoken him from his sleep,

where he ragged-rough hung gigantic and menacing
with the fury of aeons,
in his glaring red eyes,
his muscles bulged while he picked up
another rock and flung it with all his might

the road was slippery,
the front wheels lost grip somewhat,
the precipice was almost upon me
when I just touched the brakes,
geared down,
just in time the car got grip again

but this did not stop the elder-god Adamastor
from tossing that rock right in front of the car
where it did explode into a hailstorm of smaller rocks
which miraculously just missed the car
but the car jerked as the front right wheel did hit something.

Time froze as just happens
when adrenaline do rush through the body
and the mind,
when a person is in a kind of ecstasy
where everything was now in slow motion
the car did skid again but found grip again,
the wheel did respond,
I geared down,

the lower gear did have all the power
of six cylinders roaring back at that beast
while the tarred road stretched out before the car
and it picked up speed
did race through the rest of the mountain pass
but before Worchester when I was out of the pass
an eighteen-wheeled truck blinded me,
I flashed on all four of the headlights on bright
for it to dim its lights
and in that moment while the car was doing
a hundred and eighty kilometres an hour
the front right tyre did burst,
the car jerked but the power steering
helped me to keep control
while sparks did fly up as if from a grinder
from the metal rim
where it was directly on the tar
and I was able to bring the car safely to a halt
right next to the highway.

Gert Strydom

Rock-Rabbits

They could climb a mountain better than any baboon
where quickly in the hillocks they went to and thro
when I walked to the hidden fountain for water
and came to a halt at the stripped kopje.

Gert Strydom

Rodeo Riders

Something draws them back
and back again,
maybe it's adrenaline.

The thrill of feeling
an angry shivering bull
beneath you

and when the pistol whips
leaping into the pen
and animal and man

jumping up and down
into to the air
for a short moment as one.

Landing in the mud
avoiding flashing hoofs and horns,
scrambling away

with Stetson hats in hands
brushing Levi jeans clean,
smiling at the ecstasy of victory

and those fearless men
are going back to the pen again
as if never spent
right through the Cheyenne autumn.

Moments in time
of glory and humiliation
is burnt into the memory

and as time passes by
yesterday's heroes
becomes today's pot bellied men

who page through albums
with photographs,

sometimes just in the mind,
never forgetting the thrill.

Gert Strydom

Rogue Male□

I saw a man Saturday,
standing at a robot light
with a sign,
which stated that
as a handyman,
he could fix most things
and are willing to work
for food.

His eyes told their own story
and life tried to crucify him,
but nothing could
get him down

You might think
of him as just
another vagrant,
but in his eyes
there was something
deep and the expression
on his face
dug into my soul.

I thought that I knew him
from somewhere
and I learned
that as a engineer
he was stripped from work
by affirmative action
and not able to get a job
by the same racist law
and then remembered
him from the battle field,
where no enemy
could pin him down.

How sad a thing
to see a hero,
who's country

made less than a zero;
in the name
of progress and prosperity.

Gert Strydom

Romantic Conversation

Only the darkness heard the words
of two spectre figures
in the old bushy park

where they stood whispering
under a silver moon
right next to a pond

and anybody watching
would only hear the rustle of the wind
or would maybe see a shadow appearing here and there

but their conversation was about the passion,
wild joy and ecstasy
that had burned between them at a time

and focussed on a wonderful time
where sunny days stretched out
as if they could last eternally

where falling in love and love
brought new meaning to life
and where something indescribable is between people

and I was caught there,
to pieces of my own life
that I was observing

and hope that you still are remembering
that time to which
my memories are still clinging.

[Reference: Colloque sentimental by Paul Verlaine.]

Gert Strydom

Rondel For The One That I Love

(After Geoffrey Chaucer)

There is at times beauty in the way you look at me
as if such a glance no other loving man has ever seen
and even your smile is perfectly lovely and serene

but at times from you I do want to be totally free
as if our relationship has never been
There is at times beauty in the way you look at me
as if such a glance no other loving man has ever seen

but to far away places from the hurt I want to flee,
to where the sky, the beach and sea seems tranquil and clean
and yet with no other woman I want to be.
There is at times beauty in the way you look at me
as if such a glance no other loving man has ever seen
and even your smile is perfectly lovely and serene.

[Reference: "Rondel of merciless beauty" by Geoffrey Chaucer.
Please note that a line is missing with a reason like in Chaucer's poem.]

Gert Strydom

Room (2)

(for Annelize)

When I did awake this morning
the first twilight did fall through the window,
a soft rustle went by
just that rustle was all that did remind me
of how much I do need you
and on the other side of the curtain
the night did diminish bit by bit
while the sun did shine brighter
and suddenly the darkness did disappear

and you brought me a cup of hot tea
just when the thirst took hold of me,
your lips did find mine
and you kissed me as if you wanted to devour me
and while the cocks crowed somewhere far off,
the eagle was turning up high in the air streams
we were lost and braided into each other
my hand was tightly on your breast,
your head was on my chest
where I could feel your heart beating while you were breathing,
did see your breast moving up and down
and eternally I could lie like this.

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Gert Strydom

Roses

I used to pick you
bunches of roses
of twenty at a time
from the gardens
at the university.

Sometimes on my way
to Anne Fisher house
I could smell the sweet perfume
of the flowers
and it did something to my heart.

At times I snipped some off
with a pair of scissors
in colours of red, white, yellow
orange, pink and even purple.

We were really in love then
and you appreciated everything
(even the verses
that I wrote)
and it had to be obvious
to the whole university
from where I was getting
all those bunches of flowers,
but somehow they didn't care
while I dared and dared
time and time again.

Gert Strydom

Roses (Enclosed Triplet)

Some deep red roses bloomed in the rain,
the rain sieved down for days without end,
an end to winter brought the spring again;

while again roses at a time would be send,
be send as messengers of a love that's true,
that's true in all things that had happened.

I held red roses wrapped in a big bunch,
a big bunch to make up for being apart;
after days apart we did meet for lunch,

after lunch a sweet kiss would test her heart,
her heart would respond with some kind of bliss,
or bliss would be absent in our own art.

Nothing could love remove, her eyes did shine
as I saw her face, hurried to embrace;
the depths of love did prove that she was mine.

Gert Strydom

Roses (Novelinee)

They bloom with plenty pretty bright flowers
as if blessed as queen from God above,
are found in gardens, secluded bowers,
are the ultimate token of true love
and where they grow they are really adorning,
kiss the air with fragrance, wantonly play,
brings some sweetness to the early morning,
blushes red in the creator's early ray,
brings a kind of joy to the summer day.

Gert Strydom

Roses Bloom In The Spring Sun

Roses bloom in the spring sun,
their fragrance attracts bee upon bee,
morning glories climb up on the veranda
but much more pretty you are,
as if of loveliness the source
and eternally I would stay and love you
if only I could.

Gert Strydom

Rotting Food

It had been easy
to avoid something
so dreary;
rotting food remains ghastly.

Gert Strydom

Rounding The Stormy Cape

(after Luis de Camões, Roy Campbell and in answer to André Letoit)

Late at night I am astonished
when a sudden stormy wind does rise,
where my desk with the computer does caper
when a storm does rage and do penetrate into my study

Chorus:

when my desk does rock to and thro do foam through the water
where suddenly it becomes da Gama's own ship and the stormy-wind does buzz,
I hear the boards of the deck stretching and creaking under my feet
when Adamastor life-threatening do tower over me with his black fist

when moments do flash back to Vasco da Gama who is sailing to India
with the stormy winds howling around the ship
as we are rounding the stormy Cape,
where I do stare at the monster creature like da Gama and Luis de Camões

where it guards this coast as a mythic spirit
when the Khoi do call it up for protection and it does make me its own enemy
and I wonder if I am awake or are dreaming in a nightmare
but do taste the salt of the sea that splashes and break over me

are astonished with this passage that are becoming my own,
when a mass of water do pour down
and I am like André Letoit and Roy Campbell
who both do tell about similar experiences

where cruel the rocks do teeth nearer and nearer
and I am against the edge of the endless abyss,
do stare into the terrifying face of the age-old-godly spirit
when in rage the Khoi do lift their spears on the distant beach,

when the bow does suddenly sail silently through a calm ocean
and all danger is now past as if it was only a far off dream,
where I get the fragrance of the spicy islands on the wind,
do find myself back in my own chair in front of my desk.

[References:"Os Lusíadas:Canto V Vasco da Gama" ("The

Lusiads")by Luis de Camões."Rounding the Cape" by Roy Campbell."brise marine" by André Letoit.

Poet's note: Luis de Camões and Roy Campbell do write about Vasco da Gama and André Letoit about Bartholomew both the poems of Luis de Camões and Roy Campbell the titan Adamastor does appear as the mythological spirit of the Cape of Storms after the Greek myth where the Titans were dispersed and in the poem of Luis de Camões, Vasco Da Gama is involved in a deadly skirmish with the local Khoi people of the Cape.]

Gert Strydom

Rude Awakening

Sometimes I could not decipher
the thoughts that you had of me
while you were in the bed
right next to me

and were angry
when I brought you food in bed
at half past nine
in the morning

and in your awakening
some rude things
came from that look
in your eyes
and the words
from your mouth

as if you wanted me
to leave you right there until noon
or maybe right up to
the next afternoon.

Gert Strydom

Rugby Football Hero

Drive men, drive!
Get the freaking ball!
That's it, now go.
Fling it, throw the damned thing!

From the reserve bench
the game is rushing by
and both flanks, the centre, the lock
almost every member of the team
are taking huge knocks and still
nobody is really getting hurt.

A dropp goal soars through the poles,
followed by a brilliant try
and the crowd are standing, are cheering
when the confirmation kick
is delivered securely.

The opponents are really angry,
starts to play dirty,
with reckless foal play,
high tackling
and gets a penalty kick
that is on the mark

and then the lock is hurt,
trampled under boots
and the manager
points to me
and while the crowd cheers
I run on to the field.

The whistle blows
and in full pace I run in line
catching the ball that is flung to me
and the game is on,
the crowd roars while I sidestep
two tackles and see the line

and every thing is blurring
and time is fragmented
into splits of seconds
and I am flying at speed
trying to touch down.

Gert Strydom

Running Beyond Enemy Lines

For days and days they hunted me,
with armed soldiers in oncoming lines
and with my urge to be free
I had to creep through a field of landmines,

bursting through stopping groups
that was set to search and destroy,
avoiding ambushes set by specialist troops,
even the trackers that they did employ

and time and again I had the enemy in my sight,
while I was hiding,
sometimes were freezing in the bitter cold night,
while around me fog was rising

and my nerves were alert
when the birds stopped their singing,
I was ready to divert
the enemy that was following

and to be finally free
from the enemy
was a strange, strange thing
as the chase felt as if it were never ending.

Gert Strydom

Running On The Beach

Early just after dawn
there is salt in the air,
a light wind pulls at my hair
while I race on the beach
clothed in only bathing trunks,
trying to outrun the incoming surf,
which at times splashes against my body.

I pass some big rocks
while the white sand of Clifton
clings to my feet and legs,
the air starts to burn in my lungs,
while I pick up the pace,
finding new energy under the summer sun,
with the sea only touching at my feet.

In the distance stark naked
two young women tan,
the one is lying on her stomach
the other is sitting up and facing me
and I notice that her stomach is flat,
her breasts are DD sized with nipples hard,
she says something to the other girl and is smiling.

I want to avoid them, keep to the solitude,
the freedom of racing at speed,
with the sun and the wind touching my body,
while all thoughts are stripped from me
but one of them have got other plans,
gets up and steps right into my way
with legs wide and eyes bluer than the sky.

Gert Strydom

Rurally God Created The Loveliest Rose

Rurally God created the loveliest rose
that blooms by itself in the veldt
where the hillocks in the distance touches the horizon.

In her kitchen there are trays full of rusks
where she is working from before sunrise,
that the visitors later claim as booty

and she is busy with her work
until the last tray comes out of the oven.
Rurally God created the loveliest rose

where se sprouts out in the veldt
and when you visit her
where she is working from before sunrise

she almost possessively guards her rusks
and her farm is her own property
where the hillocks in the distance touches the horizon.

The farmstead lies like a rectangle,
she is prepared for almost anything
and when you visit her,

you note that in her Eva's beauty has come to perfection,
that time and again she astonishes you with her loveliness.
Rurally God created the loveliest rose,

she gives new meaning to attractiveness,
with her teasing she spares no one,
she is prepared for almost anything,

but her mother is miserable like a fire-belching dragon
and you have to be at your wits or she will turn you around her finger
where the hillocks in the distance touches the horizon.

and she's a vixen and leaves every suitor perplexed
when she sparkles womanly,
with her teasing she spares no one

and sometimes it seems as if she has too many suitors
but still she cannot disguise her feelings.
Rurally God created the loveliest rose
where the hillocks in the distance touches the horizon.

and that little darling has charmed me.
In her kitchen there are trays full of rusks
(when she sparkles womanly)
that the visitors later claim as booty.

Gert Strydom

Russian Travel Program

Every now and then
there are Russians
travelling to foreign countries
standing in lines
at aeroplanes and vehicles
to on government command
take a return trip without cost:

In 1932 it was right through Siberia
into Mongolia
with excursions through the country side
to look at the wall of China.

In 1939 together with some German friends
they visited Poland
and the old town square in Warsaw,
looked at the armour
of the Teutonic knight Sigismund II
and the cathedral of St. John.

In 1940 Finland got a turn
and many travellers
were left behind,
frozen solid
in the Finnish woods.

In 1944 right across the steps
with visits to
Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria,
Albania and Yugoslavia
past the rhine into Berlin
to let every German disappear
or maybe to make Russians out of them.

In 1956 Hungary was visited again
with a trip over the big Alföld plain,
excursions at the Danube
and visits to block of flats
after block of flats

in Budapest
until the people were in the streets.

In 1980 reconnaissance trips
through the mountains of Afghanistan
to try and rid the natives
of their ground.

In 1989 some citizens were selected
to scout Angola with Cuban friends
and to win the hearts
of some black women,
but it was very difficult
to try and discipline Afrikaners
and they themselves
were taught a costly lesson instead.

In 1992 Russia
wanted to stop all foreign tours
of the citizen class
to fit into the new world
and the roaming jackets and boots
are in the cupboards,
but visits to Tjetsnia are still occurring.

[Reference: Reisprogram by Johann Johl.]

Gert Strydom

Sabbath

Early in the morning
they sit rather proper in the benches
and sing out joyously
and read the Word
and rolls of notes
are in the offering plate.

Sometimes I see them look
at people in the street,
as if they are a little beneath them
and circle around
a blind beggar.

Dressed in church suits
and designer dresses
I see them in the cafe,
the chain store,
restaurant
and even at the movies.

They are buying bread and milk,
sometimes a bottle of wine
and husband and wife
and at times
all of their children with them
are peacefully
going through the shops
or wait for tickets
in a row.

Every thing happens
as if they do not have
another time
for all of these things

and in the restaurant
jokes are told
that even people
at other tables can hear

and I wonder where and why
man has lost
his respect for God
and of His day.

Gert Strydom

Sabbath Of A Child

(after D. J. Opperman)

My whole family and I
did pick corn-cobs

from our own field
and we carried them in our hands

and being hungry
our need was great.

At the old oak tree we stripped them
did heap up wood and coal

and cooked them in the old big three legged pot
on a jolly fire that smoked joyfully

while we rested
and did sate our hunger.

Later when we did arrive at the homestead
there were people from everywhere,

people from town and every rich neighbour
with a pastor as their leader

to point us the way out of scripture
with some impudent and headstrong

who broke down our house to its last bricks
and what was left they wanted to set alight

and totally out of control
they wanted to convert us back to the day of God

until a stranger opened the Book
to where the disciples of God did stretch out their hands to the wheat,

at a distance the Lamb stood waiting

and the visitors did not even notice His presence.

[Reference: "Sondag van 'n kind" (Sunday of a child) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Sabbath Of A Unemployed Man

I stand just outside the Pick-a-Pay
and have got no money to buy
some bread and milk
and the smell of hot bread
hangs in the air.

It's a humid, cloudy hot Sabbath day,
however the sun is scorching
while for a few Rand
and sometimes cents
I am looking after cars,
are minding them from being stolen

and suddenly a Higher Being decides
that I need a shower bath
and the clouds open
causing streams of water
to run down my clothes
while I flee to the shelter
of the roof

and I wonder who does control everything,
the weather, and the destiny of people
when suddenly it stops raining
and steam rises
as vapour from the tarred road

and a man presses a hundred Rand into my hand
and say: "take this friend"
and I am astonished
on the kindness of some people
and in the distance
a lightning bolt flashes down to below
and I shiver where I am standing in the sun

and I buy bread and milk,
already prepared chicken,
the newspaper
and ride like a prince

with my bicycle back
to the shack
where my wife and children
are waiting hungry.

Gert Strydom

Sad Tidings

When uncle Henry
(who had been my father in law at the time)
did beat the last retreat
on the golf course

Riana & I had to hurry
to Barberton to mother in law
to assist with the funeral
and Riana & I had to constantly wash the dishes

and Riana & I had to prepare
food and refreshments
for the horde of guests
that came to the funeral,

we had to help with the funeral letter,
go along to the veterinarian
with the beloved dog of the deceased
and I had to dig a grave for that poor animal

as for that old madam
(who had been my mother in law)
the poor dog had to be buried as well
on the day that I helped to carry her husband's coffin
to his grave.

Gert Strydom

Sage

I planted some sage along
with other herbs
and got small bushes
with blue-purple flowers
and greyish-green leaves.

We used the sage
in the cooking
and sometimes in salads
to flavour it,
but in my mother's garden
at the front gate
a gigantic blooming bush of sage
greeted me
as if I was setting my foot
into Eden itself.

It was almost a metre high
and twice that breadth
and almost similar in shape
as the neighbour's rondavel
across the street
and I rubbed some leaves
between my fingers
and it smelt like mint to me.

[Reference: rodavel = a type of round brick hut with a grass roof.]

Gert Strydom

Saint Peter Cathedral (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

Some people view St. Peter as a holy place
and the mosaic pictures with time do lose their colour,
as thousands of people do daily walk there,
are attracted to that place by a wish for God,
there are people who cover their faces in prayer
and some ill people do tear a person's heart in two
but I wonder if the images do forfeit passage to heaven,
see pillars crumble when I leave with the street,
on balconies I notice beautiful prostitutes with red ribbons in their hair,
on a wall the words do scream out: "new Italy, " ;
almost anything that a person can think of is for sale in this Rome,
where the place looks more like Gomorra than Johannesburg,
when crowds, scooters and cars do join me
and losing my way unable to speak the language I walk further.

[Reference: "Sint Pieter" (Saint Peter) by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

Salmon Van As

On a night just as the moon is rising
a British officer comes by horse with a white flag
and the rifle barrels of the Boers follow him,
as they are on guard at the front post.

Evening after evening he comes
and sometimes rides past in a cloud of dust
where he is spying on their positions
and tries to lead them astray with his chattering.

With words that by now they know:
"No nation will win against us.
Surrender tonight,
as you have already lost the war."

On a hillock Salmon van As is at the front post
and something creaks below him in the trees and bushes
where he is standing with his Mauser rifle at the ready
and he knows of the atrocities of this Englishman
where with a thunder clap he shoots at him.

Some black men run back to the British camp
to tell the story of the shot,
where a red headed major stamps his feet in anger
and swears to God to take revenge.

Convinced of his own innocence Salmon van As
stays openly on his own farm,
where he goes on with his life in Heidelberg
and just after the peace of Vereniging,
when it fits the British,
they insist on his arrest.

He is brought before a military court
where he is not given any chance to defend himself,
as probably he would have succeeded in his own defence
and the British officer says his final say.

At daylight the Lee Metford rifles of the British soldiers fire

and like Gideon Scheepers there's a Boer that falls,
a Boer citizen is murdered by the British
and in the cliff a thorn tree on his grave still tells that story.

Gert Strydom

Salome (Rubiyat Sonnet)

With her long legs continually flashing,
on her small heel and toe she is dancing
keeping perfectly to the banging rhythm
in passing smiling sweetly at the king.

Past she dances again, smiles, laughs and turn,
the king watches while he is taciturn
with her skirt rising in loveliness
while brightly blazing, flaming torches burn,

to the men, the king the dance ends too soon,
while outside hangs a tiny sickle moon,
she is asked to dance once more,
to dance flirting and to ask for a boon.

In sheer pristine beauty she stands tall,
asks for the head of a holy man to fall.

Gert Strydom

Salome Dances

When Salome did dance before Herod
he was caught off guard and promised the sun and stars,
that adulterous king was almost in a trance

and he wanted her to keep gambolling around
and Salome asked for the head of John on a tray,
he was caught off guard and promised the sun and stars

and the girl did not care for poor John,
only wished to please her mother
and Salome asked for the head of John on a tray

and when his blood splattered she dances on jeering
without considering the God of the universe
and she wished to please her mother

and still today many men fall over their feet for a beautiful woman,
to make her happy
without considering the God of the universe

and do not care about having adulterous relationships.
When Salome did dance before Herod
to make her happy
that adulterous king was almost in a trance.

Gert Strydom

Salome Dancing

To remove the head from holy John
when she was near to that great saint
Salome did decide beneath a silver moon,
before that godless girl danced on.
When Salome danced before drunken Herod
that king was swept away as if enchanted
and he wanted to fall over his own feet,
while she looked really stunning,
the gleaming glance of her eye caught his
and her gruesome mother took her chance
and this is how things still go today
when a girl is prettier than the rest,
and some men realise this
and let no one admonish them.

Gert Strydom

Salome's Dance (Italian Sonnet)

She who begs a boon like a maiden do glow
while dancing she does before the king turn
and in his heart his lust for her does burn
he promises anything on her to bestow

while she turns around on her heel and toe
become under the gaze of men taciturn,
dances almost explicitly and do return
and what to ask of him she does know

while she holds her head high she acts cool
knows that money is a prize far too small
and in lust half of the drunken men do drool,
her eyes before that of the king do meekly fall
while he acts powerful but as the biggest fool
she asks for death the most gruesome price of all.

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Gert Strydom

Samson

While I walk blind round and round
chained with double copper chains
to the mill
a whip draws lines on my back
to force me to work still harder
and every lash cuts into me.

Sweat ooze through my long hair
and day after day I think back
to the lion
that I ripped apart with my bare hands,
how I killed a thousand of this enemy
with the jaw-bone of a ass,
how I let the gateway with door still in it
stand on top of mount Hebron
and chased three hundred foxes
with burning tails
into their fields
and had burnt everything down
and how I asked God for water
and the Lord cleaved the earth open
and a fountain appeared.

Outside I suddenly hear a fuss
and are led by soldiers
to a festival dedicated to Baal
of which I can hear the noise
from a distance
and the people tease and mock me
while I stumble along blindly
and they make a clown out of me
and I hear the laughter
of thousands of the enemy.

Then I ask the helper who holds my hand
to lead me to the pillars
on which this temple rests
and I call onto the Lord God
and in humility ask to have power again

to Him from whom my strength comes
and that He must forgive me
for all my sins
and suddenly there is great power
flowing through me
and I reach my hands out
and lock them
around the two middle pillars,
feeling them move
and then breaking in pieces
and crumbling as if mere dust.

[Reference: Judges 13-17.]

Gert Strydom

Samson (Cavatina)

Hidden, broken into but sheer darkness
was his own sight,
his great power had suddenly left him,
in a great fright
his life had dwindled to nothingness,
if only light
could shine again, he prayed for great strength;
rose up powerful, came back to his length...

Gert Strydom

Samson (Free Verse Sonnet)

Blind the Philistines did lead Samson up and down
and while they made a mockery of him
the Lord God had looked down with pity
and Samson did touch the pillars
where the rulers of the Philistines laughed at him,
where he stood in their god Dagon's temple with a multitude
and Samson prayed to God and waited for moments
before with enormous power he wrapped his arms around the pillars.
Like a dark mane his hair hanged dense over him
his shoulders, arms and legs strained in regained might,
when marble broke like straw under his assault everyone was scared,
the whole temple did come crushing down in his onslaught
where Samson died with a thankful prayer and a multitude with him,
almost a whole kingdom came to destruction through his hands.

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Gert Strydom

Sancta Simplicitas Moderna

(after A. G. Visser)

In front of the Devil innocence walks past
when the Satan realises that he is going to find no kind of rest,
notices her going innocently into the world
and decides to mislead her with a temptation.

She laughs at him like an angel and he is dumfounded
as she does not even try to avoid him,
winks at him and he is totally astonished
where she is trying to seduce him, the devil.

[Reference: "Sancta simplicitas moderna" by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Sandpiper

The roaring waves that is shaking the beach
the hissing surf that shines like glass
is part of its world and continually it is just out of reach
where wave upon wave is passing as it runs fast

and it is quick on little brittle dark feet
where sucking small sand grains
sweep in and out and water foams on sheet upon sheet
and there the rushing little bird remains

while its world is at times filled with vapour
and then again suddenly clear
it is focussing on things minutely small while waters roar
are drawing very near

it is continually searching for some allure
it runs and runs on little feet that are sure

Gert Strydom

Sandpiper (Cavatina)

(after Elizabeth Bishop)

The leaping spray that roar, the swishing fling
of surf and sand,
plays in and out as waves rush to and thro;
where it does stand
while searching for something on tiny legs;
it understands
the roaring toss, a world of surf and foam,
while rushing on the wet beach it does roam.

[Reference: 'Sandpiper' by Elizabeth Bishop.]

Gert Strydom

Sandstorm In Iraq

The wind is covering everything,
covering with red-brown dust,
burying the present, the past
with a future in which peace
cannot last
and man holds destiny by the throat,
tries to change the present, the future
at a very great cost
and the lost of life is everywhere
with innocent women and children
here and there being shot, killed
by dropping bombs
and US-troops and their allies roll in
with tanks and armoured cars,
fly past in gunships, bombers and fighter jets
in skies red with blood
trying to teach democracy
by the barrel of a gun
and of all of this
the wind doesn't know
and it continues to blow.

Gert Strydom

Sandton City (Free Verse Sonnet)

I notice her in Sandton City and she is slender and lean,
very beautiful, do scarcely use makeup,
with the curves that do catch every male eye
with a crocodile-leather handbag that hangs on her arm,
she hides behind sunglasses where she waits on a lift
but smiles back at me as if she is yearning for conversation,
a three-carat diamond shines on her finger
but she agrees to have a cup of coffee with me.
She tells about how lonely her life is, that money does not bring happiness,
and she wants to talk her heart out and I am a brain wave,
I tell her that the pleasure, which she seeks, is meaningless
that it will do nothing to her life and the continual missing.
There I have got a blonde in Levi jeans and a too small T-shirt that is crying,
who wants to have a different kind of life.

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Gert Strydom

Sappho

Let Phaon set his ship to sea
and fare away for ever more,
since he could your words ignore
and couldn't find any love
for you waving on Levkás shore.

A beautiful girl flies
from a steep rock
into the blue, the deep
into the powerful sea
never more to be.

Still your words ring
true and perfect in my ears,
although it has been
thousands of years that you are gone.

Gert Strydom

Sappho (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Lina Spies)

I

People that had to lead from the front do lead others down the abyss,
say that You had an illegitimate child with Mary Magdalene,
that You did disappear with her into the bushes,
that You looked at her as the whore that she really was
and do forget that at the grave where she was crying
You did tell her not to touch you
and Your love is for sinners and Godly for anyone
that does make You the master of their hearts
where Mary Magdalene did truly come to a conversion,
did break her most valuable salve over your feet
and do have people up to now still speechless
but was only asking forgiveness
as she wanted to follow and serve you with gladness:
as a human see You as the light and the living God.

II

If a human do see You as the light and the living God
there comes peace with Your love into the heart
and then a person wants to abandon all sin and unrighteousness,
even if it's a road of pain and anguish

but now homosexuals do make You one of them
say that You did love Peter and John in a twisted way
where at a time You did reprimand
Peter for being Satan

and John was like Your brother
where at the crucifixion Peter did You deny,
did later cry about this in his distress
and You do know the hearts of all humans fully,

did pour out Your love for humanity in Your death
as the stainless Lamb of God was slaughtered

III

Of you I do have a summer's, sun and sea memories
but far too little is left of you,
mostly only dreams and thoughts that I do keep safe in my heart
as between us a lifetime and decades are missing,
the longing of the years where I did lose all hope
for almost a whole lifetime did flow together into prayers
as if I am clinging to you and our love
against the going of life in a silent resistance
while for years I do remember you in loneliness,
where my life has unfolded ghostly at a time
where constantly I am writing love poems
as if with them I am still clinging to you
as if our love do light up the darkness in my heart,
while my feelings do stay sincere and intense.

Gert Strydom

Savior (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

You did not come for the rulers and royal prelates
but for the ordinary man that is forced to serve,
where you do provide for the needs of those that are oppressed,
far less did You come for those that dignified as plutocrats,
still less for presidents that do reign for all of their lives as potentates
but they will see You in the final Day of Judgement
and with Your coming there was for You no great display or esteem,
You were as a wonderful human full of love despised and forsaken.
You are returning for everyone that sincerely wants to know You better,
for those that stand under the mockery and disdain of others,
that honestly in a dark world tries to make a living,
where You do know what a painful human existence does mean
and for the broken You did leave Your kingdom
for the sinner, the murderer and for the whore.

[Reference:"Redder"(Saviour)by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

Saviour

The kings, dukes, princes and prelates
did not want to know You, one of them even wanted to destroy You
and the learned men, the priesthood and the plutocracy
did not want to be a part of Your harvest
and later the Sanhedrin and a governor
punished You as totally innocent man,
thrashed You with a cat-o-nine-tails,
as they mocked You and even at Your death they were silly
when smugly they did decide over Your fate,
nailed You to a cross and pushed it into the earth,
aimed insults, mockery and spit at Your face,
as they pressed the worst bit of humanity onto You
but for those who are broken You did come
and in love like a lamb You were mute.

Gert Strydom

Scenes From My Childhood Days

(in answer to André Letoit)

Too innocent I was as a child
to play with a girl's secret place,
we did rather steal peaches at the principal's house
did scuttle away when he wanted to find us,
with kites that flutter high in the wind
the summer-sun had been golden-yellow above us,
we did pretend to be sword-fighters,
did devour all the wild fruit in the veldt,
did wait each other in with canes loaded with balls of clay,
did throw the blue-hell out of each other with them,
did hunt with catapults,
was caned time after time for all our naughtiness,
did laugh at silly jokes
and old people did invite us for cake and tea.

[Reference: "tafereel" (scene) by André Letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

School

Continually its progressions and rows,
the teacher is on patrol,
his cane sometimes swishes painfully,
there are theorems and more theorems
which are driving us nuts
with differentiation and other calculations,
and we are taught about Ballot and Christaller
and models are all around me,
one after the other they do pass
while there's no end to examination papers
and the girls are lovely
but continually I am caned
and this is why I find high school
somewhat bewitching.

Gert Strydom

School Then And Now In The New South Africa

When we went to school
we had respect, good manners
combed our hair, brushed our nails and teeth
wore uniforms and blazers
and followed a decent curriculum.
A portion was read from the Bible
and prayers were said
and hymns were sung at school

and although the cane sometimes
did it's whacking, it was for minor things,
or for sometimes not learning for tests
although some teachers misused its functions
by applying it for marks under ninety percent,

using it as a teaching tool
when scientific formulae was written
on the black board
and summoning a pupil
to give a answer
or to get caned until it was correct

and the most deviant pupils
were smoking cigarettes
at the toilets while one was watching
for approaching teachers

and we sorted out our differences
at the oak bush,
where we rolled up our sleeves
used flying bare fists
to hit a bloody nose
and shook hands as friends afterwards

not like now where parents are compelled to help
with homework from the Internet
being brainwashed into a new way of living
without God and indoctrinated
into New Age teachings

where man is a god,

teenage girls are pregnant,
a boy in class urinates in a tin,
marijuana, cocaine and heroine
is available at even the best schools,
sold by Nigerian drug dealers

the cane has been withdrawn
and children's rights are in
and using cellular phones
learners call the office
to call the teacher out of class,

a union to which the teachers
at the school does not belong
is on strike
and minivan taxis drive up
with unionists causing a ruckus,
forcing the school to close down
for the day or for a whole week.

A pistol, a knife, a screwdriver,
a sword is drawn
and someone is shot, stabbed
or beheaded
and the savagery is barbarian
as if from a primitive man
right out of the bush.

Gert Strydom

Seagulls

Seagulls are flying from edge tot edge,
their screeching voices call the veldt, the sky the sea
of South Africa stretching east and west
to a carnivorous hunt above the ridges, sea ditches
and small crabs, whose lives are spent in shell crevices, yield
splashing blood, ooze from their guts, their veins with

a little nucleus of skeleton. It was when I walked
facing the sea at its east end with a kind of dredge
of sprinkling sand, strolled through the lathering water
naked legged in the winter water, with a member as bait
under cast moon with rocks itching and scratching my feet

after I saw in my rising eyes the stretches, flattening
of this one land, a country stretching east to west,
(as if no other exists anywhere else)
south to north, wherever I were going
with hillocks, mountains, flashing city lights,
even trees looking somewhat blatantly
as if staring at me with cold winter bitterness.

I know that the sun still turns, until the next day
and the morning will visit as owls or rats to us
in hues of brilliant blue, only in the Cape it will be grey
and I know that day and night the seagulls fly over me
or we or us with wings covering South Africa, the whole
the continent of Africa, even the whole wide world
and their screeching will last until eternity.

[Reference: Owls by Leslie Norris.]

Gert Strydom

Seagulls [1]

Seagulls are flying from edge tot edge,
their screeching voices call the veldt, the sky the sea
of South Africa stretching east and west
to a carnivorous hunt above the ridges, sea ditches
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[Reference: Owls by Leslie Norris.]

Gert Strydom

Searching

Until I saw you
I was searching through beautiful faces
experiencing lovely bodies,
personalities
and catching smiles.

There were restaurants and bars,
at times cars
and sometimes little rooms
or big villas,
Jacuzzi's and soft beds
where my search lead
and I met blondes, burnets,
red heads, auburn girls
of different ages

and I must have thought that
experiences would make me
understand women
a bit better

and that there is somewhere
less complicated
than love
and much greater,

but I was mistaken
when my search ended
and I found you
who could with one look
caress me
and taught me
what it is to love.

Gert Strydom

Seasons

I

As if summer will never end
irises are everywhere in the garden
with opening flower after flower
in light yellow, deep purple and rust-brown.

The bright hot sun hangs day after day
in a cobalt blue sky and even carnations, geraniums
and flame lilies are showing their beauty,
are still holding onto summer.

Doves are still cooing in the oak tree,
their are finches and sparrows cavorting up and down
and it's as if nature is thwarting autumn
while dew is still shining on the leaves in the mornings

until later the sky becomes dull blue
while the sun is getting much more faint.

II

Slowly the leaves are falling
descending in different colours,
in one's and two's and later in a bigger number
tree-trunks become dark brown, red and some pallid

until every tree but for those that are evergreen stand skeleton,
the birds that remain sit next to each other shivering,
wishing for the winter to past
having difficulty to find seeds and other food

and the cold winter wind blows through everything,
filling the air with whirling dust clouds
with stripped branches flinging up and down
and everywhere leaves and branches lie in a jumble

until the wind dies down and the morning fog hangs like vapour,

at times only at noon is dispersed by the sun.

III

Days are cold and grey while the sun hides,
with a owl hunting during the day
searching for hungry mice sneaking around in the yellow grass
and all other signs of animal life is missing

but for doves sitting here and there
on telephone wires,
in disconsolation staring into the distance
and early mornings the grass is covered with white ripe

and it is as if every flower succumbs,
is shrinking crumpled and are folding close
until the first spring rain comes suddenly,
with sprouts and buds appearing and new flowers folding open

when fruit trees are covered with white, pink and yellow blossoms
and the sudden beauty takes your breath away.

Gert Strydom

Seasons In Life

1 In the High-Veldt (Fatima stanza sonnet)

Then the fourteen-day rain sieved down,
by the wind broken branches were left behind
and seeping wet were the veldt and the town,
the smell of rain did us of new life remind,
this season left an impact on the mind,
an icy chill did with the wet weather appear
and cosily we did solace with each other find,
while we knew that the winter was almost here.

The joyful songs of the birds we did hear,
knew that lovely spring was very near
and we planted flowers that we hold dear,
until sunny summer grew faint in the fall,
the screeching calls of ibises almost split the ear,
while clouds of rain and fog covered all.

2 In the Cape (Fatima stanza sonnet)

Then the winter-rain for months sieved down,
by the Southeaster broken roofs were left behind,
ships were lost at sea and some sailors did drown,
everywhere we did signs of a chilly winter find,
this cold season left an impact on the mind,
a miserable feeling did with the wet weather appear,
cosily we snuggled together were to each other kind,
while we held the sunless cold season in drear.

In spring on the beach I did lotion over you smear,
summer turned out to be the best time of the year
where without fear we held each other very dear,
until sunny summer grew faint in the fall
and the screeching calls of gulls almost split the ear,
while clouds of rain and fog covered all.

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Seasons Of Life

I. Far too rapid (rondelet)

Far too rapid
the long hot summer days sweep past
Far too rapid
love turns to something insipid
and it's as if spring cannot last
as life does end when days seems vast;
far too rapid...

II. There is a secret power (triolet)

There is a secret power
that pours down with the summer rain
and something special in every shower
There is a secret power
when flowers grow to loveliness in every bower
and with love their impressions do remain
There is a secret power
that pours down with the summer rain

III. Disablement

The garden is reflected in the bright window glass
while the summer rain is splashing down
and flowers swish to and thro, point upward
but they are gone in winter and in summer do reappear.

In this way you find a own kind of disablement
when it seems that a relationship only brings a kind of evil
as if love also at a time does reappear
as if it perishes in winter and in summer is bountiful again.

IV. While in seed hidden lies life's awakening might (Rondel Prime)

When the irises flower purple, blue and white

early in the month of April
and they bloom lovely before the winter chill
then there is something special to each day and night

when the last heat is still in the sun's light
before winter stretches out its hand over the dale and hill.
When the irises flower purple, blue and white
early in the month of April

then the early autumn is a colourful sight
as falling leaves does the countryside fill
before winter comes as it will
while in seed hidden lies life's awakening might
when the irises flower purple, blue and white
early in the month of April

V. In winter

Stripped trees are each a mere skeleton
as if they are separated from each other
and starkly alone with branch
that reaches like fingers up to the heaven

while a strong wind devours the leaves,
lurching them away and spreading them everywhere
and still every tree remain near to each other
where you see them etched against the rising sun.

Sleep softly my darling
while the winter wind sings outside,
tries to come in like a wild animal,
as it rattles the windows of the entire house.

Lie cosily and in easy in our bed
while the rain sieves down
and the sun is stole
as if it's lost for the whole of winter

and when the smell of new life
spreads softly through everything
and our hearts do jump with joy

under the anaesthetic of love
and I look to where your hair is spread out
like a dashing mane
with peace written over your entire face

[Remark: Please note that in the Northern and Southern hemispheres of earth
the seasons are opposite from each other.]

Gert Strydom

Seasons Of The Heart ('Mirror Loop')

Timelessly
drops are falling...

Winter and summer
as
seasons
comes
year after year.

We
are caught,
eye in eye,
happy, sometimes unhappy.

Unhappy, sometimes happy,
eye in eye,
caught are
we.

Year after year
comes
seasons
as
summer and winter.

Falling are drops,
timelessly...

[Reference: Paul McCann

Gert Strydom

Seeing Soviet Flagged Battle Ships

Seeing Soviet flagged battle ships,
some submarines surfaced
etched against a enemy harbour,
while on a sabotage mission
lulling up and down,
rocked by waves
in a rubber dingy
with a city skyline
dotted with sparkling lights
it comes to me
that man's weapons of war
are developing into gigantic things
which dwarf human beings.

Still the sword as a timed limpet mine,
submarine, warship, aircraft carrier
and nuclear weapon
receives a whiplash harangue
from the pen, typewriter or computer
from which words flow
as a recording witness,
a spotlight on the facts,
a persuader to action
and a weapon of greater devastation.

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Gert Strydom

Seeing You Now Feels Like Next To Never (Rondeau)

(for my wife Daleen)

During the virus I am waiting for you
and your sincere love pulls me through,
where before God we did swear forever,
seeing you now feels like next to never.
Whatever I do the missing does continue

and it feels if destiny does us severe,
while both of us are to each other true,
but too many people are dying, however,
during the virus

our love I want to much deeper pursue,
do want to know you in everything that I do,
while on television a scientist holds himself clever
and illnesses and deaths are more than ever
during the virus.

Gert Strydom

Seen From The Sky

Farms lie patched in blocks
of brown and green squares
with maize and sunflower
and other crops.

There are houses and silos
like castles protecting
here and there
with windmills
standing like bishops
wailing against the wind
guarding waterholes

and farmers, workers
and cattle, sheep
and other animals
like knights
and pawns everywhere

and God plays
against the evil foe
on a giant chessboard
seen in mid game.

Buildings, pivot points, tractors
men and animals
and everything below
becomes insignificant and miniature
and specs in time and space

and the board never ends
and stretches without boundaries
on past the next horizon
to continents across the globe
to include anywhere

and at times
life and death balances
on where destiny falls

or the next move
if there is one at all.

Gert Strydom

Selecting A Reader

It really doesn't matter
how she looks, although I would prefer
her to be pretty and maybe a little bit witty
with a good sense of humour
and maybe in the dead of the night
when life is at its loneliest
or early in the morning,
or any time will really do

she will find time,
maybe from a busy life,
or caring for her kids
to switch her computer on
and on the internet
find a line
which means something to her

and if she smiles, laughs, cries,
are infuriated, concerned
or thinks that my poems are utter rubbish
it doesn't really matter
as she had seen the world,
through my eyes
and has experienced life
in a different way.

[Reference: Selecting A Reader by Ted Kooser.]

Gert Strydom

Sennacherib

Sennacherib king of Assyria
send a message to Hezekiah king of Judah saying:

"Do not be deceived by your god
when he assures you that Jerusalem
will not fall to me.

Haven't you heard
what the kings of Assyria
have done to all the other countries
and how we have destroyed them completely?

Who will deliver you now? Did the gods
of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, Hamath, Eden,
Arpad, Sepharvaim, Hena or Ivvah protect them? "

In humility Hezekiah went to the temple
and prayed:

"Lord, enthroned among cherubim
You are alone the living God
who rules over all kingdoms
and have created both heaven and earth

and it's true that the kings of Assyria
have destroyed the gods of these nations
and have conquered these nations and their lands,
but their gods were only wood and stone
created by man.

Please deliver us from king Sennacherib
that the entire world may know
that You alone are God."

Then the prophet Isaiah
send king Hezekiah a message:

"The Lord says that Sennacherib
has blasphemed and insulted Him

and has lifted his voice in pride saying

that with his chariots
he has ascended mountains,
that he has drawn water from foreign wells,
has dried up the streams of Egypt

but I know where he lives
and when he comes and goes
and he has raised his voice against me.

I will make him return from where he came
for out of Jerusalem My remnant will come
and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors will come

and he will not enter this city,
even shoot an arrow here
or come against it with shields
or build a siege ramp
and I will defend this city.”

During that night the Angel of God
waged war against the army of Assyria
killing a hundred and eighty-five thousand men

and Sennacherib withdraw to Nineveh
where he was killed by his own sons
while worshipping his god Nisroch.

Gert Strydom

Separation

I

You have left and I am missing life
do miss sitting in the mornings or evenings on the porch
or under the old pepper tree
to hear doves coo, small birds calling each other
or to see you making food in the kitchen
where you fry feta cheese with spinach,
where you are involved in conversations with me,
where I see you busy making fruit salad
where I at times pour a glass of wine for you
but more to hold you tightly against me,
to see the stars shining against the heaven
when the day grows faint from blue to black,
to hear you play a song over and over again,
to share maybe a hundred times with me.

II

To share maybe a hundred times with me
that you really love me
or did I only imagine it?
Sometimes I try to understand
the meaning behind all of your words,
slowly I become aware of feelings,
as if something magical hides somewhere
in the loving deed and hungry kiss.
I do not know the direction to take
when I am caught in a labyrinth,
where I wander goalless without ever finding you
and I have got to go on my own way,
when my plans and dreams fall apart,
when you stay out of my life.

III

When you stay out of my life,
then I lose you
as you hide your face from mine,

when your pretty eyes do not shine anymore.
When we lead lives at other places,
when I have no desire for you,
it makes me totally free from you,
with a harsh unapproachable law
where your love turns to hatred
to fall only on your new lover,
then let me find someone else as partner
where your anger cannot fall on me.
At a time I trusted you far too much,
I did build my whole world on you.

IV

I did build my whole world on you,
on a family and children
and wanted life with you and nothing more
and like this I trusted my humanity to you
as if there is treasure to something that can fade,
in self-sacrifice I invested my existence,
did do things, to tell you about my love
and somewhere everything was spoiled
while you as if our love did not exist
openly loved another man,
while continually you fabricated that which was between us
and the most beautiful things did perish,
while you acted as if insane,
while one morning we were still a family.

V

While one morning we were still a family
(with you that I thought was still true) ,
two mischievous boys that was sometimes naughty
and two dogs and cats in it,
the final day did come
while I did not really take notice
and I lost my work and as if sentenced
I told you before I could reflect on it
with the flash of a hat, before I had any suspicion
you went to frolic with your lover,

you made arrangement to move to his house,
you got rid of most our belongings,
and took your two children along and I was nauseous;
you treated me worse than rubbish.

VI

You treated me worse than rubbish
your policeman lover wanted to lock me up,
when you left you cursed me and wished that I do perish
and I had to chase you lover away from my property.
Some weavers made their nests
out of pieces of yellow grass and some branches
where tamboti branches reach to the roof
and they are their constantly and almost as tame as doves,
against my reflection the window's glass shines,
while they sit and twitter,
some other wild birds peck against the window
while they see their mirror image;
but we are divorced and our marriage is shattered;
once more I see the sun setting.

VII

Once more I see the sun setting
where it becomes orange-yellow almost like a rose
and when I look at this picture
I know how much I do need someone.
There are far too many nights of being lonely,
when the night's cloak folds around me
that has healed me from my heartache
and sometimes also from the bitter remembering.
I am looking for matchless happiness,
something to bind me with the love of someone,
something that I cannot express in words,
and I wonder if anybody does find it?
The stars glitter above me blue and white,
you have left and I am missing life

Gert Strydom

September 2001

There are times
that always stays with you
and I remember a day
that I stood
with a cool drink
and a bible in my hand
when I saw in a religious book shop
on CNN
how two aircraft
short after each other
go right through the Twin Towers
and flames and smoke
burst out of both buildings.

Unbelief, perplexion, shock
and the knowledge that it's murder
and a chaotic terrorist deed
hit me like thunder strokes
and I am sorry for the innocent people
that has no opportunity to escape
and I wonder where have humanity gone
and stand glued at the television set
and know that a unstoppable war
is going to arise out of these events
and that more innocent people are going to die.

Gert Strydom

Serenity

Right at the weir in the river
the water in the early morning is pitch black,
the scenery around me etched rock hard
without human conversation, the silence folds over me

and when the first twilight comes, African red-knobbed coots lift
screaming from the water,
while the sun drive off the night
white-faced ducks whistles notes stretching out long

there's an untouched purity,
a type of freedom everywhere around me,
as if everything for a moment hangs in time:

I am speechless for moments
in astonishment before the day comes overwhelming,
before it flowers open in a burning sun.

Gert Strydom

Servitors Of The Highest God

On the plain of Dura
a twenty-seven meter high
golden statue stand,
that people can see for miles far
and the esteemed people,
commanders and princes
and the king is there
with a big crowd
and almost everybody that serves him.

In different languages it is announced
that everybody must fall down,
have got to pray to it
when the music instruments play
and we see the king
sitting boldly on his throne

and the people are excited,
it's a great festival
and suddenly there is silence,
in the big fire oven
flames shoot up brightly
and expectation is written on faces.

All at once the sound rises
of horn, zither, flute, lute
harp and bagpipes
and all kinds of instruments.

Around us the crowds of people bend down
onto the earth and the three of us stand
while a light winds is pulling on our cloaks
and I lift my hand
to shade the sun from shining in my eyes

while the music is inundating
and everybody can hear the music
and friends shout in fear to us:
"Bend! Bend down!"

Bend before the master and lord! "

Armed soldier take us
right up to king Nebuchadnezzar
and it's clear that he is raging
and indignantly he gets up from his throne

and walks right up to us
and in anger he wants to know
if we are impudent
to disobey his commands?

"Are you too stupid to know
that no God
can save you from my hand? "

We say that the God that we serve
is almighty and if He does not rescue us,
it will be known that we serve
no other gods.

At that moment Nebuchadnezzar gets angrier
and his face is red with rage
and in his eyes hate is glowing
and he stops talking
shouting loudly for the fire to be made
seven times hotter

and his servants run in fear
to the oven to make it still hotter
and there are flames and clouds of smoke.

"Take them to the fire,
take them to the fire, I command you, "
Nebuchadnezzar roars at the strongest men
of his army and we are cuffed
and in our clothes
are thrown into the fire
causing us to fall right into the flames
and those that threw us in
are immediately killed by the great heat

and we cannot even
feel the heat
and nothing of us is burning
and while we are still talking
with each other
the Son of God
himself visits us right there

and a distance from the oven
the king shouts in great fear:
"Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
servitors of the highest God,
come out of the fire! "

Gert Strydom

Setting Up A Fence

In the ground we plant a pole
while a worker yawns for some time,
with the pickaxe coming down thundering,
hitting rocks to tiny pieces.

Gert Strydom

Seventh Heaven (Triolets)

The moon hangs almost solitary
shining like a searchlight
while it reflects on the sea
The moon hangs almost solitary
triggers a memory
before the blackness of the fall of night,
the moon hangs almost solitary
shining like a searchlight

reminding me of the way
which things between us once used to be,
before you went away,
reminding me of the way
we used to kiss and play,
emotions come quite suddenly,
reminding me of the way
which things between us once used to be.

One we were in spirit and body.
Two persons falling for one another,
and immediately we were very happy and giddy.
One we were in spirit and body,
much happier than everybody,
going everywhere together,
one we were in spirit and body.
two persons falling for one another.

Three in a relationship to you,
to you seemed much better
but at the end it caused us to be through.
Three in a relationship to you
unfastened our glue,
and suddenly I get your letter,
three in a relationship to you,
to you seemed much better.

Four gulls fly past screeching,
but there's something familiar in your smile,
your eyes are bright and touching.

Four gulls fly past screeching,
and this can be far-reaching
as it's obvious that you want to reconcile,
four gulls fly past screeching,
but there's something familiar in your smile.

Five years ago when we unexpectedly met again
I saw your face light up like the sun
on a winter day full of sieving rain.
Five years ago when we unexpectedly met again
I was still full of pain
and here you are just after the new day have begun,
five years ago when we unexpectedly met again
I saw your face light up like the sun.

Six times we have been in touch
over the last twenty years
but then you did not care much.
Six times we have been in touch
and our feelings are now such
that you drive away my fears,
six times we have been in touch
over the last twenty years.

Seven diamonds were in your ring
and I still owe you a honeymoon
which we did not have with our wedding.
Seven diamonds were in your ring,
we feel as if our love is blossoming
and this time I will not let you leave soon,
seven diamonds were in your ring
and I still owe you a honeymoon.

Gert Strydom

Shadow Spiders Crawl On The Wall (Hymnal Octave)

Shadow spiders crawl on the wall
at the red sunset's glare
and some are short and some are small
or very thin like hair
while others are narrow and tall
like a long twisting stair
but still you are my all in all
following everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Shaken But Not Stirred

It was at the Pretoria show
that we went on a ride
on a roller coaster
with a spinning wheel
and Heinrich and I
got into one car.

There was a steel bar
that should lock shut
and when we pulled away
it did not.

We took the big loop
and another one
and the bar flew open
and both of us
almost flew out

and from then on
it was a nightmare ride
and I caught the six year old
with my left arm
and pressed him to me
and with the right
I hang on
to the bar
that went up and down.

The earth was flying past
at a great speed
and we almost were crushed
but I hang on
and luck was there
and no poems saved me,
maybe it was a terrified prayer
that gave me the power
to keep hanging on
while we flew like superman
and his son

and went up and down.

The boy screamed
first with terror
and then by the enjoyment
of the adrenaline
and I clung to that bar
and saw only a blur
and heard the croaking
of that big machine
and I hung on
reliving parachute jumps
in my mind.

Flying on the wind
until the machine
slowed down
to a crawling pace
and we got out
totally shaken
but not really stirred
and the boy said:
"Dad, can we do it again? "

Gert Strydom

Shaking Like A Immature Child

Outside a swarm of doves peck yellow maize,
my heart gallops
along the dusty roads
of the lower town
and shaking like a immature child I am searching
where cars come to a halt
for you who are rolling away like a large marble
and when we are apart I do feel unsettled.

Gert Strydom

Shall I Compare Your Beauty?(English Sonnet)

(After William Shakespeare)

Shall I compare your beauty to the time of spring?
You are angelic, holy and intricate in your way.
While all the fruit-trees are alive and blossoming,
icy-cold with rough winter winds are a spring day,

where in your emotions and views you are temperate,
while hot and dim the sun in the cobalt-sky does shine,
where far too slowly the lingering winter does abate,
while your sheer beauty after many years do not decline,

while the happy light in your sunny eyes are never dimmed
and your eternally spring will not with time or death abate,
where you are in your personality not by seasons trimmed
still of you shall these humble words after this life indicate

and this is the way that in every season you are lovely to me
where I will love you past this life if God does it deem to be.

[Reference:"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? " "Sonnet 18" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

She Brings Me The Greatest Kind Of Delight (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

She brings me the greatest kind of delight
in her presence every day and night,
at times we are totally in unison
in our acts and thoughts as the days go on,
and to me her face is a sweet kind of sight,
she brings me the greatest kind of delight.

She brings me the greatest kind of delight,
her absence leaves me with some fright
while at times we do smell of each other,
while we have a spark that nothing can smother,
as she lightens my world with her own light
she brings me the greatest kind of delight.

She brings me the greatest kind of delight,
while all of my world becomes good and right
while nothing can chill, wither or remove
the essence, the sheer magic of our love
her sweet smile is always tender and bright,
she brings me the greatest kind of delight

Gert Strydom

She Broke In To Me

She broke in to me, into my life
and slowly displaced my friends,
my hobbies, even my fantasies
but in her reality
there was something tender and sweet
and it was if it was meant for us to be
much more than just friends
and we were denizens in our brand new country
where we dared for posterity
but were still totally free
from the bonding that marriage brings
and far too quickly our time together
passed before destiny tore her out of life.

Gert Strydom

She Brought Me Joy And Happy Days

she brought me something that no one can remove
while she dwelt in her gentle ways,
she brought a kind of innocence to love.

Gert Strydom

She Comes In Loveliness (Strambotto Romagnuolo)

She comes in loveliness and like the seasons
sometimes she is dressing pure and bright as spring,
her beauty has many different reasons,
continually tranquillity she does bring,
at times her gaze is quite hot or mild or cold
and she acts timid, lively and very bold
at times with a amazing kind of pure grace
but always I see traces of love on her face.

Gert Strydom

She Does Not Need Any Praise (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Archibald MacLeish)

The greatest happiness she have given
today to me,
in the ways that together our lives is,
tranquillity
is in each smile, like a hot summer day,
totally free
she does her duty in words and her ways,
she acts unhindered like the sun's rays.

Fresh loaves of bread, lovely food she spreads,
great joy she finds
in her selfless acts that brings happiness,
free like the winds
her feet run while she lights candles, sometimes sings;
one of her kind
my wife is, she does not need any praise
as she loves with an amazing true grace.

[Reference: 'Poem in Prose' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

She Flees From Me (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Sir Thomas Wyatt)

She flees from me in her iniquity,
are very wild
as if I have brought her some kind of harm,
but only mild
I treat this forsaking newfangleness,
still like a child
I do trust that our love will overcome
that I will eventually lead her home.

There was a time of some ultimate joy
when in sweet bliss
her clothes from her entire body did fall,
where a sweet kiss
was an innermost kind of opening,
and now there's this
sudden kind of strange change in her mind,
to her I have been only very kind.

[Reference: "They Flee from Me" by Sir Thomas Wyatt.]

Gert Strydom

She Flees From Me (In Answer To Sir Thomas Wyatt)

She flees from me
who at a time did my company seek
who once loved me tenderly,
now is wild like a tigress,
are totally without remembering,
does not grasp the love that I hold for her

and I am not dreaming,
but she has turned my gentleness into wild rage
by her strange forsaking, by the change in her
and now she is totally different
from what she used to be
and treats me like rubbish

forgetting about the many times
that we had kissed and made promises
and when I let her go,
go into the wild world
as yet another beast, it serves her well.

[Reference: They flee from me by Sir Thomas Wyatt]

Gert Strydom

She Has A Kind Of Charm (Strambotto Siciliano)

She has a kind of charm, a amazing grace,
as beautiful and tender hearted she is;
in the aspect, the expressions of her face.
No lovely other woman is just as this,
suddenly she makes my feelings and heart race
and her rose red lips sometimes demands a kiss
but to her there is nothing quite commonplace,
and to be with her is a kind of sheer bliss

Gert Strydom

She Has A Kind Of Purity (Strambotto Romagnuolo)

She has a kind of purity, innocence,
and her sheer loveliness at times makes her glow,
as something precious with a evanescence,
to her the gods did a kind of grace bestow,
shining golden as the sun every tress
does twirling their soft sheer gentleness express,
as constantly she acts very eloquent;
together we are until the night is spent.

Gert Strydom

She Has Beauty, A Kind Of Perfect Grace (Cavatina)

She has beauty, a kind of perfect grace
and like the night
she has the aspect of clear starry eyes,
the gleaming light
of her selfless love does outshine the sun
in bright daylight,
while she acts as one that is innocent
and yet her ways is very eloquent.

Gert Strydom

She Has Got The Most Beautiful Eyes

She has got the most beautiful eyes
that shines like rainbows,
with the peculiar ability
to suddenly cheer me up.

Gert Strydom

She Is Like The Hot Yellow Sun

(after Vincent Swart)

She is like the hot yellow sun warm, with hair yellow
and I have known her intimately, her sunny nature
sometimes laughing, at times somewhat mellow
and I want her to share my future.

Her shoes, hat and sometimes a jersey or coat
is placed at the end of the bed
or in the wardrobe and she leaves a lump in my throat
and I know her from toe to head

with her hair splashed wild around her face
she smiles hot as sunshine
bringing joy to any place
and I am glad that she is mine.

Gentle like the wind her voice sings
and she tells me extraordinary things.

[Reference: She has a face like a beautiful melon by Vincent Swart.]

Gert Strydom

She Is Lovely (French / Dutch Roundel) (In Answer To Dorothy Parker)

She is lovely, but sometimes silent is she,
so fragile she looks with her golden hair
but always she is seen as fair
and about her sheer beauty most men agree.

Still she smiles with modesty
while her looks are beyond pretty and somewhat rare.
She is lovely, but sometimes silent is she,
so fragile she looks with her golden hair

that I a withering flower see
and men at her do continually stare
but of this she is totally unaware
as if she is from this world free,
she is lovely, but sometimes silent is she.

[Reference: "Roundel" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

She Is The Shining, Beautiful One (Italian Sonnet)

With the warmth of the heart, with light,
she wants to fill my world she tells me
and in the depths of her eyes I see
promises of all the things that might

be waiting as if great things are in sight
and very happy I want her to be,
from all fear, sadness and despair free
and our future I want to be bright

as she is the shining one who wants much more,
that draws all of my attention, talks about respect
and I look at her and see the angel of my heart,
do realise that from the start her I do adore
while I do not know what to expect
as loving her is a kind of unknown art.

Gert Strydom

She Lives

Paintings of William Waterhouse
is dear to her
and she paints images of women
and faces
and tries to find
a Tuscan world somewhere
and in the contrast of darkness
and brightness of abstract art,
I see something deeper
coming out of her soul and life.

She wears her auburn hair
in plaits and later it hangs curling
over her shoulders
while I read passion, happiness
and an urge
to be really beautiful
deep in her golden eyes
and I know that she wants to flower.

She takes the dogs
on drives to a park and the river
where they run about in joy
and splash and swim
and she lives every hour
as if it can last an eternity
and tries to catch joy
in a moment
and when the urge takes her
she writes magic poems,
sad songs
and sets her life
to follow the Lord.

Somewhere in all of this
it's as if she get wings
and the old world
of her past
fades into oblivion

and at times I wonder
if she's a angel
or human being
and I love her
and she adores me
and all the days together
pass much to quickly,
but the fairy tale
remains reality
and I see how my darling
becomes a beautiful butterfly
that sheds parts of her soul
in words, notes and painting strokes
and she lives in a way
that I can never
really pen down.

Gert Strydom

She Lives Beautiful (Sonnet)

(after George Gordon, Lord Byron)

She has a kind of inner glow
that is reflected in her eyes
a kind of beauty that gods only can bestow
that is purer than the different hues of the skies

and wherever she goes people she does impress
with her sweet-hearted company,
with her cheery ways, how she flows in a dress
and yet her imperfections are many

but she has a quality that is lovely
that continually does stay with me

and she is so different
in the ways that brings to her grace
and comes over as innocent
in some of the expressions of her face.

[Reference: "She walks in beauty" by George Gordon, Lord Byron]

Gert Strydom

She Looked For All Pills

She looked for all pills
that she could get hold of,
in a hurry
arranged them
on the cabinet next to the bed.

Perplexed from crying
counted the pills
and half ironically
tried to arrange them in a kind of order
while she tried
to lay her life down.

She almost choked
from the first mouth full
and chewed the pills like Smarties
and it tasted almost vomit arousing.

There were Syndol, Tegratol, Prozak,
Sleep Eeze and who knows what
that she took hands full of
and drank down with brandy
to try and forget
the jamming pain
and how pathetic
she had become in her own eyes.

For long moments she stared
and looked at her own life,
at dreams that were smashed
to pieces
and like a record
that jams
she played messages on her cellular phone
over and over again,

but suddenly she became unstoppable nauseas
and vomited right over the bed
until she was empty

tasting gall
and cried out
and the stench
rose in her nose
and she took all the sheets
to the washing machine.

Gert Strydom

She Ran Into Death

She ran into death,
or it surprised her
like debt sometimes do
but a car skidding in sieving rain
on a wet slippery road

made the killing,
the accident possible,
probable and yet
who can forgive the driver?

He could not forgive himself either
after killing a beautiful women
in running trunks, dripping wet,
but still very beautiful

and no one would have been able to say
that a woman like that
was a mother of three.

Gert Strydom

She Smiled At Me

At Lolly Jackson's bar
she smiled at me
and as smiles goes,
her's was teasing.

She smiled quite gay
and her eyes and lips
and exquisite body begged
to play.

In my inner soul
I started to pray
to keep this blonde temptation,
with her inviting boobs and hips
far away from me.

The energy of life
was bursting out,
with every step she took.

a Year later
I saw her in the street
and her thinning hair
and bony face,
reminded me of someone
from somewhere.

When she smiled
It was a ironic grin
and somehow,
I could still see
beauty in her eyes.

Her body was paper thin
and her blue eyes
were sunken in
and AIDS had taken her
to the verge of death.

She Softly Spoke My Name During Her Sleep (Novelinee)

She softly spoke my name during her sleep,
turned around on a cool linen sheet
while slowly along the dark night did creep,
the air was with fragrant lavender sweet,
had the smell of jasmine and cinnamon,
stretching out naked across the soft bed
her limbs and body in the moonlight shone
and on the pillow laid her curly head,
before at dawn the many stars were shed.

Gert Strydom

She Stays Linger With Me (Cavatina)

The eyes of my love shines like the sun,
summer fades,
in the presence of her most lovely smile,
autumn shades
against the colour of her vibrant hair,
spring degrades
against her charm and personality
and vivid she stays lingering with me.

Gert Strydom

She Talks Like A Lamb

I see a Super power
reaching out her hand
and trying and to change
places in the world
with naive quick fix solutions
that makes things much worse,
without really comprehending
what things are about
and causing much more harm
than there was before
and she talks like a lamb
and destroys like a dragon.

Gert Strydom

She Unexpectedly Came My Way

She unexpectedly came my way
when I wasn't in search of someone to love
on a sunny summer's day
and in the park was the fluttering of dove upon dove

the sky was the bluest hue
that I had ever seen it
and her smile was charming and true
while she talked to me with a kind of wit

but the things unsaid
had deeper meaning still
and that day I will never forget
as meeting her was such a thrill

and her smile was a work of art
which leapt right into my heart.

Gert Strydom

She Walks With A Kind Of Innocence (Novelinee)

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

The soft glowing radiance of her face
with hair tumbling down in a auburn tress
brings to her a unnamed kind of grace,
her thoughts do only loveliness express
as she walks with a kind of innocence
and when I meet the glance of her dear eyes
in them I can find no kind of offence,
any self-centeredness, her expressions denies,
they twinkle like the sun, like starry skies.

Gert Strydom

She Was A Smouldering Kind Of Joan Of Arc

I

Sometimes he wonders what burns so deep in her heart
past reason and understanding,
with eyes that do swallow a person
and about thunder flashing down one gets an impression.

II

With her wild white curls thrown back almost reckless
she was far past picture perfect,
even wilder than the animals in the Kruger national park,
like a goddess that can incinerate a person to dust and ash

III

and for her he had butterflies,
did comb his hair back,
he was overcome and enraptured by her,
by the challenge,

IV

by the suppression of every moral law
and against her he had no resistance
when she reached out for him,
did come with her enticing body.

V

Every day was full of excitement
and there was mere happiness when she did laugh,
life was intense full of expectation
and for each other they had the greatest respect

VI

until everything between them was played out,
when she reckoned that he did not anymore fit into her life,
doors slammed shut behind her
while away she clattered away on her high-heels,

VII

explosive moments hanged between them
and the happy angel was replace by a furious harpy

when the days of her depression came,
her suicide attempts were too much for him

VIII

and with the furniture and his possessions she did leave,
as another man, a policeman, was in her mind more right
and she drove away with his car
but she could not get the servant, Rose.

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Gert Strydom

She Was Like A Girl Lost Happily (Cavatina)

She was like a girl lost happily
in a attic,
when she told me of her childhood, of things
that catch and trick,
of some magic bottles in the pantry,
her tongue did lick
her lips in great excitement, we looked
at some semi-precious rocks, she was hooked

on a blue necklace of glowing sapphire,
amazing hues,
with a unknown fire in its blazing depths,
we were then glued
to imaginings, flights of fantasy;
just by some blue
gemstones that catch the eye in their sparkling
and being with her was quite exciting.

Gert Strydom

She Was White Blonde

She was white blonde,
her eyes sometimes bright sky-blue,
she was white blonde,
with a foot right next to the abyss
when I held her tightly against me,
and for the first time really noticed her well,
she was white blonde...

Gert Strydom

She's A Forget-Me-Not

She's a forget-me-not
made in each and every
delicate fine line

not gaudy, just simple
dressed in sky-blue
with natural beauty
shining like the morning sun
with golden locks
hanging down slender shoulders.

Untouched she flowers
away on a farm,
away from the big city
with its bright lights,
she flourishes
as if each and every other place
doesn't deserve her

and she's happy
choosing to live a silent life
that finds tranquility
in simple things.

Gert Strydom

Sheep-Killer

The sheep farmer's old black collie
had a ebony-tipped nose
that was turning grey,
as the specks on its paws
from the years under the elements

and a fog was hanging on the hill
when he undid the chain
and the far off bleating of the ewes
could be heard from the hill

and the farmer told the dog to gather them in,
to round them up and bring them down
to the corral
and with its normal pace,
no hurry in its trot the old hound
went off to do its task

disappearing in the mist,
past the paddocks
on it's way to the trees
and the farmer heard it barking
rounding up and gathering

and then suddenly the old dog growled,
barked, snarled furious, before giving
a long drawn out whining howl
and then it cried out in pain

and the ewes were bleating, bleating
as if in sheer terror
and their bells ringing
as if they were running
and the farmer got his shotgun,
a carton of shells
and an old torch

and went to the hedge calling
the dog's name, calling at the sheep

and he passed to the trees
walking up the ridge of the hillock
and only his voice resounded
while he kept calling.

At one point he saw the broken rails
with the footprints of the ewes
and the old black collie
crawled, in pain dragged her body along
and he thought good Lord, what had happened here?

The dog was in great pain and bleeding badly
ripped open and in his peripheral vision,
the farmer saw a shadow moving,
coming in with a big limp
and he turned to meet it
and pulled off both barrels simultaneously
shattering the head of a wounded leopard

and his dog was too far gone to be helped,
to be saved
and there was great pain in him
to do the proper thing, to stop its agony
and with trusting dark brown eyes
it looked at him, still whimpering

and the farmer took an old .45 pistol from his belt
cocked it and tears were in his eyes
when he put a bullet through its head
and shot it dead
and that night he said his things to God,
could not close an eye.

Gert Strydom

Shell Knowledge

Hundreds of miles from the sea
the roar resounds
when I bring a shell to my ear
as if to eternity it wants to buzz

keep witnessing of a place
where sand lays softly under your feet,
where water are flooding into the distance
and brings memories back that have been misplaced long ago.

I wonder about you from whose hand it came,
if you are sometimes thinking of me
or are you still disguised by life
in places where the most bright lights beckon?

Gert Strydom

Shivers To The Soul

The fog is so low
that it looks as if,
it's coming from the ground.

There's coldness
that pours down from the low clouds,
which send shivers to the soul.

This winter
bites chilly to the heart
as life nears its end
and age tries to takes its toll.

Your unstoppable love
hits much deeper,
than any thing else can go.

Every thing is soaking wet
but at ten o'clock,
the winter sun
burns it away
like on a summer day.

Gert Strydom

Shocking

Shockingly the newspapers tell
about the events in the house at the corner,
where nobody could stop black criminals
to violate, rape and kill a white woman,

the story is kept away from television-news,
it is far too crude for the public to view,
where a broomstick was driven into her female parts,
where she lies with legs apart, with her hands clenched together

and her lovely body is covered in blood,
she lies nakedly
with perfect round DD-breasts
and everywhere there's blood

and the point of the broom had been sharpened before the attack
and this scene of black violence, make me want to vomit.

[References: Photograph of the raped, tortured white woman: Dr. P.W. Möller,
"The Mandela-legend, " Publisher: Dr. P.W. Möller, Jotha Printers (2011) P.48.]

Gert Strydom

Show Me

Show me the place
where we lived once
when the earth was still young,
before man's hand
like a sickle went over it
and chopped until woods
disappeared totally
and deserts appeared in places.

Show me the fields, marches and hillocks
where animals at a time was carefree
before the rifle
sounded without end
and mines, factories, buildings
and rail tracts harassed the earth
and everything yielded
to steel and concrete.

Show me the blue sky
that at a time was pure
and now is full of smoke and ash
and water that fell sparkling
as rain from the air
and brought life
and could wash everything clean
and now eat
while it falls filled with acid.

Show me the streams and rivers
where at a time there were healthy fish
that could bring water to fields
and where children for the fun
could jump in
and now are filled with sewerage,
poisons, minerals
and garbage that drifts everywhere.

Show me seasons
that comes on their time

and now every day
is winter, summer and spring
while life
pass much too quickly
and the hand of man
for ever are mowing out the earth
and a day might come,
when the earth
becomes man's own
place of damnation.

Gert Strydom

Sick Bed

The flue eats
my head and throat and body
and still you come and lie
close against me
and let your fingers
branch right through mine.

My throat burns
and I am scared
that you will also
get something
of this awful thing,
but without a worry
you kiss me
and I can feel life
pulsing on your soft hot lips.

Your fingers tickle the hairs
on my lip and chin
and there are teasing devils
dancing in your eyes,
while your fingers
creep to places
under my arms.

Like a child
I am given medicine
while I am already
much better,
in my soul and spirit
since you are with me.

Gert Strydom

Sick Bed[2}

The flue eats
my head and throat and body
and still you come and lie
close against me
and let your fingers
branch right through mine.

My throat burns
and I am scared
that you will also
get something
of this awful thing,
but without a worry
you kiss me
and I can feel life
pulsing on your soft hot lips.

Your fingers tickle the hairs
on my lip and chin
and there are teasing devils
dancing in your eyes,
while your fingers
creep to places
under my arms.

Like a child
I am given medicine
while I am already
much better,
in my soul and spirit
since you are with me.

Gert Strydom

Sick-Bed

My head throbs from a headache
and the flu gnaws
burning at my throat,
but the blue of the air
seeps friendly in through my room's window.

Outside at the Tuscan mural
and the small bubbling fountain,
sparrows are washing,
splashing and chirping.

The garden's odours vapours
through my blocked nose
and lavender and rosemary
lies snugly against me.

While illness bring my day to an end,
outside the day carries on
and the tranquillity
comes in from outside and surrounds me.

Gert Strydom

Side Drawings Of A Monk

He transcribes every word
with every stripe and line
like it belongs
and deep in the dark night
he writes on
and unseeing his eye falls
over walls
where the shades draw long lines

and his thoughts
takes their own direction
and for long moments
he looks at his own life
to know where
to trim things in place
or iron them out.

Somewhere in his soul
he longs for another place
away from the chilling dungeons
that the cloister locks in
and suddenly he wants out.

In his thoughts he sees a young woman
remembering from his childhood days
and her eyes radiates blue like the sky
and his heart bounces while a smile
folds softly around the corners of her mouth.

When his eyes catches the paper again
his thoughts says damn
but there's no word
coming over his lips
and a big blot mark
next to the neat rows
of his writing
where he praises the virgin.

Sigh

I know that love
doesn't fade with time
and true love
does never pass.

The same things
that could make me
fall in love
with you before
still charms.

Eyes that sparkle bright
filled with teasing devils
dancing within,

soft perfect lips,
a smile coming from angels
and hair
that softly falls over shoulders,
still bewitches me

but deeper still
a look cutting past
all superficial things
and to hear
your voice again
tells me much more
and above all you remain just you

and sometimes I wonder
when time and opportunity
will again bring us together,
or rather silly I want to
jump in a car
or get on a motorbike.

Still my steps are measured out
and I walk the path
that life demands

but in one or other way
I want you in it.

Gert Strydom

Sight (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Maybe my eyes want to see you again like then
with the late afternoon sun falling behind you,
that does light you up brightly; do fall sparkling through your hair
as if you are a saint or an angel.
With that sun-filled glance in your eyes
of which my soul do still carry the brand marks,
your smile as if you are overwhelmed happy,
with the light wind rustling softly through your dark hair,
your perfume that the breeze brings to my nose
and maybe the innocence that does flee away for the passion of a kiss,
that makes you step into true to life into a moment
where with a blue sundress you stand slimmer than slim against a tree,
the sunny hours of the Cape summer lingers and lingers
and in the background the sea that is full of white horses at the Strand.

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Gert Strydom

Signs Of The Time

As time passes
there are brand new cars
in which armed black people sit
dressed in black suits, with dark windows

beyond which they hide
while they do their duty
as agents of the government
and destroy criminals?

While white nurses, artisans,
fired mine workers
are begging for food at DJ's restaurant,
some with degrees stay in squatter's settlements
or in the veldt or in the bush

it is as if the world
is turning on its head in this country
and able persons are jobless on the street,
with incompetents in every government position.

As time passes the devil is totally loose:
the Falcons, who first had been the scorpions
(a South African agency similar to the American F.B.I) brake in
at the wrong house, in the middle of the night

breaking down the front gate,
breaking down the garage door,
breaking down the front door
forcing every room's door open

breaking and destroying just what they find,
going through all the possessions
of a innocent man
destroying left and right and centre

without taking notice
or even realizing
that they are making a mistake,

they cause

more than a hundred thousand rands damage,
violate a citizen's privacy,
his right to a free existence
so as if they can just come and go

as they want to
and when the owner
of the house wants to get a summons
they admit that they

by mistake harassed him
had broken all the mentioned things,
had caused huge damage,
say that he must make a list

and claim from them,
make a list
of which they will pay
every single thing

and surely the man in the street,
the general citizen
have to take the money from his pocket
for taxes

and a person can only wonder
where they next are going to invade,
whose life they next will threaten,
whose things they are going to break?

Gert Strydom

Silent Whispers

The look in your eyes
are tranquil like the bluest skies

yet there is something chilling
running up and down my spine,
while I yearn to make you mine,
as if so intense this feelings is killing

any resistance that I have against you,
against this attraction being true.

The fire of the smile on your lips
the sublime movement of your hips
come with silent whispers
while away all my resistance slips

and I need you to kiss or chill me,
with scorn or the loveliest tranquility,

into my innermost core I want you to enter in,
I want to meet you with something deeper than just skin
take you somewhere that we have not gone before
but only if you truly love me, our companionship will begin.

Gert Strydom

Silently At Night

Silently at night
we see the bright stars appear
and their coming is almost as secretive
as the silent pain
that love asks and brings so suddenly
in mutual company
where it gives and also asks everything
and selfless carry all of life.

Gert Strydom

Silently I Do Realize Over And Over

(for Annelize)

Silently I do realize over and over:

I have lost my heart, soul and spirit in you,

do long myself back to the days in Summerset West,
do remember you and the bright sun in the sky

and as a young man I probably was naive like a child
totally blind for your and my errors

but still I do hold the same wonder
that you do bring to me as a mere human being,

the same love still burns in my heart
which do constantly sing praise songs to you.

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Gert Strydom

Silently You Did Lie Against Me In The Night

(in answer to Kleinjan (J. R. L. Van Bruggen))

Silently you did lie against me in the night,
in the silence said very little,

in the darkness there had been a wintry moon,
where in the night-sky the stars did slowly fade,

in mere moments we were forever caught,
as if everything in creation were far away from us,

that moment had been great and inexplicable,
as if no man could it descry.

Silently you did lie against me in the night
in the silence said very little:

when love brought everything to perfection,
while in the distance a star did jump,

where new life in you did sprout,
while as a human and woman you did astonish me.

[Reference: "Liefde en dood" (life and death) by Kleinjan (J. R. L. Van Bruggen) .]

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Gert Strydom

Silhouette On The Quay

While walking in the winter twilight
rain pour down without any lightning
and there is a curtain of rain and fog
that folds tightly around me
with a chill gnawing at my jacket
while few people dare to go outside.

Around me the world is closed and grey
while the waves crash and break constantly
and I see you lonely standing at the big wharf
while water hits foaming, breaking in anger
and you fade away for moments in the mist
while few people dare to go outside.

I wonder for what ship you are standing waiting
where you do not regard the coldness, the fog and rain
while you stare away past the most distant horizon
where the water gleams dark and ominous
and the rain does soak my clothes wet
while few people dare to go outside.

Gert Strydom

Silver

There are clouds that hang
silver-grey in the air,
before the winter sun
gives its first rays
of a drawling day.

Silver-grey the Monday starts
and while the day's hours
pass much too slowly,
I am summoned to the old chief
with his silver-grey hair.

One of the women clerks
who wants to be boss,
wants to push a silver knife
into a colleges back.

I leave them alone to count their silver pounds
and wash my hands in the bathroom,
with a silver ray of water that squirts out of the tap.

Gert Strydom

Simeon

Lord, now in the last years of my life
I smell the fragrance of the blooming spring flowers
and as promised You have let my eyes fall
on Your blessed Son

and I have witnessed the child
that You have brought into this old cruel world
to be a salvation to all of mankind
and I have now found peace

as I am witness of Your eternal love
that You now walk among men.

Gert Strydom

Simon From Cyrene (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Kleinjan (J. R. L. Van Bruggen))

The Romans find a man underway to Golgotha,
Simon from Cyrene, from far away in Africa,
where astonish he is looking at the oncoming mob
and they force him to carry the cross of Jesus.
He does notice Christ stumble and fall in the dust,
a cat-of-nine-nails slashing down on his back,
Simon jumps to carry out the command,
looks deep into the eyes of the Lord of the universe,
He helps Jesus to his feet to struggle on against the hillock,
notice blood drawing lines on His back, catching patches of dust,
the cross is heavy, the Romans rigid and forceful
and for this kind and affable man's sake Simon is scared:
he has for the Son of God, great compassion and sympathy,
notices true appreciation and a lot of pain in His eyes.

[Reference:"Simon van Cyrene" (Simon from Ciréne)by Kleinjan (J. R. L. Van Bruggen) .]

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Gert Strydom

Simon Of Cirene

All the way from Cirene I did travel to Jerusalem
and next to a dusty road that leads to a hill
I did come upon Him,
when a Roman officer commanded me to bear His cross,
from the whipping from the cat He was dumbfounded
and for a moment I was dumbstruck,
as such a man I have never met before
and it was clear that He did not deserve this punishment,
that He was noble and a man of God
but just there I did decide to serve Him,

to put His cross upon my shoulders
and carried it to where soldiers were digging a hole.
All of my sins were suddenly in my mind
and I looked at Him and prayed
to God for forgiveness

but did receive forgiveness and love from Him
when He hanged that afternoon on a wooden cross,
when thunder, darkness and an earthquake did suddenly come
and in my own sinful humanity I was scared

when the Son of God died there,
when even the Romans were astonished
and did acknowledge that He was Godly
and the prince of darkness was defeated.

I was forgiven
for the sins of a whole life-time
and when He did die as the Messiah
I was trembling.

Gert Strydom

Simon Peter

It was dark in the garden
when that night Judas
and a crowd of soldiers
and officials with clubs
and swords came near
and I heard Judas saying:

"Greetings Master, " kissing Him
and the Lord asked:
"Friend, why have you come? "
But it was clear that Judas
was betraying Him

and when Malchus with some soldiers
stepped up to Jesus and seized Him
I draw my sharp sword
and chopped off his ear
trying to drive them back.

The Lord said to me:
"Peter, put away your sword
or you will die by it. Don't you know
that my Father will send
twelve legions of angels
if I ask Him? And shall I
not do as my Father commands me? "

The Lord took the ear from the ground
attaching it to Malchus's head
and then asked the crowd:

"Am I a rebel leader
for you to come to me armed
with clubs and swords? While
I taught at the temple almost every day
you didn't arrest me."

They bound Him
and only John and I

followed Him to the residence of Annas
and John went in
since he was known to the high priest
and I waited outside that door,
but it was cold
and then John brought me in.

The girl on duty at the door asked
if I am not one of the Lord's disciples
and then I denied it, being afraid
that they would arrest me too.

It was very cold and I shivered
and I stood close to a fire
with some servants and officials
to warm myself and saw an official
striking Jesus in the face.

At the fire one of the officials asked
if I am not one of the disciples of Jesus
and again I denied it,
as these were very dangerous men.

A relative of Malchus then challenged me:
"Didn't I see you in the garden? Aren't you
a Galilean? " And again I denied it
and then a cock crowed
while the Lord turned and looked at me
and I remembered Him saying:

"Before the cock crows today
you will renounce me three times, "
and I saw nothing but love
and understanding in His eyes.

I was ready to defend Him
with a drawn sword
but wasn't brave enough
to admit being his disciple

and my heart was filled
with sudden anguish

and I went outside, into that cold night
and wept bitterly, hearing those men
mocking and beating Him.

Gert Strydom

Simple Flowers (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Humble simple words
I want to bring barefoot to you,
do want to paint them as the words out of my heart,
as flowers with a unique deep colour,
that you can look again and again at them,
that you can smell the impact of my words
in your ears, your memory and brain,
do know that it's a sign of love
and nothing is dark about them
where they are waiting on the sunshine
of gleaming eyes,
yearn for a single smile
as words that I have been planting for years
in the hidden ground of my heart.

Gert Strydom

Since Adam Laid His Eyes On Eve

Since Adam laid his eyes on Eve, saw her loveliness
no man has ever seen eyes so glittering,
a gaze that wants to bless,
making it feel as if every single day is spring

but now when you look at me, smile at me
while there's sheer magic in your touch
all of these wondrous things I see
and to you my life I want to vouch,

and you I want to caress
in true happiness.

Gert Strydom

Since Childhood The Night Scares You

Since childhood the night scares you
as if here in Africa dark things do sneak about
and when the stars appear you start to long

for tomorrows when the sun hangs bright in the blue sky
and it feels as if something almost touchable sneaks up on you.
Since childhood the night scares you

as if even the wind hisses at times like a deadly snake,
as if something dangerous is drinking water from the dog's bowl
and when the stars appear you start to long

do want to replace your fears with my presence,
and you want to baste in the passion of our love.
Since childhood the night scares you

and it feels as if something evil wants to catch you
when you sometimes find shelter in the bath
and when the stars appear you start to long

while I dry the tears from your rosy cheek,
and hold on to you through the night.
Since childhood the night scares you
and when the stars appear you start to long.

Gert Strydom

Since Power Is In The Hand Of Destiny

Since power is in the hand of destiny
and over my mortality it holds the key
and my time, my position, my life is measured out
and not even human love can save me

from the rushing boundless sea
that is trying to encompass me, as if with glee,
alone I struggle on against the dark night
with nowhere to hide, nowhere to flee

and your youth, your wealth and even your beauty
cannot change this to any degree
and even if you hasten to my side
I do not lend myself to charity:

let become what is destined and let things be,
to God I render my only plea.

Gert Strydom

Since The Day That Love Came To Your Heart (Italian Sonnet)

Since the day that love came to your heart
life feels as if it's played out on a stage
in times of true happiness and rage
where you do act and I play my part

and although joy is sometimes a art
that is not understood in the modern age
where people are content to earn their daily wage
there is something more to our feelings from the very start

and yet never will these true feelings fade,
never will our love be only temperate
as there is much more to it
or only be of happiness a kind of shade
or last to only a sell by date
as daily it grows bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

Since The Day That Love Came To Your Heart (Italian Sonnet) [2]

Since the day that love came to your heart
life feels as if it's played out on a stage
in times of true happiness and rage
where you do act and I play my part

and although joy is sometimes a art
that is not understood in the modern age
where people are content to earn their daily wage
there is something more to our feelings from the very start

and yet never will these true feelings fade,
never will our love be only temperate
as there is much more to it
or only be of happiness a kind of shade
or last to only a sell by date
as daily it grows bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

Since The First Morning Light

Since the first morning light you were up and gone
and I thought of last night as the day moved on
and voiceless between us sweet emotions remain
while through the day we both do toil alone

yet in the late afternoon you will return to me,
very soon your smiling bright face I will see
and I wonder if other couples
are also with each other's company so very happy?

Gert Strydom

Since We Have Been Gone From Each

Since we have been gone from each other
time passes very quickly
and although it wasn't my choice
you still blame me.

Maybe I try too hard
to get my life going again
and now I also know
what loneliness is.

Still I do not doubt
about where you are in my heart
and about how you feel,
but the distance between us
is stretched out long
and I miss you just too much.

Gert Strydom

Since You Came Into My Life (English Sonnet)

Since the time that you came into my life,
the world has got a tranquil lightness
where before it was with destiny rife
and in everything there is brightness.

Since your smile and eyes fold around me
all the joy in the world has become mine,
love holds me with a kind of sweet clarity
while you eyes do with tranquillity shine,

while there is magic afoot all around
whenever to me you do draw near
it is as if a new understanding I have found
that in love to me you are sweet and dear

where you do spread joy wherever you go
and of your goodness I do vividly know.

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Gert Strydom

Sincere And True Love (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Sincere and true love
has the power to move
where no other things can
and it's presence nothing can remove.

Gert Strydom

Sing One Of Your Songs

Darling, sing one of your songs
when we are together
and the candles burn romantic for a time
and play on the chords of your blue guitar
and let me hear your beautiful voice
and remind me
about the reasons for our love.

Take me along
with a lovely tune
and let your magic words
fold around me
and hug me with your sweet voice
and make me believe
that I cannot lose anything
of you forever.

Gert Strydom

Sir Lancelot Du Lac About Queen Guinevere Pendragon (Novelinee)

To me she came on one storm tossed night
with eyes shining bright like the morning dew,
she was dressed quite flimsily in white
stepped into my arms before I knew.
She kissed me and in bliss we did play,
we were smitten; it was much more than lust,
every day I must from her keep away;
my friend, companion, lord in me do trust
but when Guinevere smiles there is just us.

Gert Strydom

Sir, Do You Know The Sea? (Ballade)

(after Uys Krige)

Here is some red-roman, barracouta and codfish.
Your wife will love it when the fish is soft
and she eats it from her fingers,
I will tell you how to fry the fish perfectly.

Chorus:

Sir, you do complain about the price of the fish,
do not know how merciless the sea is,
how storms do rise suddenly out of the nought,
that when you are still sleeping we do sail out in the darkness.

Look at this, boat, this fishing vessel
the stormy sea does throw you out of it,
it's a thing that braves the waves
which one great wave can smash down to the seabed.

Sir, you do see the mirror smooth surface
and to you the sea seems tamed by technology and meek
but when the great storms roar, gigantic waves crush,
they can snap a fisherman, a boat and a ship.

Sir, the savage stormy wind is a wild unpredictable thing
that in rage does drive and blow waves, make boats jump up and down
and when you are caught in bad weather then you do pray hour after hour
that anyone and God do come to rescue in this wasted water.

My best friend, my own brother is away into the depths,
many times I have reflected over my profession
but the sea has an own magic and it's the only work that I do know
and I cannot fabricate the great danger to you.

Do you see that woman with the baby there on the pier?
Christmas, when you are jolly and do celebrate the New Year
she will still be waiting on her husband to come back
and she is already right there from first light

but for her there will never again come joy and tranquillity

as eternally she will wait upon him day after day,
do keep hoping and trusting, do not want to listen to anyone,
where her mother and father is taking care of the two of them in their old age.

[Reference: "Ken jy die see..." (Do you know the sea...) by Uys Krige.]

Gert Strydom

Situation Report Of Reconnaissance: Caprivi Strip

(after Bernard Odendaal)

1. Native Village (Free verse sonnet)

In the early afternoon we walk through the endless bush,
come upon small cultivated fields with branches around
where five cattle and eight goats come out of the shade,
smoke rise from fires with the smell of food,
where women stop there constant pounding of maize,
small naked toddler children stare at us amazed,
their fear is undisguised,
an old man talks and wears clothes from a fox,
he wants to slaughter one of the goats for us,
we do not accept his hospitality,
the women continue with their household tasks,
we can barely understand each other and nothing is suspicious,
just primitive fields on red-ground
and with the reconnaissance we have got to continue.

of terrorists are found (Free verse sonnet)

Southwest parrots chatter the late afternoon blue
where the Bushman tracker find tracks
of a old women and a very small child,
while it feels as if nothing can hold any danger
but we keep looking at the ground and terrain,
the Bushman sniffs smoke somewhere far away on the wind,
we find five lions in a group devouring a kudu
and that bright hot day is only in my memories:
Other tracks of a group of men lie in the sand
the Bushman indicates that there are fifteen of them,
contact is made on the radio network and commands are received,
I scout the bushes around us with a pair of binoculars in the hand,
the LMG ways heavily and can destroy a multitude
when a sudden deadly silence hangs everywhere around us.

3. Ambush (Free verse sonnet)

They sneak close to us in the tamboti,

in the buffalo-grass, past acacia trees
and hesitates for moments at a marsh swamp,
the birds suddenly become silent, even the insects,
but they do relax, do light cigarettes and smoke,
linger for long moments and laugh loudly
and I can smell the stinking sour of their sweat,
while my heart beats anxiously,
hadidah ibises suddenly fly up screeching,
impalas in a herd flee away from them
and they walk straight into our ambush
with AK-47 rifles hanging without interest,
somewhere a black long snake rustle through the grass
and when my LMG comes alive my fear is gone.

4. Scribbling of an enemy skirmish (Haiku's)

With the enemy
we forget everything,
people die suddenly.

*

I smell sour-sweet blood,
all the air stinks as it hangs,
rifles stutter harshly.

*

A mortar bomb falls,
explode with a thunderclap,
nobody is hit.

*

We answer their fire,
my light-machinegun stutter,
shoot the bush open,

*

more commands do come,
their fire become sporadic,

suddenly does stop.

5. Scribbling of a follow-up hot pursuit (Haiku's)

Silence hangs with us,
fear suddenly sneak nearer
where we are scouting.

✱

There is just thicket,
coots suddenly do fly up,
the marsh is empty,

*

everything is silent,
some of the enemy die,
a cobra does hiss,

*

the snake sails away,
some bloody tracks lead away,
an enemy dies.

*

more tracks flee further,
many more bundle together
disappear trackless,

*

the Bushman do scout,
we cat-sneak around the rocks
but do find no one,

*

we do find the spoor,
to Angola we do track,
do follow at a jog.

*

Near the cut-off line:
radio signal is weak,
just hissing, screeching.

*

Tired we drink water;
antenna runs up a tree,
radio is strong.

*

Enemy left country:
Command: "do not cross border.
Well done, on our side."

*

At the cut-off line
a chopper picks us up,
do fly back to camp.

*

Our situation:
killing does destroy the soul,
still scouting the heart.

[Reference:"Sitrap van 'n veegoperasie:Ovamboland,1979" (Sitrap
of a sweeping operation: Ovamboland 1979)by Bernard 's notes:A LMG is a light-
machinegun. The cut-line was a cleared buffer zone at the border.]

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Gert Strydom

Situation Report On A Reconnaissance Expedition

We went to reconnoitre enemy positions
being dropped from very high by parachute
in a dark moonless night
and I couldn't even see the stars
as I came down to the ground
and there wasn't any sign of light
up to the horizon.

After landing we grouped together
following a compass
walked miles and miles north east
saw the rising sun
walked right through the day

and did not find any enemy,
found no activity or any sign of man
crossed some small rivers marked on the map

saw a lot of crocodiles, some hippopotamuses
came across a lion kill
where they lay snarling at us
and as hiking through the bush go
this was excellent
as we saw almost all of the big five first hand,
while moving between them
and came back alive
but in a strategic military sense
it was of no value.

Gert Strydom

Six O'clock On A Friday Morning

It's six o'clock on a Friday morning
and I wait for my bus
and across the street,
the lights are burning cheerful and yellow
in the square and dome shaped windows
of the state library
and I wonder what documents are kept there

Street hawkers sell newspapers and sweets
in front of the Pretoria News,
while passengers are already
catching busses in rows.

There's an icy chill
that hangs in the morning dawn light
and there's a skew pointed obelisk
that is in front of the high court chambers
and a newspaper heading
talks about the recession
that is blowing hot and cold,
but it's freezing
and the cold even eats
right through my leader jacket.

On the east side of Vermeulen Street
the sky becomes a light yellow,
while the blue of the heaven
folds open all over the rest
and streetlights stand in a long row
up the street past traffic lights.

Schoolgirls dressed in blue
are watching school boys with red jerseys
and young women
stand and shake
from the cold and I wonder,
how the old red delivery bicycle
behind the pillar
are not getting stolen

where it stands every morning on its place.

There's a street sign that points to the Pierneef museum
into the L te Groen Eureka factory building,
but it's still too early
to go and look at paintings
and I wonder how
the Pierneef paintings inside looks.

On the side of a building
I am amazed at the Tswane sign,
but this big city
will always stay Pretoria for me
and I wonder how people
can build buildings so pressed into each other
and look at old and new buildings
standing rowed in onto each other
and the bus stays away,
while others come and go
and I wait
a while longer in the cold.

Gert Strydom

Skeletons

Between yellow cranes groaning and bended
I saw people small as ants,
I saw people gather at skeletons of steel and concrete,

lost between ovens that cook glowing,
between hell-hot fires of iron and metal
I saw people struggle in the dusk

and this morning I came
past huge, long pipes that hiss like snakes
between yellow cranes groaning and bended.

Where white smoke are stoked through round chimneys
people were trapped and caged
between hell-hot fires of iron and metal

busy with their work as if dumb,
as if only machines with their humanity missing
I saw people gather at skeletons of steel and concrete,

through walls, doors and roofs that block off
lost in the circles that the city draws,
people were trapped and caged

with crying, screaming, gnashing machines everywhere
without any natural refreshment or relief
between yellow cranes groaning and bended

with tiredness, disconcert, alienation on every feature
they kept building
lost in the circles that the city draws.

Like beings coming from another planet,
ghosts just waiting for a coffin,
I saw people gather at skeletons of steel and concrete,

while some were clinging to black pipes
and children were laughing without concern
they kept building

on terrains with danger signs on the outside
without worrying, with there destiny determined.
Between yellow cranes groaning and bended
I saw people gather at skeletons of steel and concrete,

with their lives tinned, day and night
lost between ovens that cook glowing
and children were laughing without concern,
I saw people struggle in the dusk.

[Reference: Past skeletons of steel and concrete by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

Sketch Of A Winter Day

Maybe you can draw winter
in charcoal grey, without light,
or maybe you can old-fashionably
try to ascribe to a growing pain
or bring an icy kind of view
to the nature of it
or something more intimate and intense
on which mere moments hang.

Gert Strydom

Skimmers

As a boy he used to toss
flat rocks on the water
of the farm dam or nearby lake

watching them skim
over the surface
only touching here and there

and there was some magic
in the leaping
almost right across the water surface.

The wind whirls up tiny whirlwinds
running out before him on the beach,
a lonely boy is tossing shells into the air

which are blown back in a curling flight,
sand hits legs, arms and the body
stinging like sandpaper,

in the distance skimmers are eating from shells
near to green-blue hued pools,
with some flying low over the sea

and he flings his thoughts back to many years,
thinking again and again
about a world that has changed with time

how he changed from an innocent believing child
to the mature successful man
but his life is empty and he is here to find something.

[Reference: Skimmers by Ted Walker.]

Gert Strydom

Skyscrapers

We tower into the blue sky
covered by glass,
concrete and steel
entangled, encaged

and at night
peep at the surroundings
with thousands of glaring eyes.

Lightning cables run
right through our veins
and breath,
through ventilation shafts.

We are worlds within the world,
where people like ant's
work live and play.

Gert Strydom

Skyscrapers (Free Verse Sonnet)

Some poems, which are only thoughts, do fade away
if you do not immediately write them down,
others do keep gnawing at your thoughts
and they do drive you mad and sweep you along
to come out on paper and in ink,
to in brightness find a life
and with this kind of thing I do stay astonished
as words and words do pierce through me
that by themselves indicates the plans and layout
where by themselves they do build walls of comprehension
as if at any time and place skyscrapers want to rise
with machines digging by themselves the holes of the foundations,
mechanical chisels and drilling-drills more solid than gravel and rock
do by themselves note down the lines of pleasure and meaning.

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Gert Strydom

Slaughterer's Neck (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after C. J. Langenhoven)

I

The British build a gallows at Slaughterer's Neck against rebellion as a solution
they forced everyone in the region to be present at the public execution,
to family and friends was said to look upon what happens with revolt.
The rebels were told to climb up for the noose and this did crowd jolt
but they trusted upon God for His resolution
the ropes of the gallows broke and they were free according to the law
but the British was resolute to hang them once more
"Hang, they will all hang! " With rifles the people were held at
caution,
they forced everyone in the region to be present at the public execution.

II

The crowd roared:"Look, the gallows did brake, let them be! "
"God found them !Let them Free! "
John Philip did look on along with the Khoikhoi named Boy
as a pastor of the British empire to see them the rebels destroy
and so they hanged one by one without mercy.
Five men that stood up against tyranny and for liberty did fall,
lost their lives in the name of freedom and valiant they were all
and they remain the greatest Afrikaner Boer heroes to me:
"God found them !Let them Free! "

[Reference:"Die galg" (The gallows)by C. J. 's note: In
October 1815 the missionary John Philip of the London Missionary Society incited
a Khoikhoi named Boy to lay charges against Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout and
his brother Jan Bezuidenhout that as farmers they do misuse the Khoikhoi in
labour."Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout suspected the Khoikhoi labourer Boy
of stealing and did retain his did lay false charges of assault against Cornelis
Fredrik Bezuidenhout at the Graaff-Reinet magistrate" and in his absence
Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout was sentenced to a month's imprisonment."A
force of 12 Khoikhoi British soldiers under a white British officer was sent on 16
October 1815 to arrest Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout" and at his arrest he
was shot British also tried to arrest his brother Jan Bezuidenhout and at his
arrest he was also killed which led to the Slaughterer's Neck executions of
Cornelis Fredrik Bezuidenhout, his brother Jan Bezuidenhout and the executions

at Slaughterer's Neck led to the Great Trek of the Vootrekkers twenty years later where the Boer / Afrikaner nation brewed on this for twenty years and were concerned with the continuous Xhosa and Khoikhoi attacks that murdered and plundered and the far too many border wars."Voortrekker is a pioneer and it's a name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces)who migrated north into the interior of South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what became known as the Great Trek."]

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Gert Strydom

Sleep On Gently My Love

Sleep on gently my love
while the bastard wind
does rattle the windows,
does grab with dark fingers
while in my heart you are covered
and you are protected against the evil.

Do climb into my dreams
where we both walk along in an own small world,
in a paradise away from the real earth

and when the sun does drive away the banks of fog,
does shine blinding white against the sky
then the shutters do cover you still,
you are still sheltered
and can still sleep on further

and when you do awake
we will still lay anchored against each other
with your head against my breast
and we will be thirsty for each other
be thirsty for healing, courage and hope
from the fountain of love.

Gert Strydom

Sleep Softly, My Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Breyten Breytenbach)

For days the rain fall as if it will never stop,
the wind jerks constantly in rage on all of the windows,
it is shivering-cold and wet and clouds of fog hang low
and still the doves coo constantly for each other outside
but you beautiful Helen, are cosily against me,
where all of the days and nights together become rapture,
wonderful Daleen, from wounds and poison I am free
where nobody wants to tear us apart while the rain does pour down,
you can sleep with tranquillity, my love, the earth gulps up the water,
where seeds outside do rise and fruit-trees do flower,
where a person wants to stop at the beauty of maize-fields,
while most of the rivers again do flow strong to the sea
and you are in my heart, my words, my spirit and flesh,
it's you that I do adore who knows how to be my darling and my wife.

[Reference:"in julle hoede" by (in your carefulness)by Breyten Breytenbach.]

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Gert Strydom

Sleeplessness (Free Verse Sonnet)

When the turbines at Impala platinum
sing right through the night at a high tone,
at the goldmine it sounds as if a monster
or hellish lifts do groan under something,
the dull drums in the squatter-camp
and that whistle that does constantly shrill,
at the black newcomers in the neighbourhood the bull
that for hours is being slaughtered for a funeral,
the unholy tortured fearful bellowing
that never gets an end while they await some spirits to come,
when the train clatters and gives a long whistle
as if it's stuck somewhere and cannot continue
and they say that you do get used to all of this
in the elite residential aria of Petersfield extension one.

Gert Strydom

Slow Dancing

Your auburn hair flows
in a shining string
down your pearly white neck
and I smell the sweetness
of your warm breath
while I hold you
and we slow dance together.

There's joy in your eyes
as we move slowly
and your body
is hot and soft against mine
and somehow I can feel
your heart beating
as if we are part
of each other.

Gert Strydom

Slowly I Do Adjust To Hoe Life Now Is

Slowly I do adjust to hoe life now is
but you do still remain loving me
while I am becoming aware how things fit together
Slowly I do adjust to hoe life now is
while I am making new friendships
and far too quickly days, months, years do past
while slowly I do adjust to hoe life now is
but you do still remain loving me.

Gert Strydom

Slowly My Days Turn (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Slowly my days turn around and around
as the new mornings do come,
shuffling my poems do go to you
as without them I am wordless and dumbstruck
where with begging hands I wait upon you
for your sunny eyes and summer laughter,
I notice the lights of thousands of stars
burning brightly at night
decades do go to waste,
sometimes I see stars jump and shooting past
while I do write you back into my days
to know you in my happiness and sorrow
as love is a strange kind of thing
that let my heart sing to you.

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Gert Strydom

Small Blonde Curly Head

Where he walks happily in the garden
he watches a gecko big-eyed,
the entire world lies open before him,

his attention is attracted by 'n big koi-fish
that watches him with large eyes from the pond,
he watches a gecko big-eyed

and he tries to touch the fish and the water is cool
while he catches a small frog
that watches him with large eyes from the pond,

he presses the small animal against his cheek
and it jumps from his hands
while he catches a small frog

and the fishes are circling the pond
when he picks up another frog
and it jumps from his hands

and he is splashed dripping wet.
Where he walks happily in the garden
when he picks up another frog
the entire world lies open before him.

Gert Strydom

Small Boy

(after Marietjie van Wyk)

Like wild roots growing everywhere
his curly blonde hair is muddled
with his heavenly blue eyes gleaming like stars
while he gambols continually
runs around like the wind,
and is even more naughty than a gnome,
wants to ride upon the two big dogs,
will in a short while receive some kisses and hugs
from the women of the family.

[Reference: "Klein seuntjie" (Small boy) by Marietjie van Wyk.]

Gert Strydom

Smoke And Poker (Parody)

(with apology to Koos A. Kombuis)

in the lane of the light
we go into the location
and there create family
on beds with blankets without sheets.

[Rook en poker (Smoke and poker) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Snake

With sunrise many dismayed birds do wake me
where they do get me immediately at a window,
and through the window in the apple tree I notice the snake.
For it the birds are utterly angry and scared
and it's a grown ring-necked spitting cobra
and it has caught a small chicken
where with it, it hangs halfway out of the tree

and these things do bother me when they come to near to people,
at first I am angry and astonished by it
where for the swarm of birds it does hiss malicious
and it's age-old-evil like in the garden where it is busy cunningly,

far too near to the house where for every one it does hold danger,
I do think while I fold open the ELG twelve bore shotgun
and it is red LG cartridges that I do hold in my hand
than can stop great danger deadly
can halt a human, a warthog in its tracks

and to the snake that can spit and strike it makes a deadly impression
where the gun claps like thunder,
what is left of the snake drops from the tree
when grains of lead does tear it to bits

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Snare

Where guinea fowl
nest against the cornfields
and I sometimes saw pheasants,
just on the other side of the tributary,

day after day I found
snares made from fishing gut,
or wire
that was destroying constantly

and I was very angry
when one morning
I found a small duiker there,
with a leg
into which the wire were wringing
and I liberated that small antelope.

Gert Strydom

Snow Hangs Like Strings

(for Annelize)

Snow hangs like strin
on the branches in the cherry orchard
do gnash under your shoes
where you and your small daughter do smile beautiful,
are half frozen and as if you have lost your way.

Gert Strydom

Snow Storm

Snow was drifting down,
falling on people in the street
like soft powder from the sky.

A chilly wind blew
from the Drakensberg mountains
and around me it was white
and fresh.

Every thing was clear
and white clinging to shapes
that man put there.

Traffic lights brightly blinked yellow,
red and green
like one eyed Cyclops's topped in white

with cables feeding
thunder and lightning to them
and I felt like Zeus

while I walked away
into the new white world
and the white started to cover me.

Gert Strydom

Snow-White Of The Veldt

(after A.G. Visser)

On a winter afternoon it became icy cold
as Rachel and Hendrik was searching for a calf,
when the snow suddenly started falling around them
everything was white like a huge table-cloth.
Lost and half frozen
they could not find the way home,
with the night falling black
they were blinded by the wet winter wind.
She hollowed out an anthill,
with her naked body she diverted the wind,
with her clothes pressed into the hole to shelter her brother
and so the twelve year old girl Rachel died
was devoured by the icy cold and the winter weather
while she saved the life of her seven year old brother.

[References: "Sneeuwitjie" (Snow-white) by A.G. Visser. In the book "Sketse uit die Lewe van Mens en dier" (Sketches in the lives of humans and animals) by Eugène Marais the incident is noted of the twelve year old girl Rachel de Beer who saved the life of her seven year old brother near to the Drakensberg mountains.]

Gert Strydom

So Beautiful Were The Yesterdays

So beautiful were the yesterdays with you
that I can paint days, weeks and months,
everything is in my most lovely memories

and maybe a person cling to the times of tranquillity,
do etch love into the chambers of the heart.
So beautiful were the yesterdays with you

but now dark days do unfold
where thousands of people die from a virus.
Everything is in my most lovely memories

where those times I want to preserve in my thoughts
but all of life is uncertain and spoiled.
So beautiful were the yesterdays with you

but a lock-down now keeps you and me apart
and you are in my heart, soul and spirit, deeper than the skin,
everything is in my most lovely memories,

but now I can trust nothing and nobody
as from ineptness we have inherited death.
So beautiful were the yesterdays with you,
everything is in my most lovely memories.

Gert Strydom

So Its Been Twenty Years

So it's been twenty years,
Annelize, since we wed
and a time that no man
could ever forget.

Twenty years since
a young boy and girl
said high vows
before the world and God,
that couldn't even survive a full year.

What lightning forked between us
to shatter that which once was,
what scourge smote
from what hell
and burned and scorched us apart,
to this very day I do not know
and a time came
that you had to go to another.

Still feelings remain
and flames of lust
have the possibility
to burn high,
yet the truth remains
that I cannot trust you
ever again.

Even if our stars are still the same,
you have the image
set to that of Helen
and all of your heart
reaches out to me,
never ever will that romance
be able to endure.

Time still tell its truth
of a love that once was
and forever are gone

and deceit burnt the beauty and thrill away
and not even a great sage,
can turn those ashes
back to what it once was.

Gert Strydom

So Lovely On That Morn (Balassi Stanza)

So lovely on that morn
when our kisses were born,
beauty had joy forever
and somehow we did change,
but it did not feel strange,
I wish it to be never
much different from this
a fragile kind of kiss,
the flower wilts however.

Gert Strydom

So Many Times I Have Dwelt In A Place

(to Minette)

So many times I have dwelt in a place
where graves are in neat rows of black granite stone
and have been the lonely one
who is trying to trace some memories like
the last impressions on your face
but maybe eternally how life had been

but you are gone
and day-by-day,
even moment-by-moment this life moves on
from your last embrace
and I only survive by grace

while the breeze whispers in the Cyprus trees
and you are now so distant,
almost as if you have never been
as the bright girl with sky blue eyes and hair of gold
and next to your grave a wild flower blossoms with circling bees;
and it's the most beautiful thing that I have ever seen
while with brittle leave upon brittle leave I see it unfold.

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Gert Strydom

So Many Times That I Talk With You

So many times that I talk with You
there is a peace that comes into my heart,
its as if my worries suddenly do disappear
as if I am looking at the world with new eyes
and then I see every small flower
while my own fears are left to Your omnipotence.

Gert Strydom

So Much More Happy Than Before (Common Measure Octave)

So much more happy than before
with love you have made me,
as destiny had brought me loss
and you tranquillity,
forever you I do adore
and in your eyes I see
a lovely golden kind of gloss;
as true love has to be.

Gert Strydom

So That Meaning Gets An Own Reality

When words are superfluous,
loose their ability
to express love to you

I leave the translation
to my lips, mouth
and fingers

and when your artery
beats mysteriously against your neck
and I see dreams in your eyes

I suddenly know the meaning
of all the love cards in Cardies
how deep eye contact can bind,
that a person can find somebody special

at a place where you do not expect it,
how people can yearn for each other
when at strange places
they set eyes on each other
for the first time

and if life could be just as simple
words would be able to do miracles
could be equal to a kiss
would not disguise feelings or emotions
and would say the right things without fear.

When words steal meaning,
quenching that which is between us,
I say nothing while you are getting aroused
even less, when we are making love

so that meaning gets an own reality.

[Reference: Vertaling (Translation) by Johan Johl.]

So That You Do Become Much More Than Just A Maybe

My Lord, today I do realize
that sin is a living reality,
that iniquity is present in my whole being
as if a union with the darkness

is hardwired in me from the beginning.

I ask You to come and live in my heart
and that You do become a living reality to me,
that you show me Your presence in the small things
and that You do shower Your blessings over my life,

that I can see Your presence daily
so that You do become much more than just a maybe.

Gert Strydom

So Very Much

So very much I want to be with you
but with a virus days just run on,
while humanity fears something deadly

and to pieces I am longing for you,
while a lock-down do keep us apart
but with a virus days just run on

and you are very important and special to me,
where this thing makes life difficult,
while a lock-down do keep us apart,

while it touches all of humanity with death,
and no one knows how long it will last,
where this thing makes life difficult

and government prohibits travel and other freedoms,
where every day I just become more sorrowful
and no one knows how long it will last,

while God does still keep each person in his hands.
So very much I want to be with you
where every day I just become more sorrowful,
while humanity fears something deadly.

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Gert Strydom

So Very Much (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

So very much I do long to see you again
to daily live with you in times of gladness
to experience times of sunshine and rain
to have you in all of life's fun and madness

where as my love you are closer than kin
where truly you do me day after day adore
do know me thoroughly and even my sin,
and I do want to love you as no one before

with you want to turn the world upside down
to paint it any colour that you do want it to be,
once again I want to make you my very own
hear your laughter and see you truly happy.

Here I am with my heart and soul at your feet
as you are beautiful in womanhood and sweet.

Gert Strydom

So Very Subtle And Cunningly (Italian Sonnet)

So very subtle and so very cunningly
with eyes shining like that of a sprite
you crept into my heart during the night,
your smile, your eyes and personality,

your pure body enchanting came to me
and by gentle loving and not by might,
you did caused me to fall in love to write
of a creature that is mine, who is free

an angelic being that loves me more
with flaming passion full of blazing fire,
who makes me wanting to live and to die
as my heart is smitten just as before
and when at night we together do retire
I am blessed as in my arms you lie.

Gert Strydom

Soft Like The Fog

Soft like the fog that rises
at the old dam at the fountains,
when early in the morning bloody-red
the sun does catch the eye,
when the first weavers do show their heads,
there is a kind of tranquillity that unexpectedly does hang
and even if a person is broken or hurt

the first impressions of the morning
do come as a full reality,
when nature is viewed in her glory,
to the smallest detail
and somewhere each person does fit into the story of life
like the pieces of a puzzle.

Gert Strydom

Soirée At The Hap

Mandi is playing the piano,
a light breeze sways table cloths
and softly Piet, Jan and André laugh
before one of the poets realize

that he has to read his poems next
while a spotlight comes on
and Ian somewhat hoarsely talks
at the opening on the small stage.

Glittering are glasses full of wine
in the romantic soft light
of many small candles
and I enjoy poem after poem.

A guest artist sings an old song
about Lilly Marlene losing her lover
that brings some memories back
and her voice is intimate, soft and pretty on the ear.

[Reference: HAP: The Home of Afrikaans Poetry in Capital Park, Pretoria.]

Gert Strydom

Soldier Of Yesterday (Free Verse Sonnet)

Here I am back from the hell of the army and war
and my voice stutters of AK-47 fire,
while my face do tell about thousands of dead enemies,
RPG-7 rocket-launchers comes with each lifeless glance,
landmines walk along with every step that I do take,
BM-21 Stalin-organs paint every night bloody red with their flames
where I still do fall to find cover when a door is slammed,
in vain try to be hidden beyond every tree,
see how black blood does become when it does somewhere coagulate
when death comes quickly and unexpectedly
and my hands are full of the blood of others where I have been exposed,
where I cannot disguise the price that have been paid in war
and I wonder why I had to stand against the enemy,
while slowly but surely my country is going to hell?

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Gert Strydom

Soldier's Faces

Maybe I saw the faces
of a thousand soldiers
while they prepared for war
and some had grim determination, even dedication
to get ready, cleaning rifles, checking
what we carried along

and some acted as if they didn't care,
others were clowning around
making funny faces
and then there was me
and till today I wonder what
other soldiers saw
when they looked at me

or was the lines already chiselled in
that killing leaves on the soul
or were my eyes just bare and blank
or were they raging with inner fire?

Who will ever know?

Gert Strydom

Solitude

May he that lives alone
and in loneliness
and do every thing for himself,
have peace
and get all the blessings of it
and enjoy
to stay on his own.

Set me free from solitude
for just once,
we have got this life
to do something with
and to make something special
out of it all.

Let me know how others feel,
let me really love somebody
and get involved,
with things that bring joy to others
and let me make a difference
and give me a place
where others wants to be
to be friends with me.

Gert Strydom

Some Call It Accidents, But I Call It Torments

Some call it accidents,
but I call it torments
which usually occurred
when the boys didn't listen
or acted on their own initiative

and the two boys
while growing up
knew how to do
it to themselves
and then to me
and their shocked mother in turn.

Driving slam into a house wall
at full speed on a bicycle
without braking
almost cracked the skull
of one of them
and I had to rush
him to the hospital,
where he got it cleaned,
some injections and stitches.

Ramping a bicycle
into the swimming pool
and almost breaking a neck
while bumping a head
against the side of the pool
had me patching a head wound.

Against instructions going to the river
and walking on pipes,
falling in
and almost drowning
while breaking a leg
had me rush him to the nearest doctor.

Petting a squirrel
which looked tame as a house cat

while visiting the Kruger national park
almost gave him rabies,
nearly severed his finger
and luckily there was a clinic nearby
where they helped
while dosing out a big scolding
to both the child and us.

Removing the fall mats
around the trampoline
at a resort
and landing
on the concrete next to it,
gashed the boy's head
with a deep cut
which happened on a Sunday

and when I found
the house of the only doctor there
I had to drive to the local airport
and ask the tower
to call him down
where his was flying
his own plane
and he stopped the bleeding,
administered injections,
applied stitches,
prescribed some pain killers
and gave one hell
of a big bill.

Gert Strydom

Some Girls Like Roses Or Carnations

Some girls like roses or carnations
in bunches in glass vases,
others love marigolds
and sometimes one on a pillow
with a letter or card
speaks to a girls heart,
burning candles and dimmed lights
sometimes helps to set the scene
and soft soothing music has its magic too

but none are like you
who values everything
and your smile lights the night
like a rising sun
and baby any time with you
is a lot of fun.

Gert Strydom

Some Happy People Take Holidays (Trijan Refrain)

Some happy people take holidays
and its when you and I
love to dine out, to dance and play
while summer days rush by
and with delight moments drag on
and in a flash the night is gone
and with delight,
and with delight
to me you are the only one.

Some happy people take holidays
couples whose love is strong
bathe for hours in the sun's hot rays,
together they belong
with endless love, drawing them near
when they act without any fear
with endless love,
with endless love,
and jubilant they do appear

Some happy people take holidays
while some are separate
and are set with life in their ways
but do not love or hate
to me you are like a goddess
in your new lovely rose-red dress
to me you are,
to me you are
the one that I want to caress.

Gert Strydom

Some Mornings

Some mornings I hear doves coming down fluttering outside
and its as if long moments are lingering between us,
it's as if sleep is stretching out
and I am lost in each breath and the contours of your body.

Gert Strydom

Some Mornings [2]

Some mornings I hear doves coming down fluttering outside
and its as if long moments are lingering between us,
it's as if sleep is stretching out
and I am lost in each breath and the contours of your body.

Gert Strydom

Some Of My Fellow Soldiers Look At Photos (Free Verse Sonnet)

Some of my fellow soldiers look at photos of their girlfriends,
two read from their Bibles which are opened at the psalms,
some are cleaning their assault-rifles and I my LMG,
a radio is tuned to Springbok Radio and plays requests,
several parcels from home and girlfriends are opened,
some soldiers stand around a private with a larger box
from which he takes sticks of salty tasty Kudu-biltong
and he throws several of them to each one of us,
the day's action from which we did return to camp is forgotten,
as there are smiles on almost every young sunburnt face
but away in the corner a private takes a blue letter from an envelope,
I see the kind of pain that only heartache does bring
and its time for the lights to be turned out,
sleep evades me while in the darkness I hear people snore.

[Poet's note: A LMG refers to a light machine gun.]

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Gert Strydom

Some Of The Best Things In Life

come from their own accord and are free
like the sun hanging in the blue sky
and so it's also with you
who have grown fixed to my life
and without being asked without me knowing
you do carry me in prayers to God.

Gert Strydom

Some Seek Me And Others Curse Me

The priest and the poet
and the terminally ill,
all know me.

The soldier and the general,
both obey me
and serve as my minions.

To some I am the end
of all knowing
and to others,
a time of peace and rest

Some seek me
and others curse me
and I visit heroes and fools
and the rich and the poor
and time or destiny
brings me to everyone.

Gert Strydom

Some Silence Hanged Wordless Between Us

Next to a silver river, a clear stream
you were dreaming against a willow,
with a small smile, silent and satisfied
as if something great happened in the past
when your bright eyes suddenly caught mine,
words hang silently between us.

In your eyes light sparkled like stars,
a leave fell and glided away
when suddenly a plover called from the marsh
with others answering from far away
when your bright eyes suddenly caught mine,
words hang silently between us.

Where the water flows endlessly
you got quickly to your feet,
your glance went deep into my soul
and we could not evade our feelings,
when your bright eyes suddenly caught mine,
words hang silently between us.

Gert Strydom

Some Thoughts Of Penelope

Coming over the raging seas
Odysseus is the only one for whom I long
with his hair shining silver in the sun
and although sometimes in memories
he comes back to me
from the longing, the yearning for him
I am never free

and I spin my weaving wheel
while I am thinking he loves me,
or maybe he loves me not
and it's all the thread that I have got
that I again unravel every day
while I am waiting for him to come,
are wondering if he remembers me?

Through all the wooing to him I stay true
wishing that on this very day
my husband would come out of the blue.

Gert Strydom

Some Thoughts Of You Constantly Do Remain (Novelinee)

about happy moments we both have known
as if I do long to see you again
and at the times that I am on my own
like secret perfume they keep lingering
with a own kind of sincere perfection
whenever I am away travelling
and then we still have the sweet connection
that only comes with a true affection.

Gert Strydom

Some Times

Some times I wonder if God only knows
how I struggle in the depth of my throes
to find the right clear words to express love to you
while I do take destiny's blows

and even if I say with all humility
that you are far more than dear to me
my words are totally stripped
as if from all meaning free

and yet I do still try to write
as to express my true heart I might.

Gert Strydom

Some Women

Some women
can not pass. a shop,
without gazing at the displays
and hanging around
to fit and try everything
and not to buy
a thing.

Some women
treat shop assistants
as their friends
and walk around
talking to everyone.

Most men
buy what they need
and get the hell
out of there.

Gert Strydom

Somehow Today I Caught Your Glance

Helen of Troy's beauty held some men in a trance;
torn from her lover Sappho jumped from a cliff to die;
somehow today I caught your glance
and I wonder if it was hello or goodbye?

Gert Strydom

Something About A Bird In A Tree

I. Solitary

There's a solitary bird
sitting in the berry tree
as if watching me

and every now and then
pecks a few, before looking again

and it comes daily
and maybe now
sees me as its friend

and I watch it eating
with the sun glittering
on its green feathers
and its long tail
swishing up and down

and when I look away
I do hear it calling, calling
as if trying to attract my attention

as if seeing me looking
holds something of company for it.

II. The going

Why did you not make me aware
that never again
I would see you there
in the berry tree
from early morning
singing from dawn to dusk.

You were chirping and indifferently fluttering
like every other day
and I did not realise

that you were going away
with the setting sun

and now any movement
in the berry tree
catches me to see you,
but only to realize
that a sparrow
is also hungry.

Gert Strydom

Something About Spring

Spring is something amazing
when flowers suddenly appear
in colour upon colour on branches

when everything comes to life overnight,
in the joy of existing
coming to full maturity.

Gert Strydom

Something About The Girl Called Spring (Sonnet Corona)

I

Just after winter you are back enchanting
with unfolding blossoms on hot sunny days
playing your roles in all your beautiful ways
as if every day is a grand setting

with colours and smells alluring, inviting
man, animals and insects to stray
in orchards, gardens and in the veldt to play
wherever you may be wandering

while insects and birds sing sweet melodies,
even the breeze is charming
in the season that you bequeath
that becomes a time of sweet memories
while everywhere life is swarming;
flowers are as fragrant as your breath.

II

Flowers are as fragrant as your breath
and outside the sun does shine
where flowers and insects ephemeral awaits death
living just as small specs of the will divine.

There are tales about flowers and butterflies that you tell,
about all the minute things, before the first shadows fall
but you have to mention the Creator as well
who fathered everything, created all.

His gardens fill the earth in sheer exuberance
while in summer and spring, in daylight hours
bees, butterflies and birds dance
around the fragrant flowers

in their winged flight,
from early twilight.

III

From early twilight
you are everywhere sent
until the dark night
for the whole world's enjoyment

and flowering fair
you dance along
without a moment to spare
singing a cheerful song

as a seasonal creature being sweet,
dressed very serene
dancing with fairly like feet
as the essence of the productive machine

and nature everywhere tells,
spring is awaking in smells.

IV

Spring is awaking in smells
with birds singing
rising from the valleys and dells,
sounding in joy about the beauty she is bringing

even every bird, deer and bee,
as the blessings have come
as a time of tranquillity to some
until all of nature is happy and free

when love is finally finding its home
and spring is especially dear to me,
in the air above there's a vibrant hue
as if it's a living kind of blue

specked with flocks of birds in their flight;
spring is dressed in white.

V

Spring is dressed in white,
dressed for her wedding day,
when she blesses wherever her flowers stray
in celebration in every day and night

while she dances from early morning light
inviting all her guests, the birds and bees to play,
while she lingers everything is gay
in colours jubilant and bright

with butterflies filling the air,
humming yellow and black bees,
even joined by flying birds that in joy sing
roaming among the almond, peach and pear,
flying to and fro from the blue gum trees
in the unfolding of spring.

VI

In the unfolding of spring
it came to my mind
the words, the deeds and every thing,
of the troublesome kind

that man does to his fellow human beings
as if he is inclined
to act only to his own interest without any feelings,
as if so designed

but around me the new awakenings
are totally unrestrained
in days and evenings
with beauty that is gained

while everywhere flowers are rising,

I long for an eternal spring's blessing.

VII

I long for an eternal spring's blessing
as if the Godly plan
in a place where everything is living,
is still in effect for man,

where the songs of birds through the hubbub ring
as if the singing birds are right here
bringing pleasure to everything
making existing so sweet and sincere,

as if from the very beginning
the Lord God was near,
even before human beings were sinning
when these joyous songs fall on the ear:

.
with all of the love that God is granting,
just after winter you are back enchanting.

Gert Strydom

Something About The Women In The Genealogical Register Of Jesus Christ

(after P.W. Buys)

Right next to the Timna road she is in a veil
where small Tamar alluring waits on Juda,
Salmon could not refuse the slut Rahab
when she sneaked to him in the dark night.
Boas was well-off and a big flatterer
when for days he secretly watched Ruth.
I can have contempt on these women as a leader
and still I wonder how He regards me with esteem?

[Reference: "Stamboek" (Genealogical register) by P.W. Buys.]

Gert Strydom

Something About Winter

Icily the winter touches me,
some trees are stripped like skeletons
as if death touches everything.

Gert Strydom

Something Greater

I saw soldiers in pain,
some shot up, soldiers wounded
and some bandaged
doing their duty
and some even going insane,

I saw heroic men
going far beyond duty
not thinking of themselves
and more about the welfare of others
and some of them were doing exceptional things.

They were men who lived as if today
was the only day and if tomorrow
would never come
and all of them to me
were the greatest of men,

but then there were bullets holes
even on the church wall
like the blasphemies of man

chipping away at the greater good
where a minister of God stood
with a bible in his hand

and that holy man had something
clinging to him, as if God Himself
surrounded, embraced him
with utter goodliness, being humble and sincere
and that was something greater
than any man I ever had met.

Gert Strydom

Something Of Innocence Was Lost

I knew Shell-shocked troops,
who were battle hardened
and who struggled between
the sense and senselessness of killing.

Something of innocence was lost
and some brutal thing was gained
and the fatality of life remained

Gert Strydom

Something On Love (Cavatina)

The spirit and soul tells the human being
reach valiantly,
for someone else, for something that's much more,
apart from me,
that selfless becomes part of my own whole
and the body
reacts chemical, life becomes a song,
while feelings do bind us uttermost strong.

Gert Strydom

Something Serene

Where you lie beside me
your face reflects peace
and there's holiness around you
as if something serene
has folded its wings over you.

I glimpse but cannot see any shadow
that it makes
upon the wall
and my eyes do not behold
the angel which
unfolds its wings
to cover you,
yet it's surely there.

In the silence
of the stretching dark
I pray a prayer
to Him from whom
all angels of light come
to draw a wall of fire
around us
and slowly and surely
sleep creeps in
and I glide away
to the next day.

Gert Strydom

Something So Special As This Is Rare (Sicilian Sonnet)

From the first moment you did me beguile,
it was as if you brought happiness in despair,
still your perfume hangs in mind's air.
Just give me a kiss and a sweet smile,

it do linger for more than just a while
as something so special as this is rare
where for me you do sincerely care
and to you I will run mile after mile.

I gave you my heart from the very start
as if always together we were meant to be
but sometimes we from each other do part
although our feelings do run to eternity
and you are present in my thoughts and art
as if constantly you are present here with me.

Gert Strydom

Something That No Words Can Explain (Quintella)

Your cries have got pleasure, not pain
that rips right through the sheer silence
in a joyful experience
and to me our passion is plain
something that no words can explain.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes

Sometimes I am caught in the sheer depths of your eyes

Gert Strydom

Sometimes [2]

Sometimes when you smile
life changes for a short while
and I am thrilled to be in your company
to see the world the way that you see it.

Sometimes when you sleep
little furrows creep
all across your face
and you are somewhere in a different place,
but still there's a kind of amazing grace
in the comfort that your hand clings to mine
while maybe to you the TV is only a flashing line

and then there are sometimes moments that last
that lingers on and on or at times flies past,
when our lips do meet
and in a way you make me feel complete.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes A Bit Defective

I love you,
far very far
past my heart

but usually
I am at another place
and distance tears your eyes
away from mine
and your voice splinters
away in pieces

and longing makes our relationship
sometimes a bit defective
but in thoughts

I am right next to you
and keep remembering
yesterday and the day before.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes During The Hours Of Darkness

Sometimes when during the hours of darkness
I miss you severely
the day lingers like the summer sun
in the glow of a sweet memory.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes For Sport (Terzanelle)

Sometimes for sport men snare great fish from the deep
like human kings
through wide seas they sweep

seeing huge birds with white wings
and indolent on a cruise
like human kings

they brag about every scratch and bruise
drink their full of whiskey and wine
and indolent on a cruise

are like heroes to themselves without confine
and without care
drink their full of whiskey and wine

and with charm and money they ensnare.
Sometimes for sport men snare great fish from the deep
and without care
through wide seas they sweep.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Cannot Cry

Sometimes I cannot cry
while others round me weep
and sometimes life claims
that a man must be a rock
in times of sorrow,
which doesn't say
that I do not feel
and experience emotions.

At times the silent understanding
is a way of going on
and silence a way of crying.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Ask

Sometimes I do ask for a bit of mercy from you,
to hesitate when you do not immediately understand
and to keep at mind
that wherever life goes

I do love you out of the depth of my heart.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Pray (Rubliw)

At times
I do wonder
if You do hear my words
or do give attention to them
as constantly You are in the shadow
where I do see nothing of You
but small things do happen
and You are here
nearby.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Remember (Free Verse Sonnet)

Sometimes I do remember how your smile lies in my heart,
when I notice the marks of years and tracks of laughter around your eyes,
when an expression says far more than mere words
and sometimes the way that life is makes you sad.
Sometimes it's as if your tears fall like the yellow-peach-rain
when you do experience both joy and sadness day upon day
where in this life you are everything and all,
and I do want to protect you against the assaults of life
but sometimes your lips are fountain-water-sweet
in the dry winter-season of my heart,
when you do greet me with the joy of spring,
do bring great happiness in the days of sorrow
and only the loveliness of you remain in my memories,
as you are to me much more than an exceptional woman.

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Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Suspect

Sometimes I do suspect
that our love is much more
than chemical urges in the blood.
Sometimes I do suspect
that life goes on
up to a single event;
Sometimes I do suspect
that our love is much more...

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Wonder

Sometimes I do wonder
where the end of things do begin,
when it feels as if the darkness
constantly does win over the light,

as if we are caught a great labyrinth
and only do exist for a short while,
do not really know a
bout the real meaning of existence,

when tears do already flow
when in happiness we do love each other
and somewhere in all of this
from the very beginning

destruction is sneaking in
unseen and menacing
to suddenly like a lightning bolt
from a blue sky
strike at a time

and yet there are people
who constantly lead a full life
and always destiny
passes them by

but when I do look at the bigger picture
I know that at a time destiny does strike at everyone
that class, culture and skin colour
has no impact on it,
bad things do happen to everyone

and then I do come to the realization
whatever does happen in this evil world
God Himself does stand in the shadow
where as my protector He does act.

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Sometimes I Do Wonder If You Do Know The Morse Code

Sometimes I do wonder if you do know the Morse code,
that my thought, my gestures
and even the meaning between the lines
that my words do broadcast
and if you do wrap it
like clothing around your body?

If the dashes in my glances,
the dots of my voice
do make sounds on your body?

Or are you too much bonded to this world
to be aware of anything

and is it first when we do touch each other
that you are aware
of how much I do really love you?

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Do Wonder If You Do Know The Morse Code (2)

Sometimes I do wonder if you do know the Morse code,
that my thought, my gestures
and even the meaning between the lines
that my words do broadcast
and if you do wrap it
like clothing around your body?

If the dashes in my glances,
the dots of my voice
do make sounds on your body?

Or are you too much bonded to this world
to be aware of anything

and is it first when we do touch each other
that you are aware
of how much I do really love you?

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Imagine

Sometimes I imagine
that my D Jacobs painting
of a red brown earth road
that in winter
runs through the yellow green veldt
past a few oak and blue gum trees
to the purple blue mountains
in the distance
is a Pierneef,

but what draws it nearer to me,
is that I almost feel
the sand beneath me feet,
can smell the tussocks of grass,
try to catch the shades of the trees
one by one,
see a graveyard
in the distance next to
a few bushes,
look at the bright blue sky
and get emotionally involved
with this painting
as it brings my childhood days
back to me
and it jumps right
into my heart.

[Reference: Painting by D Jacobs that belongs to me.]

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Just Want To Be With You

and I want to stand close to you,
want to break your mouth open with my tongue
but days just go on
and sometimes a kind of deep fear comes
that everything is just passing
and far too quickly week upon week goes by
while the hour-work keeps ticking.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Long

Sometimes I long for you to kiss me
and I yearn for your love;
this old life just swishes me on
and the whole time I have to leave, day upon day
to explore a new world,
but I want you with me and sometimes I long that you
are near to me and sometimes I want to die,
sometimes I long that you...

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Loose My Words

Sometimes I loose my words,
sometimes they just disappear
while we walk on the beach
see gulls flying away, flying off

but there is something in the silence
of touching mouths, in meandering steps
that leaves lonely tracks at the sea,
while words become more yours

are like morning glories waiting,
climbing over walls growing,
constantly growing and stretching
but always waiting on the summer sun

while my silences get some own distinct words
as you understand me to the depths of my soul
as your are filling every part of my life and body
but I want you to hear my voice in bliss and pain.

Troubled winds, of past heartaches, of a past war
still blows right through me, while you bring
a new kind of hope, new dreams and joy to life
and a new understanding of how things can be

and I want you to be my companion in everything,
to stay with me while the storm still roars in my life
to be constantly the only one that really knows me,
to follow me on every step in this ravaged world

but you constantly are in everything,
filling my life, my body, my mind
with your kisses, a kind of strange bliss
and that is the way that everything it is.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Remember A House

Sometimes I remember a house
in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria
and there at a time I was with you

and were you aware of my feelings then?
I remember the mystery of your humanity and that house
in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria

and the electric blanket and I was there more than at home
and I was under your spell, from the way that you looked at me.
I remember the mystery of your humanity and that house

and moment after moment
you were with me
and I was under your spell, from the way that you looked at me

and that place I cannot get out of my thoughts
Sometimes I remember a house
where you were with me
and I at a time with you.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Take Your Soft Hand

Sometimes I take your soft hand
and feel how it glows with heat

and sometimes your eyes gleam
on the other side of the table when tears flow

and sometimes emotions burn in them
and our words are cut off bluntly

but sometimes kisses fall like waves on the continent
of your body when I am rowing to a place of rescue

and sometimes I am totally tired
but still you remain my only one.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Want To Become A Part Of You

and pour my body, soul and spirit into you
and for more than a thousand times
let the blissful moments linger.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Want To Flee From Abstract Things Like Love

When deep in the shadows
of the dark night I do drown,
there are lights that here and there do wink
and I do know a kind of unknown fear
that it will never be as now again with us;
above me some stars shine brightly,
in the distance people are frolicking
and I wonder if I will again find love in your gaze?
Sometimes I want to flee from abstract things like love,
and live for the moment that I am experiencing
but still you stay here right against me;
people bring me back to you,
and this keeps me from lurching unexpectedly into things
and my whole life, my very best you do remain.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Want To Know The Reasons Why From You

Sometimes I want to know the reasons why from You
when it feels as if You are forgetting me in Your ultimate plan
and there is no deliverance or light that I do see,
when it feels as if everything is resting on a big perchance

and maybe people did feel like this from the time of Adam
while time was running away from them
and when I do fall I ask You for new hope,
that You do continue to walk ahead on the road of life

and my Lord, when it goes difficult on some days
show me where You are still standing next to me.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Wonder

Sometimes I wonder
why people doubt Your Godliness
and without modesty
they mean that there are borders
to you omnipotence, as if lenses
of their telescopes can look
at Your real existence
and they find nothing to suit their wishes.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Wonder If We Were In Love?

Sometimes I wonder if we were in love
when I broke her heart,
as we did not held hands, did not even kiss
although our friendship had a kind of tenderness

and I had given her a gift of a silver pen,
while maybe far too slowly
things between us did happen
and in some obscure way she was dear to me

and I wonder what kind of betrayal it was
when I did with another girl a relationship start
which brought what was between us to an end
and she wasn't any longer my friend.

If it had been love, maybe it was only starting,
was still an innocent kind of thing,
but how deep her feelings did go
I never really will know.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Wonder If You Know The Morse Code

Sometimes I wonder if you know the Morse code
of my thoughts, my gestures
and even the meaning between the lines
that my words do broadcast
and if you carry it
as the clothing around your body?

Or if the dashes in my glances,
the dots of the times that I touch you
do leave sounds on your body?

Or are you too caught up in this old world
to notice anything

and is only when we do touch each other
that you are aware
of how much I really do love you?

Gert Strydom

Sometimes I Yearn For You To Be Near

Sometimes I yearn for you to be near
and I want to find a time, maybe turn the years back
to draw you into my arms,
to look at you with the knowledge
that you are mine
and I wonder about the thoughts
that constantly goes through your mind,
about the things that make you both sad and glad
and somewhere in the distance a star is beckoning
as if it's a silent guiding light in the darkness of the night

Gert Strydom

Sometimes In Life There Is A Moment

Sometimes in life there is a moment,
a single hour
that is sanctified and holy, where time stops,
that lasts eternally
where husband and wife bonds intimately with each other
with pure fire
and nothing then stays as it had been before
when hands, bodies reach out for each other.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It Feels

Sometimes it feels as if precious moments
are stretched out into pieces of eternity,
as if a sunset, a smile, even sexual ecstasy
reaches out to something greater

as if at times
we are more than only humans,
as if our love
can bind much stronger than death

but we are actually only like travellers
who spend a time in this world,
just visiting this earth
before everything ends,

as we are programmed from scratch
to decay with time
and at a time grey hairs appear,
when the beauty of maturity starts to disappear.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It Feels As A Eternity Back

Sometimes it feels as a eternity back
that we both sat on the porch,
hearing the birds calling at dusk to each other
and sometimes I turn my back

on memories, on every small report
that recalls our being together,
even when I call upon God,
when I see the swallows frolicking in flight

but there are times that I wish
that our lives were much different,
that you still loved me
but we are living separate lives
where yours fit neatly into your ideals
and mine time and again have got to start from scratch.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It Feels As If I Am Not Really Living

Sometimes it feels
as if I am not really living,
as I am just marking time,
being trapped in a body

where no choices
but destiny determines the way
that my life is going,
while I am not fit
to become part of the social structure
where everyone else is losing individuality

and by design I am
not made to cringe, to be servile
or obsequious
and to no man I bend my knees.

I do not fit in the social mould
where language, culture, heritage
and religion has to be sacrificed
for what is seen as the common good

and no one will force me into conformity.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It Feels As If I Will Never Find You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Sometimes it feels as if I will never find you
when the morning gleams bloody red
as if that which is between us does blow away like leaves in the wind
but still you do remain climbing back into my heart
although the sun sometimes burns merciless,
where I see it cloudless sometimes steel-blue,
you constantly take my hand when I fall in life,
when the future unfolds inescapable by destiny
and day after day we follow the sun's triumph
where every morning just brings new vistas,
where yesterday and that which we still could
does fall away and new things do jump into our lives
but you do constantly remain my new hope,
the one to whom I walk day after day.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It's As If My Childhood Days Comes Back

Sometimes it's as if my childhood days
comes back to me unexpectedly
where the sheer beauty of things astounds me,
water that lies glistening in a river
how water reflects my face and in wrinkles disguises it

the smell of wild flowers hanging sweet in the air
and the colour and texture catching me
as if I am walking in an overgrown garden
full of singing birds

where I see clouds spread like flakes
covering the bright blue in little pieces
with spots of blue between the white
and it is as if for short moments I can return

to a place and time
full of joy and jolliness

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It's As If The Sleep Washes Like A River Over Me

Sometimes it's as if the sleep washes like a river over me
and then I have got this lost fear
when I feel you breathing against my neck
that this bliss will be our last

and the whole house is dark and silent
while my thoughts wander off to where they want
and when you suddenly turn around
I am afraid to share my thoughts with you

and then I lie still without a movement,
to have some more wonderful moments with you.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It's As If I Do Imagine That You Are Near To Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

Sometimes it's as if I do imagine that you are near to me,
I do want to pack my things for more than just a weekend,
do hear your high-heels joyfully walking up and down,
as if together we share the lock-down,
or I smell fragrances of sugar and cinnamon
as if you are baking pancakes
but it's alone that the sun does daily set
while in thoughts I do steal mere moments,
constantly do pray that the virus should be gone,
while I do long to a better time,
in vain do look towards the street
and at night only the amber-light shines outside,
in the mornings the day does look miserable,
while the presence of death is emphasized.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Its As If My Childhood Days Come Back

Sometimes it's as if my childhood days come back
and it's as if the colour and texture catches me
when I am astounded by the sheer beauty of things,

by the smell of flowers hanging in the air,
where I see clouds as flakes,
and it's as if the colour and texture catches me

that is spread over the bright blue in small pieces
that brings me back to another time and place
where I see clouds as flakes,

and I am again full of joy and happiness
and the whole sky is full with specks between the blue and white
that brings me back to another time and place,

to the memories of my childhood days
when I see the summer sun rising golden
and the whole sky is full with specks between the blue and white

and the birds and insects are of the loveliness some proof.
Sometimes it's as if my childhood days come back
when I see the summer sun rising golden,
when I am astounded by the sheer beauty of things.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes It's As If Stars Spark In Your Eyes

Sometimes it's as if stars spark in your eyes
as if they glitter green,
sometimes there is something true and pure,
something more whiter than snow,
and I feel drunk in your presence
and sometimes I feel as old as ages
but you make me young again,
while your lips brings something sweet
to the bitterness of life.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Its If My Best Friends

Sometimes its if my best friends
and even my wife
are set on another place
and do not hear a word I say

but constantly I do know
that You are interested
in everything that does bother me
and in the things that bring meaning
and does excite me.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Love Remains But A Mystery (Novelinee)

Sometimes love remains but a mystery,
I cannot figure the ways of love out
when I think that she does truly love me,
then she gives me the greatest kind of doubt
but when another girl I want to woo
she simply tries to steal my heart again
and are telling me that her love is true
or she tries to cause me some kind of pain
or let her wet tears on me fall like rain.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes My Life Feels Somewhere Between Heaven And Hell

Sometimes my life feels
somewhere between heaven and hell,
where I at times
fry like a palm tree in the sun
or like a pine
is frozen by the winter
and every time I yearn for the other side
and this is also how it is with my loving
and sometimes I wonder with whom and where
true love lies,
if I really want it
or rather want to stay lonely?

[Reference: Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

Sometimes The Things I Do (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

Sometimes the things I do and say
is like a sword a that I do sway
and it's not mine to take up
but yet I do it day by day.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes There Is A Small Change

Sometimes there is a small change
of brown to green
that your eyes make, when I touch you
and when I kiss you
they sometimes get the sun's sparkle of gold
and what you do
to make them get different colours
stays 'n big secret that neither of us know.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Thunder Draws

Sometimes thunder draws blue white lines at night,
rain falls pouring
and later when the clouds open
God displays His stars.

They shine secretly,
bringing light to a dark universe,
sparkle as if they are beacons
from which the light falls,

as if they are indicating
the way back to home.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes When I Kneel Down In Prayer

Sometimes when I kneel down for prayer in church
she comes with small tottering steps,
folds her two small arms around me
and for moments the prayer of the chief elder ends
when with Gert, Gert she gives a small cry
and her joy cuts through heart and soul.

It's with a pouted mouth that she sometimes kisses,
looking up with small angelic eyes into mine
when maybe even in heaven there is silence
and for moments I am amazed
when her hand reaches out to mine,
as a small girl sometimes do.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes When The Clouds Draw Tightly Together

time slips past me
and you wander into my thoughts
and then I want to be with you
and cover your mouth with kisses
and then you are right against me
and I am on very deep ground
when we do discover something secret.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes You Embrace Me With Words

Sometimes you embrace me with words
and it's the only thing that I have
although some of your paintings
hang as companions
here on my wall,
while days and nights
are stretching out long
while I am here and you there
and I know
how much I am missing you.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes You Seem Collected And Meek (Wreathed Octave)

Sometimes you seem collected and meek,
later in the week suddenly you do change
and life feels strange while I do seek
you out. With cheek, my life you do rearrange,
as we do exchange kisses and embraces,
draw funny faces, are in bliss again and again,
and without pain my heart constantly races,
as I skip to new paces and our love does remain.

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Gert Strydom

Sometimes You Slept

Sometimes you slept with your head
right on my chest,
with your soft hairs
spread like a patch of grass
or auburn flowers

and I could see
your tender nostrils shivering
and felt your heart beating
while you clasped
my right hand
on your breast
against a big
half aroused nipple

and the whiteness of your skin,
the soft perplexity of it
the warm patch of your womanhood,
the frailty of you against me
made me feel
as if I could shelter you
against the thundering
waves of life
that was knocking against us.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes You Turn My World Upside Down

when you bring change to the routine of life
and sometimes we do together laugh and believe
that good things jump into our way.

Sometimes you do smile and I do wonder
where you get such happiness
and sometimes I am blinded
when I find signs of love in your eyes.

Sometimes I want to hide you in my arms
when on your birthday ill-mannered people make you cry
and like a scared child
you long for better, more beautiful and wonderful days.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Your Arrival Is Sparkling

Sometimes your arrival is sparkling and catching,
sometimes the sparks of thunder smoulder in your eyes
and I want to run away like a rock-rabbit in the hills
but still I want to believe in the depth of our love

and when things between us are in disorder
then a struggle rages between you and me
and we say and do things that do hurt
and sometimes leave scars that stay

but even if there comes silences that are explosive
much more remains between us
and always we do find a much deeper meaning
when overwhelming wild our hearts do beat

when we become much more than only flesh
and our emotions, even our humanity are poured into each other.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Your Eyes Are Dark Brown And Full Of Sunshine

when the tomorrows feel like only a rumour,
sometimes it's as if my yesterdays disappear into their depths.
Sometimes your eyes are dark brown and full of sunshine
where you bring joy to a world full of pain
but your humanity brings me back to the here and now.
Sometimes your eyes are dark brown and full of sunshine
when the tomorrows feel like only a rumour...

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Your Eyes Can Display Your Feelings

Sometimes your eyes can display your feelings,
sometimes a moment is balanced in silence,
when something unseen speaks.

Sometimes your eyes can display your feelings
when love accepts the smallest thing as being right,
when we learn deeper things from that, which is unsaid,
Sometimes your eyes can display your feelings,
sometimes a moment is balanced in silence.

Gert Strydom

Sometimes Your Eyes Do Catch Mine

Sometimes just for a moment your eyes do catch mine
and I am lost in their depths.

Sometimes I see small bird tracks
from the times that you do laugh
and sometimes you do smile brightly
like the summer sun.

Sometimes your eyes are turbid
as if the season of winter
does continue forever sadly,
as if the night will never again past

and sometimes your eyes are full of hope
like a new spring that does arrive
and you do change me
to also notice the bright light

in everything that has been, that is
and that has still got to happen.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere Between Here And Now

Somewhere between here and now
and tomorrow that are still hours
far away,
I long for you.

Tonight I crave
to read the ecstasy
in your golden eyes and exclamations,
but the night stretches out long
and tonight you sleep
at another place.

How strange it feels
when you're away from me,
as if I am alone
in a unknown big world

Gert Strydom

Somewhere Beyond A Old Gold Mine

Somewhere beyond a old gold mine,
probably planted there by a bird,
I saw you reaching high against the blue sky,
with blossoms folding open in purity,
bursting open snow white,
at a rusted wheel that gnashed as it turned;
as a almond tree on top of a yellow-brown mine dump
while I was walking around curious.
Your branches were like angelic wings, white and pure,
was circled by the bright sunshine,
that splashed down your wide open branches,
where like fingers they were reaching for heaven,
your glory went to the depths of my soul
where very high you stood above everything.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere I Have Got To Stand Still

You are gone from me
while the jacarandas are flowering purple-blue
and the reasons why echoes through my mind
while my days are running empty
and I aim on through the streets
but somewhere I have got to stand still.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere I Have Lost My Way In You

as if I am lost in you
and as if I can find no footpath leading to the outside,
I am trapped.
Your glances and the way that you do look
are constantly lingering in my heart
and I am caught in nights
even if you
are right here against me
and everything feels so genuine and true
as if I am meant
to constantly
go through life with you
as if I am to anchor my fingers, my humanity in you.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In A Ladies Bar

When the beer stain on the counter,
burning marks on the tablecloth,
the spiral of cigarette smoke
do almost form apocalyptic images and words

while people do treasure old memories,
do drown in their drinks
that the barman
very friendly keeps pouring

and others sit with hands around glasses
that leaves patterns,
so totally thought struck
I catch your eye,

see how you do look away,
catch you that you are looking back
(and you do wonder if I am waiting on some one) ,
your smile is somewhat bewitching

and I wonder what are in your thoughts
while your eyes shine like diamonds,
and the barman
does pour another drink for you on my behalf.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In Angola

Somewhere in Angola
you were planted
back into African soil
from where you sprouted
to make it young again
with blood
marked with a small cross
that's blown away by the dry wind
and there you
child of God
also found a Golgotha
and I wonder how many boys:

still have to fall in Africa
before the last shots ring?

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In The African Bush

The male lion leads the attack
and with help of each adult member of the group
they corner a female giraffe
against three thorny acacia trees
that grows together.

Nervously the giraffe jumps
and hooves flash past heads
while the giraffe is trying
to shake the male lion off.

More bodies hanging on,
the giraffe becomes heavy
and heavier still
and the added weight of the forth lion
pulls the giraffe down to the ground.

After ripping the giraffe open
and devouring as much as they can
the group of lions lay sleeping
in the shade of the acacia trees
while vultures, hyenas and a few jackals gather
around them at a safe distance.

Suddenly there is a commotion
and the male lion senses danger
while the vultures, hyenas and jackals scatter
and three younger adult male lions
come roaring out of the long grass
to challenge him
and in the blink of an eye the battle is lost
and death comes in the way
that life on the African plain is.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In The Hillocks

Somewhere in the hillocks
there's a place
where you go through a rocky gateway
where blunted brown rocks lie
in the red brown sand

and here and there are trees
sticking out like half bare fingers
against the sky
as if leaves are struggling to grow
and terrible winds
at times rip it off.

The grass of the veldt is yellow
as if it's already winter,
but maybe not a lot of rain
falls here

and in the distance
I see clouds white and grey
hanging over the blue mountain top

while the sun at places
comes through it
and would have liked
to be with the painter Jacobs
at that place.

[Reference: Painting by D Jacobs that belongs to me.]

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In The Karoo

Where the heat in the grey karoo throws hazy waves
I had to stop at a time with a flat tyre
and in the karee-bushes I only noticed one sheep
while around me the ground was dusty red
but still this scene was beautiful
with a windmill turning screaming and knocking,
the other sheep drinking at a dam
and an old farm house did complete the picture.
In that desolate land I could hear the voice of God
where the scene stretched into the distance,
with only here and there a tree breaking the monotony
and there I did loose the conceit of my youth,
burned the scene into my mind before I had to leave
and felt the grass-seeds jutting into my socks.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In The Night

Somewhere in the night
in my sleep,
I could feel you
laying against me.

You flung your warm arm
over me and the creaking of the tree
in the strong wind
made me lie still closer to you
and the night
was lost in sleep.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere In The Subconscious

(for Daleen)

Somewhere in the subconscious,
in the soul the roads
of that which is love
is burnt into the heart of the brain

about the light in the bewitching green-brown eyes
or the sound and tone-colour of the voice
and the gleaming of lips that could scold,
kiss and laugh
or the throwing back of hair from the face
in a unknowing movement
or the hot touch
of a small soft hand

but here in reality
all of these things have lost their meaning
and the loss of you
do now eat like a cancer on me.

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Gert Strydom

Somewhere In This Big City

Somewhere in this big city
a man lives alone
in a big old house,
of which the roof
has been rusting for a while.

There's khaki bush and weeds
in what was once a garden
and his car
is gathering dust in the garage,
when in the early morning
he catches a bus to work.

a Runaway truck
went straight over
his wife and child
and it's as if,
he never can live past
that event.

At times he buys flowers
before he walks through
rows of graves,
where on his own
he thinks about the
aimlessness of life.

Although he is neatly shaven
and dressed well
when he does his
assignments at work,
he almost never
talks with anyone
and no woman
or anything catches his eye
and he lives within himself
and are scared
to get a life again.

Somewhere Near The Lomba River

The guns of enemy tanks are flashing
like bolts of thunder while I am glancing,
the night air is full of the smell of cordite
and luckily those shots are passing

while the armoured car draws to a sudden halt
for its gun to take aim and on my lips I taste salt
before the armour piercing shell is fired
and at a direct hit around me the crew exalt

before at speed we move on
and some more enemy Cuban soldiers are gone,
are burnt in the fiery hell
while my heart, my brain feels like stone.

An enemy shell strikes another armoured car
like a exploding flaming star
and I can smell torched human flesh,
while I wish to be away very far,

to be away from killing
and this chilling
kind of machination of machines and men
who at each other are firing

but to survive we battle on right through the night,
are still trying to find some more enemies in the broad daylight,
find two abounded stationary pristine enemy battle tanks
from which the enemy had run in fright.

Gert Strydom

Somewhere The Window Rattles

from the rainy wind
and even the lightning bolts sound sad
but you have moved on
and incomprehension comes with a cold anguish.

Gert Strydom

Son Of God

Where everything in this world was mortal
where people did wander along in the darkness of sin
You an omnipotent God did come as a mortal man
to stand sinless while others were splashing around in the murky swamp,

to lead everyone to selfless love and to the light of Your commandments
but on a day You were nailed to a cross to die for me.

Gert Strydom

Song Of Songs

It's early morning
and the sun hangs like a large orange
Just above the hillocks

Three teenage girls
undress at the clear water
of a Brooklet.

The are shy for others,
but like to bathe together and walk
with bare feet into the rocky little stream.

Everyone of them is still young and pure
and splash and frolic while the sun
shines hotter and brighter.

The water is still cold
and their nipples are hard and black
on their round breasts.

While they wash each other
it sparkles shiny and rows of drops
are on their brown skins

The water runs of in little streams
down arms, stomachs, hips and thighs
and they stand and talk and laugh.

Something quivers in the reeds where is grows in a thicket
deep into the stream and they see
a dark green water monitor going into the water.

They run screaming and stark naked
and try without any clothes, to get direction
to the shacks of the village where they stay.

Gert Strydom

Song Of Songs (Iv)(Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

From high above the stars gleam and a golden full moon,
only the wind rustles lightly and full of rest is the night
in the distance the lights of Cape Town do glitter in their beauty
and the sea is tranquil where we stand on the beach,
and this moment does stretch out as if it is the central point in our existence
when like children almost in the innocence of happiness we do laugh
and it feels as if a person can do anything on a night like this
when waves do break, do wash out and other breakers do roll in.
Your firm breasts are half in the shadows and secret when you do walk into the
sea,
the moon draws a line up to the horizon, water stream from your back, hips and
thighs
when a wave unexpectedly breaks over you, your skin and body do gleam
when you walk back and suddenly the moment is intimate,
you shine with shadows that do enlarge and shrink seem naked and uncovered,
like a goddess and nothing is hidden in this moonlight.

Gert Strydom

Song Of Songs [1]

My golden eye darling of the high-veldt
I see the sand crumbling between your fingers
where you are planting geraniums and day lilies.

Look, my bride, I have brought you tiger-lily bulbs,
also bulbs of dahlias and amaryllis
and white and red roses, which I have grown from cuttings

as cut flowers does just keep for a day or two
and I want to give you something that can last
even when destiny does throw us around.

Look, my fawn, my girlfriend and my wife
how the wind blows that the dust devils dance
and how tawny and stripped our yard looks in this winter
but I know that the spring will come again.
Look, the pruned roses are growing again,
there are already buds on the peach
and apricot trees.
Look, how the clouds do turn and whirl
as if they want to bring the early rain.

With you I will eat porridge and brown bread,
will work free in the sweat of my countenance,
even will forget the children and life that is shaking its fist at me
and forget all of the ugly things of life

as I do love you dearly my golden eye wife.

Gert Strydom

Song Of Songs For The One On Whom I Wait Locked-Down

(for Daleen, in answer to Lina Spies)

Where the autumn-sun do shine bright outside
while I love you in times of joy and pain,
nothing can stop the redbreast singing,
where his song of praise rises for the rain
and I know that all loneliness do disappear
where the whole day the weaver is twittering for its mate,
the doves with cooing do bring their love to each other
and absolutely wonderful is company with you
while I love you in times of joy and pain.

[Poet's note and reference:"Hooglied vir die oorlewende" (Song of Songs for the survivor)by Lina Spies. The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

Song Of The Woods

For a time the birds
and the trees
and animals dwelt in me,
but then came man.

Axes and saws
started to chop and bite
and as trees fell,
there wasn't a place
safe for animals to be.

Time swept past
and man's machines
started to carve
right through trees.

Trees fell faster
than any could grow
and the climate was altered
by man and his machines.

Lost was the air
that had risen from me
and the forest rain dwindled
and a scorching sun
started to batter me.

The world of old is lost
and most of the trees are gone
and clouds of pollution
blankets the world.

Gert Strydom

Sonnets Of Home

I

I dream of building
a mansion, villa
or big white house
with a lot of space,
or maybe a Tuscan place
or two set on a terrace
on a mountain
with a wonderful view
overlooking the ocean
with a ivory white beach
that runs as far
as the eye can see
and to make it home
just for you and me

II

The birds will be our companions
and whales and dolphins
will pass in the bay
and a garden
as big as a park
will run all the way
down to the sea
and every plant and tree
that you like will be there
and vegetables will grow in patches
against the hill and there will be orchards
with juicy red, yellow and orange fruit
and plantations with big green pines
will cover the rest.

III

The house will be a white pillar
that towers like a castle above it all
and a place where any wary traveller

will be welcome to visit and rest
and there will be steps coming down
to the bay and a lift or two or three
next to an azure lagoon
where a cool river splashes down
in a big pronged waterfall
and we will be able
to lie in the bright sun
and run with the dogs
on the white beach
like children having fun.

IV

□

I'Envoi

Let others live in big crowded cities
and be packed into matchboxes
reaching up into the sky
and have more neighbours
than they care to know
but you and I
will be able to watch
blue waves twist and break
and hear the melody
of the rushing sea
and your studio and our home
will stretch from the hill
down to the aquamarine ocean
and touch the big sapphire sky.

Gert Strydom

Sonnets Of The Boy Who Drew Cats

I

A long time ago
when soldiers still carried spears and swords
a Japanese farmer and his wife,
had a string of children
and everyone got a task.

They milked cows, cared after pigs,
gathered chicken eggs
and ploughed the soil,
planted rice, wheat and oats,
but the youngest was too weak and small
to do any work
and time and again he neglected his duties
and disappeared
and drew cats.

II

The farmer scratched his head
and did not know what to do
with a child that disappears
and couldn't complete a task and drew
big and small, white, black, ginger and pied cats
of each size and type.

So the farmer and his wife reckoned
to take the child to the nearest temple
to become a priest
and the farmer tied his sword around his side,
loaded the child on a horse
saddled his own horse
and maybe the men of God
would learn the child about duties.

III

The child studied well

but nobody could stop him
from drawing cats everywhere
and it happened
that the priest thought
that he couldn't
become a priest and rather
be an artist.

The child was sent
to a temple farther away
and the priest instructed him
to avoid big places at night
and to find a sleeping place
in a small place.

IV

The temple was abandoned
because a evil goblin
coming from the dark earth,
expelled the priests
and the soldiers
that went to face him
had all disappeared.

At night a light burned
in the temple
and when the boy arrived
he went in and everywhere
that he found a white screen he painted a cat
and he remembered the words of the old priest
and went to sleep in a small cabinet.

V

That night he heard a big noise
of a great fight
and cats roaring like lions
growling angrily
while something tried to
smash and pierce them
and he heard them

ripping something to pieces.

The next morning
a goblin
with the head of a rat,
with a pronged whip and sword in his hands
was dead in the middle of the temple
where he lost the fight.

VI

l'Envoi

There was still wet blood
on the mouths of the cats
painted
on the screens
and they looked innocent
and vulnerable.

When the priests returned
they immediately saw
what happened
and they declared
boy a hero
and later he was renown
as a painter
that only paints cats.

[Reference: With thanks to "Japanese Fairy Tales, The boy who drew cats" by Lafcadio Hearn that gave me the idea of this poem.]

Gert Strydom

Sonnets Of The Stone Ruins

I

Long ago a mighty hunter
sailed on the river to look for medicine
and his canoe made from tree
was swept along with uprooted trees
by a river in flood.

He lost control over the boat
and in the distance
a thundering sound
hanged in the air
mighty smoke
rose ghostly out of the water
in a fine spray
and he could hear tons of water
flowing down a cataract.

II

While the canoe was spinning round
and round
he tied a long thin strong thong
to a arrow
and with all the power in his strong arms
he draws the bow's string and set his aim
on a massive tree
standing on the shore.

The arrow caught speed
and hanged a moment in the grey air
before it hit the tree with great force
and the thong spanned stiff
and his arms with desperate power
overcame the river.

III

He passed the remains

of ancient mines
and villages declining
and overgrown by bushes
and suddenly there were rock walls and towers
and branches creeping
into the walls.

Cautiously he sneaked nearer
and shot a arrow through a spitting cobra
and suddenly a figure appeared behind a bush,
but before his rock could hit it
it disappeared into the nought
and against a niche another figure stared
deep into his thoughts

IV

When he stormed with assegai in his hand
onto that figure
it disappeared around a corner
into a dark passageway
and all at once
there was an animal with glowing eyes
breathing heavily in the dark in front of him
and he lifted his shield against it
And took a firm grip on the back of the spear.

With rotting breath and cruel anger
a lion leaped with stretched out claws
growling onto him,
but he was shield somewhat
While the assegai went deep past the animal's ribs.

V

While the lion died in anger
the claws ripped deep into the hunter's shoulder
and his sharp knife
slashed time after time
through the animal's heart
and covered in blood

he came out
from under weight of the dead lion.

In horror he saw
the lion changing slowly
from animal to human
with a spear through his ribs
and a lion skin
around his shoulders.

VI

He was still busy
dragging the lion skin from the killed man
and felt the soft fur
in his hands,
when to more lions
in anger leaped on him.

It was too much for him
since both knife and spear
still wedged into the dead man
and with the fighting
he had lost
his bow and arrows
and he was cornered
by lions ripping from both sides.

VII

¶Envoi

It is told
than when the air is open
and the moon takes long to rise
a mighty hunter appears
with the rain gods
where they bash their shields
and spears against each other
and that the air
is now his hunting ground

You can see stripes of thunder
when his arrows with thongs
dropp down to earth,
before the new season's
first raindrops fall.

[Reference: With thanks to "The ivory trail" by T.V. Bulpin that gave me the idea of this poem.]

Gert Strydom

Sonnets To My Love

I. My woman among a world of women

My woman among a world of women,
I wonder when will I see you again?

You who live in every dream,
as part of me
and time is rushing by and my hope
grows dimmer like the winter sun
in the cold sky.

At night the darkness covers me
and the moon glitters bleak
and even it grows weak
while I long for you
and even my consciousness
declares that maybe
I am waiting in vain.

II. I wish I could remember

I wish I could remember in detail
the first time that we met
the glance in your eyes
when you saw me.

Was it May, June, July
or maybe October?

I cannot recollect
what time of year
not even which season
but from the very start
I held you dear and that first hug
when I held you near
brought tears to your eyes,

or was it mine?

III. In dreams you are still with me

In dreams you are still with me
and in every dream
your dear face I see

and every night I dream on
of you and me being one
and when waking
with the sun braking through
the windowpane in the early morning
you are gone

and still somehow
it's as if I can smell
your lingering perfume
just as if you spent
the night here with me.

IV. From the first moment I loved you

From the first moment
I loved you

construing how you felt
from your voice, what you said
to me and your actions
even if you might not
feel the same

but tough at times
you are not sure of your feelings
you were then
and we became one
and I dwelt in your eyes
trying to find your soul

and to bind with it.

V. Today I pray for you

Today I pray for you
not only to be true to me
but to have God dwell in your heart
for Him to keep you well,
to shadow you in every thing that you do.

Today I pray that every word
and every deed be blessed,
that every poetic line you write,
every brush stroke that you make
and every time you take the guitar
in your hands
be a great delight to others
and that they see you
in the greatness that I know.

VI. Your rebuke I have not earned

Your rebuke I have not earned,
just gave my sincere opinion
about something that I read
which you wanted me to
and neither were my words
aimed at you.

What should shine through
my lines is how much
I love and miss you

but more so
my love for the creator God
which comes first
in all that I do
even superseding you.

VII. If love is something sure

If love is something sure
between the two of us,
will you go away?

If love links you to me,
will you go astray,
be swept to another shore?

Love me and love me more
before it is too late
and destiny makes it impossible.

Love me as an equal
or let it be and loosen
the raging winds
to devour the citadel,
the castle of our dreams.

Gert Strydom

Sonnets To Someone Special

I. There was a time

In the past there was a time
when magic was everywhere around me
and the loving between us
seemed so strong
as if it could outlast
even life itself
making moments sublime

and through the years
I have loved other girls
but never as deep as then
and no relationship was as enchanting
as with you

and no woman was as smitten with me
as when we were young at university.

II. At that time we were in spring

At that time we were in spring
and I heard every bird
that we met sing
of the beautiful summer
as if it had already begin

and summer days were bright
up to eight in the evening
and every night
was almost unbearably romantic

and joy danced in your eyes,
your lips gleamed
in the candle light
of that special restaurant
and I knew that you really loved me.

III. I picked bunches of red roses

I picked bunches of red roses,
roses of any colour
that I could find,
wrote stacks of letters
and gave cards of affection by the hundred

and you blushed at the first kiss
which was really special to me
and there was a new energy
in every embrace

and the stars twinkled
and the light
from the lamppost faded yellow
and somehow you caught the sun
in your smile.

IV. Our hands were joined

Our hands were joined
as if seeking each others
by themselves
and just walking with you
and talking to you, was really special

and it was if I already knew you
and a lot like déjà vu
but the spark between us
was fresh and new

and even one glance
from your opal eyes
with ever changing colours
brought joy, enchantment, excitement
and fire to my soul.

V. You have always been really pretty

You have always been
really pretty
but now many years later
you are lovelier
than I remember

as if maturity
has brought greater beauty
and character, experience and wisdom
have edged into your soul

and when we meet
I experience the same magic,
but now that flame is raging
as if for years I were sleeping
and destiny is bringing you back to me.

Gert Strydom

Soon You Will Say That It Is Finished And So Will It Be

1

While almost all of the world was against You in revolt
You came not with in Your fist the blazing thunderbolt,
nor with the flames falling from a clear cobalt sky
or meteorites innumerable that earthly twisting fly
or earthquakes, volcanoes or hurricanes that devastation does hum
to pay out to unrighteousness its wages and total sum

2

but exchanged your eternal, omnipotent self for mortality,
walked dusty roads for people full of iniquity like me,
taught people to be happy but much more about love.
Of their tempting and mockery did not have enough,
innocent full of tranquillity they nailed You to a cross,
of who You really were those people were at a loss

3

and now in my own day people talk of You in dismay,
others that served You do You and Your existence betray,
many a rebuild newer Babylon does with its skyscrapers tower,
the new Gomorra and Sodom do constantly test their power
and in blasphemy of Your name people do speak and act,
do make You a myth and do respect for You lack,

4

do build for war killing machine after machine
and secret weapons that no normal man have never seen
from molten metals they do fabricate,
do play like gods with the common man's fate
until You do come on your Judgement Day,
do to all on earth Your glory and power display.

5

It's if I am standing at the edge of the abyss,
with a trembling hand are writing this
and although ages do pass and times change,
although man does the world rearrange,
do indoctrinate the mind, the spirit and soul
and only selfless love is Your ultimate goal,

6

a time will come when man will have no choice to make

and only Your sincere elect will in meeting You partake,
full of evil will be those that do beget it and bear ill
and nothing will stop Your supreme omnipotent will,
destruction is near and Your work is almost done,
in righteousness this world will burn hotter than the sun.

Gert Strydom

Sorry (Pleiades)

Sorry is the saddest word,
some pain, a sense of lost,
so much difficulty to
say that some failure came,
some inadequacy is
sometimes present and exist,
still sorry heals wounds at times.

Gert Strydom

South Africa Frightens You (Free Verse Sonnet)

South Africa frightens you
and here you feel like others trapped
where murder, torture and robbery constantly
hangs like thundershowers in the air
and a knife, pistol or machinegun
or anything that can hurt badly
is pressed against a person's head
to take by force and so very out of control
where people like barbarians have got more than one wife,
do resist with stones and burning car-tyres,
do plunder, do take and do just what they want
as if they can live without any law
and yet these disasters do hit white, black and brown
where our country is crumbling to ash and rubble.

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Gert Strydom

South Africa Is Also My Country

From my birth South Africa is my own country
and my people can flee to an island
but my own culture and language stays holy
although this place is not safe,
I still trust on a much higher hand,
from my birth South Africa is my own country.

From my birth South Africa is my own country
even if the struggling government gives me resistance,
do oppress me with unfair laws,
even if nothing can stop the disintegration,
even if I am not safe against the onslaught,
from my birth South Africa is my own country.

From my birth South Africa is my own country,
even if some act with effrontery against my people
I come from a noble heritage,
I am proud on my Afrikaner lineage,
even if people and buildings are set alight,
from my birth South Africa is my own country.

From my birth South Africa is my own country
with no other place I have such a deep bond
and even if here I will never have any job,
I believe in God and a Christian church,
God himself still keeps my ways intact,
from my birth South Africa is my own country.

Gert Strydom

South Africa Is Also My Country [1]

From birth I have been planted
in this country
and nowhere else
does lure me away from here,

even when being without a job
and affirmative action
does scale down my abilities to nothing,
I am not taken from this land,
where I still do talk my own language,
and I still do bend my knees
to the omnipotent Lord God

and even if I am astounded
by the clowns that do govern,
are astonished by the things
that happens in the parliament and in the country
it changes nothing
to me being a white South African

and they can give away their barbaric culture
free and gratis to other people
while I do stay with my own
and have integrity
and not even the whole Africa
can remove me from my country.

Gert Strydom

South Africa Is Also My Country [2]

My language and culture is the essence of my existence
but are despised in the new South Africa
where the government do not care about my interests
but are only following something primitive

and so the country continues in its decline
while people stream in from all over Africa.
My language and culture is the essence of my existence
but are despised in the new South Africa

while I am asking for salvation for myself and my nation,
and I am praying to you Lord God,
while the authorities bow down before ancestral spirits
and I am bringing our destiny to You that are omnipotent;
my language and culture is the essence of my existence
but are despised in the new South Africa...

Gert Strydom

South Africa, My Country

Could I play like you, like a lion cub,
spending my days inviolate with the world,
when you were innocent, intact
had tried to touch butterflies with deadly paws,
you would have stayed forever in my heart
and I would have found acquiescence in you constantly.

Still your paws had become big, deadly
your jaws had become snapping, had mightily showered blood
when your growth went to maturity,
you did even amaze the biggest, most deadly cats
and from your compulsory service I wasn't free,
fought for survival in your hunt

but now you are wounded far too badly, too serious,
I cannot stop the destruction anymore,
where you now want to kill your own cubs
and my brothers flee far away from you
while you do not want to know them anymore,
are infatuated by bloodlust, are infatuated to win the fight.

Still I love you far too much
to now want to see your nemesis,
I still try to heal your most serious wounds,
I still try to share my mangled life with you
and I can now smell your breath deadly,
while you use my life selfishly.

Gert Strydom

Soweto

I have seen highways, turning off
into your roads, crammed with minibus taxis,
full of busses, a couple of cars
and walking, talking people,

as if your people was cast out,
to live at a place that sprang up by itself,
totally unplanned, but like a newborn
thronged to be living

but at a time you were dangerous to me,
when I was called-up for military duty
saw wires spanned to de-capacitate heads
saw your people driven out of their minds

burning each other, with tires strung
onto their heads, incinerating one another
when sharp point bullets
flew in your streets

and to some people you are like a haven
of criminals that operate in gangs
to hijack cars, to rob whatever they can,
but in you I see the indignity

of people trying to make a living,
struggling on just in order to survive
and at times drinking and singing
happy to be alive.

Gert Strydom

Space Haiku's

Satellite observe
mist cloud unexpectedly
reactor flaming.

*

Big eye satellite
look at our activities
on the sandy beach.

*

Big space telescope
tuned fine on solar system
looks for small angels.

*

The white moon hangs sickle
above the bright morning sun
in the dull blue sky.

*

An eye peeps far off
and telescope watch blue sun
in very dark place.

*

A black round circle is
a blue ring in photosphere
in glamour photo.

*

The moon eclipses with
copper red colour burning
next to dull blue star.

*

Blue-white glimmering
diamond ring impress in
eclipse of the sun.

Gert Strydom

Sparkling Wine And Blood

How should I know,
that red J Le Roux sparkling wine
and blood has the same colour.

The one foams
sparkling out of a beautiful bottle
and the other gushes out of an artery or drips
and comes from the heart.

Yesterday, it feels half a life ago,
there was grape moisture
that came from a bottle
while love was blooming in full.

Today the taste is still in my mouth,
there are still a few blocks of chocolate left
and I wonder when
we are going to eat the potato chips
and when you are gone,
it's as if nothing here is right
and I loose my heart
bit by bit
with red blood.

Gert Strydom

Speaking Of Fairytales (Cavatina)

Suddenly awakening from a dream
in love we were
and you like lovely Snow-white were smiling
while here and there
the most beautiful flowers blossomed
while everywhere
life seemed like the most abundant spring
and I more of a frog than prince charming.

Gert Strydom

Speechless You Leave Me

Speechless you leave me
and I send you all of the High-veldt
with the sun hanging bright and warm,
the afternoon thundershowers
that pour down
and the embraces and kisses
to which we both do long.

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Gert Strydom

Sperm Cells (Rondelet)

Slow they do swim
in the surging swell avoiding rocks,
slow they do swim;
maybe a little he or him,
a small girl with shining locks,
conceived in happy wedlock,
slow they do swim.

Gert Strydom

Spider (Free Verse Sonnet)

At the garden-flat at night
it did deadly its web hang between two poles
waited to catch any flying insect
to devour moths, mosquitoes and locusts unexpectedly
and then suddenly in the day
that web was gone when it looked for shelter
and for that thing I was cautious more than afraid
but with big respect I did regard it
as it was poisonous but not dangerous like a snake
where at times it did swing around at night, bounced up and down,
on eight legs did quickly creep nearer to bite
but daily did just disappear almost wondrous,
somewhere crawled into a hole or found shelter under a rock
and at night that fidgeting thing had a great appetite.

Gert Strydom

Spider Web

There's a spider web
of which parts got on your hair
and you are alarmed by it
and I take fine silk from your hair
while you look big eyed at me
and your lips are open
as if you are gasping for breath.

The wind blows a branch
whipping up and down,
but it's unnoticed
by us both.

Your eyes are caught by the spider web
on which two spiders
are rocking in the wind
and I am caught,
with the look in your golden eyes
and your open lips that are inviting
and a small leave hanging on your cheek.

Gert Strydom

Spider Webs Glitter (Haiku)

Spider webs glitter,
breath hangs out in vapour clouds
early in the day.

Gert Strydom

Spotless Hands

With her hands together she prayed,
when I was sick sat at my bed
and with bright eyes she looked into my soul
past how things look on the exterior

and now that life, destiny destroys me,
it is still she that stands with me,
she is still kneeling
for the salvation of my soul

where she stands with spotless hands,
held together
hands that carry the marks of life,
while she asks for no own gain

only bringing me the whole time to God,
never complaining over her destiny.

[O smettelose hande (O spotless hands) by N.P. Van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Spring

See how new green shoots
and branches and leaves
and flowers appear
and the green grass
rises everywhere,
the gods had set a part
of Eden here.

Hear the birds
sing and cheer
and see them fly past
and follow the white-hot sun
while the rays comes to stay
for a longer time.

Smell the first rain
and wild flowers
in the fields
and get thrilled
by the sweet scent
that every flower brings

Abide with me
as the trees dress fit
for a royal wedding
and new life
appears from where it hides
and realise that Spring
is a living thing.

Gert Strydom

Spring (In Answer To Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Spring has an own beauty
where grasses and weeds appear with brush
and stem, growing in full lush
and the sky, the air has serenity

and insects, birds and animals are full of activity,
the wind quivers in every bush, bulrush and rush
in the veldt and at the marsh and even the little thrush
sings to its heart's content with a magic quality

the whole of nature rejoices its joy
as if everything has a new beginning
without any threat or ploy
almost like Eden before the sinning
innocent as the heart of every small girl and boy
where the light of God is brightly shining.

[Reference: Spring by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Note that the rhyme scheme of some Petrarch or Italian sonnets was abba/abba/cd/cd/cd and not just abba/abba/cde/cde. Although Hopkins's verse is viewed as a modern sonnet it meets all the requirements of a Italian / petrarch sonnet.]

Gert Strydom

Spring (So Suddenly She Appears)

So suddenly she appears
when the end of winter comes,
with the last icy days disappearing
skipping between seasons
with the glory that no other has,
that she comes against winter as resistance,
makes verdure sprout out,
when she unlocks the power of growth,
letting her smile dropp everywhere
while insects and birds are joining her,
she becomes the princess of the universe.

When you think that last of life is pining away,
that nature only fabricates survival
the sun starts to shine hotter,
the first drops falls and go to the depths of the earth
and then you can notice her secretly working,
how she is spreading her wings in merriment,
when everything starts to perish, are going backward
when she forces winter to end
with thunder reporting suddenly quite ominously,
when green plants appear suddenly from the earth,
she becomes the princess of the universe.

Even when in your own life your experience
pain and suffering, in every word and sentence,
with your whole life in painful rebellion,
when it feels as if darkness is systematically subduing you,
when people are in revolt against every principle and law,
when others take over the works of your hands,
when you have to close your last days,
as if nothing can stop the decline,
spring brings endless joy,
her magic inspires you to the end,
she becomes the princess of the universe.

So suddenly she draws her line,
as if she is spreading a net, a web over the whole earth
and glorious is her countenance

when she loves nature, loves the earth
where she dances pure, bewitching and uncontaminated
as if nothing can stop her coming
over the whole earth, when birds whistle in joy
and rejoicing and new life comes from it,
then comes a gigantic revolution against the decay,
as if she has the power over life and death,
she becomes the princess of the universe.

There is something in your consciousness,
when she comes secretly as consort,
in you're being a type of presence,
a awareness, although you do not sometimes feel it,
that lingers like a secret image, or poster,
even in a world infected with pain and suffering
and even if you do not bother a farthing,
healing comes from it,
she sneaks in gently, suddenly coming to mind
that something inundating is appearing, like the magic notes of a lute,
she becomes the princess of the universe.

Gert Strydom

Spring Did Begin (Rondelet)

Spring did begin
with lovely flowers blossoming,
spring did begin
with cheerful insects rushing in
with small butterflies fluttering
with joyful lovely birds that sing,
spring did begin.

Gert Strydom

Spring: First Rain

Clouds gather dark, ominous and pregnant
filled with the thunder-gloom
and the womb of the earth waits expectant
for the life giving substance to shower down
to turn seeds to living sprouts
and a fresh odour rises from the ground
when rain splatters, showers, falls
like a river from the sky.

Gert Strydom

Sprouting Like Strings Of Purple Morning Glories (Cavatina)

Sprouting like strings of purple morning glories
our love grows wild;
with vines reaching, stretching, opening;
like a small child
believing in the magic of the light,
with nothing mild
funnels reach flaring blossoms to the sun
while all kinds of barriers are overrun.

Gert Strydom

Stars

How bright they seem,
where in countless numbers they appear
and in numerous colours
flow in patterns in the dark night.

How faltering
some set their fate,
to those mysterious lights
that hangs in the night sky.

Yet, man cannot even reach
the nearest one
or do really comprehend
the mysteries of black holes
and of infinite distances
in time and space.

Gert Strydom

Stars [2]

Branches scatter into gigantic trees
and God is delighted with his handiwork
that spreads blue, white and red over the dome of the night
full of colourful fruit like only in children's dreams.

Gert Strydom

Stars Fall From Heaven

Stars fall from heaven
as if they are raining down
with bright light stripes
that lights up that nigh
almost like the day.

Thunder do bolt down to the earth
as if nothing and nobody can stop it
while menacing clouds
whirl about while they do gather

and wild winds do come down devouring
buildings, vehicles and people
where they fall

and at times the sun does become extremely hot
causing ice glacier to melt invisible
and floods and earthquakes
become a daily occurrence

and great violence bursts loose everywhere
while people try to
to somewhere find food, clothes
and a place of shelter
and everywhere there is disorder
and all of these are only signs

and defence forces, the police,
emergency services
and hospitals are at the ready
and poets are approached
to find a answer
in one or other way

as if they are holy
and alone can hear voices
that other people cannot
and in secret are having conversations
with the gods

or with God

but the presidents and prime ministers
and even Lucifer and his demonic hordes
have got no answer
although they do know
that the day of the omnipotent Lord God is at hand
and they do fear him
but do still act in rebellion.

Gert Strydom

Stars From The Porch

From being small I have been told
that You compose children as stars in Your crown
and as an adult it seems to me quite silly
but I want to ask You God

that You awaken that childish faith in me,
that You help me to become daily more involved with You
and tonight I admire Your stars from my porch,
am asking that I will be ready on the day that You call me.

Gert Strydom

Start Of A Home Invasion

On a weekday evening
while some people,
were watching the late comedy show
on television, laughing or smiling

when others were dining out romantically,
falling more in love
with candles sparkling
while their eyes glittered

when the extended show
at the cinema Nuevo was almost ending
which was portraying
Romeo and Juliet from Britain by satellite

when a father had helped his son
prepare for the next day's mathematics test,
the family had already had their evening prayers
a loving husband had kissed his wife goodnight

when most of the lights
in the houses in the neighbourhood
was switched off
with only amber street lights shining

when most of the people
in the neighbourhood was already asleep
and the dogs in the neighbourhood
stopped howling at the moon and were sleeping

the falcons armed to the teeth
unexpectedly crashed their black trucks
through the outside gate, broke down the garage door,
broke down the front door

opened and broke doors inside a house,
causing destruction and havoc
in the life
of a innocent citizen

and later admitted that it was
the wrong address,
where they had made
a tremendous mess.

[References: The falcons: a South African agency similar to the American F.B.I.
Start of a Removal by Sipho Sepamla.]

Gert Strydom

Stealing A Kiss (Novelinee)

While gentle you lie sleeping next to me
I am thinking of stealing one small kiss
and between us both, kisses must come free;
is it some robbery if I do this?
Maybe looking at you, you will awake,
a kiss will not leave you poor indeed,
but plenty more is there only to take
while many more I do constantly need,
while sleeping you smile, as if to proceed.

Gert Strydom

Steel Citizen

Steel Citizen disappeared on the other side
of the border
and some people thought,
that he was shot to pieces
on the other side of the chop line,

but Steel Citizen was an unconquerable man
and strong like his name
and one day
he just took the road home.

He walked hundreds of kilometres
through the field
and lived from the bush
and didn't set any landmines off
and one day a hardened man
with a LMG in his hands
and a knife in one of his boots
and a savage beard
walked past me
and his eyes were dead
without any life
and he didn't want to talk
or wanted anything from me
and just walked on
with bigger steps into the distance.

It was clear that it was Steel Citizen
and that he was fed up with war and death
and more bomb happy than most
and I hope,
that he found his rest somewhere
and are not still
walking along.

[Reference: Chop line= Cleared border line. LMG=> Light machine gun. Bomb
happy=> Post traumatic stress disorder.]

Steenbok (Free Verse Sonnet)

Under the sugar-bushes where the proteas flower
when the summer-sun does burn merciless in the blue sky
you will find it if you do look carefully in the veldt
where it sleeps in the shadows in the sugar-bush-hillocks
where it regards the world vulnerable, big-eyed
and agile runs away faster than a stormy wind
as that small animal can trust no human being
where I do find snares everywhere in the footpaths
that the natives do set to try and catch it
but in the late afternoon when the sun is setting,
when it hangs low over the kopjes in the west
it runs down the hillocks at ease with the world
where it drinks at the stream near the marsh
and grazes tranquilly on the new young-grass.

[Poet's note: A Steenbok is a very small South African antelope that weighs about twelve kilograms, does become about fifty centimeters high and have got horns of up to eighteen centimeters.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Stereotype

There is a kind of familiar stereotype
of some people all day following the sun
while their women work, you know the type,
I have seen some people having fun,

believing tomorrow is another day
promoted from tea-lady to director
and to some in the RSA, be that as it may,
but there is another kind of factor.

I have seen a man that breaks the mould
as the best accountant, being totally sharp,
and had to discard all the stories I had been told
as he had wit, was no angel playing a harp,

but he could joke, could deadlines meet;
on the ground had both of his feet.

[Reference: RSA = Republic of South Africa.]

Gert Strydom

Still Collective Man Feels Compelled

Have you killed a white today
is still being proclaimed
and old people are killed,
white farmers pay a price
and robberies and killings
in suburban arias
never stop
as if every criminal
in Africa
have being heading south

and some are taught
to take from others
as if the possessions
are their own
and in the doing of it
to maim, rape, kill
and slaughter
without conscience

and the killings
are still being done
by psychopathic people
who like animals in a pack
follow a new psychopathic god
proclaiming an insane culture.

Still collective man
feels compelled
to claim love
only for the self
and not to care
about love for another
while the affirmative flame
burns bright
in a beleaguered night
and guns and knives flash
on the defenceless

and the state, police
and maddened population
do not comprehend
that no one lives alone
and everyone eventually
pays the price
when hunger, poverty
and destruction
takes its course.

[Reference: September 1,1939 by W.H. Auden.]

Gert Strydom

Still Drops Fall

Still drops fall
while a child cries, while the day dies
and dark is the sky
covered in clouds, darker than night

while for money men do terrible things
and factories produce at any cost,
even the lost of clean air,
the destruction of the ozone layer,
even if it causes seasons to change,
deserts to form and rain to pour down
in great floods

and the echoes of war machinery rings
with super powers raiding
for scarce resources,
with politicians telling lies,
covering their actions
with self inflicted military assaults

and hungry the starving man
is covered with falling drops
far too late for his scorched crops

lightning bolts are echoing
are coming down in blue-white flashes
and a barely solvent commercial farmer loses
his last stock
being killed from electric shock,

hammering rain pours down,
flooding cities and towns
causing havoc to the ordinary man

and the catastrophe is man made
sprouting from the need to own,
sprouting from greed

and still drops fall

while a child cries, while the day dies
and dark is the sky
covered in clouds, darker than night.

Gert Strydom

Still For Her (Crystalline Poem)

Lord, You did change my heart again,
still for her the longing does remain

Gert Strydom

Still I Am Waiting On You

(for Annelize)

I did meet you in my student days
but did somewhere loose you suddenly
and the time with you were sweet
but of it only memories do remain.

I did for years wait on you
to find me again
and then on a beautiful day
somebody else did suddenly astonish me
and did come into my life

but she also did leave me
and like many others their time is past,
yet still there is something unsaid between you and me
but like my friend Jan A. F. Du Plessis
I do not have the patience of trees,
although longing, passion and love is in my heart,
although you are in some of my dreams,

although at a time I did kiss you spout-mouthed
and you do things to my humanity and heart
and this wait for a bit game
is to me something near to the portals of hell
as he is right that waiting later does become a way of life.

[Reference: "Wag" (Wait) by Jan A. F. Du Plessis.]

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Gert Strydom

Still I Do Love You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

There are so many things that I do want to tell you,
to me you are beautiful and have a very pretty face,
our love remains simple, fiery and fierce
and where I had to leave you at a time
all my pain and sorrow will now remain unspoken
but you are still very deep in my heart,
where time after time I do confess my feelings to you
and sometimes I do know the pain of loneliness,
in you I do find a fiery passionate woman
and still I do love you without any kind of fear,
although it's with the faith and hope of a child:
I know how vulnerable our love could be
where that which is between us does last into eternity,
as a rare unstoppable pure fire.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Still I Find You Deeper In My Heart

There are times that I wonder how much you do love me
when people want to drive us apart
and still I find you deeper in my heart,

even when people fabricate lies,
when they hit, spit and lay accusations.
There are times that I wonder how much you do love me

even when there is resistance in every sentence of yours,
even when people bring you to anger by saying things
and still I find you deeper in my heart

and I know that nothing can conquer true love,
while I keep to the oath that I have made.
There are times that I wonder how much you do love me

and even if my words and deeds as if without affect
when people hide behind hearsay
and still I find you deeper in my heart,

as if our love continually starts over again,
when people want to squash everything beautiful between us.
There are times that I wonder how much you do love me
and still I find you deeper in my heart.

Gert Strydom

Still I Trust Like A Child

It feels as if my life far too slowly comes right
while I live in a world of darkness
but everywhere that I go You are with me,
in everything that I do, You are present
and on each new morning I am amazed
when the sun cuts through the darkness,
when flowers continually get new life,
when birds are singing twittering everywhere
and still I have got to trust like a child,
cling tighter to the great Fatherly hand,
even when all of my days are falling apart
I still have got to bind closer to You
and when the sun grows faint in the evenings,
You are still the almighty Lord of the universe.

Gert Strydom

Still In My Life You Do Enter In (Cavatina)

At times the thought that You know me too well
does unnerve me
as I do not constantly think about
love, charity;
the good and great things does at times elude
my thoughts, frankly
I am at times full of the vilest sin
and still in my life You do enter in.

Gert Strydom

Still Life

She wears a kind of apron,
both of her hands are full of paint
where she is standing on the dark-red porch,

some shadows are burnt into the painting
and weeds bubble out at the steps,
both of her hands are full of paint

where she is observing it, does frown, and does drop the paintbrush.
She gazes at tables on a hobbling street
and weeds bubble out at the steps.

She does talk thought struck
but looks at Spanish building and a sea background,
she gazes at tables on a hobbling street

and later she moves around in the kitchen
and she has to serve some food
but she looks at Spanish building and a sea background

and she is scared that her husband is going to notice her newest painting.
She wears a kind of apron,
and she has to serve some food
where she is standing on the dark-red porch.

Gert Strydom

Still More I Want To Tell You (Free Verse Sonnet)

Still more I want to tell you
when we are face to face alone,
than I can write with black-ink on a white sheet.
Gestures and tone of voice comes to every occasion,
between us even the words of verses seems dismal,
as if you and I experience an agony,
even if we write them in English or in our own language,
where human to human we do preserve our love,
words alone between us are sometimes far too strong
where this inadequacy remains too unanswered,
as if we were for aeons out of the lives of each other
when our love in person-to-person now do find actual reality:
I sometimes love you modestly with my own will
and between us it's sometimes wild and sometimes silent.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Still My Dreams Do Remain

(for Annelize)

Still my dreams do remain
sometimes as things that are only dreams
but sometimes as reality
from that which had been and are still going to come
and in them I still do find you the perfect woman,
the one that do know me for who and what I am,
who do talk honestly and straightforward with me,
do look past the surface,
who really is beautiful
and for me do remain the most lovely of all women

and maybe a day will come
where I do have the capacity
to take care of you,
to make you again mine

and this dream is so near to reality
that I can almost smell your perfume
and your own fragrance
as if I am almost looking into your sunny eyes
and do become aware of a world
full of promises in their depths.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Still So Very Closely You Do Into My Heart Fit (Italian Sonnet)

For years while I did on God's salvation wait
from racism, cringing and envy I was set free
while life did not turn out how I wanted it to be.
Where churchmen did me as insubordinate berate,

you saw me as significant, important and as great,
while I was unemployed you did a future in me see
and in this life you became so very dear to me
were my companion, wife and my intimate mate.

I saw patriotism take its toll and the poor and rich
living life and some people struggling to survive
that life is not paradise but what you do make of it,
and now we live in futuristic times for which
we did not plan to struggle between death and life
and still so very closely you do into my heart fit.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Stopping At The Woods On A Snowy Evening (Cavatina)

(after Robert Frost)

In passing the nearby snow filled great woods
and icy lake,
the sheer loveliness caught the rider's eye;
a halting break
that lingers too long could bring freezing death,
a spell in each flake
brought tiredness, but the horse moved on,
breaking that old spell, its magic was gone.

[Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening.]

Gert Strydom

Stories And Legends Of Heroes (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Stories of heroes and heroines we do behold
where through countless ages they are told
of Helen, Phaon, Sappho, Abelard and Heloise
whose great love for others were very bold

and yet hardship and pain were where they went
but you and I do deem our love true and to be different
but our own tales by others may at a time be told
when our lives are passed and our time is spent

where to live life to it's very fullest we do dare
for another person in the here and now do truly care,
do try to act in the very right kind of way
in times of sorrow, happiness, wealth and despair

as love is something that makes us greater still
or in its own silent kind of way us it may kill.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Storm Night

Outside the wind moved in the vegetation
and the smell of love and rain filled the air
and your body glowed hot against mine.

In the room it was icy cold
and I felt your heart vibrate in your nipple
and our feelings were intense new and age old.

Tree branches moved ghostly while the storm wind blew
and you completed me perfectly.
Outside the wind moved in the vegetation

like leaves in a wood.
You were laying with your head on my chest
and I felt your heart vibrate in your nipple

and I was engrossed with you
enveloped in another world
and your body glowed hot against mine

and you said very little in the night
as if words were superfluous.
You were laying with your head on my chest

and started breathing evenly and weary
sleep carried you off.
Outside the wind moved in the vegetation

and you fitted perfectly in my arms,
at times you opened your eyes and looked at me
as if words were superfluous.

Like a river that at first drips and then flows stormy
passion again gripped us
and your body glowed hot against mine

and to me you were lovely, far past pretty,
we were caught in intense joy,
at times you opened your eyes and looked at me,

and I sprayed you with my seed
and in passion you screamed and twisted.
Outside the wind moved in the vegetation
and your body glowed hot against mine

as if emotions were driven to a knife's edge
in the room it was icy cold,
we were caught in intense joy
and our feelings were intense new and age old.

[Reference: You were laying with your head on my chest by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

Stormy (Italian Sonnet)

With pouring rain as many other days,
with clouds in the sky the sun seems dead,
as if for weeks from the earth it has fled
where of it there is not even a small trace,

yet radiant with smiling beauty are your face,
where very few words between us is said,
where against each other we lie in our bed
and with a own music the rain outside plays,

where here we are in a hot and happy home,
outside in the pine forest the wind does not rest,
while very turbulent is the surging of the deep,
where in tempest the ocean does break and foam,
with you right here hot and tender it seems best,
where our love and promises to each other we keep.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Strand Beach

There's a slight breeze over the sea tonight
and the tide ebbs out, but I can hear
the braking waves
and see the phosphorous
of their wake
and yet more silent
the brush of water on the sand
and the voices of the sea
sounds jubilant to me
and when the tide changes later
it grows stronger

and it's as everything I hear
have the sounds of faith and hope
rising up louder and louder still
and as if we are moving into a new age
where man is beginning to comprehend
his role to his fellows

and the moon rises big and full
like a light guiding the way
and your hand in mine
burns with its own intensity
and the look in your big eyes
tells me how much you love me
with promises of a new tomorrow in them.

Gert Strydom

Strange Are The Days (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

Strange are the days with we separate from each other
but thoughts can bring you here to me
and a thousand miles is not a estrangement
where you are so deep and intense in my heart,
between you and me there is joy and not sorrow,
where my verses do continually sing songs of praise to you,
my thoughts keep jumping back to beauty of the years
and even if every night without you is pitch-black,
I do know that your heart, soul and spirit do belong to me
where I am continually waiting on the contact with you,
as I keep your image and humanity tightly against me,
where alive you do vibrate in every humble word,
in my thoughts are with me in each day,
as if together we do perfectly fit into life.

[Reference:" vreemde dae wat ons twee apart" (Sonnet. The strange days that the two of us are separate)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Stranger To Europe

I dwell in a British city
and life is busy and great
in a way,
but my heart
is lost and left back
in sunny Africa.

I am settling into
the ever-falling rain,
but the pain
of being away
is creeping slowly
right through my soul.

Friendships and great pub lunches
and the power to buy
whatever I need
are comforting me,
but living away
from those I love
and in a different society
is leaving deep marks on me
and I long
for a sunny open
and light blue
and hot African sky
and to be back
in my own country.

Gert Strydom

Strangers

When our train
clanging move on its tracks
sometimes comes to a halt
we sit as total strangers
right across each other
and every conversation disappears
when the clanging motion starts again.

Gert Strydom

Street Hawker

I close the window
of my pickup angrily
as there the man with
spraying can comes
to stand at the front window
and today is the day
that I am not going to take any nonsense
if he lifts that can.

This time he holds himself in and says:
I am very hungry today
and nobody wants to buy anything
as if I am working at a university
and the briefcase next to me
must give him that impression.

It's as if he's looking really hungry
and there are two needy children
holding onto his trouser legs
with cell phone chargers, glue and such things
and it's another thing
to stand day after day
in the sun
at a traffic light,

but he has got nothing that I want
and my heart burns in me
from sympathy
and when I give him
gee a fifty rand note
the light is already green
and a man hangs through the window of a pickup
and shouts something indecent to me
and I notice that I have got to drive.

Gert Strydom

Stretching Summer (Sijo)

There must be a kind of way to make this summer stretch out
pulling it longer, as the shadows on the trees
that the time with my love can linger into a lifetime.

Gert Strydom

Strike Of Dustbin Men

At the gate to the street
there are dustbins
and rubbish bags heaped up
and you have
to walk on the tar road
in order to pass

and it grieves me
that the municipality
now still cannot get this sorted out.

In town the rioters
pass under police escort
and rubbish is being dumped into the street
as if we are living
in the middle of a rubbish dump.

I have to swerve out
to avoid the rubbish
and the rioters are singing in revolt
and scream and shout jeering

and I see them throwing branches
and small trees
into the traffic
as if they have the right
to cause damage
and see the police
still keeping their distance.

Gert Strydom

Stroll (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

I cannot and do not want to forget you
and tonight the night is vast around me,
where I do know about our sincere love,
the moon glides golden past the houses,
the evening star is high silver-white and far
where in the dark I do return home,
our love is real and not something arbitrary
and it's something that I do understand easily.
It's ice-cold for April,
as if more darkness do fold over the earth,
the night is suddenly totally silent,
where I do not trust the darkness
but there are many stars that do jump,
many wishes that sing in my song of joy.

[Reference:"Wandeling" (Walk)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Struggling Jacob

Above us a multitude of stars did glow
over me lingering someone did bow;
suddenly I felt His breath upon my face
His body had a kind of Godly strong grace

while I struggled hands fell upon my body
in power He did encompass me
putting all of my mortal strength against His
struggling with how my own life is

I yearned to hear His name,
as in His presence I did not feel the same.

Gert Strydom

Submission (In Answer To Don Mattera)

I have seen a white old man and woman
turned onto the street,
living in cardboard boxes
with their small white dog
in the new disastrous improved South Africa,

I have seen white people taking their own lives
when black mine owners robbed them of salaries
and there was no job to get,
no living to be made
and they did this
instead of starting to beg.

I have seen white men and women
with university degrees
leaving the country
in numbers that are more than a million
to find a place to have a life
somewhere else in a foreign country,

I have waited for more than a hour queuing
at a local bank to make a cash deposit,
as a payment to someone
and the way that things are going,
with the black economic empowerment
and people not up to doing a simple job,
soon all of private industry
will be falling apart
as the government departments are doing.

I have noticed friends and family members
who were robbed, hijacked in their vehicles,
raped, tortured and killed
while the South African Police
did their very best to make a arrest
and like in all other things
are not up to it.

I know people who live in despair,

who are totally without hope
while the country's borders
are flung wide open
to the rest of Africa
to first have a chance at a job
and their degrees and experience
in the face of this means nothing

but not one does bend
under the black heel to submission,
at the mercy of God
their lives go on...

[Reference: "Submission" by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

Suburban People

In the suburbs daily the houses
are without their residents
while the maid washes and do the ironing,
at times do prepare the supper,

while the children are at the pre-school,
school and after-school,
or at babysitters
or maybe there is a grandma
that in the afternoons does take care of them

and the taxman deducts his money,
in the evenings dad's expensive car
is parked in the garage
when he and mom does come from the gymnasium

and outside the garden is flowering
and not even on weekends
they are aware of it,
when they go and brag at the church
and the rest of the week they are at work.

When the holiday comes
the whole family takes to the road
to make a splash at Margate,
when mom wears a scanty bikini
which lets her breasts stand lascivious

and do complain that she is too obese for the beach,
are not burnt brown enough
while she does know that she is very sexy
and the children do frolic around in the water.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Sudden Light (Novelinee)

(after Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

It is very dark in this starry night,
while your shadow creeps through the creaking door,
to me you are not a surprising sight,
both of us have been here sometime before,
that moment I do not anymore know,
now it is happening to us both again,
your eyes are familiar in their kind glow,
your essence smells fresh like falling rain
while next to me, as company you remain.

[Reference: "Sudden light" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

Suddenly A Photograph Takes You Back

it's as if a face comes to life
when you are caught in moments
of longing as if you have got it right here
and that momentary recording
of a young face becomes reality
as if that yesterday was just a moment ago.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly A Shadow Falls

Suddenly a shadow falls from above
where a rock-rabbit bathes in the sun,
it moves to the fountain in the mountain,
hear baboons barking higher up on the cliffs
stops in fear, would have run if it could,
against the rock that animal is very small.
The shadows gets shape, it gets dangerous,
with deadly, piercing claws, beak stretched out
lightning quick and precise something falls,
the rock-rabbit screeches and just escapes,
disappears into a split of rock
waits for moments that lasts a eternity
but the flying danger is still there,
with yellow-gold eyes staring from the heights.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly It's Spring

Suddenly the arrival of spring is not disguised
when wild flowers are blooming over the hills and dales
and the signs are suddenly everywhere
that life sometimes does astound.

There is heat coming back into the sun,
on the breeze is the fragrance of falling rain
and in the distance at times blue-white flashes roar
when the first fruit trees start to flower.

In the whole world there is rejoicing
and where my life at a time was empty
You did also walk on the road ahead
and like spring Your work is in everything
when all of life in my maturity fits together
and continually buds out like spring.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly The Darkness Of Night Was Spawn (Novelinee)

Suddenly the darkness of night was spawn,
the sun had dipped away out of sight,
the first gleaming bright stars of night was born
suddenly there was the darkness of night
I heard the sweet call of a nightingale
saw the moon rising yellow in sickle shape,
heard a mouse giving a sharp fearful wail
heard the flutter of wings, of no escape
while the night draw on her long dark black cape.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly The Day Fades To Twilight

Suddenly the day fades to twilight,
the bright blue sky become dull
and you and I become spectators
while down the street the wind blows dust
when the sun sets in magic colours,
when we see the colours of the night
and we hear doves coo on the roof,
see stars stretching out into eternity
and there is innocence in your eyes
that becomes big like those of a child
and suddenly I have an inability
to find the right words
while silence brings a own language
when the sun sets beyond the hillocks.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly The World Is Going Wild

Like it's for thousand of years
the earth spins faithful
in its orbit around the sun
and the moon appears,
every night on her time
and seasons past
following each other,
but suddenly the world is going wild.

Famine spreads while the rich
just gets more
and some have to stay,
without food
and so it goes on.

People want peace
and everyone searches
for a place in the sun,
but wars erupt everywhere
and there's children carrying guns
and rocket launchers.

Maybe the fear
for the nuclear confrontation of the past
was nothing,
against the night
waiting at the horizon
and the world that gets darker
and pest illnesses that brakes out,
while those that can help
stand with folded hands
and wait for things to perish
to make a profit out of it.

Gert Strydom

Suddenly With Utter Joy My Heart Sings (English Sonnet)

While I planted some vegetable seedlings
today with me you did not a step walk
neither did we here with each other talk
about all of our common happy things

but then suddenly my mobile phone rings
while being locked-down here do me stalk,
the street is empty, even the sidewalk,
while suddenly with utter joy my heart sings,

it's such a sweet thing just to hear your voice
while it sounds if you do both laugh and cry
and my heart, spirit and soul rejoice,
the sun is even happy in the sky

of the very timbre of your voice I know
while I do sincerely love you so.

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Gert Strydom

Suddenly You Come

Suddenly you come as my true love
when age
already is leaving its marks and I feel young,
am astounded
by how perfectly you fit into my life,
at times I feel stupid,
are in love with you as if you are my first darling,
while daily you bring to my life new meaning.

Gert Strydom

Sue Me If You Can

Sometimes I wonder
what kind of criminals
is doing business today
in the new South Africa

and steal time, labour
and life
from their employees
and claim money
for undelivered services?

The rubbish collectors strike,
as they are not paid
and there is nobody
to collect the rubbish

and still the municipality
charges its fees
while you have to dispose of it
or have to pay other people
to remove it.

Mine workers are in revolt
since from November
they got no salaries
and it's already the end of march
and some more promises
are made by the mine
that maybe later
fire them all.

A salesman's sales
goes through the books
and money is received for it
and the boss
transfers all her property
to her children
and says that he
will get no commission

as she is bankrupt:
"sue me if you can."

Gert Strydom

Sugar Bush I Want You

Sugar bush I want you
sounds magically from the
alfalfa field

where small blue flowers
are between the green
and a sweet smell
rise in my nose

and the sky is bright blue
as if summer
is holding a festival,

but it's your deep blue eyes
that draws my glance
and your blond curls
hanging out beneath
your straw hat.

Maybe I have to tell more
about a boy and a girl
meeting each other
in the alfalfa field,
but everyone already knows
where these words go...

Gert Strydom

Summer

The year rejoice with grass
that sprouts out bright green everywhere
and leaves covering
plants and trees.

Life blooms in fruit
that dazzles red, yellow and green on branches
and insects fly swept away,
while the birds sing joyful songs
and the bright white hot sun
hangs high up in the sky.

Lord, give that the fruit coming out of my words
and deeds are not out of conceit
and centred around the I and self, but also stand as a sign
of Your infusion and flower full-blown and great.

Gert Strydom

Summer Evening (Free Verse Sonnet)

I scrubbed red-brown dust from the children's feet,
from where they played in the afternoon barefoot in the summer,
stopped their teasing of each other and did put them to bed,
prayed and shared a story out of the Children's Bible,
at the television watched the eight o'clock news bulletin,
when my darling wife came from the bathroom and called my name,
as I looked up the towel fell and she looked like Eve,
long shadows were all over the plants on the porch.
In the bedroom her soft hot body did surround me,
she smelled of bath-oil and a bit of perfume and was dew-fresh,
there are times that such moments do stay in a person's thoughts,
outside the feet of someone gnashed on the gravel,
eternity and the moment between us did come together
and with her soul, spirit, heart and body I was speechless.

Gert Strydom

Summer In The Country

One smiles at me
from where she sits
with her hands on a cow's tits
spraying milk in a bucket
with her blonde hair
bunched beneath a big straw hat,
a picture of unspoilt beauty and innocence

another whistles from horseback
while having a jolly ride
waving as she gallops by
an image of movement
caught under a blazing sun

and you my love are the only one
who gives me kisses,
plaster my cheeks with mulberry lips,
who rides bareback, unsaddled
sitting behind me
on my black stallion
clinging as if you are part of my body
and being a full grown woman,
with great beauty and the right curves,
acting like a tomboy,
a devil's child,
pulling me down
in a field of Lucerne
with small blue flowers
tangled in your hair.

Gert Strydom

Summer Is Far Greater Than Just Summer (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Everything around us have got their splendid fruit or great beauty
summer is far greater than just summer since you have been with me
where I daily see your passing and your tender lovely footfall
and all of the significance of nature in your passage seems small
while with you and in your company all of my adult life I do wish to be
and these sweet moments that between us linger I wish could last forever
than hard times and separate ways in our lives will come never
as to my life and existence you bring life, love and great tranquillity,
summer is far greater than just summer since you have been with me.

Gert Strydom

Summer Sun Memories (Ballade)

(after Ingrid Jonker)

A long summer and golden sun memories
that was filled with love I do know of
that does sometimes again jump into my thoughts
and silently, silently with the years you did forget about this.

Chorus:

Like a babbler my dreams echo alone
as there is no answer that comes from an echo
and still I do wonder to where my own road is going
when life do bring pain, at times do bring joy and do astound me

but sometimes lonely I walk back on the tarred road
where the pain and beautiful memories do burn me,
while the future hangs in the distance like a vista
of which no tracts or branching off roads remain.

High the sun sits in the dull-blue memories
where I see your smile in the dull blue recollection,
do remember how my heart did sing to you
while your image do never grow faint

and some times are full of happiness and others full of sorrow
as for years life is cheating me
and some days I do want to remember and others I do want to forget
as years upon years and decades do past me.

[Reference:"Bitterbessie dagbreek" (Bitter-berry daybreak)by Ingrid Jonker.]

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Gert Strydom

Summer Thunder Storm

The air is full of swallows
cross it up and down
and the late afternoon is humid
and thunderclouds hang heavy.

Lightning bolts falls clapping
out of black clouds
and there's a cold wind
that blows for a while.

Big drops buzz down
and the road steam
while water fall down in buckets
and the fresh smell
of rain and sand
is everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Sun And Shadows Fall Splashing Over Me

Sun and shadows fall
splashing over me while from work
I take a train home
and some of the windows flash at times
half blinding
in a hell hot summer

and at a platform
where we draw in, you come walking along
dressed in a bright summer dress
very far past pretty

and when you climb in
some of the men are smitten by you
like bees around a flower
but you only look at me

and what made you choose me,
to today I still do not know,
just that we were destined for each other.

Gert Strydom

Sunday Afternoon At The Monument (Parody)

(with apology to Koos A. Kombuis)

My love and song is totally wrong
not like something out of Afrikaner blood,

my love and song is for everyone
who undress for me, who eat with me
and fold open at a picnic
in the shades of the language monument rock

to my thanks my love and song proclaims me as the boss
it is refused in this country
with smells on the wind
and by laymen on sidewalks
with their prayers

my love and song is for everyone whom I like
but without a church or a law;
just where I am going, without suspicion and totally immoral
– casual and with ceremony -

my love and song is fragrant, like cheese you can smell it from far
and my fingers dance
on my small cellular phone.

[Sondagmiddag by die monument by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Sunday Afternoon Rest

The Kenwood plays
soft soothing instrumental music
and three dogs,
lies stretched out in front of the fireplace.

Tongs of fire lick hungry orange
on pieces of yellow and brown firewood,
while at the bottom
the coals are glowing red.

You paint a white Greek marble statue
of Aphrodite
and I see your painter's pencil,
giving brush stroke upon brush stroke
of magic.

The afternoon drags on nicely
and red Barberton daisies,
on long green stems
hang out of a glass vase above the fireplace.

The dark painting
of the holy girl with the red garment
against the wall,
watch me amused
and the golden spaniel
sleeps with her head
on my lap.

I will forever
be able to enjoy
the pleasure,
of being with you.

a Hot cup of tea
steals me a kiss or two
and a DVD with the antics of Monk,
makes us laugh at dusk.

Sunflower (Cavatina)

You follow the rising yellow hot sun,
that ball of fire,
since the very birth of passing time
as a desire
to be in reverent worship of it
while men aspire
to shine in a way and reach for the stars,
to break this world's clasping retaining bars.

Gert Strydom

Sunny Day Upon Sunny Day

While sunny day upon sunny day
is swept away
and life goes on in its age-old clutter
with beggars in the gutter

some people are full of laughter,
are celebrating to the day after
and to others have no pity
while they are happy and pretty

and so life still goes on,
with every passing day that is gone,
while from the time of birth
the days of man go back to the earth,

while sunny day upon sunny day
is swept away
and life goes on in its age-old clutter
with beggars in the gutter.

Gert Strydom

Sunnyside, Pretoria Revisited (In Answer To I.L. De Villiers)

On the street corners, in the dark back alleys
whores cackle,
some black women glance lusting at me,
poor children are watching me in hunger,
without pants form behind trellis fences,
deeply moved I notice here,
how my country is falling into disrepair,
doctor Mamba's advertisement is pressed into my hand.

[Reference: "Distrik ses herbesoek" (District six revisited) by I.L. de Villiers. Doctor Mamba refers here to a witchdoctor]

Gert Strydom

Sunrise Over Edenvale

In Edenvale the summer breeze
shivers through some willow trees
and the morning sun sizzles
hot red in the east
like coals flaring up
from the large tin drum
and the night is gone
where some early workers
are warming their hands
where the night lies spilled
like the burned out white ash.

[Reference: sunrise over edenvale by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Surety

From black clouds rain pours down
that brings life
or just as easily a twisting hurricane
which destroys and causes death

and the sea rolls in and out
with people playing on its beaches
or roars with crashing might
slamming ships on sandbanks or rocks

and from love
grace, tender care, passion and pleasure
company, friendship and loyalty comes
or hurt, some pain and hatred sprouts just as easily
and how do I become sure
about how you are really feeling?

I wish I could crawl into your head,
sneak into the depths of your soul,
to find the deepest part of your humanity

but that would not be necessary
while your eyes transmit your feelings,
your words are filled with new meanings
and an unquenchable need for me.

Gert Strydom

Surface Of The Earth

How rocky steady is the ground
of granite boulders under my feet
as if this planet
will be lasting eternally

and even where nuclear bombs do fall
the surface has melted to hard rock
did once again become solid
as if this world does stand firmly in the universe

but yet the fear does remain in me
that it is going to melt to nothing like wax
on the day of the Lord
and in seconds

fire is going to devour it unstoppable
when Your righteous judgement does come.

Gert Strydom

Surfer

When the waves get some height,
the foaming, breaking sea calls him,
to ride them,
to go into the washing water.
Even when a cyclone pushes out bigger waves,
he sees the beauty of tunnel and crest,
he becomes part of the ocean
and his robust tanned body swims
deeper into the sea,
while he searches for the place of birth,
the place where the waves begin
before he stretches himself out on the board like a god
are captured in the foaming tumbling beauty,
and cuts right through a pipe before it breaks with brutal force.

Gert Strydom

Surfing The Ultimate Wave (Rubliw)

We will
seek the great thrill,
surf in hurricane waves
experience the surf, the swell
with all our fears tossed away to hell,
and all of us will be past brave
our small party of men
will try again
with skill.

Gert Strydom

Swallows (Brisbane Sonnet)

There is a happy bird, a little one
when all the other birds do move abroad
that is flying chirping everywhere
until the time comes that the sun is gone
small swallows fill the air over the road
twisting, hurtling up and down through the air

flying to and fro, flying very fast,
like fighters they dive over the bridge,
over the water as if visiting fish
skimming along as long as the day lasts,
catching small insects, every midge
they make me feel young and somewhat impish,

flying on long pointed wings and turning,
dropping from where the hot sun is burning.

Gert Strydom

Sweet Death

After spring there are many Jacaranda flowers
that lies purple at my feet,
while the trees shed
their beautiful blossoms.

Like the sweet blooms
that die,
I know that I
have but a short time
to spent in this life.

There's a sweet perfume
that rises from the road
where the scattered flowers lie,
before it disappears
with the new rain

and I wonder if my words and deeds
will be a blessing for a time
when I am gone?

Gert Strydom

Sweet Smelling Afternoon

You are lying on your back
with a straw hat drawn at eye height over hair
sun-struck, curling and fair
with a rain cloud ominous and black

drifting past in a blue sky and a small track
needing some repair
meander past and grey ibises in a pair
are picking at a snail snack

and the smell of fresh Lucerne in purple flowers
is almost enveloping
after the last rain showers
and you play your guitar and sing
a sweet melody like a pop star but without followers
and the beauty of spring is around us in everything.

Gert Strydom

Sweetheart (Free Verse Sonnet)

My doll, there is ground and grass in your eyes
and everything earthly did find its scope in you.
My girl, you do give me the ability
to fight the struggle of life for you
and you do remind me of roses and jasmine
as if flowers do hang everywhere around you,
when your eyes laugh or the sunshine in them
and like this you come into every day's big longing.
My sweetheart-doll, you do fill up my life,
moments are holy when you do accompany me in the garden,
to take out the weed and turn the soil over
and of every flower that I plant you do have knowledge:
there is a whole green and brown cosmos in your heart
and I do love you past times of happiness and sorrow.

Gert Strydom

Sylvia Plath

With a consuming flame you rose,
gathering a small universe
in your slender hands

words poured out on paper,
thoughts of pain, of torment
of humanity lost under crunching military boots

and ever awaking
like a Lazarus girl,
from the sleep of death
morning by morning
living up to the standards set
by your godlike daddy
who was already dead

but the last time came
that you breathed the pure air,
saw the wind ripping through
your children's hair
without finding any solace there
and you did destroy yourself.

Gert Strydom

Symposium

We still wanted to talk and philosophise
over that which happened,
was coming and was occurring right now
and learn something from it

but my words disappeared
while a rain storm
was unfolding outside
and thunderbolts
draw blue-white lines
with long fingers

and inside
between the rumbling
of voices
I heard a blowfly
going around and around
caught in its own orbit
where there were coffee cups
that where not taken

¶Envoi

and then I thought
what does man really know
and is our time here
not also measured out
till a set day, hour,
minute and second

□

and while we think that we know
we stray blindly
about on this planet

and in the sky
I heard the works
from the hands
of the almighty Lord resound
before the first drops of rain
fell refreshing to the ground.

Gert Strydom

Synopsis (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

From childhood I do know how fragile
breakable and fine people sometimes are
but it does astonish me
also that something very evil
that does miss all humanity
do come from the flesh,
with my soul a own impression of Him
where the sharp-witted impact of my soul
is stripped of all kinds of fear
and I do turn my life around time after time.
Although love is endless with it I am stupid,
from you who I do love intensely so somewhat estranged
that you now again have to read in my poems of my feelings:
I do only stay flesh and blood cannot disguise my love to you.

[Reference "Oorsig" (Review)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Tabitha

As if just asleep I was waken
with the light shining brightly in my eyes,
when darkness did disappear suddenly
and I came alive again.

There is nothing strange to tell anyone,
as I bear no knowledge of exactly how death is
and everyone keeps asking inquisitive
but I cannot disguise my own ignorance.

Here I heard children laughing joyfully
and became aware of the sun shining bright,
to me the light of God was always present,
as a kind of presence in the dark night.

As if just asleep I was waken
and I came alive again.

Gert Strydom

Table Bay

The sun sets over table bay
and that rough sea lies calm
and a moon rises full,
above the waves
and the thundering breakers
roar like they did
many years before

Odysseus sailed from the island of Ithaca
and went to Troy to war
where he accompanied the heroes
Neoptolemus and Philoctetes and the
armour and shield of great Achilles,
was his to take
and for years he dwelt
on stormy seas and in far away lands.

If per chance his ship would stray
and reach the cape of storms
in another age and time
and his eyes could see
the beauty of that lovely shore,
no other place would
his ship sail to

When Bartolomeu Dias set his ships sails
and left king John ashore,
he was prepared to sail
to the ends of the earth
and no horrendous sea creature
could keep his ships in check.

I wonder what he thought
when the fog faded away
and table mount sprang into view
and table bay lay stretched out
up to its shore
and when he set his cross
did he know that he was marking

a great place
and when he marked his charts
did he wish to come back
to that stormy Cape?

When King John gave the name
Cabo da Bõa Esperança,
did he know that he was naming a place
from where a nation would sprout
and that it would become a city of hope?

[Reference: =>"Cabo da Bõa Esperança=>Cape of Good Hope"]

Gert Strydom

Table Bay (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Matthew Arnold)

The sea lies flat like a huge lake tonight
but for the spray
that is endlessly sweeping in and out
on the white bay,
some couples walk on the beach
on holiday;
holding their hands under a yellow moon,
some bright beacons and stars will be out soon.

In the distance Table Mountain rises
its huge old bulk,
is gigantic black and flat against the sky
like a ship's hulk
where it marks the African continent;
sails of yachts sulk
as they lie limp in the windless great harbour
while tranquil people are home from labour.

Lights gleam far away at sea, are passing,
with a long lost
feeling of the great endlessness; as waves
fling, churn and toss
the hopes, fears and happiness of nations;
the great-great cost
of ending impoverishment, the ills
of vast centuries as destiny wills.

At a time faith and the will to be great,
did flow to sea,
like rivers in torrents that did rush in;
people were free
from the wars on the great black continent,
no destiny
could harass the nations, the pyramids,
that any living it now does forbid.

Like waves endlessly crushing on the beach,

and never spent
drawing back again, rushing to and thro
the sheer moment
between us has something that is lasting;
evanescent,
with some joys in our mutual discourse
life also flows to its ultimate course.

[Reference: 'Dover Beach' by Matthew Arnold.]

Gert Strydom

Table Bay [2]

I can hear the waves roar,
slamming shingle on the rocks, the beach
drawing in and out
on Bloubergstrand
and the cadence is a age old shuddering
of waves breaking, continuing like before

and in the distance Table Bay
lies stretched out specked with
hundreds of little lights
like a enormous crown

with the flat mountain top
on display, etched against the night sky
and its full tide, the moon is full
yellow and magnificent

and the place of good hope,
lies on the shore
with waves breaking forever more
and lonely the beach stretches out before me,
in a long white ribbon
and the dark water goes out to the horizon,
almost as far as I can see

and the sea wind is fresh and new
and there's no light in sight
on the wavering ocean
just a darkness that envelopes me
as the waves
are throwing pebbles out
and drawing them in
before breaking on the beach

and there's nobody to be true to,
nobody to trust, only the reality of the here and now
and all hope, all promises, all joy and pain
remains the same
swept in and out of a confused world

forever breaking, forever rushing in.

Gert Strydom

Take Away (Refrain Stanza)

(After William Shakespeare)

Take away the separation and its pain
with kisses and bliss that comes again,
take those eyes, that lips, that smile away
with glances sunny full of the light of day,
where everything seems to be totally in vain,
that elegantly as if innocent were forsworn
that came with faith and hope in the morn
where still your essence do with me remain,
with kisses and bliss that comes again.

[Reference:"Take those lips" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Take My Hand (Zanila Rhyme)

Take my hand and I will show the way
to a place better than this
kiss me and tell me how you miss me
and we will find a kind of sweet bliss.

Let me loose myself in your sweet care
while life is at its sheer best,
tell me how you miss me and kiss me
while we do not care about the rest.

Dance romantic with me through the night
in a strange togetherness,
kiss me and tell me how you miss me
while you smile with utter gracefulness.

Every day as life carries on
you will still be in my heart,
tell me how you miss me and kiss me,
let us never from each other part.

Gert Strydom

Takeoff

All the sticks of paratroopers are harnessed
and a myriad of expressions
are displayed on the different faces
when the big engines of the Hercules
are started up one after the other

and we feel the body
of the big aeroplane vibrating
before it starts moving
to the runway
where it strains against the brakes
while every engine starts wining
louder and louder.

With brakes off it starts accelerating
with getting airborne
the only idea in the pilots mind
with buildings, vehicles and the control-tower
rushing by as if in an instant
and suddenly the vibrating is gone
and we are flying
with the earth dropping away.

Gert Strydom

Taking My Very Last Breath Of Air

Taking my very last
breath of air and will I see
your temperate smile grow to full capacity
when old age ravishes me
to a thin skeleton and every thing is testing,
when I bend to destiny that finishes
every single thing periodically.

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Gert Strydom

Talking To A Little Bird

I see you sitting twittering,
talking as if it's a spring thing
while moving up and down
with your black tail
fanning out, your black and white body
never sitting still
while you are pecking berries
hidden between branches and leaves.

Your voice is more pleasant
than that of the rascal window pecking
black-collard barbet,
or the cooing of love struck doves
and you are already happy
about the coming spring
of the next year

and to you it doesn't matter, that unions are striking,
laying the country lame,
the great victory in three nations rugby
over Australia,
even the death of school children
in a collision of a minibus taxi with a train

and I wish that my own life
was as simple, to appreciate the small, little things
like the warm sunshine on my skin,
the cool water splashing on to me
by overjoyed children
in the municipal swimming pool
and that I would also be able to realise
how great it is to be living.

Gert Strydom

Tankas About Namaqualand

In hot Namakwaland
small flowers blanket the ground,
everywhere seeds sprout
turning the world beautiful
into white, blue and orange.

*

Against a rock slope
grows a big old quiver tree,
finger pointing to
the sky, between white boulders
lying around in the grass.

*

Poison mountain's large plain,
at the large sandstone massif
is daisied snow white
where the big deadly wild garden
looks pretty from a distance

*

Yellow spring flowers
contrasts against old granite
that stand without life
against the blue horizon,
with time sand and rock remains.

*

In a land full of
contradictions, petals peep
out of the hot sand
with some small red heads rising
covering bulbs in the dirt.

*

The ice-cold sea wash
against the oven hot dry land,
burning like hell
with nights very dark and cold,
being lonely with great thirst.

Gert Strydom

Tankas About You And Me In Nature

Blood-red the moon hangs
as a ruby up in the sky
on velvet from God,
it does flame in the darkness
while some doves do flutter past.



You do scatter seed
with the strong wind spreading it,
it does fall softly
the sun burns everything
fields of wild cosmos flower.



Like yellow streetlight
the moon shines through the window,
your eyes do gleam
like those of a wild serval
when the black night does breathe here.



Blue-white thunder fall,
when in my arms you shelter,
the bed is cosy,
when harsh winds blow wild outside
but your hot body does flame.



In this cold winter
it is very surprising
clivias flower
when the cold black frost does come,
all other things do perish.



Lingering your scent
does penetrates everything
as if you are here
your own shampoo and perfume
do still remain here with me.



The barbet twitters
early when the sun does rise
its bright song of praise,
doves coo to their own content
to duty we do hurry.



It's dusk and dark
when the weaver does twitter
does greet the beauty
know nothing of our longing
or of the pain that may come.



The small vagabond
paradise-fly-catcher chirp,
it's orange and black
it frolics the morning bright,
and it does vanish.



You beat my heart faint,
want to go when I love you,
when you are away,
then you are longing for me,
love is but a funny thing.



You leave me wordless:
too lovely for words you are,

truly I remember
the long summer that is past,
where you do fill all my thoughts.

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Gert Strydom

Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture

The canon shots in Tchaikovsky's 1812 overture
tells me that a war of freedom
does rage unstoppable
where soldiers do drive the forces of Napoleon
out of Moscow
and in my thought I do see images
with their clothes full of red blood that flows,
the glow of the fire, the rubble, the desolation
that such a violent struggle does bring
when that piece of music
does penetrate to the depths of my soul.

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Gert Strydom

Tea For Two

You bring milk
and I make tea for two
and we are bonded together
in a moment of time.

In a way
we are radiated into each other
and to be with you,
brings more joy
than I know.

The tea is great
like it always is,
but it's much better
to drink it with you.

Gert Strydom

Telling Her Of Our Tender Vows (Terzanelle)

Telling her of our tender vows
I invited her to a rendezvous
as a loving spouse

and without a clue
she came to the deserted lane.
I invited her to a rendezvous

and more than insane
I tossed her down a well to drown.
She came to the deserted lane,

met me with a smile and I her with a frown
and could not remember the summer that we fell in love.
I tossed her down a well to drown,

with a hot sun in the sky above
and I'd care for her as little as for Satan or God
and could not remember the summer that we fell in love.

Quenching my thirst for liquor, to me she was less than a clod
and I'd care for her as little as for Satan or God
telling her of our tender vows
as a loving spouse.

[References: Les Fleurs du Mal: The Wine of the Murderer by Charles Pierre Baudelaire. The Wine of the Murderer by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

Terrible Mathematics (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis.)

By man's own actions
the world has become dreary
and sly foxes sneak around
among the rubbish dumps

but my people
have a covenant with the almighty God
who mercifully rescues them from distress
and everyone that follows Him is chosen.

By man's own ingenuity and profit mongering
there are natural disasters waiting,
the unrest of the sea is instigated
while factories fill the air with smoke

and according to the word of God
He is the source from where selfless love comes.

[Reference: 1999½ by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

Terzanelle To A Pet Cobra

Within your exposed white fangs
I look into the abyss
where death hangs

and with a soft hiss
you come erect.
I look into the abyss

without my own neglect
with a deadly sting
you come erect

and I see friendship in the hissing thing
being a comrade in loneliness.
With a deadly sting,

spreading your hood to some as a token of holiness
you come to peace closing the recess
being a comrade in loneliness

and sail over me as if with a pre-creation caress.
Within your exposed white fangs
you come to peace closing the recess
where death hangs.

[Reference: To a pet Cobra by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

Test Pilot

Finely tuned against destiny
the joystick is taken
and not a drop of sweat does appear
while mechanically he measures indicators,

do pull back further on the power lever,
with the jets buzzing louder,
energy making the engines tremble
and with the brakes off the aeroplane gets an own life

and against the blue elegance of the heavenly roof
it's only him, near to the Creator
of the endlessness
while he does blindly make adjustments,
hang for moments in the height
and the sun catches his circling flight.

Gert Strydom

Testament

Let the thunder blue-white lash,
fall like the voice of God,
while rain pours down
in its last refrain

and let my last memory be of your sweet face,
of the time that you truly did love me
while clouds fill the sky
and the earth's arms to me unfold

but in sheer rebellion then burn my body
and scatter what is left
that I drift on the wind
become part of the wide world.

Gert Strydom

That All Restrictions Disappear

I do get a silent expectation that after tears and pain,
your sincere love does come to me in its fullness,
everything that stand between us do disappear,

new hope appears with every new morning
and in a deadly time God does turn our days around.
I do get a silent expectation that after tears and pain

the intensity of our love gets focussed
and your humanity does constantly leave me speechless,
everything that stands between us does disappear.

Like a child you wait upon the hotter sunshine,
while you do hope on your seedlings to flower in spring.
I do get a silent expectation that after tears and pain

and a lock-down for you and me comes very close company.
but like flue a terrible thing is disguised,
everything that stands between us does disappear.

You are in every part of my consciousness
(but particles in the air kill other people.)
I do get a silent expectation that after tears and pain,
everything that stands between us does disappear.

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Gert Strydom

That An End Must Come

That an end must come
to the love between us,
that in death we will not miss each other,
not even will know about flowers blooming

and that every human being and all living things
with time will perish,
that all sheer joy and pain
and the things to which a person strives a life long

at a time will go to naught,
is knowledge of which I have got to take heed

but still I do know that God holds everything in His hand
and He writes down every person's character and humanity
with His almighty pen
until the day when even the elements will burn

and I know that He is beginning a new world
with each and every wonderful and lovely thing.

Gert Strydom

That Easter Weekend On The Way Home

That Easter weekend on the way home
I find a multitude of cars
of people on holiday
on the way to the sea

and just at Van Reenen's pass
there are two cars passing
over the white line
past zigzagging turns

at high speed
and they drive so fast that it seems
as if I am busy standing still

and moments later
there's a loud crash
and again another crash
when one drive right into a oncoming truck,

the other burst right through the railing
next to the highway
over the cliff face
falling down a ravine

as if they had chosen
to keep a appointment
with the angel of death,
as if the protecting angels
could not keep up

and out of the lorry
Easter bunnies and hot crossed buns
are strewn all over the road,
just where you look.

Gert Strydom

That From Each Other We Are Apart

That from each other we are apart is not my greatest grief
where still I do hold in high esteem and love you very dear,
that life does pass without you in it is of my sadness chief
and it's as if in life the way to you is never to me very clear,

where destiny intervenes and I not know what it's going to be,
our feelings are slowly but surely enhancing for each other
while I love you much more than before and you love me
and the way that my life is and some hardship does bother,

and in the loneliness and longing for you there is much pain,
where losing a career has a cost but then this is not really loss,
where God do open other ways in life for me where I do gain,
but still it does hinder me like a vicious and cruel kind of cross:

that we are apart and that you are for me the right one
and in all of this sincerely I come to you and do love you alone.

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Gert Strydom

That God Is The Only Thing That Does Remain

(in answer to Koos A. Kombuis)

That God is the only thing that does remain
for the problems, the questions and wounds
of this old cruel world
and that His love does over-bridge everything
does daily come to significance to me.

A person does not need a church
to experience His presence
as His Word does echo it out
and the works of His hands in nature
does bear a own witness

and the ominous things that do happen around me
does rather show that the power of darkness
is now casting everything into battle
and do inculcate its emissaries and people
as Lucifer does know that his time is running out
and I cannot lay the catastrophe of life,
of this old tattered world
at the feet of a God
who is the source of all words
and of all love.

I do know intrinsically that God
does have knowledge of everything,
even the things that I do ask
that does not come to answers,
even when the pain in life does knock me out
and does astound me,
I still am aware of Him
and even if I do not know the answers
to all questions and problems.

[Reference: "Gebed op stigtingsdag (manifest vir zen-calvinisme)"
(Prayer on founding day (manifest for Zen-Calvinism)) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

That Goodbye

You dropped the two dogs
and cats,
had some tea with us
and I took the motorbike
to show you the way
back to your highway

and we had a burger
and some French fries
at the Wimpy
and you cried
while we said some last words
face to face,

we embraced and kissed
and you got in your car
and I led the way
at places waiting on you
to catch up
and that goodbye
crushed me inside
and I felt something die
and I could cry,

but when I went back
I watched the needle
on the rev counter
dipping up and down
while I changed gears
and the speedometer
swung up to the far right

and still the sun was bright,
the wind greeted me
like a long lost friend
and speed and I were one
like a flash on that road
and sometimes
I still drive on.

Gert Strydom

That House In Brackenfell

That house in Brackenfell
had new furniture,
a wine red Kameel lounge suite,
a solid wood dining room table,
a big queen size bed with drawers,
a brand new washing machine,
a white Kelvinator stove and refrigerator.

I worked on an old display case there
stripping varnish, rubbing it
with sandpaper and gluing
it together again
into which your mother
put some mirrors at the back
and we gave it to her.

I planted flowers and shrubs
in that small garden
and watered them
and we lived there
in our first dwelling
for just a few months
driving to work
at Tygerberg hospital and back.

Your folks went away on holiday
and we had to look after
the Pomeranian
and you twisted
that orange-brown Wollie's member
when he lifted his leg
against the lounge suite
and the poor thing
had to go to the vet
to get over its shock.

Everything went really swell
till one night
that you used the bath

and were naked in it
with all the taps closed
when the walls
started to knock
with a sturdy sound
expected on the front door.

At first you didn't understand
what was happening
but when you realized
you gave a great scream,
and went to the bedroom
to dress.

Later I found out
that students had played
glass-glass with an ouija board
in that house
and had invited some spirits in.

When the lights
started to go on and off
and doors opened and closed
on their own
you had it with the witchery
and with that house
and moved to your parents
huge villa a little way off.

I at first stayed and prayed
and opened the bible
and told the spirits to be gone
and so they did
but you didn't believe it
and never set your foot
in that place again.

Gert Strydom

That It's Dangerous

That it's dangerous
to travel alone
lots of people have told me
and I have also
read it in poems
and ask you to accompany me

to places where the night falls dark
and days that are sometimes without end
and oceans that are bluer
than anything that we know

to beaches that are soft, inviolate and white
which go past the horizon,
but more than this
I need you
as my comrade, companion
and life partner

to as pilgrims together
go into the wide world
so that minutes become hours,
days, months and years

and if at a time
we become refugees
from staying young

and life bit by bit
slowly pass away with time
I'll love you
and you'll adore me.

Gert Strydom

That Later It Hangs Trembling

A girl plays
ballade pour Adeline
next-door on the piano
and in due time she gets it right
and it's as if her fingers
are fluttering like a butterfly

that later it hangs trembling
in the night-air
like a angel caught
while it is visible

and something wonderful
flows from the notes
while the child does bind
her heart and soul into it.

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Gert Strydom

That Love Does Just Grow (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Where it exists in the depth of the heart,
where daily it is of us a part
we know that love we cannot curtail,
that love does just grow and do prevail,
that love is a very strange kind of art,
that at a time by itself asks for more
where I do you truly sincerely adore
where with love I am not very smart,
where daily it is of us a part.

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Gert Strydom

That Mysterious Connection

That mysterious connection
I have maybe lost somewhere in my humanity
when my darling betrayed me,
that which can bring everything together

and it is only a big simplification
where you are in pain without defence.
That mysterious connection
I have maybe lost somewhere in my humanity

that love circle to the inside,
you cannot really stop the effect
when things go into decline and hurt,
distorting love to a monstrosity:
that mysterious connection.

(Reference: Breuk (Break) by Elisabeth Eybers.)

Gert Strydom

That Night

That night when the last rays
of the sun
were fading before the stars
He knew
that His own end
here on earth was drawing near,
that He have got to die
and again rise from the grave.
and it was no secret to Him

and when they came with burning torches
right up to Him,
when Peter draw his sword
He stretched out His own hand
in a gesture of peace,
attached the ear of Malchus
again to his head
and still those officials
wanted to nail the Lord God
onto a cross.

Gert Strydom

That Night There Was No Rest In The Forest (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

That night there was no rest in the forest
carnivores were preying at their best,
sneaking forward only brushing on twigs,
cold, deliberate action of killing
came about in hunger, to some chilling,
they were full of some deadly skills and tricks
putting every placid deer to the test.

Gert Strydom

That Nobody Knows

I know that nobody knows
what the future really holds
and that the yesterdays stay behind
and the tomorrows wait for themselves
and I only ask: give me today.

Let me now read love
in your eyes
and let this day be
like the only time
that I am here.

Nothing I can do to yesterday
and about the tomorrows
only destiny knows
which determines it
and here and now
is what I actually have.

Gert Strydom

That Our Love Must Be Lost (In Answer To N. P. Van Wyk Louw)

That our love must be lost,
at a time will have to end
that there is an end to all things,
is something that I find sorrowful and amazing
that no one can stop the coming of the night,
when sometimes I see your sunny glances
tags at my mind as I do know
that nothing, nobody can stop death
when at times I hold you tenderly
as if love can last eternally.

[Reference: "Dat alle liefde" ("That all love") by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

That Pain Exists Is Necessary Lord (In Reply To Breyten Breytenbach)

That pain exists is necessary Lord,
as it purifies me
and the more I suffer the nearer it brings me,
it brings You nearer to me

and at times Your crucifixion is too terrible
to understand, it torments me
to think that mere man
could act so mercilessly, so revolting,
like the deranged could shout and scream
to kill You, Lord
and some of them murderous
leaning forward and jump up and down

and although Your death is a realisation
of many prophecies,
Your suffering paid the price for the lot of man,
I am still lost
in your unselfish love
that demands from Your Father
to leave the perpetrators without reckoning,
the people that were spitting on You,
the people that hated You
and nobody can understand such deep love,
that does not turn around self, or own profit

but your pain and suffering was necessary Lord
and although some turn their backs on You
I beg You to keep me on the right way,
for Your help to unlearn my own conceit,
that is harming our relationship.

[Reference: breyten bid vir homself (breyten prays for himself) by Breyten Breytenbach.]

Gert Strydom

That People Totally Unstable Can Walk Into Your Home

Who will think that people totally unstable
can walk into your living-place, as they will,
can act with an iron-pipe as if merciless,

against my mother, a very old lady, violently
to spill her blood and life just like that?
Who will think that people totally unstable

without provocation or any aggression murderous
can make my mother scream my name deafening.
can act with an iron-pipe as if merciless,

as criminals try to steal the television and damage it,
that a human do shudder for such persons.
Who will think that people totally unstable

accessory to violence, invade a home in a armed robbery,
and me that they do not know jeer as a white man that has to die,
can act with an iron-pipe as if merciless.

The police-captain is of the opinion it's mischief, so sensible,
the other police laugh outside the yard, as if I will beg for my life.
Who will think that people totally unstable
can act with an iron-pipe as if merciless?

[Poet's note: At the murderous robbery of Eugene Terreblance I said in a poem
that every white-man in South Africa now stand in his . Zuma did put the
security-police on me and said that I wanted to start a civil prediction almost
came true to me in this incident.I do not belong to Mr. Terreblance's view of the
world or his organization but I am writing these words as the honest truth.]

Gert Strydom

That Set My Soul Aflame

Your hair was full of curls
in the candlelight as we danced,
and I felt your hot body
pressing caressing against mine
and your golden eyes sparkled
much brighter than the stars.

In the moonlight
every thing was magic
and your perfume
was enchanting as from
an ancient secret recipe
and you had me entranced,

with long sweet kisses
that set my soul aflame.

Gert Strydom

That Simultaneously Love Can Be Both Full Of Pain And Pleasure (In Answer To Johann De Lange)

That simultaneously
love can be both full of pleasure and pain,
can be full of times of despair and grief
and still can bring the greatest joy
I did not know
until I did fall in love with you.

Not even that you could be both the fire and ice,
could burn me to ash,
that you could make me mad about you,
can chase passion past the highest point
and still I do wonder
why the pain can at times cut right through me
and moments can decay to nothing
and how you can in a mere moment
make everything whole and right?

Gert Strydom

That The Going Away Is Near

That the going away is near
we both knew
and there was already heartache
waiting to happen.

Still it had been great
to be together
and to read love
in each other's eyes.

While we were watching a DVD
and your were lying against me
I wanted to catch moments
to have it forever like that.

Gert Strydom

That There Is A Time Of Rest For All Things (Sonnet)

That there is a time of rest for all things
I did realise when the winter of life did come
but still Your great and true care does remain everywhere
and not even a hair of a human being is lost
and sometimes a person does wonder about life without Your knowledge,
while at the onslaught of destiny a person stands astounded
but now in my years of early old age
there is even in the decline a kind of meaning,
while it becomes clear to me that Your plans do work better,
that You do continually go in advance on the way and do make provision
as Your care and thoughtfulness does come first
but still man is constrained to his own insight and wisdom
but when the outcome comes I do realise Your great love
in a world where rebellion, nemesis and heartache does reign.

Gert Strydom

That There Is Something Better In Each New Morning

(For Daleen)

That every new morning is better
when it comes full of sparkle suddenly,
even when summer comes in its full glory,
without you to me is meaningless,

it then only carries a big sadness
in my years of early old age.

That every new morning is better
when it comes full of sparkle suddenly,

with you becomes a wondrous event,
with your love joy becomes my property,
when you stretch out my days, when you astound me,
making me believe in a Godly witness
that every new morning is better.

Gert Strydom

That Which Is Between Us

is like the sparkle
that is at night in the star light.

like the flame
that burns day after day
white-hot in the sun

and it is told by your glance,
in your brown eyes with their green specks,
of which each look
carry your feelings faithfully

and it's caught in your hair
that hangs auburn
down your shoulders
(or sometimes truly blonde
when they have got their own colour)
and its part of your smile
which glistens so lovely

and in that electricity
in every touch
between you and me

and sometimes I do wish
that we do constantly
have this kind of effect
on each other

as if like this
I can truly note love down
and know that it is more

than only feelings,
more than only mutual trust and respect
and is a principle by which we do live

and it has got a own power and core
with its own depths,

without it being possible
to truly define love.

Gert Strydom

That Which Lies Between Us

How soft and firm and hot and wet
your lips are at times
and how tender and unstoppable,
is the passion
that I read in your eyes.

How intact and perfect
is that which lies between us
and at times no words,
is necessary to be between us
and we do not have to say anything
to find deeper meaning

Gert Strydom

That You And I Were Here

Still flows the river
and the waterfall rage
and it's still there
as time moves on
the function of it remains,
to stay and exist river
and waterfall
set in a place
on the planet earth.

The mountain at the back
of our house is there
and tomorrow
and in days to come,
it will remain into infinity
as a mountain
with aloes and sugar bush trees
growing on it.

Time brings no end
or havoc or great or real change
to these things,
but with destiny
it impacts on man
and even the brave,
the wise and the great
among men loose their minds
to Alzheimer's, get frail and weak
and life like the elements
of fire and water and air
vanish when its time is spent.

Maybe a structure, or words or deeds
or graphic images like paintings
or a life truly lived with integrity remains
for a short time,
to remind others in another time
that you and I were here.

That You Are A Wonderful And Beautiful Woman

(in answer to T.T. Cloete)

We loved each other
from the day that we met
and that you are a wonderful and pretty woman
your admirers do not have to tell me
and I am not blind
for the glances that follow you
while you still do stay true

and that a husband and wife
can love each other intimately
without distinction between husband and wife
is certainly the greatest kind of nonsense.

I do thank God
that He has created you as a wife for me

and still I do know that love
goes much further and deeper than just passion
and when old age comes
I still want to embrace you
and know about your beauty.

[Reference: "uniseks" (unisex) by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

That You Are Beautiful

That you are pretty
the whole world knows

but you do not really realize it
and it's as if you do not know of your own beauty

and the glances in every other eye
you do continually miss

and how we feel about each other,
that we are destined to be together,

how deep our feelings are,
that our worlds do fall apart

when we are separate

no other person does really comprehend,
not even your family,

or your friends that are becoming more and more
or even the postman that are bringing you letters.

Gert Strydom

That You Are Lovely

That you are lovely
the whole wide world does know

but how we do feel about each other
that we are meant to be together

not one person does know,
not even your family

or circle of friends that gets wider and wider,
not even the postman who brings my letters to you

and this piece of paper
cannot keep it a secret

and it does blab out what it knows
that you are far past beautiful.

Gert Strydom

That You Are With Me

I dream of the sun
and stars that fall
and the eclipse of the moon
and I dream of you,
who is the light
in my life.

I dream of seasons
that chases crazy past in a sting
and becomes muddled
and you stay with me
and are the one,
that gives sense to my life.

I dream that life's
dark night,
envelops me
and that you are still with me
and at the place beyond the grave;
you cherish and embrace me still.

Gert Strydom

That You Have Taken Her From Me

That you have taken her from me
while I loved her truly
as if she was from marriage free
as if she could belong to you duly.

It is not just an insincere thing
but to do so under the cloak of friendship
is something that pierces with its sting
like being sacrilegious during worship.

You did something ungodly
and smiling knifed me from behind,
never were your intentions to be kind
and gladly you acted mercilessly, even deadly:

Hers, by falling for you and by being to me untrue.
Yours, by giving me what wasn't due.

[References: Sonnets 41 & 42 "Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits" and
"That thou hast her it is not all my grief" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

That You Were Once Unkind Now Brings Tranquillity

That you were once unkind now brings tranquillity
and for all the pain that you once dished out
it doesn't anymore bother me
and nothing now can bring about

a true reckoning, or revenge taken
as it's been a hell of a long time
and I am not anymore shaken
at what I had to suffer at your crime

and still the acts of destiny hits
much harsher than anything that I would have tendered
but truly its piercing meets exactly where it fits
as if my woe have been remembered:

in reckoning all men before God meets a fee:
mine absolution, yours a punishment to ransom me.

[Reference: Sonnet 120 "That you were once unkind befriends me now" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

That's A Childless Madonna Staring Lifelike

That's a childless Madonna staring lifelike
from the wall, with eyes moving
as if they are following
every movement, a look-alike

to the mother of God,
as if something divine,
is filling her eyes that are looking in mine
and it feels as if its on holy ground that I trod

with the picture's countenance having a kind of grace
while the artist Mea watches me,
where I am awestruck by the art, she smiles suddenly.
"Who can contemplate the expression on the painted face? "

I wonder loudly while it feels
as if the picture is living,
a kind of strange thing
and my mind reels

while I try and contemplate the changing expression
now softening in the fading light
almost becoming indistinct with the coming of night
but the picture retains its original dimension,

is almost surreal and still there
with eyes that never closes watching, always looking
as if comprehending something,
following, following me almost anywhere.

Gert Strydom

The Accused

Suddenly policemen surround me
standing around me in a circle
with hands taking hold from the back of my pants
handcuffs locking around my wrists and tightening twisting.

heatedly I try to proof my innocence
but the persecutors say what they want to
and look staring at me
that I myself feel the guilt lying on me;

more so when others surround me in a cell
trellis-grate after trellis grate bangs shut around me
and I know that I am a patriot,
from being small walked on that way

but nobody wants to or can bring a charge against me
they just want me to see the might that the police have got.

Gert Strydom

The Act Of God

(in answer to Totius)

Where my burden of sin like an umbrella-thorn-bush entangles and pierces
I do wait upon Your love and Your mercy to break through,
where in the darkness only bigger thorns do appear,
You constantly keep me dumbstruck when the new morning does arrive.

[Reference:"Die Godsbesluit" (The act of God)by Totius.]

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Gert Strydom

The African Lammergeyer

Very few birds are so impressive
as the lammergeyer
with its three meter stretched out wings
when it glides circling
high above the mountains.

Legends tell that this bird
snatches people and fly away with them
but the weak claws and feet
contradicts these tales

and in spite of its size
the lammergeyer is a timid and shy bird
that lives from carrion
and it eats the remains of animals
like a vulture

and it carries the large bones
to tremendous heights
to drop upon rocks
to break them open
before it circles down
to peck up the bits of marrow.

Gert Strydom

The Afterbirth

Your master had discarded you
when he left for Spain
and left you and your
black and brown mate
and six newly born puppies.

He had decided to give you away
to people who already
had five other dogs,
promising to get
the both of you castrated
and then you got in heat
and it was evident
that none of his promises
he would meet.

I see you with dear brown eyes
lying between your pups,
cuddling and feeding them
and dancing with joy
when you see me.

I turn one of the seats
of the lounge suite over
and it is marked with blood
on the one side
where some navel strings
and afterbirth left their marks

and another of your master's lies
that you gave birth
on the floor
is exposed
and I wonder why
they didn't clean off the blood
when it was still a possibility
and if integrity means nothing
to some people?

The Air Is Full Of Darkness

The air is full of darkness
with stars and city lights
filling it to capacity

and yet I find something lacks
in her making
and nowhere I can find
a special star
or one falling

as even the sky
has no token of you,
as if you have disappeared
completely from this earth
and I am waiting in vain
for you to reach out to me

but then suddenly
a SMS from you do arrive.

Gert Strydom

The Air Was Full Of Fire And Sand

The night that I wished to be home
as the path we were on
lead to death
and not like the axiom to Rome

behind enemy lines
we called in the vultures of death
and the chill froze my breath
in clouds in the bright moonlight,

followed the mist from the river
penetrating ever deeper
into the enemy positions
we hid almost in their midst

and with the rising sun
eerie birds came screeching down
with flaming afterburners
dropping rockets and bombs
on enemy tanks,
shelling armoured cars
with raging canon
and the air was full
of fire and sand.

Gert Strydom

The Almond (In Answer To A.E. Housman)

Prettier, more pure white
than the cherry tree,
is the almond to me, when she
flowers in spring
spreading her wedding cloak,
while a thousand birds sing
in a vast welcoming

and no little tree sprite
in her branches roam
like they do in the giant oak,
but birds do their chattering.

Gert Strydom

The Altar

What use is a church,
what use are religious people to me,
when the love of Christ,
I do not in them and in it see
and when they act like religious fanatics
as if they are here to be judge and jury
and have all the facts?

Even going so far in writing,
to dare me to act with destruction,
when it lies in my hands?

And I refrain from that kind of thing,
scared that somehow, some of their members,
are sincere followers of Jesus Christ,
whom I may also harm.

I take the Bible as the book, the only one
which spells out the gospel of my life,
gives explanations of the beyond
and shows the things to come
and every day in humility
I stand on my knees,
trying to make my heart
the altar of my own church.

Gert Strydom

The Anglo Boer War

When that wimp of a Englishman
called Cecil John Rhodes
decided that he wanted gold,
that the diamonds in his pockets
was not enough

he wanted to see that British Union Jack flutter,
over the whole of Southern Africa
to his queen he went
to enchant her patriotic soul
to claim the Orange Free State
and Transvaal Republics as British territories

to sent three thousand
Christian farmers to their deaths,
to burn farmsteads down to the ground,
to throw salt in the lands,
to slaughter every animal there,

to murder twenty thousand women
and children
in concentration camps

and to loose twenty eight thousand
of the queen's own as killed, as dead
shot through the heart, shot through the head.

[Note: My own great grandmother died in a British concentration camp and my great grandfather was sent by the British to St. Helena as a prisoner of war and as a result of this, my grandfather grew up in a orphanage.]

Gert Strydom

The Ape

With primeval rage
a big ape sneers from a swing
and the jungle ferments in its cage
when it jumps leaving the swing jangling

with dormant hate
it gnaws on its teeth
slams a huge fist at the bars of fate
stares with a angry eye as if it can hardly breathe

shakes its whole body screaming
longing after tropical giant trees
and slams the swing leaving it ringing,
slaps with its hands at some passing bees

hating its cage, raging in calumny
and it longs to escape, to be free

Gert Strydom

The Apocryphal Ballade Of The Son Of Nazareth

(after A. G. Visser)

Centuries back the Son did play in Nazareth,
His days were full of duties and fun
and in big love His mother
did teach Him every commandment of God's law.

Choir:

Where he and his friends did play together
His Father's love to Him was real,
He told them about heaven and the things there
and did share all of His toys with them.

Careful they did find some clay at the stream
and the throwing with bending sticks was fun for every child,
later one did build Noah's ark from clay
and where the other were making animals He was loved

but the Son from whose eyes the sun did shine,
worked without words finely with the clay
made a affable laughing-dove with spread wings
told about the world once without pain

he threw the dove into the air
where alive it did fly in a fast flight
much higher did turn in a circle
but the dove fluttered back to Him.

Speechless everyone did want to see the living dove,
did want to hold the pretty bird in their hands
and everyone listened big-eyed to the Son in a circle
when He entrusted them with the wonders of creation,

told them that He and His Father and the Spirit did make everything,
how fierce cherubs did protect the first humans from Lucifer,
how perfect, wonderful, great and special everything at a time had been
before man did decide to get involved with sin

but that God did come with the great solution

and the Father and the Spirit did sent Him
to make a difference on a destroyed world
and they did believe Him stood astonished with Him.

[Reference:"Lank gelede in Nasaret" (Long ago in Nasareth)by A. G.
Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

The Approaching Day Of Judgement (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

Make a big mockery and laugh
about the approaching day of judgement
as if the destiny of man is a myth,
when the almighty God comes at His time in power

people will beg mountains to fall on them,
when his dire thunders flash everywhere
and graves open,
you will stand before the creator of the universe.

[Rook en oker (Smoke and ochre) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

The Army

They wanted a man
made from steel
or titanium would have
suited much better,
unfortunately I am
of flesh and bone and blood
and have a heart for peace
and could not become
a mere killing machine.

We marched up
and down the hill
and up again
and for nobody it was a thrill
and drove across the border
and came back
and some were wounded,
crippled, blind and dead
and those alive
were much different
from who they were before.

I wanted them to leave me
in peace,
but they still
kept calling me
for another stint and some more
and there was no way out
and suddenly it all changed
and although we won
all the battles and the war
we lost it all
and lost much more
from ourselves
and the sacrifices
did not matter.

Gert Strydom

The Art Of Poetry (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

A poem should touch, should palpable belong,
it should reach out,
with a kind of eternal caring truth;
it should scream, shout
of each injustice and pain that do remain
and be about
almost anything or each happening,
as something that is truly worth saying.

Not silent or dumb it falls on the ear,
as it's profound,
in a great symphony of the purest
kind of clear sound,
its rhythms do ring with every line
it is not bound
by politics, machinations of men
and can be a blessing or an omen.

[Reference: "Ars poetica" by Archibald Macleish.]

Gert Strydom

The Art Of Surfing

I have not mastered the art
of riding on rolling waves
fifteen feet high,
speeding by like a bird
in the overcast sky,
slicing the roaring thundering rush
of water filled with immense power
piping through swirling churning cavities
on a storm tossed sea
and almost drowned in the trying
with the board passing me
like a piece of driftwood,
with water enveloping me,
knocking the breath of life from me
and I sank like a piece of lead
and was tossed out
like spit on the beach.

Gert Strydom

The Atomic Club

J. Robert Oppenheimer he was of them one,
of the atomic club who like gods did turn people to stone,
as if they had power that connected to heaven, earth and hell
had clenched it straight from a ancient Nordic Yggdrasil
and when the dropping of the nuclear bombs were done
they thought that they had done very well
most Americans were sure that it was God's will

almost no one laughed, cried and most were totally silent
and publicly J. Robert Oppenheimer quoted Vishnu,
the entire world was shocked at the explosions that were so violent
but acted as if this kind of punishment to the Japanese were due

as if the burning radiation and hell of atomic weapons were pure
and of their impact the line from the Bhagavad-Gita was sure:
"now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."

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Gert Strydom

The Autumn Is In The Leaves

The autumn is in the leaves,
in the gestures of people,
when trees are already standing as skeletons,
the autumn is bringing pain
when the winter appears,
the stormy wind blows doors close
with spots of sun splashing down,
stripped trees are in their bark,
lonely I walk in the lane.

Gert Strydom

The Autumn That Suddenly Gambol Recklessly

The autumn that suddenly gambol recklessly
drawing bright lines, made me think of you
but we were worlds apart
when the stars were shining late in the night.

Still I had dreamt about you,
that you like spring
come young and pretty to me,
while the wind was blowing through your hair,

whispering words of love through the reeds
and a whole squadron of birds were singing along
and that night wasn't dark anymore,
your eyes went to the depths of my soul.

Gert Strydom

The Avocado Tree

Next to the house
an avocado tree grows
over which this winter
during the night I draw
black plastic bags
to try and stop the effect of the black frost.

Tree branches around it protects
against the strong wind
but the climate attacks deadly
and every day
I and the tree have a struggle against nature
to let survival
last a little bit longer.

[Reference: Der Pflaumenbaum by Bertolt Brecht.]

Gert Strydom

The Baboon

Bouncing buoyantly, rushing along
the young African baboon
greyish-brown with a green tint
came to the fence of the game reserve
it rushed up that fence till almost
at the top where it stopped.

First one hand, then another,
then one more and then the last
carefully came over the electric wires
on the top before it cheered in joy
bobbing and hobbled on.

The orchard with peach
and apricot trees
was its aim and in a rush
it went up a peach tree
plucking two or three
and pushing them one
after another into its mouth.

The stupid little bush sprite
couldn't get another peach
into its mouth
and gave it one bite
and dropped it to the ground
and did the same with the next
and the following peach
and so it almost stripped the tree.

Having eaten to its satisfaction
it went back from where it came
and two hours later
I saw a whole troop of baboons,
some mothers with babies
riding on their backs
and big males
with long white exposed fangs.

Danger was lurking in that orchard,
danger of being stripped totally
and danger for me,
as a baboons can easily
rip a leopard apart
with claws and fangs.

As eight year old boy
I knew it well,
picked up a broom
and to the orchard I rushed
and the big male baboons
glared at me,
but when I brought the broom
to my shoulder like a gun
the sentry barked its warning
and baboons fell from trees
and there were baboons everywhere
running away and bellowing their dismay.

Gert Strydom

The Bad Lands

Nowhere in the bush
where lions, leopard,
crocodiles, hippos
and snakes dwelt
felt really bad to me.

On patrol at times
a hidden landmine,
a booby-trapped corpse
could shatter you
with a thousand
hell hot pieces of steel
and still skill, tenacity
and knowledge kept me safe.

Even in Angola facing enemy armour
where shells swished past,
Ratel armoured cars were trapped
and shot out
and the enemy
hatched in steel caskets
that were armoured cars
and tanks at a time,

where hyena, jackal
and vultures ripped through bodies
of shot, sliced, ripped Cuban
and Fapla soldiers
we overcame
and although the cruelty of war
and lost of human live
gripped me
and the smell penetrated
up into my soul,
the ground stayed pure
and African
as if we did belong.

Yet when I visit that little hill

(in Natal)
where Dingaan misled Piet Retief
and had him
and his companions slaughtered
and fed their bodies
to the birds, the wind, the sun
their spilled blood is still glowing
as if radioactive
and that place
feels really evil to me.

Gert Strydom

The Bakbakiri (Or Bush-Shrike)

In my garden one-day while a sprinkler did spray the grass
on a rock right adjacent to the spray while a breeze with leaves did pass
a bakbakiri was enchanting its mate trying its utmost to prove
the depth, the expanse and sincerity of its love
where it did gambol to her in a twittering fluttering slow flight
while she did sing out her heart's utter delight
as he was dancing, prancing in a mad enchanting trod
with his small head did up and down and to and fro nod
his green wings did whirl, flap and flutter with the utmost skill
and dancing along she did the perfect picture fill.

Upon another day I found their nest a bowled cup of twigs up in a tree
and with yellow heads, throats and backs and blue legs I did that birds see
where they were eating insects, lizards, small birds and frogs
but they were shy and skulking away from my dogs

had laid red-brown blotched green-blue eggs where they waited to hatch
and to those lovely birds I had become attached.

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Amakeia

(after A. G. Visser)

On the border of the Transkei white pioneers did live alone.
When the mother died Amakeia did get the white child in her care
and there at the Kei River did promise to protect him until he was grown up.
"Be silent, be silent you poor little baby, " she hums.

Chorus:

When the stormy winds sometimes howl down,
the story of Amakeia and a white baby is told
where for escape she does cross the cliffs of the mountains,
where she sets the child's life much higher than her own.

With everything in her power she cared for the white child
did feed him, told him stories and when he did fall did clean his wounds,
did continually hum the small baby asleep
and for herself her motherly love was totally blind.

When she saw signs that the sixth border war was breaking out
for escaped she crossed the Kei River
did flee into the cliffs of the Amatola Mountains
to stop the Xhosa impi to avenge themselves on the white child.

Continually she did hum: "Be silent, be quiet, "
while somewhere else the Xhosa impi did spill innocent blood
and did flee with him to safety
for the promise and her love for the child.

Until scouts that were sneaking around high in the mountains
did slyly steal upon the two of them
and she unsuspecting kept singing: "Be silent, be quiet, "
where they stood with blood dripping from their spears.

"Spare him, " she said with her hands stretched out,
she tried to cover the baby with her own body.
"Give him here, " the whole gang roared in rage
and that black warrior did draw her nearer to him.

"He is only a baby, " Amakeia was brave and fierce.

"Die with him or give here immediately! "
"Rather stab me to death and let him live"
and the woman and child died with the daybreak.

[Reference:"Amakeia" by A. G. 's note:An impi here does refer to a whole tribal army with different regiments making it up.]

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of André Stander

There was a valiant bank robber, who was well known,
who scorned to earn a living as policeman
and after robbing bank after bank became renown
admired by every man and every woman

Chorus

as a captain of police he knew them inside out
and the papers, even the TV-news published his deeds and robberies
about hitting four banks even five in one day, without a sweat or shout
and just walking in and collecting like you would do for groceries.

So he took a aeroplane to Durban and went visiting
but did not get near to the beach or the sea
was fishing at the banks, casting
sacks over counters in merry glee

and disguised, a master of the art
nobody could touch him or so it seemed
and with their money they did have to part
when and where he deemed

but betrayed by his police mate,
a fellow policeman in whom he did confess,
a fastidious man some people hate
left André Stander in a great mess

that lead to his arrest
and he met some other friends and suddenly they were three,
but he wasn't for long the government's guest
and then all three of them robbed joyfully

until a working girl, the prostitute kind,
who kiss and squeeze
got it into her mind
to notify the good old police

for a awesome reward
and thought that they would be caught,
that she would be renowned get some award,

but good great André Stander disappeared into the naught.

In the good old great USA they gunned him down
shot him with a shotgun, blew off his head
more scared of him then their own
made certain that he was dead.

Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Attila The Hun

(after C. M. van der Heever)

Over the mountains they come through the wilderness
where murderous they do ride into war
as rough barbarians that do fear nothing and nobody
and every living thing does try to avoid them.

Chorus:

The wishes of Attila becomes the law
and nobody can oppose the Huns
where they come in a cruel multitude
and do threaten kingdom after kingdom.

On a high hillock Attila stares in the morning-light
with his eyes bright and blue in his face,
as a victorious monarch on his horse
and he does suddenly frown

when he notices a multitude of lovely women in the valley below,
most do bow down before him and are eager to serve
but one does resist him and turns away from him,
do treat him like he thinks he does not deserve.

Fury and fierce hatred suddenly burns in him
when his multitude on horses do come down to the city
bringing destruction and annihilation everywhere
and that woman cannot disguise herself from him

and when again she looks in contempt at him,
he does like her more than any other woman,
do grab her with violence and drag her along,
forces her against her will to marry him.

She becomes his property,
is forced to sit with him at the table
where from a skull he drinks his wine
while a pig is fried on a spit.

Later he cannot wait longer on the marriage-night

and he does conquer her with his body's great power
where in tears for hours she lies under him,
do wait for the moment to escape

but when she does come slowly out from beneath him
she is totally surprised and also astonished
as he lies stretched out and asleep
and a big dagger is right next to him,

for moments she lies while guards do shine with a torch,
and they do satisfied walk away from them into the night,
with rage she grabs that dagger and lift it with both hands
where it pierces Attila's heart again and again in the moonlight.

That night there is a thousand torches shining everywhere.
Every hillock and mountain has with the lights a big golden line
and where Europe sleeps in tranquillity it is screamed:"Attila is dead!
"
Into the nought the murderess has disappeared.

[Reference:"Attila" by C. M. van der 's note:In the year 453 A.D.
Attila was busy attacking the Eastern Roman Empire and according to a story he
was murdered on his marriage-night by a woman that he forced to marry him
against her will.]

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Commandant Gideon Jacobus Scheepers

I

Where he does believe in victory through bravery,
Gideon Scheepers ride with his Witkoppen-Commando
and as a heliographer and scout and commander,
his citizens do turn the Cape Colony upside down.

II

Chorus:

Desperate to stop the destruction of trains and telegraph-lines,
where Scheepers do in the towns order equipment, food and horses to be given,
do lock up magistrates and the police in their own cells and do set citizens free,
lord Kitchener tries to stop him with colonel Scobell.

III

Two black men that spied for the British are shot by Scheepers,
from town to town in the Cape Colony guerrilla war is waged,
the brave deeds of Scheepers and his teenagers embarrass the British
and the 10th Hussars are beaten and to stop Scheepers seems in vain.

IV

At a order and a proclamation by president Steyn and general Christiaan de Wet,
against the British scorching earth policy Scheepers burn down farms in
resistance
in the Cape Colony against the people that do give resistance against the Boers,
and with Scheepers and his Witkoppen-commando the fat is in the fire,

V

with two hundred and seventy men ambushes are laid everywhere for the British,

at Oudtshoorn many horses are taken and to surrender towns are commanded,
at Calitzdorp a Hugo (a British spy and assassin)do join them as a rebel
and at Koppieskraal Gideon Scheepers is left behind where he is deadly ill.

VI

The British takes him prisoner and in their hospitals his health is restored,
they do deny him as a Boer officer from Middelburg and do try him as a rebel,
of murder, robbery and loss of property Gideon Scheepers is accused,

before a firing squad in the Karoo a Boer warrior is blindfolded and murdered.

VII

Gideon Jacobus Scheepers is buried in an unmarked and unknown grave,
to stop his commando to find his body on the same night it is exhumed,
he is buried again and lime is spread out over him,
where he was captured as an ill man and peacefully did surrender

VIII

but until their death Jacobus and Sophia Scheepers searched for the grave of
their child,
they and the British military authority could not find the resting place that was
denied.

Gideon Jacobus Scheepers a Boer commandant from Middelburg in the
Transvaal,
is killed as a rebel at the command of lord Kitchner who is blinded by his British
hate.

[Poet's note: "In May 1898 Gideon Scheepers (a citizen of the Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic) who served in the ZAR-state Artillery was seconded to the Orange Free State Artillery (of the Orange Free State republic). "After recruiting Cape rebels, Gideon Jacobus Scheepers was promoted at the age of 22 years to the rank of commandant of a unit of 150 men, the Witkoppen-commando (White-head-commando) (after the white band around their hats) and they were ordered to go to war against the British troops in the Cape Colony. "His commando did grow to 270 men before he was poisoned and could not fight further. The prisoner of war Gideon Jacobus Scheepers was killed by a British firing squad while the second Anglo-Boer war was still raging as a rebel and he had never been a British subject or British citizen in his life.

A commandant was an officer with the rank equivalent to that of lieutenant colonel. The rank between major and colonel. It was an officer in control of a Boer commando during the second Anglo-Boer war.

"Because of the British scorched earth policy, where innumerable properties were torched and razed by the British (an estimated 33000 during the war) Boer leaders President Steyn and Commandant-general Christiaan de Wet issued a proclamation on the 14th of January 1901: "Warn the officers of Her Majesty's troops, as we have already done, that unless they cease this destruction of property in the Republics we shall wreak our vengeance by

destroying the property of Her Majesty's subjects who are not kindly disposed toward us."

Commandant-general: Supreme commander. Persons in this position during the second Anglo-Boer war: Orange Free State Republic: Commandant-general Ferreira and after his death commandant-general Christiaan de Wet.

There are three of my English poems and six poems of other poets that had been written before this poem of which the Afrikaans version of the encyclopaedia Wikipedia does I felt that I could not write the poem about commandant Gideon Scheepers that I wanted to until I did write this poem after further research about other poems of which I do bare knowledge about Gideon Scheepers or in which he is mentioned are: "Gebed om die gebeente" (prayer of the bones)by D. J. Opperman, "Gideon Scheepers" by H. J. Pieterse, "Scheepers" by Elizabeth Molteno, "The cry of South Africa" by Olive Schreiner, "Droom en doen" (Dream and do)by C. Louis Leipoldt, "Gideon Scheepers, ""Commandant Gideon Scheepers" and "Commandant Gideon Scheepers (2) " by myself (Gert Strydom) .]

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Etty Hillesum

(after Lina Spies)

Like an animal I was put on a train,
my pretty dress is stained and brown,
suddenly they did just run into the living room,
with violence and rifles the SS did appear.

Chorus:

Where God does love his people
it does make no sense,
where I am going to Auschwitz
as a woman, a pretty Jewess

I speak Dutch, as it is my own language,
I feel lost on the goods wagon
but it's my transportation and that of my nation
and nobody and nothing can rescue me here,

out of my rucksack I take the Bible,
I pray that God must stop the Germans
read from Psalms God is my shelter, my stronghold,
outside the train reflects against a window

and this train is a very quick funeral procession,
in my heart I do greet my country and my people,
I cannot hold this hellish thing against every German,
on my face there is some of the black sooth of the locomotive

and I wonder about God and the coming death,
about the evil of humanity
and nearer comes Auschwitz-Birkenau,
I am astounded with the Germans, Hitler and the SS.

[Reference: "Etty Hillesum" by Lina 's note:

"He who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust." Psalm 91: 1-2.

"The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble." Psalm 9: 9.

In Etty Hillesum's diary is written:

"Ik bin al in duizend concentratiekampen,
duizend doden gestorven."

My free translation:

"In a thousand concentration-camps,
I have died a thousand deaths."

Etty Hillesum: Middelburg 15-01-1914 - Auschwitz-Birkenau 30-11-1943.]

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Field-Coronet Jan Pieterse

(after Toon van den Heever)

I

Ten Boers and Jan Pieterse holds the neck,
when the commando do depart through the ford,
where bullets do around them whistle away from the rocks
while the British fire with cannons at them.

II

Chorus:

"Just another hour to keep this neck, "
Jan Pieterse says while he looks upon his men
in the hell of lyddite-bombs coming down,
but everything is entrusted to God in prayer,

III

where the fiery smoke of the bullets do burn on the rocks,
every Boer shoots with a Mauser-rifle in his hand,
as through the ford the commando has to pass
and this thing takes bravery and not intellect.

IV

"Rush through he ford and drive the horses! "
Below there is the thundering of hooves as if the commando does understand
and the last horsemen is safely through when the dust settles
where Jan Pieterse and his men do firmly stand.

V

"Clear out! " He commands strictly, wild and stern.
"Hurry with the horses, " while the hooves do gnash over stone,
he hears behind him someone suddenly scream and he is alone
and the smell of death and blood and smoke is fresh,

VI

where he turns his horse around and gallops back through the bullets
and everyone but one of his men are dead,
he cannot leave him behind while the bullets sing around him,
as he is wounded and is in great distress.

VII

He jerks his own shirt off to stop the bleeding of the wounded man,
throws him over the saddle's pommel where he affronts the enemy,
by riding just at a walk through the rain of bullets,
as if God is warding off the cannons and the bullets from him.

VIII

"Stop firing! He is a hero! " Screams the British general
and it's yellow when the British do take off their helmets.
"Three cheers for the Boer! " They roar over and over
and Jan Pieterse waves back with his hat from his saddle,

IX

where for another moment he is etched against the distant horizon,
does go over the top of the hill with the red descending sun behind him,
in his hand he holds a Boer's fiery-hot Mauser-rifle
and for his dead comrades he would cry if he could.

[Reference: "Rit-rympie" (Riding-rhyme) by Toon van den Heever.
Poet's note: A field-coronet: "During the second Anglo-Boer war: A official
dealing with the military order in a ward. A field-coronet was an officer with the
rank equivalent to that of a captain. A field-coronet was an important official, in
the local government, who was subject to the magistrate and had functions of
great meaning in accordance with local, administrative, judicial and police
matters. In his ward the field coronet represented the magistrate."]

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The Ballade Of Field-Coronet Salmon Gerhardus Van As

(after C. Louis Leipoldt)

I

At night in the darkness as the moon rises
there is a British officer that astonishes the Boers,
where every night he rides with a white flag to them
and then the rifles of the Boers do follow him.

II

Chorus:

Every night he passes with a line of dust,
tries to lead the Boers astray to surrender,
where constantly he is scouting their positions
and then with that information does ride back to the British.

III

Constantly he wants to convince them that they are going to loose,
says frankly to them: "do surrender, "
where he is spying on their new positions,
to enable the British to kill them with their cannons.

IV

On a hillock Salmon van As is at the most forward position,
there is some creaking with branches breaking in the bush,
where that Englishman is coming nearer to his position,
which could just there cost his life.

V

In defence of his life Salmon do fire,
as he kills captain Miers in the Sugar-bush-hillocks,
some black men run with that report to the camp of the British
and an English major thinks of murder and his anger is great.

VI

At the Peace of Vereeniging the blood of van As is claimed as a war criminal,
a brave Boer warrior has to compensate for the crimes of an Englishman
and in Heidelberg van As continues with his life,

believes that God and the truth will protect him from any charge.

VII

Salmon is arrested by the British and summoned before a military court
and the actions of that so-called court are very low,
he is not allowed a defence or to call witnesses,
he is seen as a war criminal as it does fit the British,

VIII

bravely he writes to his parents who are praying for him to keep faith
and for his beloved fiancé to still trust in God,
thinks that reverent A. J. Louw will be able to bring his case to the British
but the enemy do view Salmon as a murderer

IX

and at daybreak the rifles of a British firing squad resound,
a brave Boer is murdered and falls with the bullets going through him
and in the cliff where he had been buried grows a big thorn tree,
as a witness of this true story in the dale of the Sugar-bush-hillocks.

[Reference: "Salmon van As" by C. Louis 's note: Salmon Gerhardus van As was a field-coronet of the Heidelberg Commando and these events did occur in the Sugar-bush-hillocks at Heidelberg in the Transvaal now Gauteng. A field-coronet: "During the second Anglo-Boer war: A official dealing with the military order in a ward. A field-coronet was an officer with the rank equivalent to that of a captain. A field-coronet was an important official, in the local government, who was subject to the magistrate and had functions of great meaning in accordance with local, administrative, judicial and police matters. In his ward the field coronet represented the magistrate."]

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Die ballade van veldkornet Salmon Gerhardus van As*
(na C. Louis Leipoldt)

I

Snags in die donkerte as die maan opkom
is daar 'n Britse offisier wat die Boere verstom,
waar hy elke aand met 'n wit vlag na hulle ry
en dan volg die Boere se geweerlope vir hom.

II

Koor:

Elke aand kom hy met 'n stofstreep verby,
probeer die Boere tot oorgawe verlei,
waar hy gedurig hulle posisies bly verken
en dan met inligting na die Britte toe terug ry.

III

Gedurig wil hy hulle oortuig dat hulle gaan verloor
sê prontuit aan hulle: "gee maar oor, "
waar hy gedurig hulle nuwe posisie kom bespied
sodat die Britte hulle met kanonne kan vermoor.

IV

Op 'n koppie is Salmon van As by die voorpos,
dit kraak met takke wat breek daar in die bos
waar daardie Engelsman na sy posisie nader kom,
wat net daar Salmon se lewe kan kos.

V

Tot verdediging van sy lewe knal van As se skoot,
skiet hy vir kaptein Miers in die Suikerbosrand dood,
swartes hardloop met 'n gerug na die Engelse kamp
en 'n Britse majoor dink aan moord, sy woede is groot.

VI

By die Vrede van Vereniging word geëis na van As se bloed,
moet 'n dapper kryger vir die misdaad van 'n Engelsman vergoed
en in Heidelberg gaan Salmon van As met sy eie lewe aan,
glo dat God en die waarheid hom van enige aanklagte sal behoed.

VII

Salmon word gearresteer, deur die Britte voor 'n krygshof gedaag
en die optrede van daardie sogenaamde hof is uiters laag,
hy word nie toegelaat tot verdediging of om getuies te roep,
as 'n oorlogsmisdadiger beskou soos dit die Engelse behaag,

VIII

dapper skryf hy vir sy ouers wat vir hom bid om geloof te hou
en vir sy geliefde verloofde om steeds op God te bly vertrou,
dink dat dominee A. sy saak aan die Engelse sal kan stel,
maar nog word Salmon deur die vyand as 'n moordenaar beskou

IX

en met ligdag is daar 'n Britse vuurpeloton se gewere wat knal,
is daar 'n dapper Boer wat vermoor word en voor die koeëls val
en in die kloof staan waar hy begrawe was 'n groot doringboom,
as 'n getuie van hierdie verhaal daar in die Suikerbosrand se dal.

[Verwysing: "Salmon van As" deur C. Louis r se nota: Salmon
Gerhardus van As was 'n veldkornet in die Heidelberg kommando en hierdie
gebeure het afgespeel in die Suikerbosrand by Heidelberg in die Transvaal nou
Gauteng. 'n Veldkornet: Gedurende Tweede Anglo-Boere oorlog:
"Amptenaar belas met (militêre)orde in 'n wyk. Offisier met 'n rang gelyk
aan kaptein." Nasionale woordeboek. "'n Belangrike amptenaar, in
die plaaslike bestuur wat ondergeskik was aan die landdros en funksies van groot
betekenis uitgeoefen het in verband met plaaslike, administratiewe, regterlike en
polisie aangeleenthede: In sy wyk het die veldkornet die landdros
verteenwoordig." Hand woordeboek van die Afrikaanse taal.]

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The Ballade Of Her Pilgrimage To Wellington

(after Analisé Carstens)

I

On the farm she tries to forswear her pain
where she stands alone with nothing to defend her with,
do want to go and catch the rain like Joggem Konterdans
and nothing can stop her emotions and sorrow.

II

Chorus:

Down Church Street in Wellington she does ride at a gallop,
with her wild mare that wants to stop for nothing,
she is stark naked on the back of her black horse
where she pushes her heels into the thighs of it,

III

down the Bains Cliff road some men hear hoofs thunder
one notices her where he is walking to the bottle-store,
wonders if the brandy is going to his head,
as a naked woman on a horse is no kind of joke,

IV

old gossip Hetty from shock almost falls over,
wonders if Anna is drunk or totally mad?
Phones George, Polly and her girlfriend Dolly
and gossips about naked Anna and about the dam.

V

She rides past the farm of Peter-Lion-river
and the labourers stare at her surprised,
she remembers brambles and her father's last bunch of grapes
and in the hurting she remains confused.

VI

Isaac drinks his moonshine and almost looks past her
screams alarmed: "Oh, my! "
Is dumbstruck while she passes him:
"It's farmer Jan's daughter Anna that rides like this! "

VII

Further past Luisbos and Stink River she races
where she finds old Rachel full of purple-blue spirits:
"My Lord, mistress Anna, farmer Jan is dead!"
It's words that do cut into the depth of her.

[Reference: "klein bedevaart na Wellington" (small pilgrimage to Wellington) by Analisé Carstens.]

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The Ballade Of Hloma Mabuto

(in answer to Theo Wassenaar)

Dingaan's big kraal Ngungunhlovu, was totally round
with thickets of bushes fencing it against the open ground
with the main entrance facing the king's huts which was to the back,
with two regiments of his impi all trained, strong and healthy.

Chorus:

I the translator William Wood are writing here a eyewitness report
that stays with me as a macabre murderous day of massacre
that I did experience along with the missionary reverent Owen
where the Zulu king Dingaan was obsessed with his power.

Sixty settlers with forty outriders did come and ask Dingaan for ground
where Dingaan did complain with the leader Piet Retief, about his robbed cattle
and Piet Retief and his men did agree to get them back for him,
armed with blunderbuss rifles did ride out in an expedition to his satisfaction.

When Piet Retief and his men did return with seven thousand cattle,
Dingaan was happy and perplexed and astonished in his kraal
and while Piet Retief asked for ground for the farmers
but Dingaan also wanted the sixty horses and eleven rifles

whereupon Piet Retief replied that he cannot give the bounty of horses and rifles
as it's not Dingaan's property and Dingaan was somewhat embarrassed,
did agree about the ground between the Tugela and the Umzimvubu rivers
while outside the camp the other farmers waited at the milk-wood trees.

On the third day I perceived from Dingaan's manner that something was wrong,
did wait until the farmers came into the kraal and warned them
and they did smile at me and said: "The king's heart is right and there is no
danger."
Dingaan did however only ask innocent things from his captains.

Where Dingaan sat in his armchair
captain Inhela was left of him with his white shield,
captain Dambuza with his black shield was right of him
and on both sides of them stood the two impi regiments in rank and file.

When with the agreement the farmers did saddle their horses
Dingaan did send a messenger to go and fetch them
to come and drink beer with him and to say goodbye
and they did leave all of their weapons outside of the kraal.

The Mhlope regiment with their white shields were hardened warriors,
the Isihlangu Mnyama regiment with their black shields were inexperienced,
where they did dance nearer and nearer to the settlers
with spear stabs and hopping jumps with which they were mocking.

Dingaan shouted: "Grab them!" When the farmers did only sit for
fifteen minutes
and the two impi regiments did come into movement from their shaking dances.
Thomas Halstead shouted in Zulu:"Let me speak with Dingaan!"
Ignoring it Dingaan motioned with his right hand.

Halstead grabbed his folding knife and stabbed the soldiers that were dawdling
and far too many soldiers (as many as could reach)grabbed each farmer.
Again Dingaan screamed: "Bulala amatakati" (club the wizards to
death) ,
did command to take them away to the slaughtering place, the Hloma Mabuto
hillock.

Thomas Halstead screamed: "We are done for, our time is up!"
Piet Retief:"Aye Lord God, let Your mercy and salvation come."
The farmers were dragged with their feet trailing on the ground
and the reverent Owen and I stood outside the kraal perplexed and astonished.

Every farmer and every outrider were knocked dead with war-clubs
Piet Retief was forced to look on and stand powerless
before everyone did close in on him and slaughtered out his heart and liver
and captain Inhela with them went as presents to his king Dingaan.

For about two hours Dingaan did deliberate with Inlela and Dambuza
and the reverent Owen and I was too scared to dare it out of the huts
when Dingaan did decide to attack the wagons with the women and children
and some more regiments did join the other two for that attack.

where Inlela and Dambuza danced past Dingaan and stabbed with spears,
where he laughed and the moment that the horde did go out to war did suddenly
arrive
and they did shout:"We will go to kill all of the white dogs!"

where they did go out to drench their spears in innocent blood.

[Reference: "Hloma-Amabutho" by Theo 's note: An impi here does refer to a tribal ly a kraal is a rural village but here it does refer to a large compound in which the Zulu king did live with his regiments of soldiers and his many poem is based on the eyewitness report of the translator William Wood as regards to the massacre of Piet Retief and d: "With some particulars relating to the massacres of Messrs. Retief and Biggar. By William Wood, Interpreter to Dingaan, Cape Town: Published by Collard & Co., 24, Heerengracht. 1840."]]

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The Ballade Of Jakob Ontong

(after D. F. Malherbe)

I

Tired of the mowing of the oats-field
Jakob Ontong walks with his heirloom in his hand,
struggles over a small knoll through the veldt
and a whirling wind turns in front of him in the sand.

II

Chorus:

with an old guitar he walks to where the roads cross,
his bare feet is hurt by the rough gravel,
at midnight he wants to play the guitar masterly,
it's dark night and he hears the wind rumble

III

and wild is his forelock that hangs over his head
with an arrogant hat skew upon it,
where he goes to meet the devil
and comes to a halt in the middle of the crossroad.

IV

Just tomorrow night Saartjie Dawids will be married
and huge tears roll over his cheeks and fall into the dust,
as right here she did promise him her hand
and the world around him looks icy and dull.

V

He thinks about the cursing William Squint-eye
who she will marry far away at Onderplaas,
how she promised him her heart eternally right here
and on the crossroad Jakob Ontong stands confused.

VI

He wants to play her a song from his sorrow,
wants his guitar to share his terrible heartache to her,
wants the sound to pierce through her spirit and flesh
and his soul that he does sacrifice does not bother him.

VII

In the distance he hears the crowing of a cock,
how the old church-bell does ring off twelve o'clock,
suddenly a terrible blue-white thunderbolt does flash,
right where he is standing with a bowed head,

VIII

the demon before his eyes becomes flesh
and in the heart of Jakob Ontong there is no fear
and when the devil plays on his steel guitar,
his heart is healed from the heartache

IX

and three times higher than him flames arise where it is dancing,
Jakob Ontong plays perfectly along as if in a trance,
where both do make the loveliest music for long moments,
he does get from the one who devours souls his wish and his chance

X

and so Jakob Ontong plays right through until the morning light,
see the glowing horns on the devil's head,
trades his own soul as the price for his wishes
and is prepared to take revenge on Saartjie Dawids

XI

where at daylight the devil greets him with a smile,
does invite Jakob Ontong to meet him again,
where he is still playing enchantingly on his guitar
and the taste of the coming revenge is sweet on his lips.

XII

At Onderplaas Jakob Ontong plays that it does buzz,
the people dance the reel while his heart is bouncing in him,
he changes the tune hits the strings quicker
where Saartjie and Willam up and down do the cotillion,

XIII

every one is impressed with his playing
and they are wet from their sweat
but still quicker he plays another tune,
do not become tired of the playing,

XIV

and the guests dance jolly into the night,
do dance on his music and loose them
and Jakob Ontong keeps playing the strings,
waits upon his hour of revenge to begin

XV

and quicker they dance as if enchanted
where he makes the most beautiful melodies with his guitar,
until a thunder-bolt comes down out of the night sky
and the guitar screams enraged its cruel revenge

XVI

when at midnight Saartjie Dawids is hit
by a blue-white lightning bolt,
while Jakob Ontong just does continue to play
and then laughs just like the devil.

[Reference: "Jakob Ontong" by D. F. Malherbe.]

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The Ballade Of Japie Greyling

(after Jan F. E. Celliers)

I

It's dark-night with no wind stirring anything,
when mother Greyling does pray to God,
are praying for her husband and three sons that are in the war
and her prayer does keep Japie here safely with her

II

Chorus:

but at speed the British soldiers gallop to them in a crowd,
surrounds the homestead and point with rifles from everywhere
against women and a eleven year old boy,
where they are intent on killing that child.

III

"Come boy, come walk with me, "
British general Jack Seeley commands where he is leading Japie,
do set up a firing squad against the boy,
to find an answer about his dad and brothers from him.

IV

Through the window his mother looks frightened upon the events,
prays for God to keep His hand in this violence over Japie.
"Point to where your Boer force has gone or we will shoot you right here!
"
General Jack Seeley roars while Japie holds his glance.

V

The British soldiers aim and Japie is set against a wall.
"I will kill you right here! " Seeley screams while terrible fear is in the
mother's heart.
"Shoot, " Japie says fearless and calm."Kill me right here!
"
Japie looks at the British do not say a further word to them.

VI

Petrified his mother waits on the rifle shots,
captured prays in total powerlessness,

but Japie remains fierce where he looks straight through the British
and a mere child laughing at death does astonish general Seeley

VII

and while the British do ride away from the glance of a mere child.
mother Greyling does thank God,
while fearless Japie does go on with the work on the farm
and other women and children are devoured by the concentration camps.

[Reference:"Japie Greyling" by Jan F. E. 's note:British general Jack Seeley (later lord Mottistone)do refer to this incident in his book "Fear and be slain."]

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The Ballade Of Nomo's Vengeance

(after Theo Wassenaar)

From childhood as best friends
we did hunt, cry, tease, mock, play and laugh
and were always together
day after day.

Chorus:

Tshanibezwe and I was inseparable
like blood brothers did love each other
until his father did go to the upper-chieftain
where he did plunder our kraal, did kill my father.

My father had been a witchdoctor that threw out bones,
he could scatter a horde of enemies before our impi,
he was famous as a prophet that knew the future
and everything was to Tshanibezwe's dad too beautiful.

Our kraal did burst out of its seams,
the beer was always the best and fresh,
the cattle did graze in a multitude
and in the fields there was corn and barley.

While Tshanibezwe lured me away to the mountain
where we did take honey from a beehive with sticks,
lies did bring the wrath of the Chieftain down upon us
and I found everything burnt down and with a shock my father's body

where I did realise that Tshanibezwe did know about his father's plans,
that I have got to measure out blood with blood to his father
and that the death of Tshanibezwe would pierce his heart,
but of our friendship I could not forget.

I had lost my father and everything so suddenly,
did have no possessions, cattle or any maize left,
could not anymore pay the price for a bride
and blood did demand that I have got to murder Tshanibezwe.

At the camp-fire in that dark night

where he sat with me I did wait upon the right moment,
did go to fetch some more wood and a thorn did pierce my finger,
he laughed and with a needle in his hand did look at me

and the wood was somewhat green and wet and the fire full of smoke
while hatred and anger did over-boil in my soul
where I did pierce him with my spear, did loose my best friend,
but now he and his love do constantly haunt me

where I do wander endlessly from unknown kraal to unknown kraal,
sometimes through the rugged bushes in the veldt
and there is nowhere to where I can escape from my guilt
as constantly Tshanibezwe does catch up with his needle.

[Reference: "Nomo se wraak" (Nomo's vengeance) by Theo 's note:
the word kraal here means a small rural word impi means a tribal army with
regiments.]

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The Ballade Of October Month

(for Annelize, after C. Louis Leipoldt)

It's October, where the days are open and cobalt blue
when the spring speeds up,
where the days do become more sunny and hot,
where blossoms do hang on the fruit trees,
and it almost is as if a person is again experiencing Eden
where on your birthday I long for you.

Chorus:

The veldt is full of cosmos,
cosmos flower the sidewalks mad
in hazy pink and purple and white
that everywhere does grow wild
and now I think especially of you
my beautiful darling woman

when irises do flower yellow, purple, blue, pink and white
bees do buzz up and down from pure joy
when daylilies do follow the sun wherever it goes
and nothing can disguise the colours of spring
when the Iceberg roses do flower crazily abundant
and I almost pray that you must loom up.

Gooseberries are already covered with golden fruit
the jasmine, gardenia and lavender bushes
overwhelm the earth with their perfume
and grapes hang on small bunch upon bunch
that in summer will come to full maturity
and without you all of these things are chaos to me.

The redbreast triple-dance for the rain to come,
the doves coo full of love and they do peep,
the yellow-weavers, hoopoe and barbets twitter
and with pure love and longing my heart is in an uprising
when daily the thunder bashes down blue-white
and from the Cape I want to carry you away to right here

when the hillocks full of sugar bushes do carry sweet smelling proteas,

when the aloes are everywhere red speckled between the green,
the bakbakiris (bush-shrikes) dance for each other, do flutter and whistle
and then there are things that the creation of God does to a person
when the crickets and the frogs do sing in their choirs
and then I want to reconcile my life with you and with God,

then I want to plant immortal roses, carnations and bushes of daisies
in the fruitful garden of your heart,
like decades ago constantly bring you bushes of roses,
do want to walk like young people in love with you hand in my hand,
do want to remind you of those days of beautiful memories
where together we did walk in the spring days at the Strand

but more than that October is the time
where all things in nature do love each other intensely,
where birds in love are warbling
where the days almost endless begin with joy
as if God is spreading the cloak of the spring over the world
and silently-silently I pray you into my days.

[Reference:"Oktobermaand"(October-month)after C. Louis 's
note:The seasons in the Southern hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those
of the Northern hemisphere of the the Southern hemisphere October month is in
the middle of Spring.]

Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Rietfontein

(after I. D. du Plessis)

I

At Rietfontein when in the spring the pear, peach and apricot do blossom,
when the blossoms fall into the irrigation-dam, into which a strong stream flows,
at midnight in the moonlight a sad scene does occur
when suddenly ghosts as humans become alive.

II

Chorus:

Full of blood is the water and bright the moon
where a young woman screams and a figure stands motionless,
with corpses that drift in the irrigation-dam
and a bloody trail leads into the lane.

III

More than a hundred years back the most beautiful woman
did at the irrigation-dam hold her lover in an embrace,
where the blossoms did as confetti fall over them
and jealous a man noticed that the two wanted to marry,

IV

there is the lovely and wonderful memory
of her lover that holds her with passion,
where in enchantment they do spent moments together
and jealous a man notice that the two wants to marry,

V

where the couple wanted to love each other intimately over them lays dew,
while a killer holds a knife in his bloody hands,
do look at the work of his hands silently without movement
and jealous a man noticed that the two wanted to marry,

VI

at Rietfontein when in the spring the pear, peach and apricot do blossom,
when the blossoms fall into the irrigation-dam, into which a strong stream flows,
at midnight in the moonlight a sad scene do occur
when suddenly ghosts as humans become alive.

[Reference: "Rietfontein" by I. D. du Plessis.]

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The Ballade Of Sir Galahad

Armed with his great lance and sword
he was always true to his word
where before him horses and riders did reel
even if they did attack in a great horde.

Chorus:

Big and in every movement sure
Sir Galahad's heart was pure
where he was a giant of a man
who could the harshest circumstances endure.

While he lived for his king and God
like a mere monk and some found it odd
that never a woman he did intimately know
but strong as ten men he did trod

did the hand of all maidens decline,
did bow down daily at a crypt in a holy shrine
did become convince to find the holy Grail
where he believed that he was guided by the divine

where with this great quest he did ride without fear
into the unknown without any friend to him near,
he went through valleys, past lakes as a knight of the Lord
where always this dream to him remained clear.

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The Ballade Of Sir Lancelot Du Lac

All of Arthur's knights were great men of courage
that together in friendship did their lives against the Romans wage
but the greatest, the most beloved by all was Sir Lancelot du Lac
who drove them back to Hadrian's wall in great rage.

Chorus:

But love is such a strange and tragic thing
that makes the hart with happiness sing
but it also has the power to destroy a soul
and disloyalty and the greatest pain to bring

Since serving king Arthur during sunshine and rain
true to his cause and word Sir Lancelot du Lac did remain,
with his two ancient powerful swords of folded steel
went into battle and was tested again and again

He met queen Guinevere on one sunny spring day
where into the plain she did with her white mule stray,
where one look from her changed his life
and not a word either of them had to say

as he dismounted his horse and walked up to her
helped her some wild flowers to gather
where she laughed and smiled at him
and they were alone together

where it felt like only a girl and a boy
that with each other's company has got great joy
but there was much more in the unsaid moments
when she did tease him and with him toy

when suddenly all of his life was balanced into this
when teasing she begged for a single kiss
he obliged thought it but a joke
but when their lips met there was great bliss

and that kiss was like nothing he had experienced before
did hold them both for moments stunned, did beg for many more
and reckless they both kissed each other again and again

as they had both changed from how they had been before.

With utter joy and utter pain
full of happiness, bliss and tears
their secret love did remain
where they met whenever they could through the years.

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The Ballade Of Snow-White Of The Veldt

(after A. G. Visser)

Rachel de Beer was twelve years old,
her brother only seven and that afternoon was cold
when from the cow pen they searched for a lost calf,
they were anxious that the little animal would freeze to death.

Chorus:

“Come little brother, you must stay close to me,
together nothing will lead us astray,” she said
and took him by the hand while they were searching,
did avoid the cliffs and hills.

They searched along the trench to find the little calf
and far off at the big old swamp
but when they came nearer they did not find it
while a icy wind did cut right through their clothes,

in the distance a thunderbolt roared ominous
but when the wind died down the snow started to fall,
everything around them became colder and so terribly white
and they searched to down there in the vale,

out of the trees in the distance an owl called
and little Hendrik started crying
when they could not find their way back home
and there was nowhere to find shelter against that snowstorm.

“Aye, Lord help us back to our home,”
Rachel prayed while the cold wind did buzz around them,
totally lost they did walk to and thro
crossing the veldt at the Drakensberg Mountains

and later it was much colder in that dark night
where their mother was waiting in vain on them
but Rachel carried her brother on her back
did later become thirsty, hungry and tired.

When their father came home

he was tired, cold and totally astonished:
"Where are the children?"
The question turned around and around with both of the parents.

In vain fires burnt through that night
while they did search until daybreak
when Jonah followed the track of the children
and everyone did expect the worst.

The spoor showed that they did lose their way
but the tracks became that of one person
where Rachel carried her brother on her back
and everywhere around them the world was so chilly and white

until they found a hollowed out ant-hill
and the father cried amazed, perplexed and speechless
where they did find Rachel frozen to death, naked and white
and little Hendrik came living out of that hole

where his sister's clothes for heat were covering him
and it was almost a holy place right there in the veldt
as she had given her life to save her little brother,
did remove all of her clothes to cover him in that icy snow.

[Reference:"Sneewitjie" (Snow-white)by A. G. Visser.]

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The Ballade Of The Battle Of Isandhlwana

I

In the shadow of the ultimatum-tree
the British dreamt about their reign in Africa,
brought demands to bring Zulu independence to an end,
are set that nothing would thwart British plans.

II

Chorus:

King Cetshwayo wants to keep Zulu independence intact
and where he views the British intentions as threatening and hostile,
he sends captain Ntshingwayo KaMahole Khoza with an impi,
to destroy the British army where he does not trust the British.

III

To the hillock iSandhlwana marches Lord Chelmsford with his British army,
that he views as a strategic place to ward off any Zulu army
and in an attack rifles that take bullets are used and they set an unconquerable
square,
do believe that seasoned soldiers will be able to deadly halt any native impi.

IV

At Blood-river Ntshingwayo did fight the Boer who were armed with
blunderbusses,
where to the bloody lessons of that battle Ntshingwayo gives great value,
where he knows that the speed of the attack, stealth and surprise does bring
victory,
where he refuses the British to find shelter and to make entrenchments.

V

Unknown to the British the Zulu general hides his impi in a valley,
near to their camp that goes shallow as it leads to the hillock,
he does not take to the advice of his witchdoctors to attack on another day,
when a British scouting party comes into contact with his hidden Zulu soldiers.

VI

A diversionary force is send to take Lord Chelmsford on a wild-goose chase,
to draw the attention of the British away a regiment makes amuck,
where in vain the British follow that regiment across the veldt
and that disorderly British camp has to pay a deadly price for this mistake.

VII

The bull's head and chest with two horns is formed by the regiments
primitive, cruel and brave and honourable with assegais are rushed on the camp,

with rifles that take bullets the British set their unbreakable square against the
Zulus
and the British army are deadly caught as the pressure of the bullhorns become
enormous

VIII

with the mass of Zulus that scorning death rush forward,
where almost everyone in that camp perishes against the assegais and war-
clubs,
where that square breaks as in no other battle or war against the Zulus impi
and the Zulus do stab the British to death and a native army surprises the British
Empire.

IX

At the end of the battle Dbulamanzi a subordinate officer is sent to follow those
that does escape with only two regiments and the British do heroic fire on them
at Rokes Drift and only a few of the British survive and are seen as heroes,
where Dbulamanzi and his two regiments pull back in the morning at four o'clock,

X

the Zulus swim back through the full river and join the march of that great impi,
that returns to king Cetshwayo's kraal with their great booty
and the British do give out eleven Victoria Crosses
after the crushing of iSandhlwana where a native impi did stop the British army.

[Poet's notes: Captain Ntshingwayo KaMahole Khoza acts as a general for king
Cetshwayo at iSandhlwana 85 British officers, 806 soldiers and 470 natives that
fought for the British did die and the British estimate that about a 1000 Zulus did
perish or were wounded and only 55 British soldiers did impi here does refer to a
whole tribal army with different regiments making it ly a kraal is a rural village
but here it does refer to a large compound in which the Zulu king did live with
some of his regiments of soldiers and his many wives. An assegai is a slender
iron tipped spear of hard wood especially used by the South African native
peoples.]

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The Ballade Of The Bushman Tka

(after I. D. du Plessis)

For years there is great drought and famine
and almost the last of the wild antelope has died
where Tka lives as the last of the leopard clan
and to get drinking water the need is great.

Chorus:

Tka begs the Unkulunkulu
to send the thunderbird the Impundulu
out of the giant tamboti tree
and at the sky he stares hour after hour.

The last tsama runners has been scorched by the sun
while a dry desert wind howls over the dunes
and when the wind dies down and Tka finds a gemsbok spoor
it is with a hellish thirst that the Bushman struggles

but he follows the gemsbok track with his bow in his hand
while merciless the sun does burn down on him,
jogs to where he notices the wild animal in the distance,
on the other side of the big string of dunes

where he do slowly catwalk and steals upon the animal
from behind a small thorny bush and in his despair stalks
just a little nearer and lifts the bow and it sings the song of death
and in his thoughts he sees a herd of antelope that together do drink.

When the small arrow hits and pierces into the gemsbok-bull
it jumps and runs while it breaks away
and like a leopard Tka takes its track again,
trusts that the poison will break the heart of the antelope

and where the sun does burn merciless Tka keeps the track
the whole day he jogs scared of loosing the antelope
and at twilight the antelope falls down in its tracks
but from severe hunger and thirst Tka has no power left

where death does lose its way between the hunter and his prey,

only the tracks of the wind do wander in the desert sand
and in the wind the bow sings a last song
before Tka looks up into the sky and stops breathing.

[Reference:"Ballade van die laaste jagter" (Ballade of the last hunter)by I. D. du 's note:The "Impundulu" is the thunderbird that lives in the upper branches of the great Tamboti tree, in the clouds where its nest is. This tree has interesting properties and connects the under-earthly (hell) , earth and heaven with each "Unkulunkulu" is the omnipotent Lord God..A tsama "is a wild watermelon that in desert arias do give juice."A gemsbok is a antelope weighing about two hundred kilograms that inhabits the waterless regions of semi-desert arias.]

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The Ballade Of The Horseman Of Skimmelperd Pan

(after A. G. Visser)

The church bell in the distance at the rock-church does ring off midnight,
the world around me is lighted bright and in the sky hangs a silver-white moon,
on the plain out of the cliff I hear the thunder of horse hoofs
where at Skimmelperd pan I stand for a moment near to a dilapidated small
house

Chorus:

and there is sparks flying where the horse hoofs come down,
a woman white like a ghost walks around at the house and do whimper
while a cold wind is jerking my pants and coat
and the horseman stands up in the stirrups leaning forward

but like a shooting star in the sky above me a bomb bursts
decapitating the Boer warrior that comes at speed on his black horse,
in his one hand is a Mauser rifle and the other clings around pommel of the
saddle
while he rides with his legs around the horse and a jet of blood squirts out of him

and the smell of gunpowder and sulphur hangs strong in the air,
where the eyes of the horse does gleam bloody-red where the man is riding
nearer
and I can swear that smoke and fire comes from the nostrils of that animal
but when the flustered woman screams out her shock, the cry does cut through
me,

where she recognizes her own husband so gruesome and her voice is shrill
where almost in madness she is screaming deafening near to me:
"When are you going to rest Jan van der Meer and will the eternal galloping
end?
"My God, it's the blood of my husband that the English do continually spill!
"

I stand nailed to the earth where the horse is coming very near,
with the decapitated man and the insane woman I am totally astounded
while the hooves that are drawing flames are thundering straight at me
and the woman keeps screaming: "Why" and again: "Why?
"

[Reference: "Die ruiter van Skimmelperdpan" (the horseman of
Skimmelperd pan)
by A. G. Visser.]

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The Ballade Of The Two Boer Horsemen

(after I. D. du Plessis)

Dingaan lifted high both war-club and assegai
did not comprehend the disaster that he was bringing upon his own Zulus
roared: "Bulala amatakati" and later "Dingiswayo
dinizulu"
when they sang their war cries to their gods

Chorus:

In the impi the blood-thirst was great
where in their need Piet Retief and his men prayed to God,
two Boers near the kraal realised that they have got to warn:
let no one alive, kill the wizards! "

While Dingaan's impi were busy with the cruel slaughtering
they jumped onto their horses, a roan and a chestnut,
did ride through the dark night trying to defy the evil impi
where constantly the impi were singing their murderous songs,

in the thousands Zulu soldiers were following the two men,
where with the Southern Cross they did find direction,
galloped through the rocky hillocks with sparks flying from the hoofs
but at first light the power of the roan horse was spent

and when the two Boers wanted to rest for a moment
they became aware of a horde of Zulus in a ditch
where assegais and war-clubs did surround them
they prayed and acted while trusting on God's mercy.

When the horseman on the chestnut horse did break through,
spears did pierce through both the other Boer and his roan
he screamed:"Ride. Tell about the slaughtering that is coming! "
Dying did talk to God

and the horseman on the chestnut rode as hard as he could
but thousands of black soldiers followed that man
where again they did surround him and he shot open a path
but two spears did pierce him and he banned the pain

while thundering the bleeding chestnut horse did gallop on
and all that remained was to give the warning
where nothing could stop that man and his horse,
not even the forces from hell

and a whole impi did not curtail that heroic Boer
where both horse and horseman at the wagons did fall,
some of the men came running up to him
and dying the message was given.

[Reference; "Ballade van die twee Boere" (Ballade of the two Boers) by I. D. du Plessis. "Voortrekker is a pioneer and it's a name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces) who migrated north into the interior of South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what became known as the Great Ly a kraal is a rural village but here it does refer to a large compound in which the Zulu king did live with some of his regiments of soldiers and his many wives. An assegai is a slender iron tipped spear of hard wood especially used by the South African native peoples.]

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The Ballade Of The Umzinyati

(after A. G. Visser)

At Dingaan's big kraal Ngungunhlovu there are many fires that burn
where all regiments of his impi does gather from all across Zululand,
in front of Dingaan, Inhela and Dambuza they make the bullhorn half-moon
hit thundering with war-clubs on shields with spears in the hand.

Chorus:

King Dingaan's command to his army is short and forthright:

“Exterminate the white dogs, let the vultures have a feast with them!

”

“Bayete, ” ten thousand shout the kingly salute thundering wild
and the whole undefeated impi does march to the Umzinyati River.

In the Voortrekker laager everyone has risen before first light
and everything is prepared but the men and women kneel down in prayer,
four hundred and seventy men are ready with their blunderbusses,
do make a covenant with the omnipotent Lord God to rescue them.

Out of the fog the Zulu impi rise up and do form their deadly half-moon,
gather in regimental formation to stand in their fighting lines,
like a sea in tempest that does prepare to bring about shattering destruction
before their war cry “dingiswayo dinizulu” goes out thundering.

Suddenly the whole impi charge forward at the insistence of their generals,
where assegais like a swarm of angry bees do hang high in the air
deadly downward do decent into the wagons and around the Boers
but the shooting and loading and shooting of expert riflemen do catch the impi
off guard

while the women and children do melt lead for more bullets at the fires,
thousands do charge forward to stab and to hit killing blows and to enforce
themselves
when almost unstoppable they do come in their onslaught
in their thousands in their murderous heroic violence.

In their hearts the men and woman that do defend the laager do pray
that the Lord God must help to stop this horde
and before nightfall the water of the Umzinyati River is red with blood

while not a single Zulu does come and the Lord God is being honoured.

At Ngungunhlovu the first messenger does run in with speed:

"They are breaking the half-moon of the bullhorn from a distance,
do shoot us apart before we do come in stabbing distance with the assegais
but we are far too many and are going to wipe them out and slaughter them for
this."

At his kraal Ngungunhlovu, Dingaan waits on further tidings of the battle
his second messenger does tell:"it's the judgement-day of the
"Unkulunkulu, "

it's a gigantic slaughtering where the "Umzinyati" is full of Zulu blood
and the great might of the whole impi is totally broken.'

The third messenger does carry the wounded Dambuza on his back:

"take flight great king, go back to the mountains,
flee before they come to burn down Ngungunhlovu to the ground,
the "Unkulunkulu" is with the enemy and they are fierce and
formidable."

[References: "Bloedrivier" (Blood River)and "Uzinyati" by
A. G. 's notes:"Uzinyati" which is a part of the title of the poem is the
Zulu name for the Buffalo River now known as Blood a and Dambuza were the
captains (here the generals)of Dingaan."Voortrekker is a pioneer and it's a
name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in
the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces)who migrated north into the interior of
South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what became known
as the Great Trek."A laager "is a camp or encampment formed by a
circle of wagons.""Dingiswayo dinizulu" means "leave no
one alive."The "Unkulunkulu" is the Great Great, the Upper
being and omnipotent Lord impi here does refer to a whole tribal army with
different regiments making it ly a kraal is a rural village but here it does refer to
a large compound in which the Zulu king did live with some of his regiments of
soldiers and his many wives. An assegai is a slender iron tipped spear of hard
wood especially used by South African native peoples.]

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The Ballade Of The Xhosas In 1857

Where the medium Nonquase do get her water,
she notices faces of which nobody does argue with her.

Chorus:

The ancestral spirits talk to her
tell her to spare no harvest, no cattle or goat.

In the pond there is others that do see them as well
where they do follow their gods to the letter,

do destroy every bit of food in the land,
even that which are still growing

and wait upon a supernatural army
to rise against the white man on a murderous day,

to drive them into the sea and kill them there
where in famine the Xhosas do almost loose a whole nation

as the victory that the spirits do bring
is but a untruthful thing,

where the impi go in vain into the veldt
as nothing is left to be hunted,

where the white people do notice their great misery,
how mothers and fathers mourn over their dead children

and to this day people are astonished
about how a whole nation could have come to its end,

where from Christian mercy they do provide food
as they do serve a loving graceful God

and do forget the previous wars, the plundering and robberies
do give to the Xhosas in great humanity.

[Poet's note:An impi is a tribal army.]

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Gert Strydom

The Ballade Of Tswana Captain Magatoe The Babbler

Resolute to murder out the Boers

Magatoe did not want to listen to Swartbooï for peace,
determined tot take away Schoemansdal and own it,
he believed that the Boers would loose against a mayor force

Chorus:

and with bodies glittering from fat
the Tswana impi dance a death-dance around their fires
where the moon hangs dim in the heaven
they dance around as if in a trance,

where the witchdoctor prepares the spices
a bull is cut alive into pieces,
in a hellish scene spirits are called
to get magic power for the impi,

enchantment formulary is said with a ritual
and when the babbler lifts his glowing assegai,
he tells the Tswana impi to destroy the white man
and bloodthirsty his words do carry great weight,

where the inhabitants of the town flee away
as against a major force they cannot face,
and they leave the church and houses with their belongings
but they do undertake to come back

and four thousand Boer citizens are called up on commando
to face the Tswana impi of Magatoe decisively
but first a great day of prayer is held,
as the babbler is entrenched in the mountains.

At first light the Boers do ride into the cliffs and mountains
and suddenly the Boers have got to avoid enemy gunfire
but general Joubert does pray and immediately fog sweeps in
and beyond rocks the Boers find shelter.

When later the sun does burn the fog away
the Boers know about the hiding places of the Tswana impi,
and general Joubert orders to open fire with the cannons,

while the Boers do fire shots with their rifles

and they rush at the kraal of the enemy on top of the mountain
whereupon Magatoe and his impi starts to flee
but here and there are a Tswana that do remain
and as targets the Boers are open,

when out of a hole a Tswana raises
and shoots a Boer in astonishment
but have nowhere to flee,
when many rifles shoot him down

and from then on the resistance is insignificant,
where with three casualties the Boers are victorious,
do ride into the destroyed Schoemansdal
and the babler and his whole impi flee into Rhodesia.

[References:"Moselekatse" by Totius. The Field coronet J. J. Potgieter manuscript / Eric 's note: After Mzilikazi's impi were driven over the Limpopo River by Chief-commandant Andries Hendrik Potgieter's commando in 1838 the smaller Tswana tribes did come and settle down in the Schoemansdal area and agreed to be under government of the Boers but constantly captain Magatoe was in rebellion and after years had driven the Boers out of Schoemansdal and from the surrounding area did not want to listen to Witbooi (a member of his tribe) to have peace with the Tswana captain Magatoe was known as the babler and for thirty years did harass Schoemansdal and the surrounding farms with his impi before the huge commando under general Joubert did drive him away over the Limpopo River into Rhodesia."A Voortrekker was a pioneer and it's a name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces) who migrated north into the interior of South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what became known as the Great Trek."An impi here does refer to a whole tribal army with different regiments making it like a kraal is a rural village but here it does refer to a large compound in which the Tswana captain Magatoe did live with some of his regiments of soldiers and his many wives. An assegai is a slender iron tipped spear of hard wood especially used by South African native peoples.]

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The Baobab Tree

under whose branches lions lie down
dreaming in the sun,
where baboons sometimes play,
where elephants rip off some bark
and when you walk around it,
its branches look like rows of spears,
and birds do fly up, and bees buzz around it,
and when you come in its shade, smell its fruit,
its leaves and bark does not look similar
to any other tree.

Gert Strydom

The Barn

The smell of baled cut hay,
cut cornstalks, fuel from drums
the hot tractors cooling down
and in the semi-dark the hoard
of farm implements,
with a cold cement floor
under your bare feet,
to me it was like Aladdin's den
a place where useful magical things
of great value were stored.

Gert Strydom

The Bathing Adventure

Blue and white fishes on a string
hangs on the bathroom wall,
a striped white and blue tiller
stands at the bath's taps,
a small light tower
is warning on the edge of the bath
and a dark blue anchor,
alone against the wall
entice you to become part
of the bathing adventure
and the tiller man
is still ashore
while the water splashes into the bath.

I wonder why you enjoy it so much
to splash around like a kid
in the soothing hot water
and it's very nice,
to wash my cares away
in the big bath.

Gert Strydom

The Bathroom Was Like A Sanctuary

As a teenager
the bathroom was
like a sanctuary.

A place where
in privacy
I could in nudity
reflect on life

and soak in hot water
and wash every thing dirty
away from me.

I was undisturbed until
my mother married again
and one of my stepsisters
had a small girl
who used to follow me

and when I was eighteen
and she was about thirteen.
time and time again
she somehow
unlocked the bathroom
and walked in on me.

From where I shouted her out
in anger and shock
and wasn't amused
to get a shouting back
from a step father
who wasn't a dad to me
and didn't see
anything wrong with it.

Thinking back
it might have been something
in her genetics
or a lack of good moral standing,

since her mother (my ex step sister)
who was quite beautiful,
in vain tried to seduce my brother
but never tried
to set that snare for me.

Gert Strydom

The Battle Of Cuito Cuanavale

I. Outnumbered by armour (A reply to William Shakespeare)

Outnumbered by armour
and by men we met the enemy,
FAPLA and Cubans under Russian leadership
and the men accompanying me
was very worried
and wished for the whole
of the seventh armoured division
to have been deployed.

I said to the men
in the armoured car with me
that if we must die here in vain,
the fewer men it be
but if we grasp the victory
the world will know
that we are brave and honourable men
capable of destroying whatever faces us.

Weary I told them that our ancestors
faced a outnumbering enemy
against Dingaana and won effectively
as they were in the hand of God
and so were we.

Colonel Deon Ferreira send us straight in,
from Rundu
(heading north-west after crossing the border)
to intercept the 47th enemy FAPLA / Cuban (armoured) brigade.

At the same time UNITA were repulsing
the 16th FAPLA (infantry) brigade
north of the Lomba River
that was trying to take Cunjamba.

We were hitting hard directly from the south,
surprising the 47th enemy (armoured) Brigade,
virtually destroying it

at the junction
of the Lomba and Cuzizi Rivers

fighting with armoured cars
against tanks
hitting fast and then driving away at speed,
like on commando our ancestors did
during the Anglo Boer war
fighting day and night
till the field, the air was filled with gore

and when more pressure came,
more enemy armour rolled in
our own main battle tanks joined in,
howitzer guns started firing in support
from many miles away,
assisted by reconnaissance commandos
for accurate targeting

It was the greatest slaughtering,
as battles go a terrible, terrible thing
for our enemy
while we wiped them out
and found ten abandoned enemy tanks
left in the bush, in pristine condition
with the men operating them running away

Shortly after these victories
our forces along with those of UNITA
destroyed the remaining FAPLA / Cuban forces
in the Lomba-Cuzizi-Conzumbia area
and on the offensive
drove back the other enemy brigades
for a distance of one hundred and twenty miles
in bloody battles up to Cuito Cuanavale

I'Envoi

and now on a hill outside Pretoria
the new government
has constructed a monument
called Freedom Park

to celebrate a victory,
thinking that with lies
they can change history,
are even trying to find some Cubans
to place the names of them on a honour wall
as heroes and victors

while they had lost
at a terrible cost of men and machines
and incredibly
some people believe them.

[References: Before Agincourt by William Shakespeare.]

II. Legends and victories in Angola of which the truth is vague (in answer to Johan Myburg)

No person that wasn't there
can grasp the extent, of the impact
of the Cuban brigades

the air bridge that the Russians had build
with new armour and weapons from Moscow,
the deadly danger that attacks
of the 47th (armoured) ,59th (mechanized) ,16th (infantry) ,
and 21st (infantry) ,25th (infantry) , enemy brigades held

when almost a hundred T-55 tanks
and hundreds of BTR-armoured cars
came driving shooting out of the bush
(supported by MIG-23 fighter bombers) ,

knows how it is when Ratel-90 armoured cars
have to come to a standstill,
to fire upon moving and shooting targets
and in that hour of hell

the truth about a giant victory against
Cuba wasn't vague,
the whole of the 47th FAPLA / Cuban (armoured) brigade
was totally obliterated,

ninety-four enemy tanks was shot out,
almost three hundred armoured cars were reduced to scrap
four thousand five hundred and eighty enemies were killed
nine MIG fighter jets were shot down

against the lost of only three South African tanks,
eleven armoured cars and troop carriers,
one Mirage fighter jet
and thirty-one South African soldiers.

Whoever views the truth of this victory as vague
hasn't got a clue
of what had happened there
(probably had hidden as a religious pastor
somewhere in the rearguard,
or were away at home)

Whoever believes the false propaganda
distributed by the new government
and the Cubans,
are without proper knowledge
and disputes the bravery
of the undefeated soldiers
of the 61 mechanised
and 32 South African battalion groups.

I'Envoi

Still it's strange
that the Cuban general Ochoa Sanchez
(who was the supreme commander of this conflict)
was executed in Cuba.

[References: Stigtingsdag (Founder's day) by Johan Myburg:

"maar duisend-en-een angolese verhale
van brigades kubane
sages van seges waarvan
waarheid maar vaag is"

My translation into English:

"but a thousand and one Angolan stories

of brigades of Cubans
legends of victories of which
the truth is but vague”

The battle at Cuito Cuanavale: “The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down.” (General) Jannie Geldenhuys. (1994) : At the front. Jonathan Ball Publishers. P240.

“The South African force, under the command of Colonel Deon Ferreira, was tasked with carrying out three operations (1) Operation Modular - The aim of which was to halt and reverse the FAPLA / Cuban advance on the UNITA strongholds of Mavinga and Jamba, (2) Operation Hooper - The aim of which was to inflict maximum casualties on the retreating FAPLA / Cuban forces after they had been halted and (3) Operation Packer - The aim of which was to force the FAPLA / Cuban forces to retreat to the west of the Cuito River.” Nortje, Piet (2003) .32 Battalion. Zebra Press.

'In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 UNITA fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla brigade and mauled several others out of a total Fapla force of some 18,000 engaged in the three-pronged offensive. Estimates of Fapla losses ranged upward of 4,000 killed and wounded. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officers played a central role in its execution.... Huge quantities of Soviet equipment were destroyed or fell into UNITA and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat... The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms and its strategy.... As of mid-November, the UNITA/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of FAPLA's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters.' Crocker, Chester A. (1992) High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood. (Crocker was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Reagan Administration.)

John Turner claims that: “following their losses, the Cubans were convinced that further military confrontation with the SADF would not succeed.” Turner, John W. (1998) . Continent Ablaze; The Insurgency Wars in Africa, 1960 to the

Present. Cassell Plc.

Comments made by a Soviet adviser to the Cubans in Angola: 'The people's armed forces for the liberation of Angola have not been able either, even with the help of the Cubans, to decisively defeat the enemy and drive him out of the territory or the country.'" M. Ponomariov, Krasnaya Zvezda Magazine; 20 May 1988.]

Gert Strydom

The Battle Of Isandhlwana

Shaded by a wild fig tree
where the Tugela river enters the ocean
representatives of British queen Victoria
demanded that the Zulus give up
their independence.

The Zulu king Cetshwayo
would never again send his impi
into battle against the Boer farmers,
but the British his impi would spear
and bash to death
and he ordered
his general Nishingwayo KaMahole Khoza
to halt the British invaders.

The Zulu commander remembered the battle
at Blood River well
where four hundred and seventy
Boer farmers fought
from behind their wagons
which they had drawn against each other
to form a almost impenetrable laagered fort
where only three Boer farmers were injured,
using flint lock rifles
three thousand of his warriors were killed,
and thousands more injured

and he knew that the Zulu faced there
an enemy trained through several generations
waging war against fierce men and cruel beasts
in harsh circumstances
making them marksmen and exceptional horsemen
believing in a almighty God
with whom they made a covenant
while asking for His help
and some warriors reported
spirits aiding the Boer fighters there,
but maybe that was as superstitions go.

These British soldiers
wore red and white costumes
as if going to a festival,
didn't look rugged at all
and even under the fig tree
they were red from sunburn
and although they probably
prayed to the same god
as the Boer farmers
his translators told him
that they didn't look so devoted
and talked about a empire
and the power of their new guns
having come for a adventure
and he decided to give them one.

Nishingwayo looked
the British through thoroughly
saw Lord Chelmsford moving
his men over the Buffalo river
to Isandhlwana Hill
where the country deceptively looked
open and stretched out
and at the foot of the hill
the British set up their camp.

Very cleverly the Zulu commander
sneaked his impi armed with assegais
and clubs,
carrying leather shields
into the narrow valley
running up to the hill

and then he send
a small force
to draw the British out
of their camp
to follow it in vain.

The witchdoctors warned
the Zulu commander
against a attack,

but a scouting patrol of the British
by chance encountered
the front Zulu position.

Ignoring his spiritual advisors
Nishingwayo got his impi
into war formation
forming up like a storming Buffalo bull
into a chest and two horns
on the confused British camp.

Lord Chelmsford and his men believed
that the battle formation
of the square
could withstand any attack,
with their Martini-Henri rifles
but at Isandhlwana that square broke,
shattered under attack
from thousands of Zulus
who with shining spears and clubs
rushed in like a huge thunderbolt
screaming their ear splitting battle cries:
Ngathi impi and Abatagati

sounding like thunder
from thousands of voices
and swarm upon swarm
of spears filled the sky
making the sun disappear

and the Zulu war formation
annihilated the British
closing in
like a tremendous crashing wave
sweeping all resistance away.

Stabbing, slicing, bashing
that great impi went right through
the British defenders
sparing none at Isandlwana
and marched away
heavy laden with booty

with some warriors
helping the wounded along
still singing their battle songs

and only two regiments
under Dabulamanzi pursued
the retreating survivors
to Rorke's drift mission station
which was only
but a side show
of that great battle
which the British lost.

[References: Impi= Zulu army. Assegai = spear. At Isandlwana 1329 British soldiers were killed and eleven soldiers were honoured as heroes at Rorke's Drift with Victoria Crosses. Ngathi impi=> "Because of us, war" Abatagati=> "Kill the magicians." The Great Boer War by Arthur Conan Doyle (comments on the excellence as marksmen, horsemen and on the dedication of the Boer farmers as to patriotism and religion.) The word Boer is both Dutch and Afrikaans for farmer.]

Gert Strydom

The Battle Of Majuba Hill

With Major General Sir George Pomeroy in command
the Hussars, Gordon Highlanders, 60th rifles
and a contingent of the naval brigade,
climbed Majuba hill
and was in battle forced down
the back again.

At dawn the British army
had taken the steep hill
and the Boer commando's camp
laid on the plain below
and Major General Sir George Pomeroy,
was just a bit too comfortable
with their position on the summit
and the Boers were at their mercy,
or so they thought.

The Boers saw British soldiers
on top of Majuba hill
waving the Union Jack
and under cover,
they started to climb
the steep slopes.

On a February late summer day
the Boer commando
blended with their farming clothes
into the field, into the hill.

Every rock and crevice,
every redoubt and counterscarp
was a natural hiding place
to lay siege on that Majuba hill.

The British infantry wore red jackets
and blue trousers
and white pith helmets on their heads
and was a fine example,
of an invading Super power's military might.

They thought what damage could a
citizen force militia in jackets,
trousers and slouch hats
with hunting rifles do,
against a empire's
well trained soldiers?

What they did forget,
was they were facing
a nation of exceptional men
who fought savage men and cruel beasts
to make a living
and every one a great marksman.

In integrity the Boers prayed
and believing in God,
climbed that hill
in broad daylight.

George Pomeroy was dead
shot through the head
and accurate shots rang out
while fire and movement tactics
turned that battlefield into a slaughtering
and British soldiers died one by one
and tried to flee
down the rear slope.

All of Great Britain's victories before
never prepared that empire,
for the treatment that it got
from a bunch of hard-bitten farmers
that believed in the power of God
and brandished modern rifles.

[Reference: The battle of Majuba Hill. Battle between the Transvaal (ZAR) republic and Great Britain on 27 February 1881 in South Africa, which won the first Anglo-Boer war. "Three Boer groups were led by Field Cornet Stephanus Roos, Commandant D.J.K. Malan and Commandant Joachim Ferreira against Major General George Pomeroy." It consisted of about 400-500 Boer farmers in a citizen force militia against 405 British infantry. On the side of the Boers 1 was

dead and 5 wounded and of the British 92 were dead (including their General)
,134 wounded and 59 captured.]

Gert Strydom

The Battle Of Vegkop And Thereafter (Ballade)

(after Totius)

At the Vaal River a small impi did murder seventeen Boers,
Bataoeng Bushmen did notice it, did see the slaughtering and heard
how they did take three children with their army and that more were coming,
did warn a Boer patrol of six horsemen so that they would not be at a loss.

Chorus:

"Bring the cattle, sheep and women as booty
and slaughter the Boers and the Tswana and destroy them all, "
king Mzilikazi did say to Kalipi, his general, in his kraal Mosega,
thought that neither the Boers nor Tswana would be able to stand against his
impi.

Two days before the attack fifty Voortrekker-wagons were drawn into a laager,
camel-thorn branches filled the space among them,
while lead was molten to prepare enough bullets
next to the Heuning-tributary at a strategic place against the Vegkop Hillock.

In the laager thirty-five men and seven boys were ready for war
and Sarel Celliers knew that deliverance comes from God.
"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you,
and you will honour me" he read where he stood sweating.

Chief-commandant Andries Hendrik Potgieter rode out with his horsemen
to get a answer about the attack from the five thousand strong Matabele impi:
"Why has the Matabele come to murder and plunder? "
"Mzilikatzi! " They roared, threw spears at them and tried to cut them
off.

While the Matabeles rushed upon them, they started with fire in movement
tactics
and the impi went into the Zulu bullhorn and half-moon
where the Boers remained out of striking distance of the assegais did reload and
fired
did ride away reloaded again and with the blunderbusses in the hand tried to
win,

but five thousand were just too many and with rifle in hand each horseman rode

back,
prayed inside the laager that the Lord God must come to salvation to stop the enemy
while the Matabele impi did surround the laager, sat down and ate raw meat
and for hours were sitting and waited while Martha van Vuuren sang a song to God:

"Out of the depths I cry to you, Oh Lord"
but around the laager the Matabele impi stayed sitting
until Andries Hendrik Potgieter got up and whipped with a red flag tied to his whip
and raging the impi formed up in the Zulu bullhorn and half-moon into formation,

where five thousand stood around the laager clothed in baboon and ox-tails
Mzilikazi's shock troops the "blood path" came into motion and did attack,
where spears darkened the sky and came down whistling
where only murder and slaughter did exist for the whole impi,

where the blunderbuss in every hand became so hot that they did burn blisters,
while the Voortrekkers kept firing to keep the Matabeles at a distance
and while they came raging the Matabeles were mown down
but they did storm enraged and incited from every direction,

the women did load and passed blunderbusses on and two stood at the sides of their men
where with axes they did cut off arms, legs and hands at the camel-thorn branches,
where Sarel Celliers drew a spear from his leg, pushed it into a creeper in the branches
and one Matabele warrior was lifted upon one of the wagons,

while from below the others did pass assegais to him
and the beautiful wife of Lucas Bronkhost warned that he was throwing from above,
where Lucas shot him down and he fell into some of his own spears
and so the best of the Matabele army was scattered

but they did draw back and sat down around the laager out of shooting range,
with anger they did sing and the eyes of the whole impi was white and cruel
while Sara Swanepoel and Elisabeth Bronkhorst did stand ready with their axes

some more bullets were melted from lead where the fire was heating it

and ready for battle Andries Hendrik Potgieter and seven men walked out
while each man fired with his blunderbuss upon the impi,
and in anger they roared threats at the Voortrekkers,
did come to their feet and thought that a multitude could catch the men
unaware,

until Kalipi did defeated flee with raided cattle and other livestock
and he and the remaining Matabeles returned to the capital Mosega,
where all the livestock was taken away and it brought famine to the Boers
but God was honoured and praised as the Matabeles were formidable

but they got cattle from Moroka the Tswana Rolong-tribe chieftain
and the Wesleyan missionary James Archbell came to praise God for their
delivery,
where he brought as much food as he had out of brotherly love,
thye later destroyed the capital Mosega and the town eGabeni with Uys in faith,

did recover six thousand cattle but there was no trace of any white children
while fifteen thousand Matabeles fled across the Limpopo River,
the hunter William Cornwallis Harris heard about the two white wives of Mzilikazi
and far away in Rhodesia Mzilikazi did reign as the Matabele king.

[Reference:"Vegkop" by Totius, "Bloed, Sweet en Trane"
(Blood, sweat and tears)by E. J.G. Norval, "The wild sports of Southern
Africa, " Pelham Richardson, London,1844 by William Cornwallis Harris.
Psalm 50: 130: 1.

Poet's note:The battle of Vegkop raged on 16 October 1836 at Matabeles was a
tribe that deserted from the Zulus before they became an own nation."A
Voortrekker was a pioneer and it's a name given to the South African Dutch
settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape
Provinces)who migrated north into the interior of South Africa and away from
Cape Colony and British rule in what became known as the Great Trek."A
laager "is a camp or encampment formed by a circle of
wagons."Chief-Commandant: Officer with the rank equal to that of colonel.
An impi here does refer to a whole tribal army with different regiments making it
ly a kraal is a rural village but here it does refer to a large compound in which
Mzilikazi (the Matabele king)did live with some of his regiments of soldiers and
his many wives. An assegai is a slender iron tipped spear of hard wood especially
used by South African native peoples."In his lust Mzilikazi spared the lives
of two Voortrekker girls that he had taken into his harem" writes William

Cornwallis Harris in his book "The wild sports of Southern Africa, "
Pelham Richardson, London,1844.]

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Gert Strydom

The Beach, The Morning

(in answer to Patrick Cullinan)

At early morning dawn
eighteen big busses appear
some with Putco, Morning Star
and others with Amagolang signs on them
and on their top roof racks.
Everything is loaded from blankets,
wheelbarrows, chicken coops to primus stoves.

Durban's South beach, North Beach
and Country Club
are packed with a throng
of black tourists everywhere,
who unclothe right there in public
and swim in all colours of underpants,
in white, cream and pink bras and panties
with black nipples and private parts
shining through when wet

and some old black grannies fill bottles
with sea water and a bit of sand
believing that it's good medicine
while some chickens
in a great tumult of noise
are brought out of a cage,
are beheaded with a shining axe,
are plucked and on tent poles
spit fried on the beach.

Some men and boys
pull their pants down
and urinate near to a water tap
while others wait in line
at the toilets which are filled
past capacity.

[Reference: "The beach, the evening" by Patrick Cullinan.]

The Beast [2]

You smashed the small granite table down
like a mighty war hammer
cleaving the coffee table in two
which I had made for you,

the cellular phone that I had bought
went flying, tossed like a discuss
with might and mean
against the wall
where it shattered to pieces

and being demented arose
from a superfluous thing,
from another motorist
driving into the back of my car
and barely hitting it

and the beast was upon me
the moment that I came
through the front door

with looks it tried to kill,
looks that could chill to the bone
the labyrinth ran through the house
with your children
watching as spectators.

Gert Strydom

The Beautiful Recollection

(for Annelize)

Like every other morning
the yellow speckled barbet,

the red headed black-collard barbet and yellow weaver
did knock at the window and did frolic
as on each morning that they do greet me
and for long moments I did think of you,

two doves did full of love look at each other
where they were constantly cooing their songs of love

and it was almost as if you were right here,
as if your image was with them in the window-glass
but later when the rain did fall softly outside
all signs of them and you were washed away

and only the beautiful recollection do remain
of you with me in days in the summer and sun.

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Gert Strydom

The Beauty Of Flowers

The beauty of flowers though ephemeral
in memory lasts forever
growing in countless numerals
in almost supernatural loveliness
as if never ever

it will be valueless or become nothingness
with almost divine scent that it is leaving
from the very birth
of shoots and stems wreathing
on this gardened earth

and under the joyous sun,
the sanctifying romantic moon
blooms appear for the pleasure of everyone,
from morning right through the afternoon.

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Gert Strydom

The Bed Is Empty Next To Me

The bed is empty next to me
while you are gone
and I have drawn my curtains
tightly shut,
as if like this
I can lock the pain away.

The being away drives me mad
and it feels so final,
although maybe
you could come and fetch me here now.

I miss you just too much
and when I get a phone call
my heart lives
and the bed
is cosy against me
but you are still gone.

Gert Strydom

The Bee Nest

In Primary school
we played in the field
above the school
in break time.

There we discovered
a hive of bees
under a overhanging
shelve of rock
and I told the other kids
to leave it alone
and went away
to play on my own.

One of the kids
(Peter Conn)
threw three broken bricks
into that bee nest
and that swarm of bees
came like lightning bolts
thundering in.

He ran like a flash
and passed me
with great speed
where I was playing
with some dinky toy cars
and when I looked up
I saw the sky
turning black with bees
and that fool escaped
the consequence of his deeds.

I hardly had time to get up,
never mind to run
when there were bees stinging
and targeting in
from everywhere.

Like a scapegoat the bees
took me for the enemy
and buzzed in
and they came
in great numbers
and that whole swarm stung me
all over my body.

I was swollen up
like a inflated doll,
couldn't see through my eyes,
could hardly breathe
and got a terrible rash
and were almost unconscious
when we arrived at the nearest hospital
where my mother was in a great panic
and the doctor injected me
a couple of times
and put a drip in my arm
and after that for a while
bees were deadly to me.

Gert Strydom

The Bee-Box

At the local church I had been gardening
as it was my responsibility
and the bee box of the old retired minister
had become a danger to me
as if it housed beings that was sinister
and after reporting been stung nobody did a thing.

At the service in church there was an ominous humming
where that swarm of bees near the back window was left to be
and a sermon a pastor did administer
when the congregation did some angry bees see
and great fear did in the church register
while that small harpies that could fly were stirring

and did sting a first time visitor in the face
to the church's and God's disgrace.

Gert Strydom

The Beginning Of Spring

It's as if the last repose of winter isn't spent,
as if it carries on without end
and the veldt is stripped bare,
the winter grass burnt to ashes
but still some flowering buds declare
that sap is already in their branches, in their veins
and everything else is waiting on the spring rains.

Gert Strydom

The Beginning Of Spring (Sonnetina Uno)

The last winter chill is in the cold wind
and yet it's the very first day of spring
with seedlings awakening from their deep sleep,
with fruit trees covered with their own buds
and as the weather goes the rain does fall
with the sweet smell of new life everywhere
and the sparrows, swallows, doves and weavers
are twittering as they frolic around
while the bees buzz from flower to flower
as fast as they open to the bright sun.

Gert Strydom

The Beginning Of The Never Ending Dilapidation (Sonnet)

Maybe I see all of the signs of the ruination
how in the night hooligans do paint the walls with graffiti,
how the new South Africa does slowly but certainly loose its way
and we do inherit the robbery, the murder and slaughter of it,
the primary school girl across the street that is pregnant
and the events is missing in her head,
as she fall at a party at the school did loose her consciousness
when somebody did rape her and Police do arrest nobody,
how the students in revolt bring the universities to a standstill
to try to force them to costless classes,
how violently they do stop others that do try to learn and pay
with fists and weapons do jump in front of cars,
how one of the three sister church is tumbling down
is selling off its churches.

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Gert Strydom

The Beret Must Have Been A Dead Give Away

To this day I know that
the beret must have been
a dead give away,
and the shoulder flashes
also proclaimed something
of the military unit that I belonged to.

Tired and almost asleep on my feet
after the long military flight
out of the war zone,
the soft rain smelled
fresh and it was cold
where I hiked
the last stint home.

Fourteen days leave
came as a real blessing
and just being away
and back in the states
was really great

A Brand new blue BMW
stopped next to me
and the occupants were
very friendly
and it was warm inside the car.

It looked like a mom and dad
and beautiful eighteen-year old daughter,
but they were foreigners
and introduced themselves as American.

The girl really liked me
and their accents were all American,
but something was just not right
and I couldn't put my finger on it
and just maybe they were just a little too much
into being Americans.

The man remarked that he find it curious
for a officer to be hiking
and I thought that NATO probably
had similar ranks
and I explained that my
camp was away in the war zone
and that there was no way
to take my motorbike
all the way there.

The woman was driving
and the man frowned
at the bars and badges
on the chest of my bush jacket,
as if the combination of them
did not make sense to him.

It's another thing to be seconded
to different units
and to complete some
of their training
and I realised that for Americans,
they probably knew
a little to much about our army
and were most probably
intelligence for the enemy.

The girl treated me like a hero
and wanted to know
about my unit
and somewhere questions
about unit strengths
and targetable distances
crept into the conversation,
but I steered the conversation
in to another direction.

The man wanted to know
if we were really going to win the war
when the enemy use heavy armour
and I said that we would win
against any thing that they bring

and it would be better for everyone
if the Cubans just packed up
and went back home
and the man laughed at me doubtfully.

Maybe there was something prophetic
in those words
as was proved at the Cuito Cuanavale battle
and I told them how
my ancestors in a twenty thousand strong
Boer farmer citizen force army,
had subdued a British army of
four hundred and fifty thousand
for three years long.

Little did they know
that my words said much more
and that Ratel-90 crews
used the same tactics
of fast movement
and accurate shooting
and great bravery
in dealing with enemy tanks.

There's something very brave
to stop dead still
with a Ratel armoured car
to stabilize the gun
to be able to get the shot off
while a enemy tank
that can shoot while it moves
is charging towards you,
but that piece of information
never came out.

[References: The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale "The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down." Jannie Geldenhuys. 1994: At the front: 240 Johanathan Ball Publishers. The states=> Back home in South

Africa. NATO North Atlantic treaty organization.]

Gert Strydom

The Best Of Men Was He

The best of men was he,
but he wasn't free
from indignity.

He could control
the wind, the sea
and the fish that dwelt in it.

He could give life
back to the dead
and wake men from eternal sleep.

Still they nailed him to a tree
as if not comprehending,
who they really dealt with.

Gert Strydom

The Bird

We were walking in the park,
our little zoo of dogs and you and me.

One was splashing in the stream,
swimming like a huge black beaver,

the little one barked from the bank
as if encouraging and telling the others what to do,

one was sniffing the trees, looking for a spot
as if surprised at what she got,

one was looking out for other people
as if someone could suddenly draw a knife

and come challenging with it
staying aware as if guarding us

and then a bird came out of nowhere,
appeared in the air above me,

decided that my head
was a great place to rest

and at the last moment fluttered up
changing landing orders to that of flight.

Gert Strydom

The Birds Are Flying North

The birds are flying north
before winter bites
with the first chill,
but coming south
with a whistling whine of rotors
An ugly enemy helicopter gunship
hangs deadly in the air.

It's just another ugly monster
with a canon in the nose
and a bunch of sinister rocket pods,
that flies past.

a Missile flies into the blue sky
and the monster explodes and is gone
from the air
and some more birds fly past
heading north.

Gert Strydom

The Birthday Of Jesus Is Being Sold Out (Free Verse Sonnet)

Like every year the birthday of Jesus is being sold out,
people die celebrate Christmas and for the New Year they do have hope
but in all of this some are lonely and poor
while other people go from sale to sale,
where all of humanity is waiting on the Child of all children,
on the omnipotent selfless Lord God
to come and set things straight on earth
on His determined great judgement and salvation day
but people are still being robbed, raped and murdered
where right through the planet the devil are leaving his tracks
while hunger, poverty and pestilences are devouring some humans
while man is loosing his humanity bit by tiny bit
and those that do still have a life do go and frolic
at every place in the city where lights do shine.

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The Bit Of Time (Rondelet)

The bit of time
that together we both do spend,
the bit of time
still have some reason and some rhyme
as our love lasts and do not end,
it is godsend and it does bend
the bit of time.

Gert Strydom

The Black Coat

Father read poems,
studied literature for his master's degree,
mother snipped patterns
for a new dress
while the evening fell
and I were tending my farm,
with animals from packets of ice-cream,
dinky toy pickup trucks and cars

and the black coat behind the door,
the hat above it
looked menacing
while the fan turned
on the ceiling.

That coat could get a life of its own
and with the hat
could become a frightening stranger
who was very strict
and came in at the back door
when I did not want to eat my food

but now it was only hanging
like coats do
and dad was reading the poem
of the cannibal
and my arm hairs were raising
and mother frowned at the pattern,
stopped snipping, went to the kitchen
and returned with tea and a smile.

Gert Strydom

The Black Crow (In Answer To Ted Hughes)

Crow flew up into the air
looking, always searching
with a keen eye
roving down to earth from the sky

with wings flapping
under the blazing sun
almost blurring in
their quick movement

and flying from the blinding sun
with paws folded in
but at a time he had to drop down
like lightning falling from the sky

to find something somewhere
a mouse, a rat or a bigger rabbit
to feed with claws ripping
with blood oozing red under them.

Blacker than the night,
spreading his wings
again he challenged the sky
thinking about being supreme

and that was his undoing
as he flew up as high as eagles do
against bare cliffs to a nest of their young
and faster than light, was pierced, was flung from it

dropping down from the heights
and heard the screaming roar
of an eagle's triumphant song
just before death ended everything for crow.

[References: Wodwo and Crow (extract) Two legends by Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom

The Black Leopard

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Its dark night when something stirs
with eyes gleaming yellow cruel,
outside the open glass window I see him,
sneaking as if he can climb in.
Weird a change has occurred,
changing him suddenly from man to animal,
giving him a type of mercilessness
to plunder, to cold bloodedly kill,
continuously he lives in the glare of vengeance.

[Reference: "Die swart luiperd" (The black leopard) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

The Black Warrior (Sestina)

I never used a incantation, or did lit black candles with fire,
to conjure a demon up or used a familiar object for it to be,
and as a Christian to being involved with the occult I did not aspire,
neither did I draw a circle around a pentagram to be from its power free
and I do not even know where I did invoke Lucifer's hatred and ire
to send me such a demonic being to bring to me agony.

With a smell of sulphur that demon did appear without any agony.
He was about ten feet tall and gigantic in size with eyes redder than fire,
I was paralysed somehow almost swallowed by its pure evil ire
and then I thought this was not reality and this simply could not be.
During national service as soldier before this I was in war from fear free,
I did not know how to survive or how to for a kind of escape from it aspire.

In the residence I had studied late, did for high marks in calculus aspire,
the beach was near and student life was without any kind of agony.
As an adult in my thirties having worked before I was totally free
and this demonic creature pressed the air from me, my lungs burnt like fire,
I smelled my own fear in my sweat, wished for any other place to be,
survival kicked in, somehow my fear turned to astonished ire

but my reason told me to calm down; there would be no victory with any ire
it was clear that for the death of me it did wordlessly aspire.
Black with the body like that of a man with huge hands this thing could not be.
For a moment I thought I saw in its gaze, right at my face, some agony.
Dressed in leather, with armour which was scaled his hands burnt like fire,
I knew that death was near, could not move but I did try to break free.

My past life flashed before my eyes as if I was already from it free.
Although some humans did hurt me to them I did not hold any kind of ire,
neither was I scared of going at a time to hell or of its terrible fire
as in life I had a relationship with Jesus, to be a child of God I did aspire.
Here I was in pain, had great terrible fear, an unknown kind of agony
and it was almost impossible that at a time he could an angel be.

I knew from its evil that demonic it was and could nothing else be.
I did not know how to be from this incredibly ugly and fierce creature free,
somehow spoke out the name of the Lord God and in it then saw agony
as if it was being punished by omnipotent Godly ire

and did wonder why it did from perfection to evil aspire?
Suddenly it did dematerialise into flakes of orange fire.

It did try to bring me agony, demonic hatred and ire
and I wanted to be from its terrible paralysing power free
to escape I did aspire and God did dematerialise it into flakes of fire.

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Gert Strydom

The Blackout

From childhood days darkness
covered me as a nightly cloak,
no animal or man or ghoul
could frighten me

but now driving across the border
into enemy territory, with lights dimmed,
blacked-out it was something else
that played havoc on the senses
and the shuddering and at times jumping armoured car
did nothing to comfort my fears

of running smack bang into a enemy battle tank,
of driving direct into an enemy landmine field
and although every bush and tree was yielding,
the moon climbing in the sky more silver than white
made everything seem more surreal, more unreal
like in a strange nightmare dream,
where you sense that the ending
is going to be terrible and bloody

and then suddenly in front of us a bright light did blaze
in the dark night,
revealed, uncovered, exposed every vehicle
but it was only members
of the forward scouting party
who were guiding us into a forward encampment.

Gert Strydom

The Blossoming

I thank you Lord
that you by grace blessed me
to let my slender flowers grow
flooding over in bell like strings
in internodes, joints of roses

not peach, purple or pink
like others of my kind
but in a pure white colouring
with odourless buds opening

and some ridicule, hold my words,
my verses of rhyme and free form in parody
but my flowering is from your hand

and I can understand that they are thinking
of flowers like roses, irises, geraniums
which are tempered against the elements
bringing forth fragrant odours
that perfumes the air
but in your shade and care I am blossoming.

[Reference: The blossoming by Tatamkhulu Afrika.]

Gert Strydom

The Blowfly-Grumbler (Sonnet)

As an impudent little thing it does fly around and around a person
so that you want to hit it down and in your thoughts it's cursed
when it wants to carry pestilence from any kind of dung to a wound
or do try to land in the jam or whatever is in the pantry
as if it wants to carry death from any rotten thing on the ground
but that little insect do harass people even if you are healthy
and sometimes caught in a window it grumbles up and down
as if it is the first messenger of the final abyss
where it searches for any rotting, stinking rubbish,
is one of the most prominent visitors at an open grave
with small wings going up and down faster than the eye can see
so that you have got to buy a fly-swatter
as if this thing do serve nothing less than Satan himself
do want to hit it out of life and existence as if it does deserve it.

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Gert Strydom

The Blue Jay

With her light purple breast that gleams
a blue jay descends to the fallow land
where she dances around in sorrow
like a welding flame that impudently trembles

up and down where her nest was
in the burnt out thicket
and now there is only dust and ash
when sadly she leaves screaming sounds

and keeps fluttering to and thro.

Gert Strydom

The Book Sealed With Seven Seals

I had a dream that I heard the voices
of uncountable angels, beings
and elders around the throne of the Almighty One
proclaiming that the lamb that was slain is worthy.
Their appearance was blindingly bright,
but the radiance of the Almighty God on His throne
and of His Son was so intense
that it wanted to burn my eyes
and I stood back
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

When the Son of God
who died on the cross
opened the book that only He can,
He took the book
with His nail marked hands
and broke the first seal.
A being spoke with a voice
sounding like thunder: Come and look!
A white horse appeared
and the rider of it had a crown
and a bow en rode out to conquer
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

A second being talking with lightning
that strikes out said: Come look!
When the Lamb broke the second seal
the head of a flaming red horse appeared
and the rider took a big sword,
to cause nobody to have peace
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

A third being let thunder reverberate
come and look!
When the Son of man
reached His hand to the third seal
there was a pitch-black horse
and the rider took a scale in his hand
and a mighty voice said:

a measure of wheat for a coin
three measures of barley for a coin
and do not harm
the oil and wine
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

A fourth being's voice carried blue thunder sparks
when he said: come look!
When the Son that is God
opened the fourth seal there was a grey horse
and the rider was death and he rode away,
to kill a forth of the earth
and the weapons that he carried
were a sword, famine, incurable diseases
and ravaging animals
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

Four riders past
and I wondered
what will be left of the world
and the people on it?

When the Messiah opened the fifth seal
the souls of the holy ones
under the altar,
who died for His word
as witnesses of Jesus Christ
with a mighty voice called out:
how long holy and true Ruler
before You judge our blood
on the people on earth?
To them was said
to wait a while more,
for others to fill their numbers
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

When Christ opened the sixth seal
places on earth started shaking,
the sun was dark
and disappeared for a time,
the moon was red like blood
and the stars fell from the sky

and draw bright lines
as far as they fell
and I knew that I
was living in the last days
and the hour work started to ring off the last strikes.

¶Envoi

Today I wonder where I stand
in all of these things,
while shots of war
are roaring
and everyone lives only for himself,
and the might of God
falls on the earth
and the hour of His anger
almost touch the horizon
and the hour work has only minutes left.

[Reference: Revelation 5: 13-6: 17.]

Gert Strydom

The Boundless Blue Sky

The boundless blue sky,
the ever-rushing wide ocean
and everything living in nature proclaims
that they exist by His will

even the burning sun, every star
and the rising moon
functions in matchless precision
as if set by the greatest scientist of all.

How can we mere men comprehend
that His existence is without end,
the kind of love that is selfless
and that His powers are never spent?

Gert Strydom

The Bright Stars Sing A Song Of Joy

The bright stars sing a song of joy,
they are telling the world when you are coming to me
then continually one of them are jumping,
flowering blue-white in the heaven.
Continually the wind mentions your beautiful name,
softly it whispers our secrets to branches,
it witnesses our being together while it blows
and its pitch dark night
when your teeth glitter while you laugh in joy.

Gert Strydom

The British Descended

The British descended
on the Transvaal and Orange Free State
from their island
on the other side of the sea
and in thousands
they came to ruin the land.

The British descended
on the Transvaal and Orange Free State
and from the sea they came
and an entire empire
send its soldiers to destroy,
to pillage and scorch the earth,
to rape, and imprison
the women and children
of the Afrikaner nation.

My great grandfathers rode on horseback to war,
with Christiaan De Wet, Cronje
and De La Rey
and they fought hard pressed,
to drive the British
and soldiers from all her colonies away.

My great grandfathers rode on horseback to war
and landed in prisoner of war camps in St. Helena
and although the second Anglo-Boer war was lost
and the Afrikaner nation paid the highest cost
in the destruction of the land,
the death of men
and the murder of innocent women and children,
a time came
that once more we were free.

My great grandfathers rode on horseback to war,
but one was from and with the enemy
and a highlander was he
and a more decent man
is still hard to find

and one that hated the English
for the dreadful things that they did,
at times I see the restored Martini Henri rifles
taken from the British
during that bitter war
and the legacy and great spirit,
of my great grandfathers
still stays with me.

Gert Strydom

The Bucket (Refrain Stanza)

In the veldt the sight of a rusty bucket did me hit,
I thought that beautiful geraniums could come into it
where open mouthed in the sun's heat it did gape
for a flowerpot to me it was the right shape
but in the middle of it did a huge spider in a web sit
but still I picked it up to take it home,
in my mind's eye already flowers did into it come
and I knew that on the porch it would fit,
I thought that beautiful geraniums could come into it.

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Gert Strydom

The Bulbul

The bulbul creates its own small rainbows
where happily it splashes in the pond
washing out good its own feathered suit,
while looking great eyed at the small pool
before it goes deeper into the water,
it rolls letting water-drops splash,
pressing down, its feathers, is dripping wet,
when happily it walks up and down, slapping wings
and then sedately starts to drink,
calling dozens of birds nearer;
twittering arrogantly, scuttling past the porch
and its raiment of feathers is shining from the water.
The bulbul creates its own small rainbows,
while looking great eyed at the small pond.

Gert Strydom

The Bunyip

In the depths at lake Moodewarri
something was stirring
and to and thro some Aborigines did hurry
as they were fleeing, to their dwelling places retiring.

The size of a big calf it did suddenly appear
rushing in great speed trying to come near
to pull somebody down as its meal
and women and children were screaming in fear.

Now some people would call this a lame tale
about a hippopotamus, but it is huge and humanoid
maybe as big as a whale
and from mercy and all things good devoid.

When man disrupts its source of food
it does disease bring
as a evil, terribly evil thing
that destroys rushing from the flood.

Gert Strydom

The Burning Truck

It was early in the morning
that enemy Mig-23 fighter plane
after fighter plane
came to pillage, to ravage
broke the dull routine, shattered the mundane
and it happened so unexpectedly
that we thought them to be
our own Mirage fighter jets and were waving
before they dived in attack formation as the freaking enemy
and dropped bomb, after bomb and hit a truck that was moving
and on the Calueque dam wall there was consternation,
there were big holes and men were dying
and I had no feelings at that moment,
was totally without emotion,
shot with a light machinegun at a emptying sky,
heard men in agony crying
and when the Migs were gone,
still burning the Buffel troop carrier carried on.

Gert Strydom

The Bus That Drives To Vryburg

From Pretoria station
I take a bus that drives to Vryburg
to go and fetch a car.
Cornfields flashes past
and all of the people round me
tells a bit of the things that hurt.

One is going to a funeral because her brother died
and the bus drives on
with the road that stretches out in front of it.
Another is going to her parent's home
she can find nowhere else to go
and is unmarried and pregnant.
The nearer we get to Vryburg
the more scared she becomes
and the bus drives on.
An Older man has lost his job
and restarts his career in Vryburg.

So everyone of us are caught
our own world with freedom that always stays away
and fate from which everything hangs
and I wonder when everybody in this country
will ever get a Vryburg.

[Vryburg=> The name of a city in the Northern Cape province. Meaning place of freedom or free city.]

Gert Strydom

The Bushman

While normal hunters are gunning
causing deer to shiver,
with his naked skin sweating while he is running
with his reliable bow and quiver
the Bushman tracker follows a spoor from early light
as a master of his art on the extended plain
and even into the dark night
sometimes right through rain
in slow progress with lengthening strides
he avoids sight, smell and sense
runs past where the horizon divides
land and sky and hunts in sheer competence:
and with time he will run the whole world down,
make any animal, man, even kings his own.

Gert Strydom

The Bushman Tracker

Men with eyes like his
has a special ability
to see, to comprehend
reading the distances
but also the cryptic tell tale
of tracks left on the ground
and finding greater meaning
from small things

and he can immediately tell
the number of animals or men
and can point out exactly what
had passed and tell exactly when

and we could follow him on an enemy track
being secure to trace
a couple of passing men
over the open veldt.

Gert Strydom

The Canary

Loud he is where he sings twittering
do jump up and down in the small cage
and he is caught with an orchestra in his throat
but to his music there is no restraint
and captured remains the small feathered thing,
that is constantly moving up and down.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Cango Caves

One holiday on route to visit Cape Town
we first visited the High Gate and Safari
ostrich farms in Oudtshoorn,
where we saw jockeys racing ostriches,
to the sounds of a cheering crowd,
birds pecking everywhere
in huge camps
and round stones, coins
and shiny metal things
coming from their stomachs
displayed in can fruit bottles.

There were ostrich leather shoes,
handbags, wallets and purses
and ostrich stakes
and biltong for sale
and different kinds of curios,
but my brother and I were happy
with some ice cream
and a cool drink or two.

We had to cross
the Swartberg mountain range
to get to the Cango Caves
and at the entrance
I felt like a adventurer,
like Jacobus van Zyl
the local farmer
who according to myth
first explored these caves.

On entering a faint musty odour
and increased humidity caught me
and immediately I was aware
that some bats
were still living here
and heard that Khoisan bushmen
lived in the cave opening
at a time in centuries past

and I saw some disintegrating
blue-black rock paintings.

Ancient formations of stalactites
in the form of tobacco leaves
hang blue-grey in a chain
decorating the limestone roof
while I got the first glimpse
of Van Zyl's hall.

Two columns rose to the ceiling
in Botha's hall
and we ascended
past a hollowed out stalagmite
known as the pulpit
and in the rainbow chamber saw
a cliff of stalactites.

Following some steps
we were in the bridal chamber
with the bridal bed
and the weeping bride
in a kitchen at the rear
and in the drum room
we turned back.

But being young boys
who had grown up
on a farm,
we had heard
about the other tour
of which the name
spelt out adventure.

We begged our mom
to let us go on that tour as well
and although
she didn't want to crawl
through narrow places
somehow we convinced her.

We raced up the two hundred steps

of Jacobs ladder
past the grand hall
to Lot's chamber
and looked at some stalagmites
and the hollowed-out King Arthur's throne.

Coming out of a tunnel with a low ceiling
fine textured roof crystals
decorated the roof
looking like ice
with some twisting helictites
and a crystal wall glowing translucently.

In the cellar chambers
of King Solomon's mines
we looked at a formation
with a crystal crown.

We went up an iron ladder
crawled through
the love tunnel
and from a ledge
looked at a shallow pool.

But in the devil's chimney
we had to wriggle through
to the light at the top
to face a still smaller opening.

Leopard crawling I went
through the ruler high slot
while my brother
went feet-first
sliding down the sloping wall
to the furthest point
of that adventure tour.

We scrambled back to the coffin,
the tunnel of love,
went down the iron ladder
and followed the route
to the glare of bright daylight.

Gert Strydom

The Cannas (Sonnet)

The tall red cannas as if nude
in the garden do flaunt their beauty
as if they have got a loving attitude
that they want everyone to see

with a pure hearted hue that is deep red
like beautiful enticing ladies of ill repute
much is shown and nothing much is said
in debauchery and their impact is acute,

are bare to the very leaves and strutting high
as plants growing abundantly in their prime,
they do catch and pull each passing eye
do stop people in their tracts time after time

to look at them with an indifferent affection
but as if they do beckon they do draw close inspection.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Cape Hunt

Foxhounds bark and tare away
with tails in the air
like guiding antennas
as if chasing a spectral bone

While hunters dressed in black
and some in red
with white helmets
follow at full gallop
urging their horses on.

What a spectacle they make
while they race
through the field
as they have being doing
since eighteen twenty-two.

Gert Strydom

The Capitulation

(in answer to Ernst van Heerden)

No incarnate demons was loosened as enemies,
no harpies, gryphons or demonic legions,
no number of armoured or mechanical brigades
did overwhelm as an enemy.

As victors we did return from the border and out of Angola
and the sacrifices that was claimed from young boys, was paid with blood,
in times of war we did loose our way in our best years,
with all our enemies either dead or wounded bloody

but then a bold-headed man for the sake of his own glory
did give our land away
(this is no allegory)
as he did forge his own plans

and the suppression of Affirmative Action
did break out under a evil regime
and then we did loose our self-determination,
while white people were pressed into poverty,

while black-racism does reign supreme
where only black people are able to get jobs
and they do free farms, the possession and lives
from their white countrymen.

[Reference: "Staatsgreep" (Coup d'etat) by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

The Captain

It's the third day of the battle
and around us there are enemy tanks
of which the canons keep clapping
and Stalin organ rockets
that falls at places among our men.

Next to me there's a Captain
with a three day old beard
and his eyes is red of tiredness
while he gives instructions
over the radio.

We shoot till darkness
and through the night
and thunder clap flashes
keep on shooting
the enemy out.

The morning dawns
and the sun rises over the battlefield,
that is soundless and grim
and like two ghosts
we walk around in the bushes.

He wipes dust from his face
while we drive further
through the bushes
and we look out
from the top of the Ratel IFV
and in the distance,
a single rifle shot resounds
and the Captain is dead.

[Reference: Ratel IFV=> Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle]

Gert Strydom

The Captain2

He stands at the tiller
of a age old ship
that drifts upon
stormy waters
and the wind rips past
with a sharp chill
and the ship sail
like she forever will.

Caught between reality
and a place
that few ever see
the ghostly form
still steer that ship
to where destiny
bides her to go.

Some people think of it
as a trick of light
and others swear
of it to be there,
but no science
or chart can track
the way that she goes
and know why
her Captain lives forever more.

Gert Strydom

The Captain3

There's a Captain
that brings every ship to shore
and more than that,
guides everyone that trust in Him
and He sends His messengers
to every part of this world.

He controls the elements
and the sea
and the wind
and bolts of lighting
high up in the sky
take their instructions from Him

He knows the way
and takes care of everyone
and in times of strife
and war
His way leads to ultimate peace
and to brotherhood for all.

Gert Strydom

The Car Of Johnny Staying At Home

The car of Johnny staying at home
takes the garden route
and the old green wheelbarrow creaks
while I fill it up
with weeds.

I pull a lever
and like magic sprinklers appear
in the garden
and the two cats
run moaning out of the water,
before the dogs
rollick barking in it.

I am angry with the Indian Miners, rats,
insects and snails
that eats holes out of my ripe tomatoes
and even wreck the spinach
before they are even ripe

and I wonder if I am farming
for myself and my darling
or the wild animals
and who really are going to eat the fruit?

There are sparrows and doves
in the branches of the pepper tree
that are peering and waiting
for me to throw out some seed

and it's getting white hot
while the sun
rises higher in the sky
and I enjoy
dark red roses, purple irises
and orange, white and pink
geraniums that are all flowering.

The Carnival Of Joy

One early Old Year's Day
when the southeaster blew
with all of its ferocity
the murky sky the murky bay
was filled with gloom
and almost bloodthirsty you looked at me,
without any sincerity,
with anger and maybe a little bit of hatred

and you did not say a final goodbye
and I had lost you that afternoon
and felt empty, lost without a cause
as if all my living was finished and done
and as if everything good was gone
and I was forlorn and shattered.

Early on the New Year's Day
when the emerald ocean lay
stretched out in tranquillity
as far as the eye could see
with crystal clear waters

people from the carnival
danced on banjo and guitar tunes
marched past in bright coloured uniforms,
and I found peace in the festival of happiness,
celebrating the New Year in,
that was demonstrated how great,
how utterly good
it was to be living.

Gert Strydom

The Carpet Walks Back

The carpet walks back
into the room
but you are already gone

to yellowwood floors
on which your feet tread softly
and on which I walked a time ago.

Your image disintegrates,
but not the longing
and the cold wind sneaking in
through the window

is an uninvited guest
in my room
that feels like a sanctuary
where you were once.

Gert Strydom

The Cassinga Jump

Fear and tension was written over the faces
of paratroopers next to,
in front and at the back of me
when the red light
began to flash in the Hercules
and we went to action stations
still skimming barely over the tops
of taller trees at about two hundred feet
and most of us had two weeks earlier
been home at our civilian jobs.

One paratrooper vomited
right over me in yellow stinking
half fermented food
and the retching smell
made me nauseas as well
while the aircraft pitched steeply
with its last-minute manoeuvres
coming to jumping height
of eight hundred feet.

Mushroom clouds left by exploding bombs
billowed up from Cassinga
and in trenches I saw
people shooting upwards at us
and suddenly bombers dived
through our formation.

The sticks in front of me jumped
and air rushed into my face
at the open door
while the pit of my stomach went numb
and I stepped into space
falling, falling and seeing
a rocket-propelled grenade exploding
near the aircraft above me
and it veering away.

While the opening parachute jerked me up

I heard the deep roar
of a anti-aircraft gun
shooting from below
and it was clear that we
had jumped later
than we were supposed to
or the dropping zone
was too small to take
a full stick
of thirty-two paratroopers at a time.

We were dropping about
five hundred meters farther south
than we should have been
and a strong wind
was driving from the northeast.

We landed in wooded terrain
which made grouping very difficult
and among the trees were drawing fire
before even touching down.

Immediately after hitting the ground
I returned fire
and the enemy fire became more sporadic
and we assaulted the group of buildings
that intelligence identified as the enemy
engineer complex,
running into groups
of our own B and C companies
and for a time was shooting at each other
before realizing it was own forces.

We were just taking the engineer complex
now formed up with the other soldiers
when we came under rocket attack
from RPG-7's
and had to kill the crew
at a enemy B-10 recoilless gun
where I threw several hand grenades

and then ammunition stores

in the building complex started exploding
but only one paratrooper was wounded
when we took up our stop-line positions
to block off the escape route
lying south from Cassinga
and the anti-tank platoon was sent away
to set up a tank ambush
on the road running from Techamutete.

By this time I had picked up an enemy
LMG and more than enough
ammunition for it
and shot from the hip
at any movement that I saw
and until then it had been
easy as pie.

Then the commander of our company
left some men at the stop-line
and about twenty of us
along with him
went to the enemy vehicle park
where we ran into a crowd of civilians
fleeing into the surrounding bushes.

I opened up with the LMG
as we launched the attack
in the direction
of the lowered anti-aircraft guns
and we entered the trenches,
finding some civilians there,
but heavy fire came directly
from behind them.

It turned into a matter of killing
or be killed and even the women
that we met were armed
and in enemy uniform
and I lobbed hand grenades
into the next leg of the trench
and kept firing from the hip
and was splattered in blood

by a woman's body
that was blown right out of the parapet
and what was left of her
was still in green fatigues
and blown to shreds.

Then I had nausea again,
retching uncontrollably
and somehow I started to cry
with tears running down
my cheeks,
but like a machine moved on
seeing enemy soldiers
scrambling from the trenches
to replace the ones killed
at the three lowered anti-aircraft guns
with a bravery running near
to madness.

The closed quarter struggle
were worst than fierce
and cruelly savage
and we could only clear
just one leg of the zigzagging
ditches at a time
with supporting fire helping
from the outside.

There were screaming and crying
women and children among the enemy
and we had to kill or be killed
and a chill ran through me
and the noise was just terrible
with mortar bombs exploding
at the anti-aircraft guns,
shooting from almost
any direction onto them
and bullets ripping the walls
of the trench next to me
and I almost choked in the smoke,
dust and cordite fumes enveloping me
and finally those trenches were cleared

and the anti-aircraft guns stopped firing.

[References: LMG= Light machine gun. Read my poems Cassinga and Wings of destiny, for a full account of this battle and what happened when South African paratroopers faced enemy (Cuban) armour.]

Gert Strydom

The Cassinga Jump (2)

1

I see concern, tension and alertness on the faces
of the paratroopers next to me,
where into Angola we do fly in a Hercules
and next to me a soldier vomits,
while the aircraft goes to jumping height
and after a while the red light starts flashing.

2

Bombers dive down on the enemy base
and in smoke, flame and dust
their bombs do explode,
where they do hit their targets,
while enemy anti-aircraft guns open fire,
some trenches are full of the enemy.

3

The green light comes on
and ready to jump I do wait,
while the sticks in front of us do jump
and then I do step into space,
the wind rushes while like a stone I do fall,
see a RPG-rocket exploding above me,

4

I feel the jerk of the opening parachute,
notice that we are off from the dropping zone,
the deep roar of a soviet anti-aircraft gun
draws my immediate attention,
where it is shooting from below,
we are off by about five hundred metres

5

and we land in a wooded terrain,
while my stick is all over the place,
where from the trees we draw sniper fire,
while we are still coming down
and I try to note from where the fire comes,
while bullets swish past me.

6

As I touch the ground I unclip the parachute
and do immediately return fire with my LMG,
shoot a sniper down out of one of the trees,
the members of my stick act similarly
and the enemy fire becomes sporadic,
as some are killed and others do flee.

7

We are near to an enemy workshop,
do attack the buildings,
draw some friendly fire from our own
Bravo and Charlie companies,
but then and we realise
that we are not the enemy.

8

Some of the enemy fire at us with RPG-7's
where rockets do explode near to us
and in support an enemy B-10 recoilless gun opens fire,
we toss grenades and return fire,
the LMG leaves the B-10 silent
and the enemy that are not killed fall back.

9

Stored ammunition at what is supposed to be a workshop do explode
but this injures only one paratrooper,
while we do take up our stop-line position
blocking escape from Cassinga,
while the anti-tank platoon
do set up ambushes and lay landmines,
for just in case on the road from Techamutete.

10

Some soldiers are left at the stop line
and about twenty of us are ordered
to go to the enemy vehicle compound,
where we find a group of civilians
that is escaping into the nearby bush.
We are ordered to launch an attack,
on the anti-aircraft guns that have been lowered.

11

We fire at the anti-aircraft guns, which are causing havoc
and eventually nobody from the trenches does go to man them,
but we have to enter the trenches to clear them out
while we do receive heavy fire from them
and still it's a matter of killing,
or of being killed.

12

I lob grenades into the next leg of the trench,
fire with the LMG from the hip,
are splattered by a female soldier's blood,
where she is blown right out of the parapet
and she lies in green fatigues
blown to shreds.

13

I have nausea by this time,
are retching uncontrollably
but to survive have got to move on
when the anti-aircraft guns are manned again,
are thundering death and havoc
but like a machine I do fire the LMG.

14

The closed quarter struggle is savage and fierce,
where we are clearing just one leg
of the zigzagging trench at a time,
but do have support fire
from the outside
and mortars coming down.

15

Some women and children are trapped with the enemy
where they are crying loudly
and the din is terrible,
with mortar-bombs exploding,
RPG-7 rockets bringing death
and the anti-aircraft gun firing

16

but then there is deadly silence,
where we are victorious
and here and there
enemy soldiers and enemy officers
are being rounded up,
to be questioned later.

17

After the battle some paratroopers are flown out,
while we others wait at Cassinga for the Puma helicopters to return
but suddenly a lookout does shout:
"Approaching enemy battle-tanks! "
Two Mirage-fighter jets fire their cannons in our support,
as they have already fired missiles somewhere else.

18

The Mirages take out some enemy armoured cars,
but the firing enemy tanks are unscathed
and now for the first time I am really scared,
while the enemy tanks do crunch on
and totally in vain I fire with the LMG,
where I hold it at my hip.

19

The anti-tank platoon takes out one tank with a RPG 7,
and with a anti-tank landmine
but sure death and destruction is coming our way,
where we are facing deadly Cuban armour,
when out of the sun
a Buccaneer bomber comes to our salvation,

20

it drops bombs and rockets on battle tanks,
do leave some shot out and burning,
dive at the tanks and do take some more out
and still do dive down death defying without any ammunition,
while the Cuban anti-aircraft guns do fire at it
and Puma helicopters do pick us up.

[Poet's note: LMG is a Light machine gun. The RPG-7 is a Soviet weapon similar to an American bazooka.]

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Gert Strydom

The Cassinga Jump (Enclosed Triplet)

That night great strain was on each youthful face,
in the hangar we did equipment check,
called-up each from a different place.

The Hercules roared at a quick pace
as in many sticks we were strapped in,
with the flashing red light my heart did race;

to some an enemy jump is commonplace,
a paratrooper did vomit on me
and I begged God for His saving grace.

Suddenly I had to step into space,
I heard the roar of anti-aircraft guns,
snipers in trees was another menace

while I felt the wind's jerking soft embrace,
as we got down in a wooded terrain,
saw some women of the fleeing populace,

but that was only the smallest preface
as rockets and bullets whooshed over us,
called-up each from a different place.

Gert Strydom

The Cattle

It was early on a winter morning in the twilight
in the hour before the sun lights up the world,

but unlike most winter mornings near to Cape Town
this morning there was no rain that did drizzle,

some fog hanged across the dam like a patch of smoke
and in winter's white frost even the grass of the veldt was covered.

My breath made small clouds of vapour before the wind
with its icy fingers did touch my ears pulled at my coat.

The silence was everywhere as if totally alone in the world I were
while around me the hill's peaks looked like harsh monstrous rocks,

while I opened the gate to the field which always did creak
but it had been newly oiled and swung open without a sound

and there were the herd of black and white patched Frisian cows
about a hundred huge animals with udders full of milk in the grey twilight

standing like statues as if all of them were frozen solid
where big-eyed, always dog friendly they did watch.

They did not graze or even chew the cud but were breathing,
not a single one did swing a tail or moved

and this was very surreal while without a bellow or moo
they stood as if glued solid to that piece of ground

and they were right there near to me but I was alone
while everything did feel very lonely

in that twilight world.

Slowly the peaks of the Helderberg Hill to the west
was aglow with the orange-red rays of the round rising sun

and the sky turned to a cloudless cobalt blue

while the moon and morning star was still glowing in it.

In the distance a guinea fowl creaked like a wheelbarrow
when it made its first greeting to its mate,

a cock crowed as if wanted to trumpet in
the glory of another winter's day

and unnoticed the herd of cattle had moved much closer to me
where I was waiting at the entrance of the dairy

where they were ready to be milked,
were waiting patiently

and in my memory these moments of tranquillity do remain.

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Gert Strydom

The Cattle Paddock (Refrain Stanza)

Some young calves jump to and thro
and the Frisians are black and white where around me they go,
big-eyed cattle that chew the cud I do see
where in tranquillity they do look upon me
as if a meek friendliness they do bestow
while some do eat new sweet grass from the ground
but the dog chases a plover and its chicks is not to be found,
while guinea fowl call as if something secret they do know
and the Frisians are black and white where around me they go.

Gert Strydom

The Celestial-Bodies I Cannot Give To You

(in answer to Gilbert Gibson)

Celestial-bodies I cannot give to you,
with you I can have a sincere relationship.
The sun, moon and stars lay out of my reach
but I can draw you deep into my arms.
The mornings and seasons are still long gone
but in the here and now I do adore you,
on the Lord God we can both trust,
holy days full of love we can both enter in,
with you I can have a sincere relationship.

[Reference:"camera obscura" by Gilbert Gibson.]

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Gert Strydom

The Chain Saw

The chain saw screamed menacing
in the back yard where it did cut a grown oak tree
down branch by branch to the ground,
and every branch to firewood-length pieces of wood.

The smell of wood that had been cut
was sweet on the afternoon-wind.
The sun would shine hot again
into the bedroom windows of the big house
where there had only been shade.

High up to the west
towered Helderberg Mountain with its peaks
jutting into the bright blue sky
and on the other side stretched the town
of Somerset West to the east
while further away laid the beaches
of the Strand and Gordon's Bay
with the ocean a sapphire blue
into the distant beyond of the horizon.

One of the grownup boys
were cutting off smaller branches
with a lengthened steel-strong clipper
while the other two were dragging on a nylon-line
that was tied to a huge branch
that was been sawn down

and later the saw roared and screamed
with a greater intensity
while it ran free and did cut piercing through the wood
which were lined up branch by branch
on a bigger trunk by the grown up boys

and it was dangerous work
with branches falling down
right next to the wall,
some coming down right next to the house
and missing it just

and that menacing wood eating machine
if handled incorrectly
could cut a limb right off.

This task of cutting that huge tree down,
then into manageable trunks,
and eventually into firewood-length pieces of wood
took the whole day
from first light, right through the morning,
through the afternoon
into the twilight that did come with the night
and there was enough firewood
to burn in the fireplace
for another six winters to come.

Gert Strydom

The Cheetah

Seeming indolent where it lolls in a tree's shadow
while high in the sky the sun do smouldering glow
the cheetah waits until twilight in the late afternoon
watching the great herds moving slow

and then sneaks stealthy from covering to covering
as a invisible camouflaged dangerous killing thing
until it is close enough and the herd do it sense
and the chase of a single animal begin

where they turn and stampede to escape it
not knowing on which one it is gaining bit by bit
but then the cheetah turns on great speed,
jumps and with claws and teeth through an artery does hit.

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Gert Strydom

The Cheetah [2]

In the veldt were impalas, some oribi
and kudus roam around wild
a cheetah sneaks forward merciless
without even the zebras noticing

and when they rush away bewildered at speed,
when a cloud of dust rise in their mad run
it's as if his feet get wings
as if he rushes forward much faster

and suddenly catches up with a animal that he has chosen,
drags it down to the ground
and then the jaws of the hunter close like steel
while the other game mill around in a hundred fold.

Gert Strydom

The Child

At a time in a stable, in a manger
a child came into this world
with all the knowledge that does exist,
and He could stretch out His hands
and cause things to come into existence

but as a mere human
He came into our world
to give His love
and life away to others.

Somehow we did start to forget about Him,
we started to forget
to like a child in innocence to wait upon Him,
to trust in his omnipotence
and now mere men seek for proof
outside of His true word
and He is taken from an omnipotent God to only a man,
while His godliness is estranged from Him.

Gert Strydom

The Child (Free Verse Sonnet)

To find the innocent Child
the soldiers of Herod do perform infanticide
are blinded by the orders of a king
and for no child there is a safe haven
but the Child is not there He has escaped,
lives as the son of a mere carpenter,
do lead His own people back to God,
do give unselfish to others just what He can,
but innocently He is tried at night,
are summoned before Pilate who washes his hands,
then on a Friday murdered on a cross,
and like this. man had impaired the Godly
but the Child is not dead He has risen,
did go to His Father the king of the universe.

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Gert Strydom

The Child And Woman (Pirouette)

Butterflies you could find
as a very small girl,
could run just like the wind,
did hold on your dad's hand,
you grew to a woman,
you grew to a woman,
who like the big city
seeing things different
with your hand around mine,
and you gave me your heart.

Gert Strydom

The Child Is Still Alive

(in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

The child is still alive,
his spirit nobody can extinguish,
the small fists of the child hits on its mother's back
where she is carrying him
and out of control the child is crying
when his mother screams Africa and amandla
or like a Voortrekker woman with bare feet
try to find a way in the veldt to wild fruits
with snot that runs from his nose over his cheeks
where paper thin dogs run away scared
and a murderous crowd walks in the street,
but the child's voice
is swallowed by the roar of the crowd.

The whole country is degenerating
with cities becoming hovels overnight,
in anger the child lifts his fists against his father,
throws bricks and stones that fall like hail
and his father is without a job,
while people stream in from other countries
to fill all the vacant positions
and people walk in mass riots
while they scream Africa and amandla,
the child has a blown up stomach and is emaciated
and smells of human refuse.

The child is still alive,
his spirit nobody can extinguish,
not in Soweto, or at Thembisa, or in Sunnyside
or Hillbrow or wherever,
everywhere his toddler sister is raped
to rescue barbaric adult males
from AIDS,
or for the medicine of witchdoctors
she is cut apart
and however the child is suffering
he still is alive.

The child is still alive,
his spirit nobody can extinguish,
and he grows rebellious
while education degenerates
to human rights and politics
where knowledge, own values
and religion is been unlearned
and the child realises
that he will have no kind of future.

The child hides in the shadows,
notices the civil service
see how these people act fraudulently,
how they steal from the entire country,
even in the highest councils
where suppressing laws are being passed;
the child is unseen but present
and he notices how people are being bribed,
how everyone is living for his or her own gain,
the child peeps through bus windows,
through the windows of shacks in slums
and he wonders when it will be safe again
to play carefree outside,
to feel the sun on his skin?

Each opportunity and even his freedom
is being stolen from him time after time
and cursing whores are on the street,
drug lords from Nigeria,
thieves and killers from Zimbabwe
that gather everywhere in small groups
and strangers steal opportunities
as if they belong to them.

The child that wanted to feel the sun on his skin
in due time grows to be a man,
and decide to forget his father and his ancestors,
to forget about their corruption,
has great zeal for a new place,
(somewhere on this continent of Africa)
where everybody careless and free

can lead a own life
and he moves from place to place
where he tells everybody about his ideology
until his followers grow to gigantic numbers
and continually everyone is searching for some answers,
while no starvation, robbery, murder and illnesses
does devour Africa.

Gert Strydom

The Children Are Overwhelmed (Free Verse Sonnet)

The children are overwhelmed with happiness
as the sled of Father Christmas has landed,
some do press into the queue
at Pick n Pay and shake him by the hand,
are asking why he is not bring presents right through the year,
how high his reindeer can jump
and how he is everywhere through every city and town,
in the environs of each supermarket and shop?
Where king Midas upon king Midas are counting the pieces of silver
but very few people do still tell the story of the Child,
that a saviour for all of humanity did come to Bethlehem
and nobody do notice the people in poverty that are begging
as everyone is very jolly
right through the Christmas time.

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Gert Strydom

The Church Street Bomb

What a hell of banging sound resounded
in the inner city
on that day.

The air rushed turbulent
past me and the blast
made glass and concrete
shatter and rain down
in a deadly hail.

Innocent men, woman and children
who where on the street
where scarred, mutilated,
maimed and slaughtered.

Later the sirens of the fire brigade,
ambulances and police wailed past,
sounding like machines mourning
the inhumanity of a political cause
and of man killing man without any remorse.

Gert Strydom

The Circus Came To Town

The circus came to town
on that field
next to the old lion park
and a dark haired gypsy girl
in a way looked like you
twitched and made the same
movements as you

and I gazed at her on the trapeze
as if she was your darker half
and later she approached me
and said that my eyes
were full of sorrow

and she thought that we
had met somewhere before,
or maybe in another life

but you know
that I do not believe
in that kind of thing

and she was astonished
when I showed her
a photo of you
and said that you
could have been her sister.

Gert Strydom

The City Has A Deadly Wound

The city has a deadly wound
and on the street without a place to go,
sits an old man and his old wife
and their small white dog.

I see a blonde girl watching cars,
to buy a piece of bread
and her face tells that she has problems
and I wonder how she washes
the dirt of the road from herself?

a Red haired guy sleeps in boxes on the sidewalk
and at a traffic light there's children that sniffs glue.
At another traffic light
there's a couple with a baby,
that stands in the hot sun
and is dependant on motorists for their fate.

Just before a traffic circle there's a man
with short pants,
where day after day
he sells koeksisters.

a Man with dark glasses and a hat
strokes his guitar
chord after chord and sings sad songs
and I see that his hat is empty
where he is in a small alley
while minibus taxis hoot the whole time.

Taxes are getting higher
and everybody has to bare the brunt of it,
but the poor are on the street with their pain
and wait for the misery to pass
like flowers trying to blossom in a desert
and they are surprised and scarred by life
and wait in vain for a place in the sun.

[Koeksisters=> a Baked delicacy with syrup in it.]

Gert Strydom

The City Lights

In front of me the city lies stretched out
with pulsating cyber lights
and I wonder how many people
will see the last of life's light tonight?

I hear smack of a car crash,
in the distant a shot resounds
and somewhere the lights flicker
one after another
even before the dawn
of old comes.

Gert Strydom

The Civet

The civet melts into the bush,
into the undergrowth,
the yellow-brown grass
has got a yellowish-tan with black spots
and it does sneak past,
using the stars as its compass on its raid
and silently creeps, even crawls
and does canvass the terrain,
to find its prey.

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Gert Strydom

The Coastline Did Not Need The Poem

The coastline with great beauty
did not need the poem,
the city with its glittering lights
jewelled and blazing against the night
did not need anybody to sing
of it being the sprouting place of civilization
on this Dark Continent,
neither did the Sentinel at Table Bay
watching from its rocky slopes
care what anybody said about it
and the ocean, the blue sea
ignored its praises,
kept on sending its crushing waves
on to the shore, as it has done forever more.

[Reference: After the Poem by Sydney Clouts.]

Gert Strydom

The Cobra (Crystalline)

What does the cobra say when it hiss
other that how deadly it is?

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Gert Strydom

The Cold

Black frost fall killing, chilling
plants and grass to death
while a tiny sickle moon
watches flimsy
and there's iciness
to the wind
which cries around the corners of the house

and through French windows
the chill creeps in
like a unwelcome visitor
and tonight I am really sure
that it is winter.

Gert Strydom

The Cold Night Felt If It Would Last For Ages

The cold night felt if it would last for ages
while the wind was trying to shake the windows
and I went in and out of sleep,
imagining evil creatures prowling around outside,
heard a owl calling, some cats snarling at each other
and could hardly catch any sleep
until in the distance
I could hear the first cock crowing.

The morning was sunny and bright,
but still a cold winter's day
with ripe lying white on the grass
and it felt if I was sleepwalking
until the sun was setting.

Gert Strydom

The Cold Season

At times I battle
to find the reason,
why life is turning
into a cold season.

Still the world moves
and the country
takes its own way
and the stars
of yesterday,
are all burned out
by today.

No one can stay
forever young
and as time rushes by,
no one is exempt
from the passage
of life.

Opportunities come and go
and life carries on
and at the end of it all,
waits the cold reality
of a resting place.

Gert Strydom

The Cold Sneaks In Through The Windows

The cold sneaks in through the windows
and before you know it winter has begin
when the ripe lies around freezing everywhere,
while the grass is brown like the ground
and the branches of the trees are stripped
while the world lies naked and open

but then a person realizes
that it is a time of rest
and in all of nature
there is a silent slumbering
when the cold
pierces tot the depths of everything.

Gert Strydom

The Coming Covid-19 Level Three Lock-Down In South Africa (Sicilian Sonnet)

The worst contamination at first did start
in the Orange Free State at a church meeting
with infected people hugging and greeting
and now the government is not very smart.

Worshippers talk of oppression as if it's an art
where the corona-virus does do its evil thing,
while by infection all life seems so fleeting
as religious freedom wants to play its part

and surely now many more people will die
while meeting God can be in any kind of place,
many more funerals will be a final goodbye
and wrong decisions no one can then erase,
with heartfelt tears filling almost every eye,
with only great and good intentions as a base.

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Gert Strydom

The Coming Of Spring (Enclosed Triplet)

When everything is awakening in spring,
when a myriad of colours are displayed,
when God does to many things, new life bring,

there is a great kindness at the begin
of the season that replaces winter
when blossoms, many plants are flowering,

when everywhere some insects are buzzing
in a quest to propagate their own kind
when many butterflies are fluttering

when birds have very happy songs to sing
during the bright day and in the dark night,
when everything is awakening in spring.

Gert Strydom

The Coming Of Spring (Enclosed Triplet) [1]

When everything is awakening in spring,
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when everything is awakening in spring.

Gert Strydom

The Coming Of The First Spring Rain

(after Eugene Marais)

There are big game running
that suddenly gathers, snort and bark,
springbucks jumping, playing with their heads and walking nearer
and in the eyes of each one there is expectation and hope,

even the spitting cobra arches its back
when the guinea fowl down at the march call,
when thunder like drums rattle far away,
when even the small things under the earth crawl and whimper
and both animal and man wonder how to interpret the sudden shade

and the plain is wide and the clouds are blue-black
when everyone beholds the coming of the rain,
see how the rings around her feet shine in the distance
and hear the patter of her dance

and the nostrils of the game are open
to catch her smell if she wants to sneak past
and big joy is among all of the animals
as the rain has come with her rainbow cloak
and there are tranquillity and new life everywhere.

[Reference: 'Die dans van die reën' (the dance of the rain) by Eugene Marais.]

Gert Strydom

The Coming Of The Messiah

I

In the first year of the reign of king Darius
over the Chaldeans
the archangel Gabriel
as a messenger from God
did appear to Daniel

and he was clothed in fine white linen
his body did glitter like beryl,
his face was like thunder,
his eyes was like lamps of fire
and his words was the following:

'Seventy weeks
are determined upon thy people
and upon thy holy city,
to finish the transgression
and to make an end of sins,
and to make reconciliation for iniquity,
and to bring in everlasting righteousness,
and to seal up the vision and prophecy,
and to anoint the most Holy.

Know therefore and understand
that from the going forth of the commandment
to restore and to build Jerusalem
unto the Messiah, the Prince
shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks

the street shall be built again and the wall,
even in troublous times.

And after threescore and two weeks
shall the Messiah be cut off
but not for himself:

and the people of the prince that shall come
shall destroy the city and the sanctuary

and the end thereof shall be with a flood,
and unto the end of the war
desolations are determined

And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:
and in the midst of the week
He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.' (1)

II

The decree to rebuilt Jerusalem
was issued by king Artaxerxes of Persia
in the year 457 BC (2)

and the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt
in forty nine years
and in the year 408 BC
the repairs were completed.

In the year 27AC Jesus Christ
was baptised in the Jordan river by John
and when Jesus came out of the water after being baptised
the heaven broke open and the Spirit of God
descended upon Him like a dove
and loudly the voice of God said:

'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased' (3)

but in the year 31 AC
Jesus was crucified
and was taken to a place with the name Golgotha
that means place of the skull
and after they had crucified Him
His clothes were divided
and people mocked and said
that He could save others but not Himself

and at twelve o'clock that afternoon darkness came
while Jesus called out: 'My God, my God,
why hast thou forsaken me? ' (4)

And the veil of the temple
that was four inches thick
was torn apart
while the Son of God
was slaughtered as the Lamb of God
and the sacrifice and oblation did cease

and the centurion that had been guarding the cross
became very scared and said:
'Truly this was the Son of God.' (5)

and in the year 34 AC Steven was stoned
and as the Jewish nation did not accept Jesus as the Messiah
the apostles did turn to the heathen.

[References notes and footnotes:

Footnotes:

- (1) Daniël 9: 24-27.
- (2) Esra 7: 11-28.
- (3) Matthew 3: 17.
- (4) Matthew 27: 46.
- (5) Matthew 27: 54.

References:

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever
<3956> believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God
sent not his Son into the world to condemn <the world; but that the world
through him might be saved.'
John 3: 16-17.

'But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son.' Galatians 4: 4.

Jesus Christ says in 31AC: 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand.' Matthew 24: 15.

Notes:

The day year principle of prophecy:

'After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, forty years, and ye shall know <my breach of promise. Numbers 14: 34.

'And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year a day for a year, a day for a year.' Ezekiel 4: 6.

Gert Strydom

The Coming Of The Rain

In the early spring the signs are everywhere
before the rain comes after the winter
and the birds twitter and frolic around
while thousands of ants swarm on the ground
when the first flashes appear over the horizon
and here and there the sun disappear behind clouds
when the rain lilies suddenly open to flower
and for moments all of nature is astounded

as the rain brings new life to the dried out earth
and of her coming
all of the animals bear a kind of knowledge
and in the wild the wildebeest and zebras gather
where they tipple and gambol and turn skew
as they open there noses to the wind
to try and find the first signs of the rain
as the coming of the rain is sure
and joy is everywhere in the veldt and wilderness

and the grains of sand jumps up
when the first drops of rain does fall,
when the thunder explodes blue-white much nearer
and you can smell the joy of the wet earth
and even some of the wild flowers are blooming
and it's as if everything is holding their breath
before a rainbow hangs high in the blue
and God smiles over the earth and the universe
and the rain pours down over the meadow and the dale.

Gert Strydom

The Condemned Prisoner (Englyn Unodle Crwca)

He walks laboured solemn - wonder how much
farther, such steps condemn,
to the one hanging column;
outside it is cold autumn.

Gert Strydom

The Continental Barber

As a token a red and white emblem turns
outside the premises,
at the corner of the street
looking like some sucking sweet
or type of old lollipop
that as a child I used to eat.

Inside the barbershop a faint smell is present
but to it I cannot connect a fragrance,
almost like an age-old aftershave,
maybe a disinfectant
and the shop is squeaky clean

where an elderly barber waits me in,
asks if I want the same cut as the last time,
guides me to a old black comfortable cutting chair
places a plastic covering over my chest
that he ties with self adhesive tape
at the back of my neck

and he talks about life in general, the weather
a holiday in Portugal on Madeira Island
asks about my job, the family
while with a pair of sharp scissors
he barbers me and expertly
cuts the hair down to the right length
and I see brown locks falling
while the scissors that goes snip, snip with precision

and with a sharp blade razor some hair at the sides
and neck is shaven off,
before some of the magic cologne, aftershave
or whatever it is, is sprinkled there
and he brings a small mirror
to display how I look
at the back and sides

and transformed from a long haired individual
I am again a decent human being

with age old order being restored
to how I look.

Gert Strydom

The Coral Tree

Near to the river in the early morning haze
while in the veldt the antelope did nearby graze
some wild bees did hum and some hornbills did scream
when I found the coral-tree with its bright red flowers ablaze

and picture perfect was the sight of that tree with its flowers aflame
when at that moment a more beautiful thing I could not name
as if in a dream at a secret place in the Garden of Eden it did feel
while nearer and nearer some of the gazelles came.

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Gert Strydom

The Corporal

In basics the Corporal was no
Christian parent's son
since no person
could give birth
to a demon
that liked to press
others with his boots
into the dirt.

Not grown up yet
his two stripes
went straight to his head
and the PT-instructor's crossed swords
glowed menacing on his arm.

Through ash-holes with broken glass,
gravel roads with piercing stones
he made us leopard crawl
while live bullets
whipped up dirt
and running with truck tyres
on a pole
to him was fun
until some men fell
exhausted to the ground.

Personal letters he ripped open
and read aloud
for everyone to hear
and called unmarried people
with children bastards
and visited prostitutes
during the night
that well-off troops paid for
while his fiancée waited at home.

¶Envoi

One night I saw that Corporal run
when he disturbed me

at three am
in the truck park
where I were on guard
and I cocked the FN-rifle
and it sounded
like feeding live ammunition
into the barrel.

He tripped over
something on the ground
and got to his feet
and started running away,
jumping right over
three barbered wire fences
and hysterically shouted
at me not to shoot
and suddenly life felt really good.

[FN-rifle= Old R1 rifle with wooden butt.]

Gert Strydom

The Cosmos Stand Overgrown (Free Verse Sonnet)

The cosmos stand overgrown in pastel colours this year
where everywhere those fragile flowers are to be found,
wild daisies are in the veldt spared from the frost,
in the veldt on the farm you and I are both like children,
the redbreast sings for the rain out of season
where more and more I am in love with you,
your glances and kisses do things to me
and in the veldt everything around us are happy and free
while the winter-wind icy blows right through us,
the speckled fat Nguni-cattle do kick up dust,
seeds do turn in a circle in a whirling wind
and nothing can stop the lifelessness of winter
but your smile is much brighter than the dim sun
as if a new summer is coming in the secrecy of love.

Gert Strydom

The Country Fair

You accompanied me to the country fair,
dared me to ride a wild stallion there,
the sun was bright on that autumn day
and you had a string through your hair.

You smiled like angels do
with your eyes shining more blue
that the bright sky
and I was falling in love with you.

Pigs were pigs, so were cows, sheep
and chickens too, but you looked deep,
right into my soul
and I could have been asleep,

dreaming about your interest in me
but I felt free
with the horse galloping away
and riding it in glee

while it brought your brothers to a fall,
making huge men small
and in congratulations your lips were on mine
staying the only thing, of that day that I recall.

Gert Strydom

The Covid-19lock-Down Has In South Africa Double Standards

The government is messing with the lives of people,
the South African government mess South Africans around,
with great numbers of the dead it will be later a real mess
and with double standards people come right up to an abyss.

The informal businesses (Spasa-shops)that belong to black people
now go without any restrictions on with their business,
as if nothing deadly wants to jump from person to person,
as if under deadly circumstances it do belong like this,

while minibus taxis drive around full of people,
where informal small shops get their customers up to ten o'clock at night,
where fifty people can still attend funerals,
they can now go to any province without avoiding the virus.

Before you know it every one that travels in a minibus taxi is infected,
before you know it there is a lengthening of the lock-down in the law,
before you know it those that want to attend funerals
will be buried for a deadly thing.

Just before the lock-down came into place
a pastor travelled from Hartswater to a funeral in Bloemfontein,
did attend it and at home gave the virus to others,
who he infected when he came too close to them.

At a wedding in Hartswater he kissed the bride and bridegroom,
did wish them well and like this infected them and his whole congregation,
without knowing what he was doing gave the virus to every other person,
which made the whole Hartswater deadly ill when it did there brake out.

In less than a week the government are relaxing measures
and a person do now get the idea that for those people it's just a big joke,
where when death suddenly comes unexpected no one will laugh,
as with contact between people no one can escape this deadly thing.

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The Creation

The stars started glittering
at His supreme command,
and the wind from His mouth
swept over the deep dark void

and light came from the sun
as His mighty hand
placed sun and moon
in their place in space
and their orbits
started to mark tides,
seasons and time.

The great Creator spoke
and the waters and sky
was shaken into place
and the dry earth appeared
following His divine behest.

The earth dressed at His request
with vegetation, living creatures
of every kind unfolded
to make a place for man.

He created man by His own hands
from the dust
shaping and forming him
into His own image
and with a smile
He breathed life into his nostrils
and man became a living being

and I heard voices
praising the living God,
voices in heaven and on earth,
singing their joy of Him.

Gert Strydom

The Creation [3]

In His great arithmetic
and at a exact time
God spoke and the great wide world awoke
coming in effect to His exact design
at a instant as at chime
the earth as a revolving sphere
placed at the right spot in space
to circle around a bright hot sun
and every thing naturally falling in place
with nothing cosmetic,
all functioning as it was supposed to be
and when all was set and done
He made man, a free willed living being,
designed in His own image
and He was satisfied
that everything was well.

Gert Strydom

The Creator

Far before time was set down in history
God moved somewhere beyond the sky
and there was real magic in His words

while He did cut holes in the darkness,
setting stars,
the moon and sun in their place
and many planets in colours that amaze
came from His hands

and the raging sea, the blue sky
and the magical thing called life
came from Him.

Gert Strydom

The Credo Of A Child

Who truly knows where the rain
does hold in store her shining drops
does hide her barns against the bright blue
but the omnipotent One?

Who knows where the cloak of the morning does hide,
when orange-red she jogs out
does linger for moments
while the dogs are barking for the milkman?

The dewdrop treasures that I find,
when the sun blinds me against the heaven
may have no value to you
but I do still look through the eyes of a child,

are trying to see the unseen,
the secret places of the God that I do serve.

Gert Strydom

The Cross (In Answer To Allan Kirkland Soga)

Far too long has it beaconsed silently,
on the rocky shore of Algoa bay
etched on land against the sea,
against the thunderous breaking roar
of waves crashing forever more

telling of brave merchant men trusting in God
send by a Christian king
to overcome unknown seas, the flood,
like Noah's band, under Diaz left a marker everlasting
with prosperity unfurled,
bringing God's love to this dark world.

[Reference: Santa Cruz: The Holy Cross by Allan Kirkland Soga.]

Gert Strydom

The Crowded Street

They rush past
in a never ending crowd
some in uniforms
of police, soldiers,
security men and nurses,
some in suits, some with ties
and others in informal clothes.

Some are stone faced
with no emotion showing
while their thoughts
is somewhere else,
some are happy and smiling,
others are sad and some are crying.

Some carry briefcases, some suitcases
and other backpacks, handbags
and others bags.

Almost every one
has a place to go
where duty or pleasure takes them,
but here and there
some wander as if lost from life,
others hawk things at corners
and some stand around begging.

Gert Strydom

The Crucifixion

The first time
that she heard about the crucifixion,
there were tears
in the eyes of that child
that drew lines down her blushing cheeks

"They cruelly murdered Him, "
she said with a lot of compassion
and that she really
would have wanted it differently
and I heard pain in the voice
of that little girl.

Still I know that every hammer blow
and torture on that cross,
bought me free
from eternal death
and that He was both man and God
hanging there for me
to get that freedom.

[This poem is for Sunè]

Gert Strydom

The Crucifixion Of The Son Of God

In anger some religious officials and Roman soldiers came
to arrest Him and called out His name
when in great apprehension and fear
Peter did draw his sword and chopped off Malcus's ear

and when He restored the ear back in place
there was great compassion and love on his face
but still the officials and soldiers did not comprehend
that they were taking the Son of God to His end.

The crowd that wanted Him dead was unruly and large
and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate could lay no charge
but ordered his soldiers to have Him stripped,
to strap down each wrist and have Him whipped.

A crown of thorns was forced upon his head,
he was mocked while to a cross he was led
and this was the man that healed the ill
that fed multitudes and preached of love with great skill.

Jesus from Nazareth was nailed to a cross
and although those that were killing him was at a loss
He said: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"
and if He himself would be eternally dead he did not have a clue

while without a fault He was from the day of his birth
but carried the sin of every converted human, of the whole earth,
could not connect with God while he did set others free
and did cry out: "My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?"

Darkness came to the earth on that afternoon,
dark was the stars, the sun and the moon.
The Jews and Romans viewed this with dread
when the earth shook and people were raised from the dead.

To the Roman Centurion and his soldiers this was very odd
when they exclaimed: "Surely He was the Son of God"
and from the day that His blood did flow
God did His salvation on all people that do believe bestow.

Gert Strydom

The Crumbling Man

It's as if my whole life is breaking in pieces
and all around me I see some of the pieces lying
without the opportunity to do anything about it

as if the new government of the country
and destiny together
does tear my career apart

and from one contract to the next
I do jump
like pieces of a puzzle that are getting less
and when there are no more pieces
I am alone and extradited

as if nothing more
can fit into
my puzzle.

Gert Strydom

The Cuckoo (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

Where from branch to branch it jumps jolly,
frolic for its mate and do gambol,
that sound barrage sounds bright
when again it starts singing a love song,
where the sound does pierce almost through everything around me,
I almost by the sheer beauty cannot think,
when that song of praise do sink deep into my heart
from that paltry small flying thing,
through the thin lace-curtain
three notes comes out of the garden,
so holy and pure as if it is praising God,
where it goes silent and the bird appears again,
high up in the crown of the oak tree
the song shows it again.

[Reference: "Piet-my-vrou" (Cuckoo) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

The Current Johannesburg

(after William Blake)

In each city street there are people
who continually come and go
on their way to work, trampling with tired feet
and in some of them the spirits are low

as late in the afternoon they return home,
as slaves to a life that is by destiny set
and just here and there they find something wholesome
but some curse, drink and bet

and so life goes on
with drug peddlers that are selling their wares
and prostitutes patrolling up and down until the crowds are gone
and now and then people offer prayers

and I wonder what God on this earth see,
while people live in iniquity?

[Reference: 'London' by William Blake]

Gert Strydom

The Curving World's Edge (Passion Sonnet)

Sometimes the vast protecting sapphire sky
hangs covering over us, in it's deep blue
hangs somewhat sheltering over you and I
like something precious with a prefect hue,

as the presence of things pure and true
and over our own structures of love
like something precious with a prefect hue,
there is nothing shadowed from above.

Like something precious with a prefect hue,
the presence of the Eternal One
of every great thing that we can pursue,
we find ourselves imaged in His tone

Sometimes the vast protecting sapphire sky
hangs somewhat sheltering over you and I.

Gert Strydom

The Cyclops Multitude

In the fog I see the lonely monsters one-eyed glow red
where this Cyclops multitude stand in a row as if they bleed,
do bring me to a halt for life and death
before the traffic can again flow on.

Gert Strydom

The Daily Greeting

Daily on the windowsill
twittering about the things good great and ill
the barbet puff its yellow coat
draw its tiny lungs to their fill,

do spread both of its checked wings
and of life and its mysteries it sings
in my study's windows
to me it do its daily greeting bring

where it looks somewhat like a little bantam cock
while up and down it does its head and body rock
drawing its bristles up and pecks at the window with its bill
where it sounds as if it does knock

and then for long moments I do look at it,
it does look at me for a bit
with a twisted head as if better to see
where without movement it does sit.

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Gert Strydom

The Dam

I went to the dam to see its secrets
where it was surrounded by some hillocks,
overfull after some good rain
with water pouring over one side.
There were dragon-flies darting over its shiny surface
some small birds did land to drink water,
I found crabs, at their bottom, full of small ones
some coots swimming with their young
and I wanted to catch all kinds of fish,
there were carps, kurpers and catfish,
sometimes a yellow-fish or two
and accustomed to English boys being
from the city and spoiled,
Robert who came from Rhodesia
was a great surprise and from a farm
making him a boy like me with the same interests
and he had given me self-made sinkers and some bended hooks
which made my hands burn to go fishing.

I was nine and very happy to be right there
with all of my fishing-gear.
The three black girls higher up at the stream
did beguile me.
I came across them while above the dam
I was following the stream,
were searching under the rotten leaves
for earthworms and crickets and later
were looking for tadpoles
higher up where it still did flow slow.

I was dressed only in short pants
and wet from diving in the stream
with a bottle full of tadpoles in my hand
when I found a black girl totally naked
in the water with me
and two others also without clothes
was drying themselves by the sun on a rock.

Wordless, astounded and fascinated

we stared at each other
and never having seen any girl like this
I stood there as if frozen looking at them
until the one in the river saw the tadpoles,
asked smiling about them
and there was no shyness to them
even from being without clothes

but the dam was far better
with earthworms for bait
that could catch almost any fish
where a yellow-fish almost walked on the water
as it did jump and did fight
all the way to the shore
and the catfish were twisting
to and thro and dragging the line down
where I had a small fire of my own
on which the blue kurpers did sizzle
on the glowing hot coals.

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Gert Strydom

The Dance Of The Wind

I

Round and round
I see her skipping dancing and turning
between lumps of sand
that blows up rejoicing, where she is turning about.

She is shaking her hips,
calls the leaves, the flowers and trees
drawing fluttering lines of sand
swishing drops out of streams.

The game gathers when she sweeps past,
stand with nostrils pointed
as worshipers, lost in her worship
while grains of sand whipping against them

and she is cheering glad,
runs past crossing them.

II

Her fresh smell permeates softly to me
in her joyful waltz
as she turns again and again cheerful around me,
she smells as gardenia and wild wormwood.

She drives clouds on as a cloak
spreads the rain like confetti just where she is going
and the ground, plants, insects and small animals rejoice
with the thunderbolts whipping the whole time,

exalting about life and the freshness that she is bringing,
on big and small drums her marriage is proclaimed,
while the flashing is everywhere around her
and she invites everybody spiritual and sinful

as guests of honour to her celebration

to get new life.

III

Her fingers stroke
soft and cool over my cheek
when she plays past me
and swings out here and there, scared that I might catch her.

Mischievously she pulls at trees and branches
sweeps spinning, twisting and turning
over the roofs of houses and buildings
like a child full of merriment the whole time translucent

and she spreads her cloak
blows the clouds closer to each other
making sure that the whole world knows
that it's her wedding day

but when I look again
she suddenly is gone, has disappeared.

[Reference: Die dans van die reën (The dance of the rain) by Eugene N. Marais.]

Gert Strydom

The Dark Night

The dark night
wants to enclose everything with her cloak,
the dark night
bewitches the moon that waits on her
to join her shining yellow gold
and jollily people come home from
the dark night

Gert Strydom

The Darkness Cannot Quench

The darkness cannot quench
the light that You forked in me
where Your flames branched down sizzling

and even if destiny tries to stunt me uncannily
you free me from its tyranny
from the ghosts that accompanies it

and bit-by-bit you lead me to Your light
through this life, right through the night.

Gert Strydom

The Darkness Comes Quick

The darkness comes quick this time of year
while the sieving rain draws near
and almost lost
at times in the twilight it feels queer

In the woods there's a cold wind that blows
under mountains white capped by snow
tossing leaves, stirring through trees
and I walk on a path that I know

The path meanders while nature goes to sleep
and to its track I try to keep
while in the bushes there's something that's awake
and I can feel glowing eyes that at me peep

Gert Strydom

The Darkness Falls Like A Shadow Over You (In Answer To Pablo Neruda)

The darkness falls like a shadow over you,
where your eyes gleam like that of a cat
as the silver twilight sudden start to rush in
and abstracted your face fades into twilight.

Without a word you gaze into the night,
gaze down at neon lights flickering on,
while I am alone in our big hot bed
and there is a kind of loneliness that comes

with this early evening's magical hour,
while the sun flames in its red glowing fire
that splashes over your white dress
as the night sets its roots into our souls

while hidden things suddenly come to life,
as your gentle laughter touches me very deep
when you enter our bedroom with a bottle
full of sparkling champagne, full of joy.

Suddenly life is rich as if the act of creation,
is in every gentle touch, as if new beginnings
of love, joy and tender bliss are totally endless
as the city lights suddenly wink on below.

Gert Strydom

The Darkness In Me

The darkness in me is summoned by tragedy,
oppression and the pain
that life sometimes brings and never I am truly free
while my tears are falling like rain

but in all things Your righteousness,
Your love and compassion
comes to me to bless, even in the nothingness
and in times of oppression

there's a new light that I see,
while I look upon the cross, see You hanging in innocence
and even when my heart is full of anxiety
You bring me to acquittal from recompense,

to find inner strength and endless joy
instead of in anger that wants to destroy.

Gert Strydom

The Darkness Was Enveloping Her

The darkness was enveloping her,
covering her from above,
while he pressed her down,
with a knife against her throat

and the nightmare was no dream,
but intense reality
where he was raping her
forcing himself into her trembling body.

When she tried to resist,
his black fist slammed down
hitting her in the face
and the night became much darker

and from sheer terror
it was as he was demon possessed
and her mind went blank.

Gert Strydom

The Day In Front Of The Pulpit (Octave)

The day in front of the pulpit is in my memory
the prayer mat, you pretty in your white wedding-gown,
the chandeliers, your hand in mine I remember fondly
and the words that made you my own
where in love as a woman you were at my side
the ringing rejoicing church-bells
the prediction that God does with us abide
where you did set me before everyone else.

Gert Strydom

The Day Is Dying In A Local Town

Rose petal pink, orange tingeing into white-grey
the evening twilight fades away,
the soldiers, from general down,
the lawyer, the city lark, accountant, the office clown
are disappearing into the enclosing dark,
the homeless man, the vagrants sit smoking
in the municipal park,
with a few mucho men joking
in the packed bar, the evening star
glitters her hello, shines down
across the hugely deserted town.

Crème liqueur, dark red wine
are whirling in glasses of lovers,
mistresses, in the hands of men,
some lovely women
and a few local swine
who cavort and dine
and some are cold as cadavers,
intent on getting more
than their money's worth
from those that they adore
and pour more and more
whiskey and wine.

Tyres burn embers from the road,
light dwindles with the day
traffic lights shine brightly green, amber and red
some drunks, some fighting men goad
each other in the local pub
while prostitutes walk around ready to play
asking, "hey what's up? "
ready to take any paying man to bed
to lie any way, even inverted
but most places are totally deserted
except the local houses
where lights gleam, people gather with spouses
caged behind bars, steel palisades with dogs patrolling
with no police cars rolling or anybody strolling.

The skyline dwindles into dark night
and street light after streetlight
appear like cheap cosmetic jewels
with curtains in windows flapping like towels
forgotten on the washing line
and everything declines into rest
while busses, trucks, trains and machines
are doing their best to work on
and everything human disappears and is gone
while unknown lights keep passing by
are passing in the dark sky.

Gert Strydom

The Day Is Rainy (Couplets)

The day is rainy miserable and cold
and this morning I feel a thousand years old,

somewhere below freezing this winter is
and I have not expected it as cold as this

but cosily among the sheets you lie,
are unperturbed by the grey-dark sky,

your smile is filled by the summer's hot sun
and with you another glorious day has begun.

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Gert Strydom

The Day Is Warm

The day is warm and the sky is clear blue
the ocean has a peaceful tranquillity,
the waves glitter in a own transparent hue
and still you are not with me.

The waves roll in and out on the shore
while the wind carries the scent of the sea
like it has done forevermore
while gulls fly happy and free.

The water feels cold
while the sea splashes my feet
and I am turning old
and wonder if we will ever again meet?

Another day is gone
and in my heart you stay the only one.

Gert Strydom

The Day Little Jessica Ran Away (Terzanelle)

The day little Jessica ran away
she took the Greyhound heading for the beach
the sun was shining all day,

wanting to live totally out of reach
she had lost her boyfriend, saw him kissing another girl once
she took the Greyhound heading for the beach

while she wanted to cry, to hiss and pounce
as they drove past the church before she was gone
she had lost her boyfriend; saw him kissing another girl once

and the bus drove out of town on and on
past some farm boys on horses in the field,
as they drove past the church before she was gone

Jessica was hurt and did not want to yield,
Jessica was waving them goodbye,
past some farm boys on horses in the field

and she saw the sun yellow in a cobalt blue sky.
The day little Jessica ran away,
Jessica was waving them goodbye,
the sun was shining all day.

Gert Strydom

The Day Of My Destruction

Shall the day
that my destruction comes
and I perish without income,
be the day
of my new beginning?

Shall what was clear to me in dreams
become my reality
and become the day of my beckoning,
and turn into the day of my reaping?

Shall the day of my destruction,
be the day of my awakening,
when I get new wings
and rise up from the ashes
around me?

Gert Strydom

The Day That I Was Christened

The day that they christened me
around me gathered my whole family
while up to the altar my father and mother did trod
and the pastor spoke of the love of God,

where he was renouncing sin
and so my struggle on this good old earth did begin
while through a window sun fell on my face
and I knew that I was living

while outside birds was singing,
the sky was cloudless and blue
and in my mother's arms I was gently swinging
while her love was dear and true.

Gert Strydom

The Day That The First Rain Comes In Spring

The day that the first rain comes in spring
they say then all of the birds sing,
with not a cloud is in the sky
while the sun is shining,

that they sing their praises with voices that ring
and on that day there's a great blessing

but while I look on a bright spring day,
there was no rain falling,
while the birds did twitter and play.

Gert Strydom

The Day The Paratrooper Antitank Platoon Went Into Action

The day the paratrooper antitank platoon
went into action
stays with me
with a piece of shrapnel
that almost missed my knee,
but grazed it leaving its scrawling mark

and sometimes lovers want to know
about that scar, about the one
just under my chin
and to them
they are almost like tattoos on my skin

but to me they address
a different story
of a war, that most
want to forget now
and of which
I do not know how too.

Gert Strydom

The Day They Robbed Me Of My Life (In Answer To Don Mattera)

Black people have got power
in this government that rules,
to sing songs of hatred
like kill the Boer, kill the farmer,
kill the white man

and to sit back in comfortable chairs,
while pillage, rape, torture
and robberies takes place
and then when crime is out of control
to be about it totally amazed

Black people have got power
in this government that rules,
to destroy a lifetime's career,
years of study at university,
years of experience
of doing a person's utter best
in moments with affirmative action
and turning lives into nothing but dust.

Gert Strydom

The Day They Robbed My Car (Englyn Cyrch) (In Answer To Don Mattera)

On high the sun did witness
with a kind of aloofness
how black men robbed my car;
but by far in lawlessness.

[Reference: "The Day they came for our house" by Don Mattera.]

Gert Strydom

The Days That Are Past

The days that are past
are like leaves in the wind
that is blown away
never again to be found

and the events, feelings
and time that is past
circle out like ripples
that goes wider on the summer sea
and that which stays unsaid
has got a expectation
that someone will understand.

Gert Strydom

The Days Will Fly Far Too Quickly (In Answer To Dorothy Parker)

The days will fly far too quickly
in their unending spell
and I will see you weekly
while being away from will feel like hell

when ever we are apart,
but every time that we are together
will brighten my heart
and will be lovely like a day of sunny weather

while your eyes will gleam like the sky
and whatever we are afraid of
will pass us unhindered by,
while that which you are made of

will come to its perfection
while you love me with sweet affection.

Gert Strydom

The Dead Citizen

A man went to get his identity document
and for a passport at the same time
and was found by the Department of Home Affairs
to be dead and buried
and they did not care that he was still living
and instead declared him deceased and past away

His accounts at the bank were frozen
as part of the estate
of a person deceased
and he couldn't leave the country
or renew his driver's license
and draw any money
and he was declared to be deceased and past away.

He went to the head office
of that great State Department
and declared his problem with them
and they were amused
that the dead citizen
had risen again,
but he was still a living man
with substance and form
and not a ghost
that had stepped from the grave
and he was declared to be deceased and past away.

Gert Strydom

The Deadly Leviathan

God's ancient plaything
lays motionless while around it
fishes, small plants and steam are rising
and it settles down bit by bit

while in its stomach burns an ancient fire
and very deep down it swallows fishes by the ton
before sleeping some more is its only desire
but its eyes are always switched on

while it waits aeons for Michael to return
and in its heart hatred and longing for destruction burns
where it is gigantic in size, lying like a mountain of fuming rock
and slowly one of its many heads turns and turns

trying to comprehend,
while it lies if all its energy is spent
waiting, always waiting
to bring earth to its devastation, to its end.

Gert Strydom

The Deadly Virus Bares The Very Name

It's nice to call the American president a racist,
to hide behind political innuendoes and propaganda,
while the real culprits who did spread death worldwide
still run free and without any remorse go on with life.

It's nice to talk and act with relative truth
(with lies that cover-up that do replace the blame) ,
when the absolute truth is so very self-evident
and to which the COVID-19 virus bares its very name.

It's extremely useful to call on help
from those from whom this very virus came,
to twist facts as if in that overpopulated place
this unseen deadly thing is now at rest,

while right there thousands do still pay the price
of a social system (a religion if you will) ,
that they do believe cannot fail
and yet world wide this thing of death do still prevail,

do many hundreds of thousands suddenly ail,
do so silently suddenly kill
that the entire world now is locked-in
and do not know when a normal life will begin.

[Poet's note:China Originating Viral Infectious Disease 2019 (COVID19) .]

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Gert Strydom

The Death Of Samson

They wanted to make a mockery
of the man that was once mighty
and the thousands that were there
each one wanted to spit on him, to touch him

and in his blindness they forced him
to dance before them,
to jump away from their blows
but he objected to this and waited,

asked when things became a little calmer
that his helper led him to the central pillars
and he prayed to God, prepared himself,
when he apparently just found a place to rest.

Then the muscles in his body tensed
while he pulled with all of his might
and his arms strained to quivering
while the crowd waited, suddenly were afraid,

before the pillars that held the building up cracked,
broke to smithereens under his power
and for his God he made an end to his enemies,
when that temple, that building came down with a thundering sound

and in the last moments Samson realized
that God was still with him, when his vengeance was on his enemies.

Gert Strydom

The Decimation Of The 47th Cuban / Fapla Brigade (Cavatina)

That night thunder flash after thunder flash
roared blood red,
I could smell scorched flesh, saw the havoc
of the burnt dead,
while the armoured car's gun hammered;
Cubans had fled,
left their pristine battle tanks to run away,
while we fought through the night into the day.

Gert Strydom

The Deeper Right

When my ancestors faced Mzilikazi,
Dingaan and the British
they thought of no honour
or heroic deeds
while spears and rifle barrels
gleamed in the morning sun

and their eyes were set on You
and with the Bible in the hand
they wanted to convert heathen
and to make impressions in this land,

but somehow
my people were murdered by barbarians
and covetous people,
the Godly call was lost
and survival went into their very souls
to make laws for their own protection.

Still in our simplicity
we tried to stay with You
and now I ask that our property
remain our own,
for the oppression to be gone
so that the sun can shine over us as well
and we also can have a life

and if they that sit in the highest chairs
still want to deny
the deeper right that belongs to us,
do not want to honour You,
further want to trample us
and try to indoctrinate
it compels me to ask:

that You let the broom loose
which Your prophet had predicted
and wipe this continent clean from end to end
and bring salvation to us.

[Reference: The deeper right here refers to the right of leading a life.]

Gert Strydom

The Deluge

The crust of the world breaks open
and water gushes up
from below,
while heavy continual rain
pours down from above.

Lightning bolts roar menacing
flashing white blue
against a clouded black sky
and the sun is blocked off
and it's like night.

The ark rises on water
which floods universally
causing havoc and catastrophe
and in tremendous winds
Noah steers the ship
to ride gigantic waves.

His massive arms
is rock solid on the wheel
while huge waves break
splashing him soaking wet
and the chill creeps in
right through to his bones,

but the biggest chill
is in his heart of humanity,
while he watches the rest
birds and animals die
and dead bodies drift
as far as his eyes can see.

Solid rain pours down for forty days
without end, winds howl in great intensity
and waves break and rock the ship
uncaring for its destiny
and it's as if every lightning bolt
finds the ship

as the only thing available to bash down on.

Days and nights he watches
dark green water rising,
rushing, crushing and coiling out
and in the dark the wake at the stern
gleams white.

[Reference: Genesis 6-8.

Gert Strydom

The Dentist Thing

I. The evening that I bite right through a molar

The evening that I bite right through a molar
with the nerve lying open,
in a thousand years I do not want over again
and then suddenly I am without an appetite

it feels as if I am losing my senses,
to put it mildly
while I neatly put down my eating utensils
and the next morning I go without breakfast

but that night that thing
pains and beats
and no clove oil, Syndols or R10's help
to stop that pain
and it feels as if I can jump up and down
and I am overwhelmed with pain.

II. I cannot close a eye

I cannot close an eye
even if I do anything to lie down
or do whatever to be sleeping
and far too slowly the minutes and hours tick past.

Then I sit in front of the computer and stare
and write a poem
where the devil tells me not to spare God
and I have no humility

but I write a song of praise
a poem that I call early spring
letting my pain, my song, my life there cling to Him
where I glorify the awesomeness of His creation and salvation

and send that dark might on its way,
waiting right through the night on the morning light.

III. At daylight I find no opening at a dentist

At daylight I find no opening at a dentist,
everyone is booked full,
and I drive to and thro
and my molar is broken right through.

Even the dentistry department
of the community clinic is closed
and it's as if everything is hampering me
and in the new town I feel miserable

when a black old lady outside the library
tells me about another dentist
and with my motorbike I break the speed limit
while that awful tooth troubles me

and when I quickly run into that dentistry rooms,
there's a booking open.

IV. There I am taught why children hate dentists

There I am taught why children
hated dentists and are afraid of them
and wish that I were somewhere else
when he switches on the searchlight and with his knowledge

grabs needles, pliers and drills
and uses a thing that almost sucks my breath away
notching a hole into that teeth with a drill
with my mouth stretched open and my head bend back

and that teeth is impacted into the jawbone,
whereupon he brakes piece by piece out with a pair of pliers,
takes a scalpel and before I can stop him
cuts and stabs a hole into my mouth

saying very nonchalant that the rest can swear out
and my bleeding mouth aches a long while after this.

Gert Strydom

The Depths Of Love (Cavatina)

While our deeds are from harshness innocent,
mere words express
that what we deem love in fullness to be,
what it possess,
as defined by mind, body and soul;
its own excess
we do not really know, comprehend,
as it is selfless to its joyful end

Gert Strydom

The Desert Was The Colour Of Cinnamon

The desert was the colour of cinnamon,
the hills in the distance were blue,
were rolled up like pan cakes
and I was searching for a stopping place
near to some water
the air was a metallic blue, the sand yellow;

time here came to a standstill
where the desertedness catches you sometimes,
in this barren landscape where decay just brings
more and more sand
and dust clouds hang lingering over everything
while the wind flutters and dust hits everywhere.

Gert Strydom

The Destruction Of Sodom (Tennyson-Turner Sonnet)

(in answer to A. E. Housman)

When envoys of God were visiting Lot
a crowd wanted to rape them in that night,
but they were struck by blindness and could not.
On the very next morning at first light

when Sodom's destruction was imminent,
Lot and his family hesitated
while the very great danger was present.
The angels grabbed them where they waited

with words to flee, not to look back, to stop
on the plain or they would be swept away
and to hurry until they were on top
of the far of high hills, but on the way

Lot's wife halted on that plain to stop
to the destruction, her glance did then stray.

[Reference: 'XXXV' 'Half-way, for one commandment broken' by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

The Destruction Of The Spanish Inquisition (Ballade)

(in answer to N. P. van Wyk Louw)

1

The thought came to me that man is fragile
around me, colonel Lehmanowsky, chilly the wind do blow
while in darkness I walk through the streets of Madrid
and in the fog turn off into the wrong alley.

2

Chorus:

That Christians do murder other Christians
I did hear about the Jesuits and Inquisition
but did not want to believe it of godly men
where rumours can lead to unreasonable actions.

3

Suddenly two armed men do overwhelm me,
I call for help to a patrol of mounted soldiers that are passing
and I struggle to draw my sword from its sheath,
that my enemies are soldiers of the Inquisition leaves me dumbstruck.

4

Musket-shots resound from the French soldiers that do come to help,
quickly with the rapier I slash to the nearest enemy's head
do get in a cutting wound on his cheek and in the lantern-light pick up an ear
and realize that members of the Inquisition tried to kill me

5

My enemies have escaped and are gone and I a protestant do live
and what further action to take I demand from Marshal Soult?
That they tried to kill me makes me tremble with rage
and I remind him of Napoleon Bonaparte's decree.

6

Marshal Soult orders me to go and destroy the Inquisition,
I ask for more soldiers, for help from my comrade colonel de Lile,
as without the help of the 117th regiment the 9th Polish Lancers are trivial,
obliging Marshal Soult says that I can have another third regiment if I want to.

7

Outside the city a wall surrounds the castle of the Inquisition,
a small company of soldiers defend it and I ask them to call the fathers,
order that they bring the Inquisitor-General to the entrance
where my men and I in three regiments stand in the open in a group.

8

The sentinel gets his orders; shoot with his musket and brushing past
the bullet hits the soldier next to me and others fire from a breastwork on the
wall,
with us in the open plain it's unequal warfare
where with three regiments we surround the thick wall of that castle.

9

That I first had to reconnoitre the castle comes to me
and if I went to fetch a cannon explosives would be set by the enemy
but colonel de Lile finds a weak spot in the wall
and I order the men to cut down two trees and to bring them.

10

A breach is made through the wall through which we enter
while we fire at the enemy soldiers on the inside
and inside the complex a strange incident happens:
priests do wait on us in their robes with long faces,

11

with arms crossed over their breasts and fingers on their shoulders,
standing as if they have been deaf to fighting,
I become aware of the glance of the Inquisitor-General
try to find meaning in sinister eyes and a self-satisfied smile.

12

"Why do you fight against the French, our friends?"
is asked of the soldiers of the Inquisition
and the acute glances between the inquisitors I cannot miss
they make as if the attack was unauthorized by them.

13

I do arrest the lot of them and place them under guard
and Colonel de Lile and I pass through chamber after chamber,
find rooms full of candles, altars and crucifixes,
without finding any sign of instruments of torture.

14

There is no sign of iniquity that is being practised,
we do find lovely paintings, a noble atmosphere, an extensive great library,
beautiful architecture and perfect order,
the wooden floors shine, the marble floors are perfect.

15

There is no hollow sound when I stamp down with my boots upon the floor
but colonel de Lile looks at everything thoughtful and unsettled,
the rumours and reports of torture disappear into the naught, as if vapour,
and where I am prepared to stop my comrade do not believe their innocence.

16

The sinister eyes and a self-satisfied smile keeps bothering me in my thoughts
when my comrade asks if they could pour out water over the marble tiles,
the soldiers of his 117th regiment go to fetch water and I am dumbfounded
when water sinks away quickly at a place and the inquisitors are dissatisfied.

17

Swords, bayonets, and butts of muskets are used to lift a tile
while the Inquisitor-General remonstrate about desecrating a holy place
but his expression of hidden fear brings insight and all hands to work
where I use my own sword to try and hasten discovery.

18

At first it seems purely in vain until a soldier hits a tile right next to it
everyone stand speechless and the Catholics are shocked pale
when a spring causes a marble slab to stand up
and stairs in the darkness lead to beneath and do invite further inspection.

19

I take a four feet long candle from a nearby altar.
"It is holy you cannot touch that candle, "
I am stopped and restrained by the hand of an inquisitor.
"With this candle I will shed light on dark things and on iniquity."

20

I brush the hand away and follow the stairs down,
notice a golden throne that is higher than the other chairs,
in the middle a marble block where the condemned had to wait on punishment
with chains on it and in the distance cells smell foul in the darkness.

21

The cells are awful places of severe solitary confinement,
at some do only lay the bones of the prisoners,
a place for the human spirit grinding it down and exploiting it
and it's difficult to express this madness in words.

22

People from fourteen years to very old are found,
from both sexes naked in chains,
where hunger and pain are devouring them
and for a hardened soldier this is a terrible thing.

23

Without being ordered the prisoners are set free by the soldiers,
from their knapsacks overcoats and other clothes they bring,
where intensely they are sorry for this people
and without me realising the lot of the inquisitors are determined.

24

In another room on the left we find instruments of torture:
a machine that breaks and pulls apart all joints in hands and in the body,
a machine in which the head is motionless while water drips in pain and horror,
another machine is covered with razor-sharp blades,

25

another machine has a doll that clasps a person
while grating blades do cut a person little by little to pieces
and screws do pull tighter
until nothing living is left.

26

Everything works terribly on the disposition of the soldiers
far past rage and abhorrence they fetch the inquisitors
the will for requiting is overwhelming strong
and each one begs, pleads and asks for mercy

27

but everyone is right here executed,
the Inquisitor-General has to meet the doll,
no notice is taken of my counter-command
and to them revenge is bittersweet.

28

Outside a crowd waits upon the prisoners
fathers, mothers, wives, husbands and children do embrace
at the same time people do cry and laugh
some are happy other over everything in revolt

29

but for a moment everyone do stand still,
do in silence look at the buildings, towers and wall
while explosives goes off in the dungeons of the Inquisition
and when everything falls to ruins cheering they do hold on to each other.

[Reference: "Die hond van God" (The dog of God) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.

Poet's note: A person that views this poem as an attack on the Roman- Catholic church or religion reads it totally wrong. Here the clash between time periods, words and people are expressed and it is indicated how dangerous it is were church and state becomes one institution and religion and worship is forced down on is a report of the events before and during the destruction of the Spanish Inquisition and also a piece of history where a person can learn about human impurity that leads to such things as death and slaughter on both sides.

Footnotes:

Colonel Lehmanowsky was attached to Napoleon Bonaparte's army that was stationed in Madrid and was in command of the 9th Polish Lancers regiment. Marshal Soult was the Governor of Madrid in 1809.

Napoleon Bonaparte's decree did order the suppression of the Inquisition and up to that time was not carried out.

Both colonels Lehmanowsky and de Lile did after the war become pastors of the Evangelical Church in Marseilles in France.]

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Gert Strydom

The Devil Wears High Heels

The devil wears high heels
and nobody will be able,
to convince me differently.

As a joke I heard a girl say:
she's evil,
but there was truth to it.

I saw the colour change in her eyes
and heard her voice rise a pitch or two:
Excuses, excuses get the job done yesterday
were the instructions for today.

Some frickings slipped out
as the day ran on
and I heard an O Christ or two
and I want to misuse you,

was part of the normal speech
as if the basic conditions of employment act
is totally null and void.

To receive two days work an hour
before closing time
that she wants at the end of the day
must be a joke,

but the devil wears high heels
and I saw it
in a pinstripe woman's suit
trying to do a man's job
and decency and integrity
was long gone
and every thing turned around
the self, the ego and here and now

and with those that kissed her feet
she was nice and sweet
and with the rest

the devil wears high heels.

Gert Strydom

The Disarmed

The night had passed
the cobalt morning was not far anymore,
dawn was near
when I remembered Your star,

when Your feet stood on this fierce earth
and I am arming for war,
are ready to go to war,
even to declare it in full readiness.

But time and again You blind me,
cause me to bend down,
force me to get another solution
for liberation of my nation, for opportunities and happiness

and on my knees I know that in You all power lies,
that You are going to fight the battle and my war lust is gone.

[Reference: Die ontwapende (The disarmed) by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

The Divine Presence (Cavatina Sequence)

Whispering softly, sometimes indistinct
as vague as sleep
a voice keeps calling, as if it's drawing
from the dark deep;
in times of happiness and utter gloom,
while people weep
something reaches with invisible arms
with its own sweet silent lingering charms.

In the veldt, in the green grassy meadows
in night and day,
the essence of a kind of divine care
does always stay,
speaks up in the world's natural beauty,
it is at play
in all the silences of day and night,
in the utter darkness and at first light.

Gert Strydom

The Dog Of God

No pet that ever plays around
and lays its head
down on a prayer mat,
or hunting dog that sniffing
follows the track,
rather he is a wolf
that rips apart in hate
when he gets the sent of blood.

Still, certainly he is unique
armoured like a dragon
with fire that devours
when he opens his mouth.

How many girls
did he fry as witches
and for how many men of God
fire was his resort?

Even for Jeanne d'Arc
that with help from above
(or so she believed)
tried to rescue her nation,
there was no absolution
and fire was his word and law.

[Reference: Die hond van God by NP van Wyk Louw. "Domini canes" – "The dogs of the Lord" – is how Roman Catholic Dominicans are known and to whom the leaders of the Inquisition primary belonged. This verse illustrates how easily man can make mistakes, where the church and state are one. Who reads this verse as an assault on the Roman Catholic Church misinterprets it.]

Gert Strydom

The Doldrums

(after Etienne van Heerden)

The ocean lies flat like a mirror
without any stream or surging swell around me,
without any waves or wind
where the sails of my words do hang down
and experienced poets have told me of this
but I had laughed at them about their inability,
where moments of stretched out silence do come
without any words,
I was sceptic about their great fear
for the stretched out horizon that meets the sea
at a place where sound and sight and smell and feeling
does disappear into the naught and there is but nothing,
as if you cannot find a way out,
as if no sincere words will ever again come.

[Reference: "Doldrums" by Etienne van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

The Doves Flutter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

The doves flutter like flowers against the blue
where at a street-café we are drinking coffee,
while you fold your hand stroking-soft over mine,
when I pour some more coffee from the big kettle,
the moment lingers long almost eternally between us,
you smile softly and your eyes burn into my soul
but delicately you take your rough cinnamon-rusk
and this beautiful grand moment is only ours,
maybe a dream of that which may be at a time
or a memory of how another yesterday had been
and your lips is soft near to me and your voice husky,
there is a ray of sunlight that splashes down past the umbrella,
we both look big-eyed at each other like long ago
and above us angry seagulls screech in a high circular flight.

[Poet's note: Rusks are a traditional baked delicacy that South Africans do at times dip into their coffee.]

Gert Strydom

The Dragon

Far to much suffering did I see
and scared people flee
to get away from the terror
and to be free from the tyranny
that war brought on.

It feels as from eternity
my soul was strong full of energy
but now after the war
the demons remain
and leaves greater pain
than scars made by weapons.

But still who really knows
and understand man,
are awed by the mysteries
of life and death,
knows the nature of humanity
and what it really means to be free?

Some say that freedom
is eternal vigilance,
others that it's a belief
or the right of action
without restraint,
others that knowledge
brings it on,
but I know that its price is high
and paid in blood
in battles fought
and that war leaves a mark
and in my soul,
the dragon devours me.

Gert Strydom

The Dragon (Continues)

(after WH Auden)

1 The image of the Beast (Swannet)

The deadly dragon stands among the dead and desperate openly
where it lacks compassion or a conscience common to man
plan to subjugate, rule and ruin wherever it possibly still can
regulate and try spreading its false religion in mere stupidity,

stalks among those that serve it in the greatest kind of fear
but what is the honest absolute truth it cannot comprehend,
those that appose it, it silently put to an awful kind of end
stalks still closer with consuming fire try to get very near

and in a catastrophe it's science and technology lags behind,
while utter gibberish with drivel and nonsense run from its lips,
as its evil demonic black death-bringing wings it continually flips,
with amok within or complacency it kills the spirit soul and mind.

The deadly dragon stands among the dead and desperate openly,
regulate and try spreading its false religion in mere stupidity,

.2 (COVID-19) During lock-down in South Africa (Swannet)

With government hospitals and clinics run in incompetence
amid a lock-down that strip man from almost all kind of liberty
in China and Cuba the government do its great salvation see,
it attacks the USA (superior in technology) and commonsense,

where out of China the virus comes, its communist technology lags behind,
with a lock-down / quarantine in place the regime fears a coming common flue
while the Corona virus do silently effect the population as if out of the blue,
the government with its propaganda tries to kill the spirit soul and mind,

with snapping jaws agape COVID-19 crunches at all other things,
the most superior research scientist is quickly silently slain by it,
while from China it slays desperate man bit by tiny little bit,
do fly worldwide with evil demonic black death-bringing wings.

With government hospitals and clinics run in incompetence,
it attacks the USA(superior in technology)and commonsense.

3 The country will be stripped

a

The country will be stripped
by the dragon whose mouth in fire flames
burns my daily bread to ashes
before spitting charcoal in my face
from its silver snapping jaws.

b

and in these circumstances of COVID-19 causing amok
still the South African government
wants to dispossess the commercial farms
and bring a great everlasting famine.

[Reference:"August 1968" by WH Auden,

I am quoting WH Auden's poem here:

"August 1968" by WH Auden,

"The Ogre does what ogres can,
Deeds quite impossible for Man,
But one prize is beyond his reach,
The Ogre cannot master Speech:
About a subjugated plain,
Among its desperate and slain,
The Ogre stalks with hands on hips,
While drivel gushes from his lips."]

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Gert Strydom

The Dragon (Continues)[(Cov Id-19)& Farm Dispossession In South Africa]

(after WH Auden)

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while from China it slays desperate man bit by tiny little bit,

do fly worldwide with evil demonic black death-bringing wings.

With government hospitals and clinics run in incompetence,
it attacks the USA(superior in technology)and commonsense.

3 The country will be stripped

a

The country will be stripped
by the dragon whose mouth in fire flames
burns my daily bread to ashes
before spitting charcoal in my face
from its silver snapping jaws.

b

and in these circumstances of COVID-19 causing amok
still the South African government
wants to dispossess the commercial farms
and bring a great everlasting famine.

[Reference:"August 1968" by WH Auden,

I am quoting WH Auden's poem here:

"August 1968" by WH Auden,

"The Ogre does what ogres can,
Deeds quite impossible for Man,
But one prize is beyond his reach,
The Ogre cannot master Speech:
About a subjugated plain,
Among its desperate and slain,
The Ogre stalks with hands on hips,
While drivels gushes from his lips."]

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Gert Strydom

The Dread God

When the dread god
rode to war
on his flaming chariot
and went right through the stars
and tried to take
the other angels with him,

he wanted to rise above
the Most High
and establish his throne
above the only God,
but fell out of the heaven
like a lightning bolt from the sky
and were smitten down
on to the earth.

Gert Strydom

The Dream Merchants

You wanted dreams,
but didn't have any
or so you thought

as if they had been robbed from you
by weird goblins
during the dark night

who were ready to sell them
to each and any one
but you
and were there
when ever you closed your eyes.

Yet, I heard you talk in your sleep
and sometimes having fun
and at other times having night mares
you slept next to me dreaming on.

Gert Strydom

The Drop

On a sunny day
a drop hanged on a cloud
when a thunderbolt unexpectedly lashed down
and for a moment it hesitated to fall
while it longed for the glistening glitter of a rainbow,
wavering wanted to wait for more moments

but nature went its way
as destiny does demand
when on fruitful earth it splattered
and suddenly its gloss was gone
but as a part of a beautiful flower
it did rise again

in the lifecycle of the creation
where things do come, go and are reborn.

Gert Strydom

The Drug Party

Four drugged kids were naked in the room
and had removed
every piece of clothing from their bodies.

Sweet sour with a smell
that is almost like khaki-weed,
their marijuana zol's smell went right through the house.

When I stood at the front door
every thing in the house was ungodly and deadly silent,
as if I walked into a place were the spirit of man can die.

I opened the room door slowly
and there was no innocence to be seen
and only children that were naked on their knees
almost praying,
around that bottle point zol sitting staring
and the stench was more repulsive
than that of vomit or liquor.

Pain went right through my soul
to see children
throwing their lives away like this
and past all reason and other desires,
see them chase the drug god
and to see them lying there
somewhat dead to life.

Gert Strydom

The Dying Beggar (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

I

Cursed is the day for him
and all of life is dim
where he is unshaved and rough with fear in each eye
diffident bashful and shy
while he enters the park the chance of help seems slim
like every other person he expected a better life
but he sleeps in the open during winter and his world is at strife
but at a time he had lived life to its brim
and all of life is dim

II

He had lost his life and his home
where no one still do to rescue come
where moments he lingers at cigarette butts do shiver
struggle on with a very high fever
and for years endlessly now he did roam
his need for food and medicine is great with pain in every breath
he lurches at the edge of death
his existence has become painful and gruesome
where no one still do to rescue come.

III

Memories bring a beautiful time back
where with great pain he does cough and do medicine lack
and then the hurting recollection do come with disgust
of the Aurora mine bosses that no one can trust
and the police did not those black men track,
he remembers the food parcels at the church
but that was long ago and staving he does lurch
but he does not a person's attention attract
where with great pain he does cough and do medicine lack

IV

The money for eighteen months of work he did not receive
and that he is dying he does perceive,
with affirmative action he could not find any income and it's sad,
worst is the pain of lost of a living, the hurting in his heart does sting bad,
where his life hangs on a thread and they did him deceive
and as a young man he was sent to war,
at a time a wife did him adore
but for years he has waited for it to end as no solution he did receive
and that he is dying he does perceive.

[Reference:"Dood van die bedelaar (Death of the beggar) by C. M. van den
's note: This problem of the Aurora mine has not been settled yet and for some
people it will be too late when one day a solution does come:
"The need for aid to workers of Aurora Gold East Rand is stronger than
ever, following the recent suicide of Marius Ferreira. Fifty-two-year-old Ferreira, a
respected fitter in the mine for many years, gave in to the pressures of ongoing
non-payment of salaries over the past 18 months. Taking his own life by drinking
ant poison, he passed away at Far East Rand Hospital on March 29, along with
the last inkling of dignity and pride he once possessed. A loving father and
husband, Ferreira's death devastated those who knew him most of all his wife,
Susan. A resident at a retirement village in Krugersrus, Susan's struggle to come
to terms with her husband's death has only being heightened by the ongoing
struggles that she is now forced to face went from a comfortable s earning on
average R16000 a month depending on overtime to one of pure struggle,
explains a close family member, who prefers to remain anonymous. "They
were forced to sell everything. They were forced to move to the retirement
village as they could no longer afford the house they were in. They lost their cars
and were eventually at the point where they even had to sell their bed linen and
cutlery just to put food on the table, " she adds. Ferreira's death appears to
have sparked a string of potential suicides, with no end to their seemingly never-
ending struggle in sight. Johan Cronje and his wife Chané, together with their
three children; aged 11,10 and six; are on the same dark road as having
attempted to take his own life no less than three times on Thursday evening.
"I was busy in the kitchen when I went looking for Johan. I found a rope
tied on a noose already set up outside, " explains Chané. Calming her
husband down, Chané kept a weary eye on him through the night not daring to
sleep for fear of waking up to find his lifeless body. He attempted to hang himself
twice more that night. "We were comfortable once. Never would we have
expected to find ourselves in such a position, " says 32-year-old Chané
tears threatening to break. A qualified winding engine driver,36-year-old Johan's
R18000 salary allowed Chané to fulfil her role as a full-time housewife at their

Groot Vlei Village home, caring for their two sons and daughter. Losing their vehicles, furniture, dignity and hope as salary problems persisted. Johan's failed attempts to find alternative work is considered the main reason for his suicide attempts. The couple is R48000 in arrears on their home, recently receiving a eviction notice. Chané says that the last payment received from Aurora was at the end of January a meagre R1800,10% of one months salary." The Springs Advertiser Wednesday,11 May 2011.

"Zondwa Mandela and Khulubuse Zuma, accompanied by an entourage of friends and advisers, decided at the five-star Beverly Hills Hotel in Durban in March 2009 to set up a company that would take advantage of laws favoring black investors in mining. They didn't put up any years later, Nelson Mandela's grandson and President Jacob Zuma's nephew are fighting claims alleging fraud amounting to almost 2 billion rand (\$164 million)in a civil case after gaining access to two mines near Johannesburg without paying for them. About 5,000 workers have lost their jobs, operations ceased five years ago, equipment has been sold for scrap — and almost \$10 million of gold is missing, court documents show." Biz News June 2,2015

"The high court had in June last year found that Zuma and Mandela, along with their co-directors - Thulani Ngubane, and father and son Solly Bhana and Fazel Bhana - were to be held personally liable for R1.5 billion damages at Pamodzi Gold Mine. Khulubuse is President Jacob Zuma's nephew and Zondwa is the grandson of Nelson Mandela. According to Judge Eberhard Bertelsmann of the high court in Pretoria, all five were reckless and incapable managers whose conduct led to the deterioration and collapse of the two Aurora directors made their first failed attempt to appeal that decision in September before the same judge, who predicted then that they had no prospect to succeed in another court."Business Report Economy 13 May 2016 Baldwin Ndaba.]

Gert Strydom

The Eagle

I saw the eagle turn in air space
on radial winds
like a kite it hanged there,

a dot high above in the blue,
a thing clenching to the heights
that knows to where those winds blow
time and again turning on its circling course.

Almost effortless with equilibrium
it is a master of the air,
until it dives like a thunderbolt
and in swiftness
exposes its claws downwards
descending deadly, in a moment,
right on target.

Gert Strydom

The Eagle [2]

The pillars of its wings
are tremendously strong things
that pushes it up high into the sky
before it turns and glides with a scanning eye
while in its merciless talons lurks death
and in the time of a gasp of breath
lightning quick it does fall
and at first seems a speck and small
but in an instant becomes a deadly thing
that rushes in flying.

Gert Strydom

The Early Evening Before Worship

Early evening before worship
my uncle watched the sky,
looking at the gathering clouds
and later when it started to rain

I found him on the porch,
with the dog lying at his feet,
deep from the house a woman's voice called
but we said nothing to each other,

just saw the rain falling down with thunder strokes,
smelling the odour of the wet earth
and it was as if our lives were suddenly clean
while the swallows was diving down to their nests

and on the porch we were and the God of the universe,
while the rain fell clattering from heaven.

Gert Strydom

The Early Night Is Pitch Black

The early night is pitch black,
with only Venus,
the evening star shining
and the others are still to come
and just above the horizon
as if it was hiding somewhere,
the moon creeps out
and cannot decide
if it's going to be yellow or white

and you my love puff at a cigarette
blowing a cloud of smoke
into the air
and above us somewhere
a bird flies past
a dark thing on wings
screeching out a cry
and your face is soft
against the glowing cigarette
and softer yet against my lips
with the cigarette forgotten
in your finger tips.

Gert Strydom

The Early Spring (Rondel Prime)

The early spring brings new flowers again
while twittering birds fly past in a flock,
at the sight of humans cry in amok,
hide in their nests in the seeping cold rain,

while on the road daily joggers do train,
timing themselves with the far off clock.
The early spring brings new flowers again
while twittering birds fly past in a flock,

some on the ground peck and cry out in pain,
others flutter above ships in the dock
while the big waves does them up and down rock
while the spray, rust and salt marks does decks stain.
The early spring brings new flowers again
while twittering birds fly past in a flock.

Gert Strydom

The Early Spring [2]

Its early spring and I hear the sun-beetles telling about summer
there are frogs croaking, crickets that shrill continually outside
and golden yellow the moon rises and changes everything to a magic land
but the still the chill of winter does torture me when it comes.

Gert Strydom

The Early Twilight Is Slowly Falling

We see a myriad of hungry pigeons
circumventing the lawns of the park
while the early twilight is slowly falling
and cars and pickups draw red lines in the dark.

Your right hand feels hot in mine
while we walk talking on the promenade
and beneath us is the crushing breaking sea
while the city lies in the early night shade.

Moments linger as we embrace and our lips meet
while with you my life is content and sweet.

Gert Strydom

The Earth Feels Rocky

The earth feels rocky, terribly hard,
when the pick-axe and the crowbar hits ironstone
and here a man stands separate from a child
when thundering blows strike downward,
I have got stand back and rest for moments
and then try to pierce through the red rock ridge
but at times my thoughts move on
to God who brings salvation to my life,
when steel sing moaning on the hard ironstone;
do You also brake through and bring healing.

Gert Strydom

The Ecstasy

(after John Donne)

From the start although it had been
great ecstasy and our loving
had been better than anything and we were keen,
we had a deep understanding

and although it were at times gentle and powerfully severe,
the fun and joy and moment's bliss was unperplex
while nothing did with the loving interfere,
we both knew that it had been much greater than just sex

while our hands, fingers and bodies did intertwine
and for long moments
in all things, in intimacy you were mine;
there were some elements

of a different thing
of a principle, of love a greater understanding.

[Reference: "The ecstasy" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

The Emptiness Deep Inside

The emptiness deep inside
eats like a cancer on me
and I wonder where I
fit into this old life?

Every day I wear other clothes from my cupboard
hide behind a smile
that I give to the world
and see strangers smiling back at me

and even this passes me meaningless
and sometimes I wonder
who measures out my punishment
as if the Lord is not seeing me
and knows nothing about me.

¶Envoi

That which lies behind my mask
is hidden so deeply
that nothing breaks through it
and with times
it's as if I get big surprises

when things happen unexpectedly and indeterminately
and I see how He tries to teach me big lessons
and brings about radical changes
and even turns around the worst things.

Gert Strydom

The Empty Evenings Are The Most Difficult (In Answer To Mandi Engelbrecht)

The empty evenings are the most difficult
when alone I write poems,
when I sometimes listen to Classic Fm
while I have got nothing to do,

the two old people
go to bed when darkness comes
and we say our prayers,

at times they insist
that I watch a religious DVD with them
and they talk about the news
and newspaper reports

but much too soon the evening is past
and the cocker spaniel
looks at me with her dark eyes

while the Persian cat goes outside to hunt,
and I read poems of some English friends
one after the other.

I am still searching for a job
which circles out wider,
almost away from me
while I spent my spare time

on what I can find in the library
on poetry of some great poets,
to teach myself techniques, methods, style,
and to find ideas

and it's as if the wide world
waits upon my new poems
and sometimes I mow the lawn,
and help here and there in the garden,

see the flock of sparrows,
weavers and doves coming near,
and I dare poems to repair my country,
my world, to tell people
who can make a difference

about the things happening here
and my days and nights are empty without you
but our relationship went to hell
by your own choice
and I have got a new mistress
whose name is poetry

and she is a whimsical lover
who serves others much better
before she visits me at night,
to share my pain, my sorrow and memories

and most of the time I try to know her better,
to know the rhythm, the methods of her existence,
to find that which makes her great

and one after the other my days pass,
while I wonder when things are going to change,
while I try day after day to survive

and I know that I cannot hold on to the past
and I know
that I can write almost any kind of poem
and still at times I wonder
what is happening far away in your world?

[Reference: 'n dood gewone vrou' (an ordinary woman) by Mandi Engelbrecht.]

Gert Strydom

The Enchantress

Death's the enchantress who was visiting
but she did seek out everybody but me
and in war somehow I stayed from her wiles free
while around me her presence did sting

as if with everybody else she had a wild fling
and at times she looked lovely
but mostly it was awfulness that I did see
while bullets past me did sing.

Far too suddenly the men once hot tempered
wilted with blood from their bodies flowing
shot to pieces, bombed and in agony were screaming
while they laid shattered
with her embrace still glowing
as they begged for something to be redeeming.

Gert Strydom

The End Came Too Suddenly

The end came too suddenly
and all the joy that bubbles from you
was suddenly dumb, like a thunderstorm
that emerges with sudden doom
with a lightning bolt that crackles down.

Like that you lay stretched out on the tar road,
like a flower of which the petals
are pressed flat

and the glassiness of your bright blue eyes
was without life, soulless and dead
and blood stained the tar red
and at times the you and I
still lives in me
as if your love
can never come to an end.

Gert Strydom

The End Of This Planet

People expect the end
of this planet
to occur at Armageddon

but slowly but surely
man is destroying
this planet by himself.

The ozone layer is disappearing
by contamination in the air,
the clean water resources are disappearing
by sewerage draining into streams

and with floods, vehement storms,
waves from the sea destroying and streaming over buildings,
drought, great heat and deserts appearing
man is solely responsible.

At Chernobyl in Russia,
at Three Mile Island in America
(maybe even in Japan?)
nuclear radiation
is escaping into the atmosphere.

Oil is washing out on the beaches
and the destruction
comes from the hand of man
who at the cost of others
are leading an existence
until havoc is everywhere
and nobody is able to live here.

Gert Strydom

The Enemy Is Gone

The enemy is gone
whose steel chariots shed flame,
aircraft dropped rockets and bombs
and helicopter gun ships drifted
like giant locusts in the sky.

Fear had no shame,
nor loose bowels,
or shell shock
that bewitched the brain
and boys became men,
forced into the reality
of surviving against the odds.

Still in the dark of night
the war comes back again
when sleep spread its wings
over distance and time.

Gert Strydom

The Essence Of Love

I wish I knew how deep and how sincere,
and how extremely wide love really is
as about it I cannot get my head clear
and nowhere I can find a that and this

to really explain the essence of love
nowhere I can find something to measure it;
some say it comes straight from heaven above
like raindrops falling bit by tiny bit

as if it's the greatest thing they have found
some say it is good, it is really swell,
and about it others are not so profound
as they do kiss, have bliss but do not tell:

but there is nobody that want to tell me
and now for my self I will have to see.

Gert Strydom

The Eternal Child

(after C.M. van den Heever)

His grey-headed mom pushes the wheelchair in the street,
with his big water-head that bounces to and fro,
an incoherent smile is on his face
but then suddenly he stares in front of him,
when his soft hand reaches out,
confusion and spit comes over his lips,
people are almost fleeing, are avoiding him,
while others stare astounded at him
and all of life is passing him.

[Reference: "Die ewige kind" (The eternal child) by C.M. van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

The Eternal Spring (Sonnet)

(after John of the Cross, after Roy Campbell)

The spring from where all life does flow is hidden
but I do know where it bubbles up to the surface
as it has been there all along, did not rise all of a sudden
where it is a place full of charity, love and blissful grace.

The only origin, which it does have, is from the Lord
as He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and the only God
as is written clearly and to some depth in His own word
and I do not find it meaningless, a fairytale or odd

but every thing, but sin and its prevailing darkness, comes from it
and it's a place where all of heaven and earth does drink,
a place into which only beautiful and lovely righteous things fit
where in its realm and breadth and depth I can only of it think

and its clarity, its truth, its light and its power do not grow dark
as to everything it's the eternal life giving connection and spark.

[References:"Song of the Soul that Rejoices in Knowing God through
Faith" by John of the Cross, translated by K. Kavanaugh and O.
Rodrigues."Song of the Soul that is Glad to Know God by Faith" by
Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

The Evening Primrose And You (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize, after Dorothy Parker)

I know a bloom that is pure pink and sometimes white
and it does blossom fragrantly during the dark night
but many times in the day its petals do as spent fall
as if in the bright day they do not want to exist at all
where only the stars and moon of it does bare sight
while nightly almost holy its essence is soft and sweet
and it reminds me of you from the times when we meet
where destiny takes you away from me and yet you do delight
and it does blossom fragrantly during the dark night.

[Reference: "The evening primrose" by Dorothy Parker.]

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Gert Strydom

The Executive [2] (Sonnet)

I am an executive and my position has been affirmed
from that of a cleaner, driver and delivery man
where at those tasks I once squirmed
and that was before the great freedom began,

but now I order my subordinates around
while sitting in my office all of the day
and I do confound them, with my knowledge that is profound
and on television watch my soccer team play.

You ask me about my job, it's quite simple.
I get other people, especially the ones of European decent
to do the job, to work and if they don't, I squeeze them like a pimple
until they go off the bent or all their energy is spent:

I am the boss, a man who watches other people work until five,
after that I watch the sun, my three wives and drink and jive.

Gert Strydom

The Exiles

As an exile I live
in a country that despises me,
despises my whole nation, our language,
the colour of our skin
where the president
has opened the doors wide
to all of Africa,
and citizens from other countries
are more welcome here than us

but even if he tries
to drive me and my people
into the sea, as immigrants
right into the wide world,

like my ancestors
I have sprouted from this very earth
and there's no other place
where I can make a living,
no other place that calls me
with the same intensity
and although work is being reserved

by the colour of skin
and my patience is running very thin
and I struggle to survive
in the situation that I am in

no highfalutin balderdash
of this country only belonging
to those who are black
is going to break my people or me

and still we trust God,
to change circumstances,
to change the mindset of people,
and if not to conquer and destroy

to make this country a place

in which all its citizens
have the opportunity
to make a living

and to be free in speech,
in dignity, in association,
in religious beliefs,
to live a life
according to your own culture and values.

Gert Strydom

The Expelled Farmer (Parody)

(with apologies to fanie olivier)

At five to eleven there is thunder slamming down outside,
the winter chill is already cutting through his body.

Now in the folds of the bed he draws the blanket tightly
and look somewhat clinical at how it is flashing outside.

From above everything is washed neatly clean,
there is darkness covering the blue,
while like last night, he does not trust the peace,
being alone in his double bed.

He remembers how it had been
at the farm near to Pongola,
now with stripped grass, overgrazed, used far too much,
with shabby pineapples and he is fed-up,
has had too much of broken houses and poles,
of the joblessness with which the government
is trampling over white people.
The rain flows while he smells new life,
his county is being run into the ground.

[Reference: "retoer" "return trip" by fanie olivier.]

Gert Strydom

The Extremely Severe Thought Burns Like A Pain In Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Minette, after Totius)

The extremely severe thought burns with a pain that cuts me
my love, the one with whom I wanted to live, is dead,
before God I stand in my sorrow and in my distress
and the days in the summer's sun flash past in thoughts
but nowhere there is any consolation for me:
children in Ethiopia suffer severe famine,
the news-reports talk about a train full of bread
and the children do not get this help in time
and days pass, become purposeless in their passing,
she was here and now in a mere moment she is gone
as if she never existed in the entire universe
but constantly the great longing for her remains,
where I am caught in a struggle between good and evil
and now, years later, she is only a memory that I do recall.

[Reference: "Die pyn-gedagte" (The painful thought by Totius.)]

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Gert Strydom

The Eyes Of My Love Shines Like The Sun

The eyes of my love shines like the sun,
summer fades,
in the presence of her most lovely smile,
autumn shades
against the colour of her vibrant hair,
spring degrades
against her charm and personality
and vivid she stays lingering with me.

Gert Strydom

The F Word And Me

The other day we discussed reasons
why people use
the magical f word.

a Young woman is of the opinion
that it's because of a lack of imperfect language,
where a person's vocabulary
lacks other words to use.

I think that there are many more other reasons
to slip in everywhere
and that vocabulary
has very little
or nothing to do with it.

One thing that can incite it
is exposure,
where people hear it
hundreds of times
every day
like in an army.

Subsequently without intention
it becomes part of your conversation
and your own vocabulary,
without drawing any attention
with yourself.

The word f is a power word
that give colour intensity
to the meanings of other words
and it can underline, emphasize
or lift some out.

You can also use it as a word
that has many meanings
and use it like a good shifting spanner
that shift for meaning values.

This word can also
be almost any word type
that gives bigger power
to other words used with it.

The thing that really matters
what others read
in the meaning of my words
and if I loose integrity by using it.

There are times
my mother wants to catch a fit
when I use the f word
and not from the meaning
of my words,

but from the negative context
that can be drawn with the word
and the easy transfer
of the word on children that hear my dialogue.

[With thanks to Skymaster, whose article inspired this poem.]

Gert Strydom

The Factory Girl

At eight o'clock the workday begins
and like a mechanical machine
she is busy with the
the never ending packing,
the packing of fresh fish

and here there is no time for dreams,
or even thoughts that lead away from work
as you have got to be sharp to avoid
the blades ever carving the fish
halving them, cutting some to smaller bits.

At lunch time the other girls are chatting,
about their new boyfriends, their husbands and men
or about their lack of them
and then she starts to dream about a house
high up on tamboerskloof

with a big garden full of flowers and trees
and wild birds that roam free,
about a rich strong friendly loving man
that outside in the street smiled at her
and suddenly she wonders

if she will ever again meet him,
before the alarms rings again
and it's back to work,
to from the conveyer belt
pick up and pack and pack again.

Gert Strydom

The Fairy

(after Robert Browning)

I

Notice the fairy hanging on the wall
where she mischievously smiles as if she is alive.
That painting was painted for me by my wife
and although it's somewhat small

it's a masterpiece if ever I have seen one
and there is something in her glance
as if her eyes is radiant like the sun
but still it's difficult to contemplate her countenance

but strangers like you notice her breast
and the light and shadow in the paint
or remark on the royal colour of her dress
but still lingering is something faint

as if there is an odour in the air,
as if she is right here.

II

In a week for business you are right back
and where the fairy was is just a blank spot
and on the wall to you something does lack
"but it was such a lovely thing was it not? "

"My wife ripped it apart,
said that there was evil to it
as she burned it bit by tiny bit"
"But it was such great art, "
you do protest
and I wonder what evil it did possess
in the eyes of my dearest.

[Reference: "My last duchess" by Robert Browning.]

The Fairy [2]

I went to Zeekoeivlei, that marsh, to photograph and look
at the coots, the flamingos and the hammerhead near to the brook
and to me they were very interesting as things in nature does go
but unexpectedly I found things portrayed only in a mythical book.

On the flats of Zeekoeivlei on a bright sunny day
I saw some goblins selling their goods and fairies out to play.
There was gnomes, elves, nixies, sprites, kobolds, dwarfs, pixies,
and some others to whom men are enemies and fair fray.

The mischievous ugly dwarf-like goblins kept on bidding me to come,
to buy their sweet yet poisonous fruit which would be delightful to some
and they sold all kinds of berries that could take you on a trip
but the effects were vile and could keep me from going home.

Strange it was that all of this was revealed to a man
and there I did trod as carefully as I can
forgetting about the flamingos and hammerhead-bird,
saw a minutely small lovely friendly fairy-woman

with golden locks catching the eye dancing on a dew drop
where it did tremble under her small fairy-feet and she did stop.
Áine, smiled very lovely to me said: "come and play, "
where she was pert, hoydenish but a troll tried to eavesdrop

and with a kind of authority she sent that creature on its way
waited till it and a undine were out of earshot and far away,
hopped off the dewdrop smiled enticingly and was very sweet
when she again invited me with words that did much more say.

She was coy but also enticing with all kinds of skills
did usually bewail death as a woman of the hills
and her rainbow-silk garb glimmered white as milk
where she was a protector against all kinds of ills.

That small little Banshee full of heartfelt greetings
fluttered all around me on small golden wings
treated me with unequal respect, acted as a woman to a man
and she said that she had happy joyous tidings

but to her there was a solemn dignity and she was secretive
and it was as if I was under a spell but it was a joy to live;
she took me to milky-white arum spathes enveloping flower clusters,
served me cake and raisin-bread and she had much more to give,

said that she wanted to marry me and I would be a prince or something
but first I had to drink from a needle-small vial and this was interesting
as it would diminish me to her size and somehow she had chosen my company
and it was exciting to think that with me she wanted to bring to life offspring

while she explained to being a goddess who would bring me endless bliss
with something new and unexpected in every single kiss
and that she meant all of this in reality was strange
also that tiny mighty creatures could live like this

and my days with her would be endless with daily new discoveries
with only my love my yearning for her and no other liabilities
but changing from a full grown human man to something else
and there would be provided for all of my necessities.

She told me that for many years when I went to the veldt, into nature,
she did watch me, did follow me as a child and also when I became mature
that she do know me very, very well and even about the things I do not like
and of her love for me, and also of her responsibilities, she was very sure.

She was such a genuine sincere lovely little thing,
I realise to her my voice must be like thunder and start whispering,
I told her that as we have just only met that I did not really know her yet
that it would be something huge and life altering this transforming.

For a moment her eyes did with a evil kind of black anger glow
while things that sounded like curses she did on me bestow,
she said that I was a fool as I do not comprehend her love for me
talked about things of which I do not really the full meanings know

but I do know this that no heartache or any loss she did to me bring
and sometimes in the evenings among the flowers I see something twinkling
while now back right here I cannot believe it was really happening
but the most beautiful songs full of pain and joy I do hear her sing.

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The Fairy-Princess Of The Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

In a place far away on the other side of the moon
there is a road that runs beyond the horizon
where the bullfrogs croak and the crickets sing
and the fairy-princess stand with a basket full of stars
where she does throw them out on the cloak of the night
and when one falls out of her hand she wants to laugh
when till there in the distance it does jump
and so she walks on up to the twilight of the day
to reach her palace
and then lingers at every dew-drop at each flower,
do sometimes dance on one
and is always astounded by the beauty of the daybreak
but when the sun hangs high she is tired,
when the sky makes its cobalt-blue colour.

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The Fall Of Paradise

(after John Milton)

I. Lucifer

Thus he rebelled without anyone stopping him,
wanted to put up his throne above, at times
equal to that of the almighty Creator
and approached others for this goal,
felt at times that his jealousy was noble
where he stood at the edge of the precipice
and thunder flashed ominous around him.

He dragged a third of once holy ones along
to all at once squander their lives,
joy, virtue and nobility
and along with them
later missed the glory, peace and love
of the heavens and knew
that he (the flaming son of the morning)
is trivial to the Most High (who is always honourable)
could not even stand in His shade
and through stars, he had torn, through the heavens
to declare war, as in his heart he wanted to win
as if insanity was eating
through every reason and sensibility
and had destroyed his nobility.

When he stood alone in front of Michael and thunderbolts,
suns and comets was thrown at him
at supreme command, he new pain and misery
was banned from heaven, with all of his rebellious team
was crackled down in flames
and in his heart he had to admit that it was just,
that he could not give life to anything
and could not comprehend or have love anymore;
as might, his splendour,
his own power had overwhelm him
and then he could still fall on his knees and beg for mercy

but he was far too proud for it
and he wanted to take revenge on the Almighty One
where he cunningly deceived man
and got some more victims for his own punishment
but for man God himself came to pay the price,
Lucifer was convinced that death on the cross
was the end of God, as God had become man,
in his heart Lucifer thought that he had won
and when God rose staying available for man
Lucifer could still not comprehend or explain love
or what it is to as God have the power to life.

II. After that initial awakening

After that initial awakening
Adam realised that every animal had a mate
and in him there was a longing
for a companion, for someone beautiful to love

and with infinite care God knew about his thoughts,
made him sleep and formed a woman from his flesh,
constructed a delightful charming being,
someone to match the longing of his soul.

Radiating purity and innocence
they stared awe struck
for long moment after long moment
when at first they became aware of each other.

God Himself bonded them in connubial love,
told them to multiply, to engage with each other
in the act of utter joy and there was sheer magic
and tenderness while in each other's arms they did rest

Such sweet happiness, sprung from love
physical, spiritual and for God divine
and was in the tender care
with which they ruled the world.

They made sheer intimate passionate love,
without realising their nakedness

found beauty, love and tranquillity
in ever movement, in every tender gesture

and it was if there was magic to everything,
as if in each insect, animal, plant and tree
they found something inspiring
while they lived with freedom of choice.

III. Glorious did that snake appear

Glorious did that snake appear,
with its scales glittering in the sun,
in a place of perfection
its charm, its voice did stun.

Its deception mixed truth and lie,
enticed the woman Eve,
to reach for more knowledge,
to reach for godliness.

To her the love
of her husband Adam was secure
and in perfection, in sheer innocence
she looked at that snake with an own radiance.

The longer they talked the more she longed,
not for the fruit of life, for immortality,
but to enter into the unknown
and by disobedience the fall of man did begin.

The taste was sweet but mortality was in it,
it made both Adam and Eve aware
of their sheer nakedness,
brought destruction to a world without strive,

but still the two humans instinctively knew
that in all of this, in the sin that they entered in
God had a plan for the salvation of man,
a plan that was unspoken but existed as a token of love.

IV. How will I now see the face of God or of His angels?

(Adam after the fall of man)

How will I now see the face
of God or any of His angels?
Will it be with sheer joy,
in a blaze of clear light?

Or will I forever be afraid,
be scared of wrath, of judgement of the brightness
that reveals the darkness of my heart,
that reveals the darkness of my passions?

In this glade where I am hiding,
where leaves are covering
my beloved Eve and me,
I long for some tranquillity

but my own iniquity, our sin
is darkening everything
and there's shame,
so much of it

that I do not know
how to face God the righteous One,
or even one of his angel messengers
and I am longing to be forever hidden.

V. There was some tranquillity in His voice

(Adam after the fall of man)

There was some tranquillity in His voice
while He called us to appear,
to where He was wandering in the garden
but in nakedness we were hiding.

His piercing brightness made the darkness
where we were hiding day,
and He had seen us sin,

had seen us changing the way that things were

to devastation, to pain and suffering
and He told us about the earth being cursed,
to bring forth thorns and thistles,
about the struggle to earn a living,

about death that at a time will be approaching,
will be approaching everything that lives
and He made clothes of skin,
to cover our nakedness

told about the time when He would come,
to crush the head of the snake,
to die for our sins like the lamb
that He had slaughtered for us.

We knew that the punishment for sin was death,
that all things living would change,
with lions, leopards, wolfs
preying on gazelles, on antelope.

It was clear that His words were true,
that He truly loved us
even though we had fallen to sin
and His eyes were full of pain

when He looked at us
and we did not really realize
the destruction, the pain and the hardship
that we had brought about

not until much later, when our son Cain
killed his brother Able
but we cuddled together
when He left us and loved each other.

As I knew that day by day
our bodies was weakening,
saw the strain, the sorrow
on my darling, Eve's, face

while I held her while she was crying
another plan to reverse things
suddenly came to mind
and I wanted to get fruit from the tree of life

but He knew all things
and before I could even reach that tree
He banished us from the garden of Eden,
driving us out into the wilderness

and I struggled to understand this
while mighty brilliant cherubim ready for battle
was patrolling at the entrance to Eden,
with drawn flaming swords.

[References: The Holy Bible, "Paradise Lost" by John Milton.]

Gert Strydom

The Fallen Cuban Soldier

Your hand lies stretched out
and still holds on to your Ak
where you lie in Angola,
in the African bush in the last sleep
and in Luanda
and later in Havana
they know that you are missing
and are probably dead.

Nobody of your unit
will ever again,
drive tanks and armoured cars
and their general
does not wait on their return.

Somewhere in Cuba a woman mourns
and waits in vain,
to ever again
hear something from you.

You lifted your weapon
against boys from South Africa
and the bullets of an Afrikaner boy
pierced you.

Your camouflage uniform
is stained with blood
and you are placed in a hole
in the red-brown sand
and white powder,
is dropped on top of you
before you become a part
of the cold earth.

Later a Ovambo's farm goats
will graze above you and eat
from the thorn bushes,
that grows over you
and you will be forgotten by everyone.

[Ak=Ak47 submachine gun.]

Gert Strydom

The Fallen Cuban Soldier [2]

Your body lies shattered on the veldt
in the long rust brown winter grass
where you are almost devoured
and half burned
where you did fall out of a battle tank
when that deadly projectile did hit
and the blue sky, the wind that blows lightly at times
now has no impact on you
and scavengers will bring your bones to skeleton,
where you do have nothing left of life
and in Cuba the great leader will roll another fat cigar,
will draw his cheeks full in pleasure of it
and still your wife will remember you
while life does rush on.

Gert Strydom

The Fallen Zulu Captain (Refrain Stanza)

(in answer to C. M. van der Heever)

Forever your king Dingaan waits in Ngungunhlovu on you
where the death that you wanted to bring, to your own Zulu impi came true
and next to you lays your war-club, shield and razor-sharp spear
where to you only the wind blowing through the long grass is near.
They called you Captain; you are remembered as a general in what you did do
but far too late you realised that your enemy did serve God
when the destruction of a whole impi seemed to you odd
when trusting in God a handful did overcome and pursue
where the death that you wanted to bring, to your own Zulu impi came true

[Reference: "Die gevalle Zoeloe indoeana" (The fallen Zulu induna) by
C. M. van der Heever's note: An impi here does refer to a tribal army with different
regiments out of which it does consist. Ngungunhlovu refers to a large compound
in which the Zulu king did live with his regiments of soldiers and his many
wives.]

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Gert Strydom

The Family Crest

Was it in Nelspruit,
or was it at Pilgrim's Rest
that you had the man
make the family crest
on a white plate?

Of the Lion with the crown
walking with a golden
sword turned down
in its right claw
over fields of
green and red
and on the top it had
a silver skullcap
of medieval armour.

To the kids it was
a holy omen
something out of old chivalry
standing for a religious, moral
and social code
where courage, honour, courtesy
and justice prevails

but to you and me
it was a token of love,
a gift that was especially made.

That holiday we visited
Hall's store on the way
to Sabie and bought
a boot full of fruit, dried fruit
and fruit juice and jam

and in the Kruger Park
Five-year-old Heinrich
cried when a baboon
jumped on the bonnet
and pulled a wicked

face at him
with long fangs showing
and then we were a family.

Gert Strydom

The Farewell Of Aeneas From Dido

There is some confession, outside the sea foams,
he feels comfortable with Dido where there is rest,
he feels no pain; the waves want to carry him along
there is no heartache, the sweet bond
still exists in the core of his heart;
no other women has been so dear,
she is in the night, the starless darkness
where he loves her until the morning starts.
He stands still for a moment; he has to sail with the tide,
he cannot stay, torn he has to go on;
time lingers, minutes drags along like hours
when he later becomes small on the stern,
his existence is shaken with cutting pain,
his eyes follow the bring orbit of the stars.

Gert Strydom

The Farm Yard (Refrain Stanza)

The smell of bales of alfalfa on the wind does come through,
in the middle of the sky at twelve o'clock the sun hangs true,
a red tractor draws a dusty line in the field
and against the burning sand I cannot my eyes shield
and it's a lovely day and the sky open and blue,
it's silent in the yard and the peace cannot last
and this is what I do remember from my past
where there is great pleasure in everything I do,
in the middle of the sky at twelve o'clock the sun hangs true.

Gert Strydom

The Farmer

The farmer isn't dead
the earth that he adores, still remembers him
where his wife is raped,
his toddler daughter also
where his house is burnt to ruin
still stand smoking after the mad plunder
he lies half burnt, with his face distorted
and who will ever bring justice here?

The farmer lifts his fists against the wind
stand blinded against the horizon
searches perplexed for answers that are still missing
tries to find judgement from the Almighty One

And the wind turns dust from the red ground,
the earth is also badly wounded.

Gert Strydom

The Farmer (2)

(after A. D. Keet)

Life came in grains of wheat
and where in the winter
there were only strips of sand
a harvest of wheat
did now stand in tidy rows,
waiting to be brought in at the right time
with the sweet smell hanging in the air

and I saw the farmer
walking through the veldt
just before the harvest time
and high in the sky
a thunderstorm was brewing

with grey and black clouds
and also big white ones,
that did cover the sun from his gaze
and a mighty bolt of lightning
did fall from high above
with flames raising
in row upon row
and suddenly the wheat field was aflame.

Startled the farmer did look up into the sky
when the first hail did fall
as big as chicken eggs
and it was tearing the wheat field apart
with dust rising on the dust track.

Anger did explode in the depths of his soul
and shaking his head he did roar:
"why my God? "
It did feel as if all the elements
was aimed against him.

He lifted his fist into the air
as if with it

he could grab all lightning bolts out of the sky
and a raw cry
came from his throat

I'Envoi

and suddenly the hail did change to rain,
with rain pouring down on the flames
and extinguishing them
and after a short while
the clouds and rain
had been blown away
and only a farmer was left
speaking with his God.

[Reference: "Die lied van die koringboer" (The song of the wheat farmer) by A.D. Keet.]

Gert Strydom

The Farmer (Cavatina)

(after Guy Butler)

On the sandstone veranda I saw him
withered, old,
the master of thousands of acres of veldt,
it was quite cold
that early morning and through seasons of rain, drought
he stood quite bold;
a world of summers, winters he did love,
from an earth of grey shale he could not move.

[Reference: "Farmer" by Guy Butler.]

Gert Strydom

The Farmer And His Wife (Sestina)

A girl was lying down flat on her back
with a straw hat at eye height over hair,
she was sun-struck, curling and fair
with a rain cloud ominous and black
drifting in a blue sky and a small track
meandering past and it needed some repair.

Some of your makeup is in need of repair,
there's a guitar bag slung over your back
where you walk pass the girl at the dirt track
with the strong wind frizzling through your hair
and the sky is already turning black
but the evening up to now is fair.

Slowly you walk past the local fair
with some of the stalls needing repair,
the guitar you are carrying is black
and you walk straight on, do not look back
at the whistles of some men with long hair
while home you take a narrow long track.

Watching our horses on the racetrack
you are really sexy and very fair,
our horses do parade with shining hair
you notice that the stands need some repair
and I am standing somewhat at your back
while you are dressed prettily in black.

The highway is like a ribbon that is black
where it meets the old overgrown farm track,
there are huge blue-gum trees some way back
and you agree that the price of the Lucerne is fair
where some cows graze at the pen, needing repair,
swishing with tails to drive flies from their hair.

I pull my fingers slowly through my hair
and there are streaks of grey in the black,
but the cattle are only doing fair
while my love is coming with the field's track

that must constantly be kept in repair
and I hear her singing over my back.

There were torn out hair a long time back,
when I met my darling and she was fair,
at a fight at a track, I was in need of repair.

Gert Strydom

The Farmer's Bride (Cavatina Sequence) (In Answer To Charlotte Mew)

There was a farmer's wife, who was afraid
every day,
was driven wild with unmentioned fear;
always away
she was hidden beyond some lock and key,
never was gay
but doves gathered at her window sill,
many birds fluttered near at her will.

Without much love she was driven to work,
once she did flee
with the farmer and his labourers searching;
she was happy
while she was hiding in the large cornfield,
was from fear free,
later sneaked into the nearest church,
while drunk from the bar her husband did lurch.

Like a small animal she was hiding,
the minister
prayed for her but then took her back home,
quite sinister
acted the farmer as he whipped her,
did register
her into a lunatic asylum
and of his actions that was the sum.

The magpie's feathers did lie in her room
and she was gone
as if she had suddenly taken flight,
had moved on,
one day to a much better loving world,
but all alone
until his sudden death the farmer was,
they found him deep in a field of green grass.

[Reference: 'The Farmer's Bride' by Charlotte Mew.]

Gert Strydom

The Feelings Between Us Was Tempestuous (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

yet also powerful and impetuous
but the surrender to each other was overwhelming
sensually sweet, full of fervour and nothing
was as great and yet it felt noble and virtuous
but more than that a huge relief,
it felt like an eternity but the moment was brief
while we acted presumptuous
yet also powerful and impetuous.

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The Feelings That You Evoke

In space beyond the terrestrial atmosphere
the sun endlessly opens its furnace doors
and at times sends heat more intense

which the naked eye can hardly trace
and the moon at times is romantic yellow,
sometimes more chilly white
or white with a blue hue

or with a solace, copper red
before it turns black
with only the photosphere
shining like a diamond ring

and in the evening breeze
the stars buds out, flickering
like fruit on a gigantic tree

but to me, you are brighter than the sun
shining at full blast,
more magical than the charming moon,
your eyes out glowing any stars

and the feelings that you evoke
words can hardly comprehend
even if every last one is spend.

Gert Strydom

The Fighter Ace

It's another thing
to take a jet with flaming afterburners
into the air
and to see the earth,
getting small beneath you -
I am told

At times I think
those fighter pilots,
are a species of their own
of the human race.

It's a master fighter ace
that takes a slower plane
and shoot three Mig-23's down
and is able to land,
a Mirage with a shot off tail
on the landing strip.

Gert Strydom

The Fire At Helderberg Mountain

Under the white clouds that hangs like a sheet
we saw a mountain burning,
saw it red aflame
with a pine plantation that was burning down.
Students with tractors and trailers and pickup trucks

did ride up with the narrow mountain roads
to cut down pine trees
in front of the fire spewing dragon
until darkness did come with a strong wind,

and fire brigade trucks from as far as Cape Town
did come to the houses, the university against
the Helderberg Mountain with flashing red lights

to try and stop the flames
while the fire did jump from tree to tree,
while the whole forest did come alight.

Under a white moon the sky was orange-red
while two helicopters were throwing down streams of water
and for miles the fire could be seen
while fire-fighters did drop their equipment,

when it looked as if the sun were rising from the earth,
with lights from Summerset West
were arriving white and gold
and people were caught by the spectacle
others were astounded by the damage to their property.

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Gert Strydom

The Fire-Bull

As a soldier with a Bushman tracker
and a section of other soldiers
hot on the trail of terrorists
I learned how deadly and avenging
a wounded African buffalo could be
where the terrorists had wounded it,
and we were tracking them
but it was following them too
did not like us to be on its spoor
and that great raging beast came at us
with the fury of a thousand demons,
with a body weighing seven hundred and fifty kilograms
at fifty five kilometre an hour, at speed,
with its one hundred en thirty centimetre horns lowered to kill
and it was as if the earth trembled
under its stampeding hoofs
and the Bushman
who had faced a hundred firefights,
dropped his rifle and ran
and everybody scattered
where I was the only remaining man
where my R5 rifle with its folding stock
resembled a machine-pistol
and it was too light to stop that beast
but the Bushman's R1 rifle
could shoot right through trees
and I grabbed it from the ground,
emptied a whole magazine
into that charging buffalo bull
and it swept me off my feet
where next to me it did fall.

[Poet's note: "The 7.62mm R1 (FN FAL) Assault Rifle is one of the most successful of the weapons produced by Belgium's Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre, the FAL has been adopted by over 70 countries, It was manufactured under licence in South Africa, and designated the R1 and it is a reliable and robust weapon, capable of selective or fully automatic fire. It delivers the standard NATO 7.62 x 51 mm "long round" from a 20-round magazine, and weighs 4,31 kg unloaded. The R1 did make way for the 5.56 mm

calibrated R4, which is a lighter and more compact R5 is a shorter barrel version of the R4 with a folding stock. Interestingly, the R1's muzzle velocity, at 840 metres per second, is 125 mps faster than the Soviet AKM assault rifle at 715 mps, but 140 mps slower than the R4 at 980 mps. The R1 has a cyclic rate of fire of 650 to 700 rpm, an automatic rate of 120 rpm, and a single shot rate of 60 rpm over an effective range of 600 to 700 metres."]

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The Fire-Lily Blooms Flaming

The fire-lily flowers flaming and bloody red,
the crooked-thorn-bush is thrown over
and between all the incinerated stalks stand
this fire-flower so prettily adorned

Gert Strydom

The First City

The great hunter Nimrod
was a mighty leader of men
who ripped beasts and lions
apart with his bare hands
and he led them out of the mountains

and on the wide open plain of Shinar
they made a city fair
calling it Babylon
and men build a great tower there
from baked bricks plastered with
asphalt and bitumen
trying to reach to the sky
their Ziggurat was rising high.

They tried to build a gate to God
and they believed that no god
would be able to touch them there,
where it rose up in stepped stages
but the Lord came down
and lighting fell from the sky
hitting the tower again and again
and it stood burning
in unquenchable flames.

[Reference: Genesis 11: 1-9. Asphalt and bitumen = tar.]

Gert Strydom

The First Dragon (Sestina)

They went to find a thing that belched fire
a killer, a dragon what could it be?
To defeat it, to win they did aspire,
to set the people from its terror free,
it was huge as it could never tire
and where it went, there was only agony.

Those brave humble men were of all fear free
were like a mighty force that did aspire
to make men godly, as t no man should be,
to snatch from that beast it's devouring fire
and to bring to it just death and agony
and in this quest they would not tire.

Yet all of the great brave men do aspire
to in the unknown find knowledge free
to test skill against the beast and to tire
to measure if plans full of follies be,
later to chance, to fight using its fire,
even in using if there is only agony.

They wanted the truth of its power to be free,
free to use in destruction like the strange fire
that came from heaven that fell in agony
that has the capacity to even gods to tire,
they constructed weapons that should be
the main goal to which warriors do aspire.

It may that other men could easily tire
of this overwhelming quest whose worth could be
not lovely high things, to which to aspire,
nor a guiding light sparkling over the free
but quenching of life by its terrible fire,
with it only acts of death and agony.

Then like destiny, which doomed in agony,
like the first discoverers of divine secret fire,
the beast would rise and in raving anger be
really ruthless and from tricks it will not tire,

its intimate knowledge would not come free,
to seek power in which men as fools aspire.

In pride anything to be, finishing foes with fire
while endlessly to be free they do aspire
while men tire in wars only breeding agony.

Gert Strydom

The First Fig

From the very moment that it swells out
birds do gather,
watching somewhat keen at the ripening,
they do twitter
fly to and fro and in happiness
then eat it to the very skin.

Gert Strydom

The First Monarch Nimrod (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to C. M. van den Heever)

As a mighty hunter of man
he and his seductive pretty wife
did view themselves as the equals of God
and their fame was almost boundless
where Nimrod did even God and His covenants curse
when he, the son of Ham, did build a gigantic tower
while he did distrust the intentions of the Lord God
and to law and fulfilment was every strange wish
where the father, mother and son was worshiped
when Horus, Isis, Seth did get stature
where their kingdom stretched right across Mesopotamia,
and different languages from God did curtail them
but in Egypt those gods did still remain
when the heathendom stretched over a part of the earth.

[Reference: "Nimrod" by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

The First Night

How peaceful you lie against me naked in your sleep,
with arms half embracing stretched out over me
and just a while ago I could snatch you up,
when we could stretch moments into eternity.

What more will I now ask from the creator
where you carry my connection to life?
What secrets are still hidden in your soul
while the light of love is dancing in your eyes?

How will I again be lonely
with you trusting me without any fear?
How will I be able to look at another woman with desire
when I know the depths of your love?

How can the bliss of passion compare
with your soft glance that connects with me?
What times of destruction and pain
can destroy our bond when your smile shines over me?

What other pretty person will bind her to me in times of emergency,
joy, happiness, disaster and pain past life and death?
Anyone that truly finds love in someone else
will fight against anything that can destroy it.

How peaceful you lie against me naked in your sleep,
with arms half embracing stretched out over me
and just a while ago I could snatch you up,
when we could stretch moments into eternity.

Almighty God I ask You to keep Your hand
over my wonderful wife and me.

Gert Strydom

The First Summer Rain

My darling says look at the sky
And I see that it's grey
And I wonder how much
She does really love me

And in the distance
I hear the roar of thunder
And how it's drawing nearer and nearer

And we smell the rain
In which she wants to frolic
While it falls and the thunder
Is coming closer and closer

And there is a light breeze blowing,
Which makes her hair hang in strings
While the clouds are drawing close.

Gert Strydom

The First Time

At a time when we were young,
gentle and innocent
and our love wanted more
that just a lingering passionate kiss,
it was searching for greater loveliness,
for ultimate bliss

and spontaneously
you surrendered yourself to me,
in utter innocence,
and we loved passionately for the first time
and your loving was without restraint

and maybe all of life,
maybe the greatest things to it
is caught in memories such as these
and I see your radiance,
your inner beauty
that is still reaching out to me.

Gert Strydom

The First Time I Loved

The first time I loved I was blessed in some ways
with almost endless beautiful sunny days

and I walked tall, with my head held high
almost touched the blue clear sky

danced rejoicing in the rain,
kissed her again and again

and thought I would forever her keep
while she was even beautiful in her sleep

and that summer hot did the sun burn
while the days far too fast did turn

but at a time I had to wave those days goodbye
and suddenly lonesome was I.

Gert Strydom

The First Time That We Met

I should have known
that you will bring more than just friendship to me;
in my blood
there was a tingling that suddenly did come,
a bright radiance
shone from your face with a kind of holiness
and eternally I could adore you.

Gert Strydom

The First Time That We Met [2]

I should have known
that you will bring more than just friendship to me;
in my blood
there was a tingling that suddenly did come,
a bright radiance
shone from your face with a kind of holiness
and eternally I could adore you.

Gert Strydom

The Fiscal-Shrike (Free Verse Sonnet)

The grey and black bird calls out its warning
and on the thorns of the wire hangs its prey
where its black tail does constantly bounce up and down,
with a twittering other birds do join it
being afraid that he will catch their little ones
and I wonder why its booty hangs in rows
and sly and cunning the big housecat sneaks
where it is longing for bird-meat
but all of the birds are aware of the bigger danger
and from the fence the shrike stares at the cat
where it looks at him with distrust,
are afraid that it will eat its prey
but it's not on him that the black and white cat does have its attention
and the shrike does continue with its hanging work.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Flags At The Pretoria News Hangs Limp

The flags at the Pretoria news hangs limp
hangs limp
while I walk to the bus stop
and a man with a straw hat
with a badge on it
carries a backpack
and is armoured with a leather jacket.

His white smoke clouds
curls into the morning air
and a schoolgirl,
gets a cigarette from him
and a small group
smokes with him.

a Air force officer
with a blue penguin cap
on his head
walks past like on every work day
and I wonder why he
has to be so early on his post.

I buy sweets from a street vendor
who also sells newspapers and cigarettes
and I see his fingers
counting sixteen in the cold,
before he replaces his hand
into the pockets of his coat.

The people are already
forming a hell of a long queue,
to catch a bus to Hatfield
and the air is this morning
rather grey than blue
and I wonder why
a young lady
keeps looking at me.

a Bus that looks like the right one,

stops a away at a short distance
where the driver
changes the sign
and it parks at the right place.

Gert Strydom

The Flower's Name

(after Robert Browning)

I

Through this garden her steps swept
before she opened the gate,
where roses with dew wept
and not a moment longer she could wait,
while there was something gracious in her walk
before she stopped a moment at the letterbox,
in the distance children's voices she heard talk
while her arm brushed against the snow-white phlox.

II

Her feet carried her in ready steps as she passed by,
saw red carnations in a row
and her eyes sparkled bluer than the sky
while she felt a gentle breeze blow
everywhere flowers and buds did God praise
in their beauty almost casting a spell
while they were blooming for days
with more loveliness and vibrant colours than anyone can tell.

III

She found a flower much more lovely
than any other one she had ever seen
while bees were circling it lively
and to smell it she was keen
but did not know the flower's name
while it was something precious that she did find,
the flower was blushing as if it were aflame
where it was growing in bloom upon bloom from the ground.

[Reference: "Garden Fancies: I: The flower's name" by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

The Flowering Jacarandas Are Quite Pretty

(for R)

"The flowering jacarandas are quite pretty"
you said in the morning while I was leaving for work,
also that you do wish that everything had been different,
that we do not perfectly fit into each other's lives
and I did not really understand what you were saying.

Doves did coo in the jacarandas,
starlings tried to steal the food of the dogs
and I did not really understand
when I took the two food bowls the afternoon
to give the dogs some food
that our bedroom was locked

the curtains were drawn tight,
a chest of draws was drawn under the door's handle
and I did not really understand
had to break the outside window
did find you with many empty pill boxes

and then I did know
while the starlings were screaming outside,
and from the jacarandas the doves were gone,
I did throw you over my shoulder,
did carry you to my car in the driveway,

did burn tyres
with flashing emergency indicators on,
with a flying squad police car
that was closing in behind me at speed
did drive right up to the nearest provincial hospital
where I did stop at the ambulance entrance

and it was not the first time
that you tried the suicide thing
and I did not know
how to stop this kind of thing in you
and no treatment or counselling

could convert you from this.

Gert Strydom

The Fluttering Kiss Of Your Lips

The fluttering kiss of your lips
can do strange things to me,
your breasts that resist softly,
your eyes in which at times stars are leaping

can day after day captivate me,
in the joy and insistence of a moment
when suddenly time stops in eternity,
as if my whole life depends on you.

Gert Strydom

The Flying Dutchman

The blue water stretches
as far as visibility allows to see
and there's fog
rising white before the storm
out of the water.

The dusk becomes grey
and the sea from blue to dark black
while the night
darker than ink, as only companion
folds over the old ancient ship.

It's Van der Decken standing as tiller man
behind the big wheel
and forever he steers the ship
on the journey that she goes.

Always cursing
his loud voice thunders
like lightning falling around him
for sailors to tend the sails right
and sails are hoisted crunching, groaning and trembling
with strong ropes
and the ship jumps
over the smashing waves.

Like a phantom
the Flying Dutchman appears
with white sails like a wraith
over the horizon
where it sails before a storm with speed.

The ship becomes lager
as the storm wind
brings her closer
and you hear her creak
against the power of the wind.

There's thunder bolts blinding suddenly

and sea birds flies screeching
out in front of her,
while Van der Decken's skeleton
drills his men powerless
to set the sails right
that is vibrating against the wind.

"How long still Lord, "
echoes against the sea and sky,
without a answer
ever coming
and suddenly the ship is gone
as if it disappeared in the naught.

Gert Strydom

The Flying Dutchman (Refrain Stanza)

(after I. D du Plessis)

Every seven years when a wild storm do rage,
when the age old ship do around the Cape its passage wage
a skeleton at the wheel do stare
not being able a escape to dare
where with a horrid gesture he curses God age after age
but those that do defy and challenge Him do sail along,
do to this legend of the Southern-Sea belong
and never do this voyage end or anything the ship ravage
when the age old ship do around the Cape its passage wage

[Reference:"Die Vlieënde Hollander" (The Flying Dutchman)by I. D du Plessis.]

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Gert Strydom

The Flying Dutchman [2]

With age-old masts creaking,
cursed by Godly wrath,
just before the worst storms in the Cape do begin
an ancient ship is sighted sailing
as a token to break the scorn and blasphemy of man
or so the legend says, with a skeleton at the wheel
of the Flying Dutchman, full of ungodly sailors
who forever glare at each other with thoughts of revenge,
as a spectre strait out of the portals of hell
and if I do remember correctly
there is no salvation or sleep for anyone aboard
and everything turns around the love of a woman
that lived in the most beautiful Cape
and now I wonder how long that ship is still going to sail
as every now and then some seamen do notice it.

Gert Strydom

The Fog On The Hillocks Melts Away

The fog on the hillocks melts away,
it's another bright sunny day
and people do not really know me
the beings beyond the stars
look down at me and cannot properly
make up their minds
if I am living like a saint, or sinner
or is a little bit of both,
the smell of smoke from the train,
and the nearby black township
is on the air
but the light wind blows it away

and the flowers in the garden
all smile up at me, as if delighted
to have my company
and nothing really threatens,
the heaven is blue above me
and at night the stars sparkle invitingly
are drawing me to a world,
a place in the beyond
where my dear father waits
and everything is clear, lovely and sunny
without pain or regret
and nothing bad besets anyone.

(In Answer to Sylvia Plath/Reference: Sheep in Fog by Sylvia Plath.)

Gert Strydom

The Forsaking (Canzonetta)

(after Sir Thomas Wyatt)

She whom once did me seek flee away
and it is somewhat kind of strange to me
that something did change and she cannot stay
as if I have some kind of iniquity
while she hides behind a sweet kind of guise
and it is very strange this sad awakening
comes as a sudden kind of dim surprise
as there is much pain in the forsaking

and in the morning's bright new day
she does continually want to be free
even the kind of music that she plays
has a kind of rebellion that I see,
when I do touch her, her arm hairs do rise
and all of this has me worried and thinking,
makes me cry right up to the red sunrise,
as there is much pain in the forsaking

and I will have her right back if I may
but that is not how things are going to be
while to another lover she is set to stray,
want to make me for her sake feel guilty
and to want her back, to stay is unwise
but terribly my heart keeps on aching
and of her intents I can just surmise,
as there is much pain in the forsaking.

Gert Strydom

The Fourteen Days Rain

When the rain fell for fourteen days
The yellow peaches did get ripe
While streams washed like rivers
And sheep and even cattle drowned,

The dust roads became muddy
While the rain poured down
As if without end.

And on a particular day
The sun shone while it was raining
With the pouring drops
Shining bright like diamonds

But the farmers were trapped on their farms
By streams that crossed roads,
That where flowing strong like rivers
And where they were praying constantly for rain
They started to beg the Lord
For the rain to end..

Gert Strydom

The Frisian Cow (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Bertolt Brecht, after Barend J. Toerien)

The molasses and hay smells sweet where she eats at the crib,
while snugly she chews more and more of the hay,
the man that are milking her is bricked up into her memory,
hay bulges out and are slowly worked in over her lip,
there are hands going up and down her teats,
with soft loving eyes she looks at the world,
in tranquillity she eats on while she trusts the man
where the tail of the Frisian cow constantly whisks up and down,
she chews utterly happy on the hay,
feel her udder sink bit by bit,
she does not look around but just keep on eating,
knows that her life must be like this,
the man is fixed on his work and tense
where she knows about no other things in life.

[References: "Kuh bein Fressen" by Bertolt Brecht."Koei by die voerkrip" (Cow at the feeding-crib)by Barend J. Toerien.]

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Gert Strydom

The Frost Dragon

While the dark night chills the earth
it creeps sneaking in
with breath caressing the ground
covering with the kiss of death.

Like a ghoul gliding phantom like
with blue white icy eyes hovering
and nowhere it leaves tracks,
the icy dragon shakes its head,
blowing vapour ice,

freezing where it lands
like summer dew
but for its icy heart
that injures and sometimes kills.

Gert Strydom

The Fuse Of Time

The fuse of time comes to its limit
as like in a sandglass the last grains drop
almost one by tiny one until they are all gone
and life leaves the body, following the demands

laid down by destiny and the force
that drives the body stops to exist,
to exist in it.

The force that drives the blood
through veins and arteries
gives its last beat, contracts
and then stops beating

and the last breath is taken
with the lungs contracting
and taking in air and death is here
but that human being do not realise it.
but I do not realise it.

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Gert Strydom

The Future

The future is here
and I am beginning to fear
that the end of life as I know it
is very near
and society has changed from some integrity
to none and corruption.

Those that were oppressed
are now oppressing
with the world's blessing
and use Black Economic Exploitation by law
to get the Revenge of the Dark People's going
and work is scarce
or totally nonexistent
and I rather have my old broken world back

[References: BEE= Black Economic Empowerment. (Black economic exploitation)
RDP = Reconstruction and Development Program (Revenge of the dark peoples.)
]

Gert Strydom

The Gaggog

(after R.C. Scriven)

I am in my desk with a ruler and protractor
way back in the class
playing the role of a actor
while the teacher walks past.

My real shape you would find quite bizarre,
and it will come as a big surprise
if I changed to it while you walk over
but here on earth I am under cover
in a human disguise
trying to find out how these humans really are.

I am a Gaggog from Mars
and my ears have antennas to spy what I want to know
while my teeth are like iron bars
but now it doesn't show.

There is fire that I belch up through my mouth,
that burns with green vapours
and I love to act somewhat uncouth
in the vilest behaviour finding favours

while my eyes dim red do glow
and my brain clicks and hums with its gears
while white invisible gas out I blow
and my ship can travel through light years
in less than a sec
while it is disappearing in a spec.

It would be quite amusing
if I would take to my real shape
and the teacher would dropp the pen she was using,
while in fear she is trying to run away to escape

while I would hit the blackboard with a smack
enjoy destroying it while it did crack
while all the children would befriend me

and laugh at her in glee
but suddenly to this image I am back.

"John, come here. John! "

The teacher calls me and I am on,
getting up and walking to the black board
while I wish that I was gone.

{Reference: "The Marrog" by R.C. Scriven.}

Gert Strydom

The Gamblers

One rainy night at a border camp
in the operational area
I walked past a tent
and while the wind flapped open one side
a lightning bolt slammed down
into a tree near to me
sizzling with blue sparks flying
before it thundered cracking

and I saw some young soldier boys,
a group of troops
about the same age as I
sitting around a table
dressed in military vests
and brown military long pants
drinking brandy from a bottle
that they passed hand to hand
and I thought that they were probably
playing cards
or some sort of gambling game

when I heard the clicking sound
of the cylinder of a revolver being spun
and a dull click in an empty chamber
and knew which game was on

and walking right in
I took the gun from the next one
after it had again been spun
aimed it at the ground
next to the entrance and pulled the trigger
and the gun went off
with a bullet kicking up wet sand
near to the group of us.

Sheer terror had brought soberness
to the group
and those men were silent
with their eyes on my officer's pips

and I took the revolver
and first thought about arresting
the lot of them but left them
to be sorted out by a sergeant
who followed me in
after admonishing them
with a very stern warning.

The very next day we went into action
were taken out
in some choppers
right into battle
and at the dropp zone
two rockets flew over my head
just after the last helicopter had lifted off

and the game was still on
for the brave young men
who accompanied me,
Russian roulette
with a bullet through the head
from a AK-47
or living on instead
from missed enemy shots.

[Reference: The gamblers by Anthony Delius.]

Gert Strydom

The Game

When more enemy pawns break through,
do plant landmines and do murder people on farms
horseman, motorbikes are let loose in the veldt
to with speed jump inclined in advance

when the search in hot pursuit operations
does circle out wider to make everything safe,
while airborne soldiers do jump above a enemy base
to quench the attacks, when pawns do take two steps

the general sit safe as a queen
far away in the rearguard
when enemy castles do advance and it's check
when things get dangerous with battle-tanks,

when two fighter jets and a bomber
oblique with cannons and bombs do draw lines,
like bishops singing godly songs
while at the back of that base
there are Puma helicopters landing.

In armour black-townships are patrolled,
arias are divided left and right
in block upon block of houses
to avoid that mere pawns do die,
are surrounded in flames do receive necklaces.

The world looks at the board with blocks
when the Red Bear in black moves its towers,
in white from the South armour do fight back,
when the castles of the Bear fall in hordes,

three own battle-tank-castles
and eleven armoured-cars are cornered,
do receive deadly shots in a landmine field,
just more than thirty of our own pawns do die
while the Bear does loose
near to five thousand of its soldiers,

castles near to a hundred, hundreds of combat vehicles
where the Bear does acknowledge that its struggle is lost,
and the world wants to believe that the war is over
when the king does topple, does fall from his own accord.

Gert Strydom

The Game Ranch

We went to visit my cousins
on their game ranch
and you hated it there
although every thing
was very comfortable
and you were well cared for.

What had set you off?
I still do not know,
but at breakfast you were already furious
although everybody
danced to serve and entertain you.

Was it the hunting tales
of the previous night
around the blazing big fire,
or the bush hog
that the Spaniard boasted
about killing,
which almost smashed him
of which his wife
had taken a video?

At the shooting range
some cool drink tins were set
and you didn't want any help from me
and didn't really listen
to the instructions from my cousins,
closing your eyes with every shot
that you took with the pistol
and missed every target by a mile.

I looked at the nine-millimetre pistol
with its missing front sight
and both my cousins smiled
as if conspiring with each other
and I clasped both hands together
in a well taught military hold
and your eyes went big,

almost popping out of your head
while the row of tins
was shot off
in what sounded like almost one shot.

On instruction I shot at the fallen tins
letting them jump into the air
until the magazine was empty
and the cousins
put matches standing up on bricks
and gave me a old.303 rifle
with an open sight.

I aimed carefully before pressing the trigger
and shot those matches down
and on your face
there was a frown
and even before we left
to go hunting
with some trackers
you looked at me
as if I had turned into a killer
and was going to shoot
at every living thing.

Gert Strydom

The Games That We Play

Far too quickly we are bored
when some people try to draw attention
in the games that we daily play.
Far too quickly we are bored
and divided among ourselves
by every gossip.
Far too quickly we are bored
when some people try to draw attention.

Gert Strydom

The Games We Play (Sijo)

During our youth we played innocent games without guilt
by the whim of playing them there was a kind of sheer happiness,
but as adults, life and love is a game without absolution.

Gert Strydom

The Garden In The Hillocks (Tartoum)

Against the rocky slope lies the old white house,
there are roses, lilies and irises that are flowering
between blocks of rock stacked together.

There are roses, lilies and irises that are flowering,
succulents, aloes, torch lilies grow
like tongues of flaming exuberance.

Succulents, aloes, torch lilies grows
as red dots against the rocks that are flaming
as if nature is singing about God's creation.

As red dots against the rocks that are flaming,
as God's own lovely garden
proteas, wild wormwood and every wild flower blooms.

As God's own lovely garden,
as dots full of gleaming fire allows flower
while doves, finches and bush shrikes sing with joy.

As dots full of gleaming fire allows flower
between blocks of rock stacked together
like tongues of flaming exuberance,
as if nature is singing about God's creation
proteas, wild wormwood and every wild flower blooms
while doves, finches and bush shrikes sing with joy.

Gert Strydom

The Garden Of My Heart

The garden of my heart
is empty when you are gone
and its as if every plant
that I have in it does perish

and although
I do give great care to everything
something essential is missing

and I bring everything to inside
and wait like a winter
on a new beginning

and it is as if the sun is away
and as if the frost
does extend deadly cold fingers
while you are missing.

Gert Strydom

The Gardener

The man must know that spring is almost here,
around him the garden is lovely,
and seedlings he is planting in rows

and his fruit trees run up to the top of the hillock.
At the break of day he is already in his orchard,
around him the garden is lovely,

where He is praising God for His blessings
and when he washes the mud from his hands,
at the break of day he is already in his orchard

and there is a realisation coming to his mind
and he is happy that all of this comes from his hands
and when he washes the mud from his hands,

he knows that God is more than just merciful
and his orchard goes as far as the eye can see
and he is happy that all of this comes from his hands

and its not as if he deserves this prosperity.
The man must know that spring is almost here
and his orchard goes as far as the eye can see
and seedlings he is planting in rows

Gert Strydom

The Gift

For a Godly being that control and send elements
for whom time is only a moment,
with might unlimited
comes the time, the hour
of being human.

The life that he led
made purity, integrity and love spread
and still he was despised and hanged
to get salvation for all men.

When we celebrate Christmas day
and send gifts to our loved ones
it's better to look at His life
than gifts wrapped in paper.

The ultimate gift of all time stays
the God that had to endure pain for us
and faultless had to pay the price
for everyone to have salvation.

Gert Strydom

The Girl

I see her with eyes
as cobalt blue as the sky,
shining full of light as the sun
her hair is yellow like the winter grass
and the blush of the rising sun
is on her cheek.

I have seen the white of her skin,
while breakers roll in from the sea
walked the path in her hair
through the veldt,
through fields filled with corn.

Have smelt her scent on hillocks
full of flowering sugar-bush,
in valleys with jasmine
and I know her well,
have been since childhood
under her spell.

Every day she is more part of me,
in everything that I do and see
as she is the one
from where all the tribes, the people
in my world comes.

Her name will forever
stay dear to me,
as its part of my history,
even is knotted into the essence of me

and she is my country South Africa.

Gert Strydom

The Glance In Your Eyes

(for Annelize)

Some people will call it graffiti
something that people on own accord write on walls,
others talk about cuneiform
as if everything is just ancient
but I do read love in your eyes.

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Gert Strydom

The Gliding Death Angel

Only a dot is caught
in the early morning air
of the eagle
in its morning flight
where almost invisible small
it hangs storeys high
in radial winds
in a little dot against the blue
before with stretched out claws
lightning fast
as a shadow
it falls from heaven
with death
striking in precision.

[Reference: Arend speel doodsengel by Jan Lourens.]

Gert Strydom

The Glory Of God

Nature is filled with the glory of God,
in electric lightning bolts that flashes down,
hitting as if aflame

and in every piece of grass, flower,
bush and tree nature bares witness to it

the white-hot sun in the cobalt blue sky,
aquamarine waters stretching into the sea
is making it know,

but the presence of man destroys,
leaves an impact,
eats at nature like a cancer.

Gert Strydom

The Gold Of Your Eyes

The gold of your eyes
is like the sun on a summer's day,
the auburn of your hair
more beautiful than spring and autumn.

The glow in your smile
is brighter than the snow,
the pink red blush on your cheeks
is more beautiful
than the flowers in your hair
and the softness of your face
cuts past all borders
and brings you deep in my heart,

but it's your humanity
that hits the deepest nails
into my soul
and maybe the thing
about what love is essentially,

is clear in what a person is
and are able to become
more than the mere feelings
that you read
in someone's eyes.

Gert Strydom

The Golden Moon Hangs Big-Eyed In The Window

(to Minette)

The golden moon hangs big-eyed in the window
as if it is watching me
while in the dark the cat watches the world
with gleaming eyes
and of you and me there now are only memories
and I know that I cannot hold you,
that winter at times do come merciless,
does destroy the summer at times
and that life and death
does come unstoppable
like night and day.

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Gert Strydom

The Gorilla

The gorilla does what gorillas can
sits on a dung heap,
protecting it with its life
as if it belongs
to only him

and eats bananas
from its own republic
faster than they grow,

scratches for ticks and lice,
swats some opponents
down like flies

scorches the plain
over and over again
and shakes its head
walking among the slain

not able to understand
where every thing has gone
and although it walks
on hind legs,

growls words as speech
and sometimes begs,
but one task
is beyond its reach:

the gorilla cannot
become human again.

[Reference: August 1968 by W.H. Auden.]

Gert Strydom

The Goshawk

The turning hawk suddenly breaks its flight
with claws stretched out,
it falls like thunder from the sky.
The turning hawk suddenly breaks its flight
and even when its prey is anxious
.it falls as if it is drawing into the earth;
the turning hawk suddenly breaks its flight,
with claws stretched out.

Gert Strydom

The Gossamer Strings

In an old dilapidate farmhouse
I saw the gossamer strings
webbed in corners, at windows
shining in a haze of light
and trembling in the slight breeze
with wiggling prey, some with leaves
as some uncertainties expanding
with frail bonds
until the master killing spider
would pounce

and such is life with Big Brother
always watching from behind the scenes
with the web of its control spanning wide,
still widening across the globe
and in the end man is metered down
to being a mere individual
against the big machine,
against a system of control,
from where some act like gods
over fellow human beings.

Gert Strydom

The Graceful Lines Of Your Face Stunned Me

The graceful lines of your face stunned me,
dumbfounded, nothing else I did notice;
beyond me, on the road cars flashed past,
sheer perfection had an own strong power.
Your smile made me feel somewhat ecstatic,
in a instant, my thoughts, my life, reality,
my whole existence changed totally,
living without you became a big void.
Your cat-like glowing eyes burned intensely,
burned into my soul, your small snub nose,
your brow, your soft wavelike hair, your hot lips,
left much more than just a lovely picture;
for long lingering moments you were real
and your loving was absolutely clear.

Gert Strydom

The Great Chess Game

Leading riders on black motorbikes swish past
with flashing red lights
over the crossing of Arabat street
where rows of lamp-poles
tower with golden round lights,
small black Powédas
with men of the Federal Security Service
follow short on their heels
before the bullet-proof Zil
that is big and black glides past.

men from the CIA in two black
American Chryslers
follow at a distance
while they make jokes
about the people in the Zil
who in their opinion
is on the way to a dacha
to enjoy bodily pleasure
with each other
and the two cars take an off ramp
to drive back to the American embassy
from where they did come.

In the background the big Kremlin palace fades away
with a building of which the golden domes gleam
while the small convoy
takes the ring road,
and the general does sit smiling backward,
the skirt of his young companion
does shift up to her lovely upper leg
and the glance in her dark-brown eyes
are dedicated to him,
(as a person would expect)
and yet somewhat amused.

The man suddenly smiles
as that although the people in the West think
that they had drawn the tooth of Russia

the chess game does go on,

submarines do still sneak through the depths of the ocean,
with their nuclear explosive heads aimed as previously
on New York, Washington, Los Angeles
and other cities of the American continent,
at cities in Europe
and even on the Southern point of Africa

with aircraft standing ready for a attack,
missiles of which other countries are unaware
and day after day
the game is set anew,
and the waiting does continue
that he would give the attack command.

The small convoy
leaves the highway,
disappears into a secret military base,
into a place where the end of the lives
of billions of people
could start within moments.

[Reference: A dacha is a Russian holiday home.]

Gert Strydom

The Great Dragon

(after WH Auden)

1

wants to purge, discipline and feast,
do turn especially to people from the East,

like any other false religion it believes it cannot fail,
slowly silently it devours itself, do every other one assail,

with snapping jaws agape it crunches at all other things
do fly worldwide with evil demonic black death-bringing wings

and in a catastrophe it's science and technology lags behind,
with amok within or complacency it kills the spirit soul and mind

(and silently, so very silently
it acts in total secrecy.)

2

At Chernobyl Russian technology do become dilapidated with a bang
and at the start while people's lives do in the balance hang,

it's believed that a Russian reactor is superior to the finest detail
and as they do act immediately it's to no kind of avail.

When the switch is pressed that should stop everything it increases the load
and to the horror of the civilized world it does with catastrophe explode,

(and silently, so very silently
it's kept in total secrecy)

American satellites do immediately the blown up reactor find
while poisonous substances are carried by the wind.

All that does remain of Pripyat and Chernobyl
are the signs of how a person should communist technology bewail,

as people are forced to more than there lives give
and ghost towns remain where nobody can live.

A small girl writes on a board at school: "look after my cat"
but there is no unaffected living thing, not even a rat.

Painfully scientists, firemen and normal people do die that were exposed,
every entry to that radiated wasteland have been closed,

sorrowful parents do hold their misshapen babies (have got cancer from this)
and to human error the dragon do persist that it is

(and silently, so very silently
it keeps the real truth in total secrecy)

After all of this as the danger of Russian technology do over everything tower
my government (South Africa)wants to invest in Russian nuclear power.

(and silently, so very silently,
its plans are kept in total secrecy)

3

In China where people cannot their religion or beliefs choose
from what people do eat the Corona virus breaks loose,

becomes a menace to all of humankind
and the Chinese cannot a cure to it find

but believe that their medicine will above all prevail,
that it comes to rescue to anything that does ail

(and silently, so very silently
the outbreak is kept in total secrecy)

China do not ask for help or use any kind of commonsense
and the whole wide world is plagued with a pestilence.

Without having any kind of measure to or warning of this,
from another person a sneeze or cough could have death's kiss,

it affects people suddenly out of the blue
and kills and acts as if it's the common-flue

(and silently, so very silently
it's acts in total secrecy)

[Reference:"August 1968" by WH Auden,

I am quoting WH Auden's poem here:

"August 1968" by WH Auden,

"The Ogre does what ogres can,
Deeds quite impossible for Man,
But one prize is beyond his reach,
The Ogre cannot master Speech:
About a subjugated plain,
Among its desperate and slain,
The Ogre stalks with hands on hips,
While drivel gushes from his lips."]

Gert Strydom

The Great Game Massacre

Thomas Baines in eighteen sixty
made a painting
that he entitled "the massacre"
portraying a antelope slaughter
that was organized as a great hunt.

It was in honour of prince Alfred
(a son of queen Victoria)
who was visiting near Bloemfontein.

About a thousand natives
of the baRolong tribe were formed up
under the cover of the hills
armed with assegai spears
and joined on the plain enclosing twenty
to thirty thousand game.

The different kinds of game
grouped as separate herds
of springboks, wildebeests,
bonteboks, zebras and ostriches
and was rushing about
in great confusion,

crossing one another,
in sheer terror trampling each other
with rifles blazing away,
the natives screaming and using their spears
and huge clouds of dust closing over them.

.
The fiercely terrified wildebeests
made wild rushes trying time and again
to break through at places

but were killed with assegais
rushing back over the slain
while the other animals
milled around in the closing circle

and the bellowing
of the wounded animals
drew flocks of vultures
that filled the sky hovering

I'Envoi

with probably no more than
three thousand head of game braking through
in the narrow valley
sweeping past the house of Thomas Baines

and I can only conclude
that man is the most destructive
of all living creatures
on the face of the earth.

Gert Strydom

The Greatest Thing

I put the seed
into ground that I
mingled with dark black compost.

Rows of beans,
some carrots, some pumpkins
and spinach
I sowed into the orange brown earth.

Some small tomato plants,
I planted in blocks
and pressed small
frames of reeds
on top
for them to crawl over.

Every day I sprayed water
and tended the weeds
and in time
little green plants
sprang out of the ground
and the tomatoes crept
and crawled all over
their reeds.

It was great to be part
of spring and see
living things sprout
from the ground,
but a dog dug
some carrots out
and a flock of mice
came to eat
tomatoes from the plants.

Yet in time
some great vegetables
came to my table
and spring was awesome

and so was summer
and to tend my own garden
is the greatest thing.

Gert Strydom

The Green Starling

When you look at the green starling
it screams in the long grass,
gleams green in the morning dew
and catches your eye
as it comes out of a hole, out of a tree,
as it picks up insects at a small stream
as it comes out,
as it comes out
as if caught in your daydream.

When you look at the green starling
it sparkles here and there
as if it sometimes is holding onto rays
and it warbles
stretches out under the sun,
view it as a red balloon
stretches out
stretches out
and it would fly away if it could.

When you look at the green starling
it pecks at a sorrel
when at times it holds onto a big worm
before it sings a song of joy
flies up fluttering, spreading its wings
and for moments distract you,
flies up fluttering
flies up fluttering
and so a whole mornings swishes past.

Gert Strydom

The Grey Horse

The grey horse grazes outside
and eats, eats bit by bit
in our country
and on the farms is where it gets delicacies

but first it must go up into dark Africa
as pestilences and plagues
and famine asks a toll.

There are clouds hanging black
and thunder drawing closer
and it smells the rising wind.

Still it waits on the angel of death
to give a loud whistle
and then it stretches its stride
as everywhere there are corpses when war comes.

Gert Strydom

The Grocery Store

I drove my old blue
Honda CB900F motorbike to town,
took a small backpack along,

as I had to buy some Whiskas cat food,
the ginger coloured Persian likes
the blue marked kind that contains fish.

The small backpack had nothing in it,
was flat on my back,
the store had just opened

and I was in a hurry
to get to the Internet café
before the better computers were taken

by other customers
which would cause me to crawl along
on an old 486 dilapidated model.

In my right hand I carried
my blue Lafê crash helmet
and I was dressed

in a t-shirt and jeans
walked down five rows of shelves
finding nothing else interesting,

saw that the price of a one kilogram packet
of Whiskas had hiked by ten rands,
did not even touch anything in that store

and decided to walk right out,
as the price at the Checkers store
might be lower.

At the exit there were six armed security men
who were talking to each other
with boredom written over their faces

when a sharp alarm went off,
in fractions of seconds they surrounded me,
ripping my backpack from my back

retaining me with hands on my arms
while one searched my body
right there and could find nothing.

One said that it was illegal
to walk into the store
carrying a backpack

and I asked what about
ladies carrying
handbags full of their belongings?

My backpack was empty,
they even took my crash helmet,
to look if something was in the inside

but could find nothing,
force-marched me through the exit
and the alarm went off again.

Their attitudes were somewhat hostile,
but when another customer
left that store, not by a till,

but by that exit
that alarm went off again
and then they realized

that they had a problem
with their security system
and not with me.

I received no apology,
had a crowd of other people looking on
while they treated me with indignity.

The Guard

We were observing, doing recognisance
on a enemy camp, had parachuted in
during the night, dropping from very high
and my comrades and I had leopard crawled,
catwalked from dark patch to dark patch,
from shadow to shadow
using the cover of knee high grass
and with the sun rising
was in a dense small bush

reporting back on tanks and armoured cars,
the number of soldiers seen,
how battle ready they seemed
when a little boy herded a few goats
and with a bone thin dog came along
and I let them go, not being able
to kill them as the enemy
and almost immediately we had to leave.

Soon hundreds of enemy soldiers
were dropped in search lines,
were trying to cordon us off
and my comrades wasn't pleased with me,
as things could have been much easier
if I had killed that child
and we went into a river
cutting reeds to breathe through
and went under the surface
trying to shake off the enemy

that was closing in on us
and when the three of us left the river
some large crocodiles
were on the bank where we entered it
and we had the opportunity
to return to the enemy camp
where the next evening
an enemy Cuban soldier lit a big cigar
only a few paces from me

and the child was a far better guard than he.

Gert Strydom

The Guardian Of The Flames

Always there have been
something holy to me,
about flames
that comes alive suddenly.

It's a great thing
to see flames spread
and to see yellow licking tongues,
consume wood
and to get heat, energy
and comfort from it.

At a time human existence
surely depended on
keeping the secret
of flames
and to make sure,
that the last glowing coals
do not die.

When I was a child,
my brother and me
almost burnt a hillock
and some residences down
by misadventure.

The more I tried to kill
the small fire,
that I started in the long brown winter grass,
the more the fire spread.

It's a fact that my behind
also burnt on that occasion
from a hiding
with a old fan belt
and I learned quickly,
what the power of fire is
and how to act responsibly with matches.

Tonight I am the guardian of the flames
at the fireplace in the lounge
and I take care of the hot coals
and have to put wood on
before the fire dies.

Gert Strydom

The Guitar Player

He is just a child, a guitar player
and he hits the strings of his brown guitar quickly
in a lonely kind of song,
as if he is going into the world with it.
He plays for whoever is passing, for the night
where the birds and crickets are suddenly silent
when he picks at strings with a deep sweet kind of hurt
and his hurting music cuts through all things.
Sometimes he feels the cold, the winter wind
that wants to bring him back to reality
and he is being devoured by life
where the stars shine high above him
and he searches through pockets for a marijuana cigarette,
as the last pleasure that is left to him.

[Reference: Die speelman (The playing-man) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

The Gymnast

His attitude is set to high precision
where he swings
making the correct grasps lightning quick,
and sometimes just for moments touches the rings,
hurling through the air he turns
in movements that really does count.

He tumbles quickly from the balancing beam,
he is supremely accurate on the pommel horse
where he retains absolute balance
and moves perfectly
from place to place,
later he returns to parallel bars
before landing without movement on the floor.

Gert Strydom

The Gypsies

You believed in the power
of rock crystals
and there were people
selling and displaying them
on rows of tables
in Brooklyn shopping mall.

Like mages they would discuss
the powers locked into
the stones,
but to me they were only rocks
of various types and colours,
and a just a group of gypsies
selling their wares.

Some old people
even bought some
believing in healing properties
for arthritis

and going along
I let you buy me a brown one
with strips of quartz running
with white lines right through it
and still it just another rock to me.

Gert Strydom

The Hadedda-Ibises

The flock of Hadedda-ibises decent
and glitter bronze
in an indecent purple-copper sheen
in the sharp summer sun in the garden
and like a group of well armed ancient hoplites
they do form a formation
as they gather together
while their long sharp spear-like bills
slam down into the soft ground
to irradiate all snails, earthworms,
king-crickets and the larvae
of moths and beetles
that they do find
and when a human being startles them
they flap their huge wings
and loudly cry out "haa-haa-de-dah"
before rising with great strain into the air.

Gert Strydom

The Hammer's Tale

There's a tale of a hammer
that dropped from the sky
and fell at the feet
of a warrior chief
while he was hunting
and before he saw it
a flash of blue-white lightning
cracked down at his feet
from a cloudless cobalt blue sky.

Amazed at the thunder
his gaze went into the air,
but he could see nothing there
but he sensed something
and looked more carefully
and something still unseen
threw a shadow covering him
and at his feet lay something strange
while in the east he heard the sound
of something huge
hitting the ground as if dead.

A metallic hammer huge in size
fit for a giant
with a colour somewhere between
copper and gold lay gleaming
as if it was filled with some strange
sort of energy
and it was crafted beautifully
with intricate runic patterns
decorating its shaft

and while the shadow
became much larger
and more threatening
and he swore
that he could hear
something breathing
and he reached for the hammer

trying to pick it up
and it was light
as a feather in his hands

and the hammer changed in colour
to a bright white blue hue
and started humming
as if it was coming alive
and it changed in size and shape
becoming much smaller
but like a big war maul

and he wasn't dreaming
but a giant of a godlike thing
was in fury looking at him
and a flaming sword
was in its huge fist
with a hound with red gleaming eyes
following it
and holding onto the hammer
with both hands he took a swing at it,
hitting it with a tremendous thundering blow

and it fell over into a valley
facing the wooded west
but with a still swiping sword
and the warrior ran
trying to avoid it
and in anger bashed
at the mountain
rising in front of him

and the mountain shattered
while tremendous lightning bolts blazed it
causing the mountain to fall
over the god's breast
and the hound tried to kill him
but he knocked it
right over the mountain
with lightning bolts sizzling over it.

[Reference: Gluskap's Hound by T.G. Roberts.]

Gert Strydom

The Hammerhead Bird

From the dark-grey when the fog hangs
with a white vapour in the early twilight
and the coots do long for the hot sun
in the marshland the hammerhead bird is busy
where he stands in the marsh like a heron
where deadly still he is stately and brown like a chicken hen
while there is nothing that passes his eye.
At the back of his head is a quiff that stands upright
where into the muddy-water he pushes his bill
where it seems that it's so long under that he is lost
and he swallows frogs, tadpoles and small fishes
before at ease he pulls out a bigger wriggling frog
and with a beat of his wings he flies to the twigged-nest on a cliff
when the sun do sit low like a red ball in the late afternoon.

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Gert Strydom

The Hand Of Time

The hand of time
ticks without end
and every moment
man is nearer
to where
his life ends
and death that which
he doesn't really comprehend.

Still like Malthus
I cannot believe
that there's a cycle
bringing war and famine
that spreads wider all of the time.

I set my eyes up high
to the unseen and believe
that God prepares a way
and all the time
keeps his hand over me.

Gert Strydom

The Hands

The hands that hold all planets in the endless universe,
that control galaxies in stretched out space
is still busy building you, and me
is mightily folded around my insignificant life
and in nature time after time I see their work
as they are here close to fend off all kinds of catastrophe.

The thoughts out of which man and all animals did come,
that guides and controls all things from the time of creation
is still busy astounding me with intense love
and every man, animal and plant is still mended by that power
as continually that great mind is busy
and where all things do fail God is still working.

The Christ that no cat-o'-nine nails, nail or spear could keep in death
is continually providing my daily bread.
He is present in each daily stress, circumstance and distress
and the hart that trusts Him
does even in the years of old age find revival
and will rest in His soft omnipotent hands.

Gert Strydom

The Handyman

His knowing hands
could hit nails
and lay bricks exactly right
and with his eyes,
he could draw and measure lines
and know exactly
how the plans wanted things.

Developer and businessman
and the best handyman was he
and he took an oath,
that his children
would get higher education.

Wood turned into beautiful objects
under his hands
and tables and chairs
was shaped magically.

He constructed a church without charge
and houses without number,
but a door fell
with a thundering crash
and in his body
some veins were cut
and the medical science
was still too primitive
to help and rescue
a man bleeding internally.

Still his works
exists in places
and one lesson still stays with me,
to do the best
with every thing
on which you lay your hands
and that nothing is too large
to dream about
or to accomplish.

Gert Strydom

The Harsh Cursing Of Dogs

The harsh cursing of dogs
at criminals that wander outside,
trains that pass noisily,
drawing out their long whistles,
when trucks sound
as if they are rushing somewhere
like battle tanks,
is disturbing and suddenly awakes me

but outside it's a golden fairy world
where the moon hangs bewitching
glowing one-eyed,
with branches moving somewhat
in the light breeze
and stars are shining like diamonds
in the black sky.

Gert Strydom

The Havoc Of War

a Smoking and burning
enemy battle tank
stands stopped in its tracks,
like a metal coffin
with its occupants
still hatched in.

a BRDM enemy armoured car
is encased by leaping flames
and the phosphoric burning smell
is churning in my guts.

Some dead Cuban soldiers lay
cut from the stem
mangled in blood and guts
and the machinegun is still chattering
and I wish to be,
in another place and time
than to be a part
of this slaughtering.

a Bleating Gemsbok rushes past
trying to outrun the flames,
that leap through the field
while the machines of war
brings death to the living.

Shot after shot is fired
at killing range
and it's hot and deafening
inside the Ratel,
but the wind
brushes through my hair
where I stand
in the top hatch
and trees and bushes
sweep past
as if screened in a movie house.

Enemy armour keeps exploding
and my voice sounds strange
and unfamiliar to me,
while I give directions
for the next killing.

Gert Strydom

The Hawk

The hawk cries out from the electric line
up high on the mega-power mast
from where it watches everything below
and the people that do pass on the nearby road.

Like an exclamation mark it stands out
against the cobalt blue sky
while it flies up to the high wind streams,
straining its muscles in its long wings
that is adapted for the struggle
against the force of gravity
and it starts to turn in its own designated gyre
while it does scan everything below

and with its strong feet with curved sharp talons
and beak it's the perfect killing machine
for whatever it does designate as prey
be it a insect, rodent, small bird, mammal or reptile
on which it does swoop down with speed,
do seize and rip into pieces

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Gert Strydom

The Heart Of A Human Is A Strange Thing

The heart of a human is a strange thing,
it's a place that words and deeds do penetrate
or to some only a pumping station for blood
but still love can let it sing without words

and now I wonder what to do with you?
Will I be able to disappear into your depths?
Will I eternally anchor to who and what you are?
Will I trust you to keep all of my secrets?

That something deeper is present than any words can say
is constantly clear to me when your hand lies in mine
and if this thing is love that binds me to you
then I would never want it any different.

and to laugh and cry with you,
to hide against the rough world at your side
seems to me like how things should be
when we love each in innocence without fear.

Gert Strydom

The Hell Is Totally Loose (Ballade)

(in answer to Charl-Pierre Naudé)

Nothing can save us from the darkness of the heart
that tears and sorrow did chisel in,
by the plundering of a whole society
as the struggle is not anymore between white and black

Chorus:

but gryphons, harpies and demons are loosened as people
and only too easily they deceive everyone,
lie that everything is going better where everything is falling apart
and people wait on the Lord God to come with His salvation

where it seems as the great Day of Judgement is near,
where people with their antics do astound me,
while there is no mercy for those that are unemployed
and demons do disguise themselves in different ways,

where suppression now for decades are flowering,
even black people more than ever do struggle to exist
and the distortion of facts and half-truths even history
old John Phillip (as at Slaughter's Neck) would comprehend

where robbery, rape, murder, torture and killing
is rampant and is at the order of each day,
where through aeons by culture and tradition
people have been taught to plunder as a sign of power,

while people hide behind bladed-wire, palisades and electric fences
with guard dogs that do patrol yard upon yard and women that do cry at night,
when the neighbourhood-watch and armed reaction makes the suburb a war
zone
and people do lock in behind steel gates and others trade this country for
another,

but history does just repeat itself again
as if nobody do know of it or learn from it
and Blood-river and Golgotha become places that few do understand,
where on our own we cannot face the hellish forces that are rampant

when church denominations fall apart and sell their churches
and no leader, no De Klerk or Mandela can lead as a messiah
as just the Lord God can still bring salvation here
while our country has violence and all kinds of evils and catastrophe.

[Reference: "Die kalksteengroef" (The limestone quarry) by Charles
Pierre Naudé.]

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Gert Strydom

The Herald

At the subway whore upon whore chatters
where in fishnet-stockings they stand in a group,
a poor white beggar does sit on the porch of Meat Mecca
and in the street a black woman is busy feeding her baby,

while around her in the middle of the street people are dancing in a hubbub,
two streets further on a black pastor do pray where he is calling on God,
over his bullhorn he wants to call people to account
in the street rubbish bins and refuse bags lie thrown out in revolt

when a spectre figure comes at a slow pace on a pale-grey horse,
the horse throws its head while the horseman sits like a Boer general.
It can be Eugene Terreblance, Christiaan de Wet or Koos De la Rey,
the bustle does continue in disorder around him,
the horse comes to a halt and moved the man prays for a moment,
where he talks to the omnipotent Lord God without any fear.

He prays that God must heal the hatred and envy,
that his people once more must be self-reliant and free,
he prays for his country that clearly is falling apart,
that even in oppression God must open a way,
he even prays for the killer and the thief that does rob the innocent,
for those that do love each other and as spouses do make promises
as in everything around him there is tinned pleasure and great decay
and in a great bass voice he talks to the omnipresent Lord of the universe.

He says: "My Lord and my God I am here to fulfil Your will
as the iniquity of mankind has been uncovered."
He lifts his hand with a sword in it and a quarter of the county falls,
a quarter of the whole world is destroyed while gunshots do resound,
famine, epidemic annihilation and animals of prey are taking their toll
and its clear that the world is going to its end,
that death does fallow short on his commands.

When he rides further along the main road his horse is on a gallop,
there are lines of fire that the horseshoes do draw out of the tar,
everyone that hears and do notice him are astonished,
all the parties and the normal passage of life is stopped,

black people call to their ancestral spirits loudly,
others take serious decisions and do turn their lives around
and they feel unmasked in the days of youth and old age
while it feels as if God is again knocking at the doors of their hearts

and many are joyous and very happy
when the horseman and his horse do ride away into eternity.

Gert Strydom

The Heritage

I think of those incredible men
who lived out legendary lives
and with a whip, horse and oxen

a rifle or two and the black book in the haversack
crossed the wild plains, mountains and rivers
and conquered lions, buffalo and all savage beasts

and made their houses in the wilderness,
developing farms, towns and cities
and even faced deadly enemies in war

and wanted a life and nothing more,
but now they pass into the remembering,
becoming a piece of ancient history

and yet again we are facing savage men,
a self obsessed government
that inflicts unfair laws

and the power of that black book
stays eternally with us
and our families

and we are driven to our knees
having to trust and believe
that the almighty Lord is with us still
like our fathers did.

Gert Strydom

The Heron

The moon is aflame while it is still rising,
glows orange-red and brings a feeling
of danger to the night
and under the blue-white specks of stars
I do notice a solitary heron
standing on its long legs at the march
with its long neck and bill bended down
where sickle shaped it is etched against the moon,
against the reflection of the shallow lake
before it screeches out its call,
do spear a small wiggling fish
which it does swallow down its bill
and stands still as if in a trance.

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Gert Strydom

The Heron (Cavatina)

Sweeping in for a landing with its neck
in a s-shape
with its golden eyes it motionless stare,
nothing escapes
from its deadly sharp pointed falling bill,
a paw does scrape
quite slowly down in the crystal clear stream,
but it does not stir when the seagulls scream.

Gert Strydom

The Hidden Violence Lurked (English Sonnet)

The hidden violence lurked, was right there,
waiting always waiting to come to the surface
and in Africa most people were totally unaware
until the blood flowed, until they had to face

the destruction, until a hungry lion rushed in;
on the tranquil river eyes were peeping
and this struggle no unarmed person could win
when razor sharp jaws were snapping

and yet a kind of beauty, a kind of innocence,
was always present and just waiting to appear,
even if cruelty did daily feelings incense
there was something without any kind of fear

that dwelt in the early morning beauty,
something that stayed great and forever free.

Gert Strydom

The Highway Man

The wind was howling
and shaking the big oak trees,
and the moon hanged like a sickle
gliding like a ship over the dark sky
and the motorbiker came riding
and the light of his motorbike cut
through the rain and kept him
locked to the stretch of road
that twisted up a hill.

He'd a round black helmet on his head,
a black leather jacket and black boots
and he rode through the weather
to where a light sparkled in the dark
and the girl of his heart was waiting.

Gert Strydom

The Hireling

Applications are being waited on
for the position of mercenary
or now rather security consultant

to with and for the Americans
help to make
Afghanistan and Iraq tame.

Jannie from bush war
and Angola fame
applies to go

and he is selected
with a group of special soldiers
that stand separate from the others smoking

who can parachute
and take life
in diverse ways

and in secret he gets on a plane
that stands on Waterkloof air force base
and takes off in a northeastern direction.

The pay is good
and US-dollar strong
and it's a fixed job

that he can find nowhere in his own country
and for a while
Jannie is very happy

for being able to give money to Sannie
to buy food
and small Jan can get rugby boots.

His blue eyes cuts
day after day through people
to try and identify terrorists

but how do you really know
who is carrying a bomb
and who wants to die for his faith?

There are many things
that the Americans learn from him
and he from them,

but while on leave
he is in the bath on the third storey
of a hotel in Baghdad

and an Arabic woman and child
walks into the lobby
and she smiles shyly beyond her veil

and a bomb explodes
that nearly kills him
and cuts his legs off
and confused the world turns around him.

Gert Strydom

The Hobo

Somewhere in the city he did loose his heart,
did loose his child, his wife, his work
and tried to find salvation
in the bottom of a bottle of liquor

and at a time he was blinded
by the bright lights of the city and by the entertainment,
life did devour him along with spirits
later cannabis, LSD and heroine

and when icy in this winter
the ripe lies white like snow around him
its as if it is his last winter
that he is going to have in this old hard world
and there is blood the he coughs out
but his does still remain in wonder
over the stars that hang like magic lights above him,
and he is still amazed by the omnipotence of God.

Gert Strydom

The Holy Bible Asks

The holy Bible asks
who can come into the presence,
into the dwelling place of the omnipotent Lord God
and it's no riddle that a person has got to solve
as it is clear that he who is sincere
will see the Lord.

Gert Strydom

The Honest Truth About Soldiering

Here I am to confess that
patriotism and glory during wars
are just lies coined by politicians
who haven't got the guts
to even kill a fly

and then expect young men
from the population
to kill, to maim and to destroy
and at the same time
to still stay sane

and here's the honest truth:

to be forced into war at a pauper's wage
and imprisoned if not
to go through countless hardships,
at the hands of a selected mad few
and then to be able to survive only
by taking some killing shots
kills the child, destroys the man
leaves only the bomb happy soldier behind

who will never be the same again
and nothing can make him
continue as before
or can cause the past to reappear

[Reference: Tell Us The Tricks by Paul Scott.]

Gert Strydom

The Hoopoe

Every time that I mow the lawn
he waits in a tree
on me to finish
and there are times
that he gets impatient
and his hoopoe resounds.

Just when I walk away
he flies fluttering down
and pecks everywhere
to get worms
and insects

and I see his orange brown quiff
standing up
and it's as if his body
glows shimmering orange

and there are black and white stripes
going to the points
of his wings
while like a woodpecker
he hits his bill
here and there into the ground

and like a chicken
pecking up seed
picks up insects from the ground.

Gert Strydom

The Hoopoe [2] (Sonnet)

After the lawn I had been mowing
down it descends for a landing
from a branch of an elder tree
and to me it's a colourful beautiful thing:

with its white and black checked wings
its pink-orange-brown colour and it sings
before it walks on the grass where it's on the hunt
do peck with the motion of some coiled springs

catching insects here and there, like a machine, very thorough
while it spreads its fan-shaped crest and in the summer sun does glow,
do for only a moment rest as if it is pensive
where it walks with laser sharp eyes very slow

and at the sight of me it does fly away
to return on another day.

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Gert Strydom

The Hope That You Will Be Coming Shortly

The hope that You will be coming shortly
constantly turns around and around in my thoughts,
that You do call everyone to an own mission
and in our lives do astound us with it.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Hotel Room

The hotel room is eight levels up
and a interesting place
to find some intimacy,
to be alone, two people together
and the concierge carries out cases
touches his hat and leaves
and outside a battalion of umbrellas
are marching past
minutely small like play dolls
braving the wet weather
and your Chanel perfume fills my head,
your smile goes right into my heart
and you are very pretty
and I am utterly lucky to have you
as a darling, companion and friend.

Gert Strydom

The Hotel Room [2]

The hotel room is eight levels up
and an interesting place
to find some intimacy,
to be alone as two people together
and the concierge carries out cases
touches his hat and leaves
and outside a battalion of umbrellas
are marching past
minutely small like playing dolls
braving the wet weather
and your Chanel perfume fills my head,
your smile goes right into my heart
and you are very pretty
and I am utterly lucky to have you
as a darling, companion and friend and wife.

Gert Strydom

The House In Panorama Street

I once had a stretch of red rocky ground
on the street side
of a rented house
in Panorama street in Rooihuiskraal.

The cars criss-crossed past
and the bank took it back
and rented it out
and nobody else
wanted to make that house
his own.

I decided to let flowers,
sprout out
of that rocky earth.

There were small carnations
that grew creeping over each other
with the most wonderful smell
and opened
in colours of white, red and purple blue.

There were geraniums
that easily grew out of cuttings
and become big strong bushes
that was covered with flowers.

Vygies crept all over the place
and just where you look
the rocky soil stood in flower
and I wanted to stop the bank
when I got two months notice
and other people
bought that house
with my beautiful garden.

Gert Strydom

The Hunger In My Heart (Cavatina)

The hunger in my heart tonight leaps
like a panther,
while I miss you more than I can tell,
there is no other
that can even quench this empty longing,
just together
life, the world seems functional, good and great
and you remain my life-long love and mate.

Gert Strydom

The Hunter

With a bow in his hand
the hunter sneaks
above the wind,
following the tracts
of the wild antelope.

His brown skin
melts into the field
and the bushes,
and like a wild cat
he sneaks
from cover to cover.

The sun is hot
where it hangs in the half-Kalahari sky
and he drinks a tiny bit of water
out of the ostrich egg flask,
before a brown hand
with caked sand
wipes sweat out of his dark brown eyes.

Again he takes the trail
and follows it at a jog
until the oryxes are closer
and again he sneaks nearer
and stalks still closer.

When he is in striking distance
an arrow is taken from the quiver
and the small bow's string
made out of roped intestines draws
and for a moment,
it sounds like the buzz of a bee
while the arrow
rushes away from the bow.

The arrow hits the antelope
and when the startled oryx
rushes away

the hunter follows
faithful on the spoor,
till he finds it
where in time
it lies stretched out
on the red brown Africa sand.

Gert Strydom

The Hunting Party

One weekend a hunting party
comes together on Serfaas Lourens's farm
and they consist out of family, friends
and town folk:
two teachers, the school principal,
a lawyer, a visiting advocate and magistrate.

The group is dressed in hunting clothes
and with four by four pickups they drive
through the open veldt
past the stream with the blue gum trees.

Guinea fowl and pheasants fly up into the air,
the vehicles brake in a cloud of dust
while hunter after hunter jumps down
with shotgun upon shotgun blasting into the air.

The son of Serfaas Lourens
is shooting with a ELG-12 bore
with red LG cartridges, as if
he wants to teach the older men something

but they find only pieces
of his guinea fowl
and with the trip back
Serfaas Lourens reprimands him
all the way to the homestead
to use the right ammunition.

Gert Strydom

The Iceberg

Suddenly rising out of the mist, shining,
a small iceberg
was very dangerously far too near,
rising straight up,
sinking again with facets glittering
as a deadly drifting, yet beautiful thing.

Gert Strydom

The Impact Of A Mere Glance

There is a moment when a mere glance
can become everything,
when a face do speak volumes
to the heart and mind and soul,
when dumbfounded your eyes
do catch those of a girl
and equally big-eyed
that woman does look back at you.

In that moment nothing else
is really of any importance
and at the red traffic light
having just stopped with the car
I saw her, really looked deep into her soul
and similarly she saw me.

I did not notice the traffic light,
the other cars,
the people on the sidewalk
everything else was lost
out of the picture
as if into a big void

but yet that sight asked for much more
where it lacked the power to take in
more than the ideal form,
the ideal expression,
the ideal experience
in the ideal moment,

as if this moment was everything
and yet there is a void to this
but to this kind of ecstatic happiness,
there is a kind of bliss
that the eyes do bring to the mind

where it's almost like a simplification
of the person that it does represent
but at a level where it has very deep meaning

and this is not falling in love in a moment
although probably a meeting after this
could really lead to something
or to nothing in the way that life does go
but probably to absorb her face,
its expression,
the opening into the heart,
into the soul and mind
puts it against all beautiful and lovely things

and this is not just her face or something in it being beautiful
but it brings its utter joy,
its sadness, pain and even misery
and everything that she is to the heart and mind,

the little snub nose,
the shape of the face,
the intelligent high brow,
the crown of the hair,
the movement with which she did throw her hair back,
the chin's shape and way that she holds it,
the expression of the lips,
but most of all those eyes,
that did swallow me

and this experience is not a desire
or a want or need
but it's there like a lovely sunbird fluttering,
a bee, a dragonfly or a butterfly,
or a black-red rose opening
but with much more meaning,
with a kind of mystery
where in the moment only the two of us do exist
and this brings a kind of tranquillity and inner joy
as it does really give meaning to being alive.

The cars behind me hooted
and that moment was broken
although she did smile at me
but life and all of its things of existing
flooded back while I did drive away.

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Gert Strydom

The Impact Of Your Deeds (Limerick)

The impact of your deeds I do know
and it did hit like a hammer blow
but the impact of your words stays,
cutting me day by day
and divorced I still live in its shadow.

Gert Strydom

The Importability Of An Evolution Type Origin

Scientist that believe in evolution, do not believe in an omnipotent God.
Out of nothing there is suddenly an immense explosion
but so do come into existence according to them energy, stars, planets truly

which is more improbable than ten to the power of eighty
and by itself a planet becomes fit to sustain life.

Scientist that believe in evolution, do not believe in an omnipotent God

and in this way man wants to lay claim to the power of God,
with the power to give life to a single cellular thing
but so do come into existence according to them energy, stars, planets truly,

where they do claim that all living things do come from that cell,
that in a tree-like structure it started to exit by its own accord.
Scientist that believe in evolution, do not believe in an omnipotent God

and the existence of man is drawn back to the baboon,
everything living is distorted to these kinds of facts
but so do come into existence according to them energy, stars, planets truly

but the record does show an existence pattern that is like a lawn,
as if everything at the same time came to life with offspring.
Scientist that believe in evolution, do not believe in a omnipotent God
but so do come into existence according to them energy, stars, planets truly.

Gert Strydom

The Indian Minor

It landed on the wall
that divided the front yard
from the back
where my yellow BMW
was sheltered under a roof

It was dark brown with a yellow bill
and sharp small black intelligent eyes
watching everything
much like a crow or raven.

Every now and then
it darted down
to land next to the bowl
with the dog's pellets
pecking them up
as another bird would seed.

The dog would eat every now and then
and sometimes guard its bowl
lying there defying that bird,
but when ever it would go
that bird would
have its feast,

till one day
that I took that bowl away
into the dogs pen
and then that bird
sat screaming on that wall
as if I had stolen
his dearest possessions
from him
as if there was nothing else to steal.

Gert Strydom

The Injuring Of Your Character Is Now Forthright

(after Lina Spies)

I

People that had to lead from the front do lead others down the abyss,
say that You had an illegitimate child with Mary Magdalene,
that You did disappear with her into the bushes,
that You looked at her as the whore that she really was
and do forget that at the grave where she was crying
You did tell her not to touch you
and Your love is for sinners and Godly for anyone
that does make You the master of their hearts
where Mary Magdalene did truly come to a conversion,
did break her most valuable salve over your feet
and do have people up to now still speechless
but was only asking forgiveness
as she wanted to follow and serve you with gladness:
as a human see You as the light and the living God.

II

If a human do see You as the light and the living God
there comes peace with Your love into the heart
and then a person wants to abandon all sin and unrighteousness,
even if it's a road of pain and anguish

but now homosexuals do make You one of them
say that You did love Peter and John in a twisted way
where at a time You did reprimand
Peter for being Satan

and John was like Your brother
where at the crucifixion Peter did You deny,
did later cry about this in his distress
and You do know the hearts of all humans fully,

did pour out Your love for humanity in Your death
as the stainless Lamb of God was slaughtered

III

Where the stainless Lamb of God was slaughtered,
was hanged as a curse for humanity,
He is now curtailed to being a mere human
as if His sacrifice is suddenly replaced,

where people do say that He did not rise after the crucifixion
but was only a mere pathetic human being,
that the dogs did eat Him and carried pieces of Him away
and like Pilate do wash His Godliness off their hands,

do forget to have a relationship with Him,
do agnostically demolish him as being not important,
say that He was the child of a Roman soldier and a whore,
that He is a myth is reasoned out from logic and an affected mind

and some do run in advance as professors and pastors with this nonsense
and people that had to lead from the front do lead others down the abyss.

[Reference: "Onverklaarbare" (Inexplicable) by Lina Spies.]

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Gert Strydom

The Insect Thing

Before we can dance
on the wind
we have to crawl
from place to place.

Before turning into butterflies
we have to be caterpillars
that ravage plants, aphids,
and even baby ants.
With growth and knowledge
we find maturity
and new perspectives
rise out of experience.

Flying together like dragonflies
over stretches of shining water
and praying to the bright sun,
the great blue sky
the day flashes past

to the dark night
and we have to face both
and the demands of life
to understand the depths of love
and in order to survive.

Gert Strydom

The Inswelaboya

In the dark moonless night
the gigantic insect,
the Hairless One sneaks around,
where it prowls the African bush
with its glowing red evil eyes
which see clearly in the dark,
with its jaws with the fiery fangs
that does slam open and shut
while it tries to bite someone in the heel
and when bitten a person falls down,
is almost dead
while that monster drags him
right through the dark bushes
to its lair in a dark cavern.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Inswelaboya (2)

In the dark moonless night
the gigantic insect,
the Hairless One sneaks around,
where it prowls the African bush
with its glowing red evil eyes
which see clearly in the dark,
with its jaws with the fiery fangs
that does slam open and shut
while it tries to bite someone in the heel
and when bitten a person falls down,
is almost dead
while that monster drags him
right through the dark bushes
to its lair in a dark cavern.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Invasion Army

When houses dazzle on all the hillocks,
every swamp is drained
for sport fields,
bulldozers make roads
right through the veldt

and it becomes mines, factories
and office blocks
and sown farms cover the fields
and the bush veldt
disappears into timber mills,

the last trees become burning wood
and furniture
and concrete creeps up into the Karoo

and the clean air disappears
behind industrial fog,
car fumes and poisonous gas
so that the sun shine fades

there will be nowhere
to draw a trench
to ward off the technology
that covers the earth

since the invasion army
are marching in unstoppable
with lorries, bulldozers,
scrapers, graders
and cranes
and every yellow machine

and in only a few glamour books
you will read about warblers, plovers,
jackals, baboons, suricates,
rock rabbits and wild animals

and humans will be like in a zoo

curtailed beyond their own railings
and work and play caged in
while the state watches,
spies and controls them.

Gert Strydom

The Irene Farmer's Market (Free Verse Sonnet)

There are delicious things just where you look,
some other things are art manufactured by hand,
at the artists I do want to get involved
where I walk past all the stalls
I realize this is how carrots, potatoes and beans should look,
wonder if I would be able to paint,
do notice pancakes and curlers full of syrup and feel compelled to eat something
with milk-cans, watermelons and cantaloupe the Afrikaner is stereotyped
and everyone laughs and it almost looks like a farmer's paradise
where girls, boys, men and women do drink coffee and eat rusks,
some do know each other for years and they do joke
and everyone wants to show something pretty, new and great,
when someone unexpectedly pours me ginger ale for free
where Afrikaners come in a multitude on a sunny open summer day.

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Gert Strydom

The Jackal-Buzzard (1)

When the jackal-buzzard
does come here and sit in a tree,
haughty does look down
and continually does cry out to me
then I wonder what he is saying

and if he brings a message from a pretty girl
out of Russia
or does tell of his flight over the Baikal Lake
with its green islands

and early every morning he comes to greet me
as if he does suspect that I do not understand his message.

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Gert Strydom

The Jobless Optimist

Day and night he searches for work,
And spend only money on that which is necessary.
He picks up old bottles and boxes
that he later trades in or sell
and when the night comes
he plays snooker, pool or darts
or whatever game that brings in money.

Gert Strydom

The Journey

I remember you the first time
stripped from every piece of clothing,
with your sun's burning into my soul,
leading me to the bed
my with a hand.

Like a landscape
with mountains pointing peaking,
a meadow over your stomach
and a magic valley
to which I dare it like an explorer
and glide in to get relief
(in the need that chases us)
and how your expression changes
and you kiss with open eyes
and you tuned to me.

I remember the first time
that you call out in passion
and that I see pleasure on your face
and I am in a dark cave
that cuddles me loving
and we are one in spirit, body and soul
in a struggle against loneliness

and the rain falling outside,
the thunder that sound everywhere,
the wind that jerks the window
happens in another world
and we are on our own journey

while I press myself deeper into you,
I feel you stiffen,
I become beating,
my whole body burns
and seed are injected into your depths.

[Reference: die reis by Breyten Breytenbach.]

The Journey 1

I remember you the first time
stripped from every piece of clothing,
with your sun's burning into my soul,
leading me to the bed
my with a hand.

Like a landscape
with mountains pointing peaking,
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and seed are injected into your depths.

[Reference: die reis by Breyten Breytenbach.]

The Joy Of Bathing (Pirouette)

You are tired and weary
pour water in the bath
the tap drips some big drops
oil makes you slippery
you are soft, soaking wet,
you are soft, soaking wet,
are hot from head to toe,
cheerful and fresh and clean,
extraordinary
where you do live alone.

Gert Strydom

The Joy Of Spring Is Everywhere

From sunrise rays cast their spell
on grass, flowers, bushes and trees
causing nature to bloom
and from dust and rain
nature is drawing its power
and breathing out the scent of spring.

All over birds are singing,
flying up and down
and butterflies, bees,
hornets and grasshoppers
are gliding, flying, buzzing
through the air
and the joy of spring is everywhere.

Gert Strydom

The Joy Of The Road

It's a big joy
to take the road
and drive past cornfields
and to get the sweet sour smell
that water leaves there
for the first time
in your nose.

It's a big joy
to drive on a road
that allures black in front of you
and goes up and down through the landscape.

There's something indescribable
if you become part
of the sun and the wind
and with a motorbike
to find your place
in the world around you.

There's something magical
to hear the insects
in the bushes
outside of Pieter Maritzburg
and to smell the summer sun
on the plantation trees.

Still greater is
to catch the smell of the sea
on the wind
to see the blue waters
lying in the distance,
while free like a bird
you drive nearer to it.

Gert Strydom

The Joys Of Spring

The very first joy of spring
is the blossoms that are arriving
white on the apricot tree and pink on peach
while the starling and the rook are pecking at their delight
up to the twilight
and the doves do their love-songs sings
right into the night.

The second joy of spring
are the new flowers that are blossoming
on the geranium in white, red, orange and pink
and purple, orange, yellow and blue
on the irises that are distinct
while the roses are full of new growth after their pruning,
the first spider and daylilies are flowering when they are due
and the very first red roses that I pick for your love that is true.

and the third joy of spring
is the days of sun that are lengthening
the sky that is changing to its summer blue hue
and birds that from their seasonal flights are arriving
while small seedlings are planted by you
and suddenly everywhere there is new growth as a stunning thing.

The fourth joy of spring
is the rain that are intermittently falling
turning even the grass green
and it is giving new life to everything
changing from the dull death of winter to how it had been
as if such a lovely sight have never been seen.

and the fifth joy of spring
is that every seedling, stem and flower is growing
in their natural abundance at balance
and that almost everything is blooming
is lustrous from up close and from a distance
and the happiness that I see on your countenance.

☐Envoi

While it seems as if Mother Nature do hear
the rasping prayers of the frogs, the howling of the dogs
in their selenologues
as the rising romantic moon shines clear
and this is going to be another great year.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Joys Of Spring (Un-Wreathed Quatrains)

Landing outside a hoopoe is on the lawn
drawn to the window where I am standing
demanding its hoopoe resounds at dawn,
showing off its plumes while wandering

with the orange and fawn colours glowing
with movements flowing somewhat strange
as if to arrange a gift of beauty on a wing
with its cry near to the mountain range

with perfect wit it flutters like a butterfly,
it passes by; stripes blazon the beauty of it,
perfectly it fits in the curious eye;
a stunning picture pecking bit by bit.

Gert Strydom

The Joys Of Summer (Cavatina)

The comforting warmth of the sun falling
through the window,
the voices of many birds calling serene
from the meadow
while the new morning rushes on boundless,
the pure blue glow
of a ethereal sky does reminds me
of the joys of summer, of tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

The Jump

He is standing at the open door of the aircraft
and see his life flashing past,
while strong winds are pulling
on his face and jacket
and the light keeps on flashing green
and somebody taps him on the shoulder.

It's like a explorer
walking into an new world,
with the earth rushing past beneath him
and he is almost above the horizon.

It's as if for moments
he is hanging and feeling insignificant
and he is thought struck
while he falls at terminal velocity,

the wind is whistling in his ears
and it is then that he locks his thoughts,
knowing that man is but paltry
and seconds drags on like hours

before he pulls the string,
the parachute rushes open,
breaking his fall with force
and he is gliding like an eagle

while he's riding the wind,
getting breathtaking views
of the scenery
that stretches out far below him,
drawing a picture
up to the horizon.

Gert Strydom

The Jungle Sneaks In The Yard

The jungle sneaks in the yard
and changes from cat to tiger
in a moment
taking less than a second.

Something rustles in the grass
and he crawls on his stomach
with golden eyes drawn wide
he jumps through the air in a bow.

Claws hit in and teeth bite
and with his prey in its mouth
he comes to me,

jumps in through the room's window
and there's a black brown snake
hissing out of his mouth

l'Envoi
and cat's eyes leer murderously cruel
as if has forgotten about being a cat
and eat snakes for snacks
and with one leap
he takes his prey to the outside.

Gert Strydom

The Kill

Having eaten as much as they can
the male and two female lions
doze off in the afternoon heat
while the knee high yellow winter grass do rustle

as a small black-backed jackal sneaks nearer
and with big eyes somewhat wary
reconnoiters the scene
her face suddenly lighten up with a smile
as she walks right up to razor sharp ribs,
some entrails and bloody intestines
with her spiny back legs quivering
pulls out some pieces of lung
and silently wary start to eat.

In a fluttering aggressively angry crowd
some vultures and griffons do land
with their thin necks waving up and down,
bobbing along to with sharp beaks and claws
drive the jackal away.

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Gert Strydom

The Kissing From Above

We are back with the kissing from above,
back with the shining faces baking outside,
their desires climbing as a ritual
like a pergola.

Fragile

we are back at the kissing, if we do not get wet from ripe.
Back with the witticisms, where hour upon hour there is being gossiped:
the questions that become unsafe,
where everyone are lost and baggy afraid of the shining
that comes back with hidden things
and the eyes glitter with questions that get larger,
against the pain that scratches and swarm,
calm.

O my beloved dreamer: you catch Johnny naked at the fence
where you peep big-eyed through the bush as a bride.

And at the figure
among the hillocks, made by the hands of a ancient master
your half eaten fruit is spoiled, through sorrow I try to reach to you
against the hour when a whimper at a time was nice,
that happening by bewitchment
where once upon a time love was written on the sand.
Indeed, we are back at the kissing from above,
stolen bended bodies find depth for their bosses,
pasted together.

Gert Strydom

The Kite

On the white beach I pick up a kite
where yellow-gold it trembles in the wind
and I brush the sand off and it wants to gallop,
jerks into the sky while I am standing still
and it flies as only a kite can
while the line in my fingers are spanning
as it climbs still higher against a storm wind
while specks of sand blow against me, are blinding me.
It raises quickly, almost flies heaven high
where suddenly it flutters, hangs streaming,
as if it already are catching the radial winds,
are out of my sight
when it jerks loose and unfolds the stars,
are flying a path right through the universe

Gert Strydom

The Last Day Of Military Leave

I returned early from pass to the camp
at Natal Command in Durban
right opposite the beach,
went in to stow my kit
and on that late weekend afternoon
the camp was almost empty
with only a few guards
and probably skeleton staff running it

and I drove out on my motorbike
in civilian clothes,
parking it near a cinema,
was walking to a restaurant
to have a decent meal
when a bevy of lovely girls
walked right up to me
and offered to buy me a drink or two
as it was clear that I was in the army
as my hair was short and I was young

and there were five of them
with every single one dressed in a mini skirt
or something very sexy
and I had a cider, some of them beer, champagne,
vodka martinis and whatever they fancied
and we were rather jolly

and we talked and later walked out on the beach,
seeing the setting sun, the bright rising yellow moon
and that night was really something
but when it got romantic, there were five of them
and only one of me.

Gert Strydom

The Last Journey

(for Minette)

Like a small gazelle
you walked next to me
did far too easily blush

and on that holiday through Zimbabwe
you were picture beautiful
with a straw hat covering your blonde hair,
your eyes at times drawn fine against the bright sun.

At the hotel we ordered champagne
and you loved trout
while I did eat some stake
and we were free, did forget the worries of life.

Maybe too easily we thought that our journey
would last forever, that no farewell would come.

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Gert Strydom

The Last Moment

As a mosquito hangs buzzing in the air
while telling everybody of its approach
and with a predatory instinct
finds a landing zone,
it is powerless to comprehend
the last moment
when a raised hand
makes it just another blotch of blood and guts,

far too busy feeding, enjoying the nectar of life
in that instant it does not comprehend
that destiny enacted by mere man
comes down in a darkening slap
and maybe the darkness
which is eternally
makes everything around it fade to black,

but to this enemy of man,
there is no hesitation, demur and misgivings
of the price it has to pay
for its feeding act.

Gert Strydom

The Last Sunshine

The cold breeze
with icy freezing fingers
brushed leaves freezing
against the windowpanes.

Rain fell from a cold grey sky
seeping trough everything,
driving the freezing winter in.

I tried to lock the winter out
closed French louver windowpanes
and to only let
the much too timid sun in.

Outside the evergreen bay leave tree
that had been blown over
in a summer storm

have sprouted new long stems
covered with green leaves
already growing higher
than the roof
moving to and fro
as if rocked by the wind.

Distance is locking you out
and in your mind
we are growing apart
and are in a winter
of the heart

and you are sad
and read a farewell
in my lines
although I am still trying
to catch the last sunshine
of that which lies
between us.

The Lemon

I pick a ripe yellow lemon from the tree,
the children, even the dog imitates me
and when I warn them to eat it up
the two boys draw up their lips
from its sour taste, the brown Labrador complies,
eating right through the skin,
but will never again eat such a thing

and my picking of it is no sacrament,
to offer to the gods
not even a thieving thing
as that tree with green leaves and thorns
belongs to me
and I am not doing it
to apply as medicine with honey in a drink
but lemon juice in my mother's pudding treat
is an essential thing
in the mix of biscuits, condense milk and custard.

Gert Strydom

The Leviathan

Far deeper than the thundering waves,
at a unfathomable depth
where there is about no visibility
and night encompasses everything
and the pressure will crush
a human being
lies the Leviathan with no interest
but only to feed at times
from the blind fish, cuttlefish
and some sea creatures

and some men have sworn
that in times of storm
it crawls from the hole
at the bottom of the sea
and they have seen one of
its red crests riding a wave
and believe that it snaps ships
with its huge seven heads
filled with stone-like teeth

and when the storms subsides
it goes back and lies
in the depths from where it came
where it sleeps until the day
that its reckoning comes
and awaken
as a red seven headed snake-dragon
it will rise and in battle be slain
by Michael and his angels.

[References: The Kraken by Lord Tennyson, The Sea-Serpent Chanty by Vachel Lindsay, Psalm 104: 26, Isa.27: 1. Rev 12: 3, Ras Shamrah Vol. I, pp.128,129.]

Gert Strydom

The Leviathan (2)(Free Verse Sonnet)

The restless ocean did not expect him,
the winged dragon that did fall down into the water,
that did sink and became a part of the deeper darkness,
where he dreamt to above God have power,
where he rested and mended in a place darker than the night
but the might of the leviathan has just for a time been curtailed,
his control over his followers have never been suspended
where he does conspire, prepare and do keep waiting
on the great Judgement and Salvation Day of God that is coming,
where his black wings under the sea do still trembling vibrate
as he has been separated from God and His holy angels,
where he draws man and beast to him in their urges,
where to his subordinates he gives his wishes and commands
and do prepare to lead as many as he can to final annihilation.

Gert Strydom

The Leviathan: Far, Far Down In The Freezing Deep

(after Alfred Lord Tennyson)

Far, far down in the freezing deeps
where icy water continually over it sweeps
its arms twirls and its body is like a mass of rock
where it for centuries sleeps

and in the dark world below
it lies like a prehistoric monster as if in its grave
while the waves and hidden streams over it flows
and above it break wave upon wave

where it is silent since the devastating flood
hardly notices the waters rush,
while very slowly flows its lifeblood
and it lays waiting in ambush

until the day that Michael returns to earth
to erupt above the waters as if coming from new birth
as a gigantic monstrous thing
with multiple heads and fiery beaks that swing.

[Reference: "The Kraken" by Alfred Lord Tennyson.]

Gert Strydom

The Library

In primary school
books were restricted
and classed for adults and children
as if one would find
a deep secret in them,
as if something was hidden
in the depths of pages
that some people knew about
but did not want to share

and I had been reading
from being very small
and at the age of ten
had gone through every book
in the library
at the private school
and demanded from my mother
to become a member
of the public library in town

and found another world there,
a world that the keeper of the books,
the librarian Mrs Smith knew
and was permitted to read
novels, poetry and what ever I wanted to
even books about the construction of bombs
and explosives,
even books written in English
which was my second language
and authors like Jack Higgins, Wilbur Smith,
Geoffrey Jenkins and Desmond Bagley
were really great to me.

Gert Strydom

The Light

Come bright sun
like a beacon from the sky
give warmth to plants and flowers,
give light to the night that stretches out,
gather drops from the earth
to the pool up high.

Come bright sun
like a sign from above
give light to the depths
of darkness in my soul,
burst into every cell
in my body:

Be the lamp that points the way
to a soul that went astray.

Gert Strydom

The Light [2]

Lord who decreed
and all things had become,
you who exist separate
from the machinations of time,

are not bound by years,
who seasons does not bind,
who forged space, the universe
and its glittering stars by your words

that is filled with power
immense without end
come to me a mere rebellious child
and help me understand my destiny,

help me see the way that you have set
be my brilliant ubiquitous light
that leads me on the true and only way
dispelling the darkness that encompasses me.

Gert Strydom

The Light Focuses More Intensely

The light focuses more intensely
and brighter the ray does become
as if somewhere nearby a sun is rising

but it is manmade
and around him there are people,
people that are busy

and its as if every searchlight
in the vicinity,
every searchlight in the city,
even on earth

are shining on him
and half-blinded he walks
as if this is no experiment,

as if something big is going to happen
of which he cannot ascertain the value
and on a microphone he reads lines,

lines from his own poems
that worldwide does carry an impact
and later there are people with many questions
and although even a toddler can grasp the words,

highly educated people want to know from him
exactly what he is really saying,
they want to know
about the meaning of his words

and there are people that view him
as a kind of saint
notwithstanding which God he is serving.

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Gert Strydom

The Light In The Room Is Still Grey

Outside the weavers are twittering
where they sing with joy in the branches of a tree,
children laugh at the neighbour's quince hedge
while cars are passing one after another
and the light in the room is still grey with curtains closed
when sleep folds around you again.

Far away an old church bell rings constantly
to attract people in the city to the church.
It's eight o'clock when I wipe the sleep from my eyes
when you turn around and make a whimpering sound
and the light in the room is still grey with curtains closed
when sleep folds around you again

When I bring you a cup of tea
the sun falls over your face on a spot
with a small vein beating in your neck,
for only a moment you look at me
and the light in the room is still grey with curtains closed
when sleep folds around you again

Gert Strydom

The Light Of Day You Are To Me

and sometimes to eternity
our love goes strong
as if together we do constantly belong

and I try to love as well as I can,
with the feelings of a man
as perfect as the Lord can let it be
even when we live in a world of inequity.

Gert Strydom

The Lightning Falls With The Rain

The lightning falls with the rain
with a thundering sound
and something of its essence does remain
within the ground

and there is life within every living thing
while new buds does appear in spring
and from early morning the sun does glow
when the Lord does His goodwill bestow

and yet my love you are away from me
while I do experience nature's bountiful beauty

and in my heart there is a kind of pain
while I do not know where my life is going
but still the tokens of our love is all around
while nights and days does into each other flow.

Gert Strydom

The Lilac (Novelinee)

With branching dense inflorescences
fragrant blooms the purple pure lilac
quite softly touches all of the senses,
its scent still lingers while the night is black
and in this very happy early spring
its vivid bright beauty I do behold
while it feels as if I am truly living
see nature with its great bounty unfold,
somewhat cheerful in a world that is cold.

Gert Strydom

The Literary Life

We went to the house
of Afrikaans poetry together
on weekends and spent hours there
and listened to the master lecture
and met some poet friends
around a table
with a drink or two.

Sometimes the poetry was Afrikaans,
English, Dutch or even German
and we learnt from poets
around the globe.

We discussed what we had
just learned,
asked about his views
of certain things,
or what people in the group think,
discussed poetry, life,
sometimes even politics
and philosophy
as individuals of a group.

We read our poems,
listened to other poets,
reading their own,
analysed every word, every line
comprehending meaning, impact
and sharpened our art.

Your poetry was really great,
from when I read the very first line,
but mine had still to grow
from rhyme into free verse.

At times I hated comments
that forced me to move,
but realized that it was meant
with great goodwill

and even though I was in pain
I sharpened my verse
and free verse brought
a clearer ear, making it
much easier to write
great rhyme.

Now that I had to leave Pretoria,
weekends I really miss
that great writing school,
new poems from great poets,
learning something there,
experiencing poetry at its core,
lectures from that great master
and verses of his own,
but much more
your poems.

Gert Strydom

The Little House Of My Heart (Ballade)

(for Annelize, after André Letoit)

When I do look deep into your eyes
then I do truly know how love does look,
then I do want you to stay eternally with me
as to me you are wonderful and glamorous

Chorus:

I do want to build a small hartebeest-house for you
for when the afternoon thundershowers do come
that you can find shelter somewhere
deep in the high-veldt of my heart,

with a orchard of two peace trees,
An apricot and a plum
and then two grape vineyards
for when you do long back to the Cape,

where the antelope do roam free
and people can have long conversations,
where it feels as if God is right here with man,
where the scenery and sky is stretched out and open

and plant all kinds of lilies, roses and garden-pinks
whichever plants that you so want
in the garden where our love does flourish,
garden-pots you can buy and bring if you like

from where you do live in the glorious Cape
in a palace with marble pillars
which has a beautiful view over the whole of Cape Town
that crowns you as a businesswoman,

where as a princess you do come from a mansion,
out of a place where love does constantly burn as chandeliers,
where you do know the open spaces of the deep-blue sea
the cosiness that one does find in an own family.

You are not accustomed to thunderstorms as they make you scared,

when the clouds do hang grey over the whole high-veldt above you
and to you I do want to give my humanity and love and life,
I do constantly want to catch the sunny glances and happiness with you.

[Reference: "florauna" by André Letoit.]

Gert Strydom

The Little Old Lady (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Where every night at sunset she stands at her window
with tears she reads the written characters very slow.
Every night at sunset she writes herself a letter
from memories that remain and hope that tomorrow will be better,
hoping that the next day will much lovely go
where she do not anymore exist in her child's life
and while the day does pass lonely she tries her spirit to revive
but every word she do already know,
with tears she reads the written characters very slow.

[Reference:"Die afgeleefde vrou" (The worn out woman)by C. M. van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

The Lizard

Just where you do go you will find it,
outside in the garden between potted plants,
in the sun and weather and wind,
in the kopje between the rocks in the hillock,
on the inside wall of the house
where the little rascal does climb up against everything
and do look impudent
with small eyes gleaming intelligent
like a miniature dragon that looks harmless
where it glances at the world from high or low.

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Gert Strydom

The Long Journey

Motorcycling along
the N1 freeway
from Pretoria in the north to Cape Town

the flaming sun rises over the horizon
small like a ripe apricot
while its dimensions gets larger

and then tomato red
a little later it turns orange and like a ripe fruit
hangs untouchable up on the sky

and corn fields, fences and trees
fly past almost blurring
in the twilight sketched like pencil drawings

and the sun like a huge pit being spitted
crosses the sky
changes to yellow and then to white hot

and the sky turns from dusk grey
to bright blue
and later to a darker hue

and the hot wind bristles
as if with loving fingers
touching and stroking your whole body

and in the early fresh morning
you draw in at a garage,
make a pit stop, to check the oil,

to fill your motorcycle up
and have a breakfast
at a Wimpy roadhouse

and the smell of fuel
hangs in the air
and you find children there

looking with huge curious eyes
at your motorbike
and gazing at you,

as if a hero character
has just walk right out
of a cartoon magazine

and you remove your helmet
take off your leather gloves
visit the loo where a guy or two

looks at you and comments
on your motorcycle, your leather jacket
the weather and the road

and in the restaurant
the waitress pours a Mega coffee,
smiles dazzling

when she puts it on the table
with your breakfast of steak,
French fries and coke

and you can swear
that there's a twinkling in her eyes
before she walks away

with a French plate swishing to and thro
and buttocks leaving a distinct impression
of female grace

but the sun is drawing water
and time is flying,
you motorcycle thunders alive

and you return to the freeway
where at speed you pass
cars, greyhound busses and trucks

and the road feels almost without end

right through the flat Orange Free State,
later the acrid hell hot Karroo

where you see grazing flocks of sheep
like white specks
and some windmills

flashing and reflecting the sun
on their huge spinning blades
somewhat like lonely landmarks

and you make some more pit stops
to refuel and stretch your legs
have another meal

and just before driving through
the last tunnel on top of a hill
dusk envelopes the world, the sun dwindles away,

the evening star is just above the horizon
and a little later star after star flies pass
like leaves in autumn falling from a tree

and you are free, almost at the end
of your journey
or maybe you are always just passing by,

travelling to a new destination
with the wind, the sun and sky
and some people that you meet on the trip

and sometimes you go very fast,
at other times almost creeping slow
until suddenly destiny causes the journey to end.

Gert Strydom

The Long-Legged Bait

(After Dylan Thomas)

He saw her standing on the pier
watching his boat coming in
a long-legged girl
with her hair twirled
in a French plait
and seaward the brewing gale
was closing in with a black sky
and lightning bolts flashing brighter.

The sails billowed in the piercing wind
and he steered clear of some sandbanks
to the harbour mouth
on the surging swell
into the breakwater
and he could almost smell
the coming storm
while he anchored down.

She was still on the jetty
when stepped up on it
and looked stunning
as if walking right out of
a magazine
and she smiled at him
as if she had been waiting.

He was in love with the sea
and had sworn against any woman
keeping him from it
and nobody would stop him
from sailing when he needed to.

"You just made it in time
cutting it very fine, " she said
and her eyes sparkled blue
and her voice was sweet

and he wanted to frown
but her smile went to his heart
and he asked what she was doing there

and she replied that she loves the sea
and wanted to witness the storm coming in
and that was it and she had him
hook line and sinker.

[Reference: "Ballade of the Long-legged bait" by Dylan Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

The Lord God Hears Before We Even Ask

(in answer to Ina Rousseau)

I

Before we do pray and ask God knows what we want
and hereby I want to bring to silence anyone that talks against this
as nobody and nothing can withhold His great love
where omnipotent like a father he does daily watch over us,
it is not in vain He talks of his everlasting love
where for our own good He does straighten our ways,
if we do want to know Him and want to be personally involved with Him,
He also knows about the things that do lie like stumbling blocks in our way,
it is not in vain He talks of his everlasting love

II

and nothing can stop our words to reach Him
where in His omnipotence He is astonished about us,
is the One that knows every thought and every desire thoroughly
also knows when people do rebel against Him
and He did become human and turns our days and our world around,
He is the One who knows everything in depth and who do comprehend,
who accompanies each one that wants Him to past death
and as mere humans we are but stupid about Him and His abilities,
where in His omnipotence He is astonished about us.

[Reference:"Die bewerking" (The bringing to pass)by Ina 's note:

My free translation of a quotation our of Ina Rousseau's poem "Die
bewerking" (The bringing to pass) :

"Look through the frame how a petrified sea
of stones do stretch around us that kills plants:
it's stones given to us
when we do ask God for bread.

In crevices against the slope of the garden-terrace
snakes lurch around hear them hiss:
it's snakes every time received by us
when we asked God for a fish."

Bible verses that says the contrary on which I have written my poem:

"Before they call I will answer;
while they are still speaking I will hear."Isaiah 65: 24.

"Then he continued; Do not be afraid, Daniel.
Since the first day that you set your mind
to gain understanding and to humble yourself
before your God, your words were heard
and I have come in response to them." Daniel 10: 12

"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?
Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?If you, then, though you are evil
know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father
in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! " Matthew 7: 9-11.

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray
for each other that you may be prayer
of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5: 16.

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe
that you have received it and it will be yours." Mark 11: 24.

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,
neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love
of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."Romans 8: 38-39.]

Gert Strydom

The Lord God Thought (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Bernard Odendaal)

The Lord God thought and spoke and it was,
it's unthinkable that everything comes from the omnipotence of one being,
when an uncountable number of systems did fit perfectly into each other,
whirling matter in the all pivoted around gravitation axles,
glistening stars did suddenly everywhere flame and bunch together:
star-clouds, radiating-spirals, star-heaps and star-groups did form,
when words left supernovas, clouds of gas, red- and super-giants,
explosions appeared like one gigantic terrible storm,
when suddenly planets, moons asteroids did get their own scope,
when atmospheres, liquids, solids and life did come
but man He created to His own image in clay,
did blow the breath of life into him and was astonished
and in His master plan were thoughts of you and me,
of people that like a father He wants to draw into His arms.

[Reference: "duiselgedagte" (Reeling thought) by Bernard Odendaal.]

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The Lord Has Spread His Hand

The good Lord has spread His hand
over the world
and everywhere there's
birds and bees
and plants and trees
and the world is full
of splendour for everyone to see.

The beauty of the sunrise,
the majesty of a rainbow,
the vastness of sparkling stars,
the tranquillity of a pond or lake,
the perpetual crashing waves
all outlast the march of time
through our lives
which ends as destiny ordains.

Gert Strydom

The Loud Noise

The loud noise
of school girls
that shouts at each other on the bus
banish every thought
and they laugh at a teacher,
that tries to teach them
to be ladies
and I wonder if they have got a clue
about proper manners.

The shouting way of talk
let it feel as if your soul
dies inside of you,
while the meaningless noise
of their talk
goes right through you,
and I wonder if this way
is own to them
and if from the start
they have no respect
for other people.

This Africa country of mine
will never be like Europe,
but it stays the place
that I love
and I wonder when
a person will ever here
have a own place in the sun.

Gert Strydom

The Love That I In My Heart Do Find

The love that I in my heart do find
is the conjunction of the body, soul and mind
where two people with honesty meet
and something beautiful far beyond grace do them bind

in a kind of closeness, a kind of unity
from which they never wish to be free
and this is not only fixed by emotion but by choice,
even if the design of destiny does not want it to be

as this decision to love is pure, simple and rare,
does not come out of rebound from despair
but its qualities are selfless with a childish faith
that does past all kinds of turmoil and impossibility with care

and this is a divine and yet a simple thing
that does joy, pleasure and happiness bring
to a cold dark and pain filled world
and its magic does touch everything existing

while unseen it works in countless ways
does fill not just an intimate hour but also all of our days.

Gert Strydom

The Machine Against Man

The super-computer Deep Blue of IBM
thinks that it can tame the master Kasparov,

do observe the board when Kasparov makes his moves
and that master plays chess against the machine,

where technicians believe that it could beat Kasparov,
it tries to stop Kasparov with move after move,

where it knows all moves of all masters
and without emotion it does calculate only to win,

but in loosing the machine does find no kind of sense
when Kasparov does beat it four times against two

and Chung-Jen Ten swear to make improvements,
at IBM do constantly get new brainwave after brainwave.

Gert Strydom

The Magi

In the dark night
we followed a shining light
that led us on a long journey
and at times it shone bright

and by the power of our knowledge of science
we were convinced that the Lord God had come
had acted by divine consequence
in a world that was gruesome

to show the depth of love,
to really come and effect a difference
had left his palace above
and as if struck, like being in a trance

we have travelled through dangerous lands
in our search for the divine king,
we have spoken to a wicked king full of iniquity
have held the reigns of camels in our hands
to find the Lord whose reign is everlasting,
in our search to see
the newborn child
we had brought offerings.

Gert Strydom

The Magic Of His Designs

The magic of His designs
all around us we see,
the working of His divine skill
nature continually displays

and in mysterious ways
His unending love
works selflessly
falling for evermore

like showers from above
and even if we do not want to admit
that He exists and judge His works
by our own feeble sense

make statements by our science
we still do err in incompetence
while His works persist,
His amazing grace and love stays boundless.

Gert Strydom

The Man

With every few steps that the Man takes
nature walks with Him
as if it's a part of Him
while every piece of grass, leave and flower
is dedicated to Him,
under His gaze some of the most beautiful flowers
open their cups and it's as if some
are flowering and sprouting only for Him
and while He walks on
there is power and new hope
and small animals are following Him
as if they want to kiss His feet
and He is aware
of the smallest thing around Him.

Gert Strydom

The Man And The Beast

Without any rebellion
and without a great bleating
did the lamb
lie down,
before it was slaughtered.

It died in peace
with the world
and in a moment
was gone.

The cousin
(who wasn't from the farm) ,
cried and tears
ran down his cheeks.

"You killers!
You killed the poor beast!
May God have mercy,
on you! " He screamed,
but ate the meat
at the afternoon's braai.

a Round stone
flew from a kettie
whipped with speed
and raced to its flying target.

The dove did not even
flinch her wings
and stopped in flight,
came tumbling down.

"What a shot! " called the cousin
from town
and tried in vain
to shoot birds down
from the sky.

Long ago
a man was baptised
and when he
came out of the water,
a dove was seen
and the world was at peace
and God rejoiced
in his Son.

On a day that all
the universe was stunned,
a man was taken
to a cross
and simply crucified.

Gert Strydom

The Maritime Ode

When the ship sails away,
leaving the quay with space widening
setting a course into the sea
aiming somewhere over the blue beyond
a memory starts lingering in my mind,
about a time that I had experienced
this leaving before
embarked into the wide world
from a timeless place not divided by space,
maybe from somewhere in another galaxy
but still a place that exists

of which all other quays are entities,
links to worlds outside our own atmosphere
and at twilight in the early morning
on the pier
the silence runs deep
as if all sounds are quelled for a time
and with the rising sun
sound roars thundering,
in nearing trains and trucks
in machines catching energy coming alive
and factories billow into clouds of smoke.

[References: The maritime ode by Fernando Pessoa (de Campos) . The maritime ode by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

The Marketplace

Daily we live in the marketplace of the world
where almost everything is for sale
and there we do find
things for our daily well-being,
the food we eat,
the clothes we wear,
the houses wherein we do dwell,
the jobs that we do labour at,
places where we do keep fit,
people that help to keep us healthy,
education and our knowledge of things
that does exist,
religion and the way that we do understand God
and in the cinemas and on television
a kind of tinned-in quick-fix comfort
for the soul.

Even the bodies of people,
weapons of war,
war itself
and politics
and at times even the lives
of men as soldiers
are traded
in the world where we do live

but I do recall a time
where the omnipotent God
did dwell among men as a man,
did lash out with His tongue and a whip
and did trade His very life
for the lives of everyone
to pay the wages of sin.

Gert Strydom

The Marsh

Barefoot at times I walk through the marsh,
having to dodge plovers
diving down at me,
widow-birds are trying to draw my attention

with long tails that looks
as if they are too heavy to fly
and in the reeds something is moving
as if some animal is hiding there

and when I come closer
a water monitor
comes out hissing
hitting challenging with its tail

and everywhere yellow and red finches
are flying around
the oaks are full of wooing doves
and there's a wild cat
looking down from a tree.

Gert Strydom

The Marsh [2]

African coots fly up black in the marsh
and long-tailed widow birds hang
somewhat tempting as if I can catch them
and I am startled as plovers do bombard me

but the marsh does tempt me past them
with a own unknown insistence
till where a Cape monitor peeps like a crocodile
and scared I run back, right across the maize field,

do drive away a group of baboons in my fright,
rock rabbits do run in all directions,
donkeys do stampede out of my way,
the dogs of the neighbours do howl,
the round gate does spin around
and I do not wake mother, as it is Sabbath.

Gert Strydom

The Marsh Land

The nearer I come to the wild marsh land
the more I hear red-knobbed coots carolling
where a swarm of tiny weavers twitter,
rocking and balancing on the long reeds,
cheerfully the meandering stream jabbers
while it shines in the bright morning light
next to the big old hanging willow tree,
where a symphony of nature resounds.

Marsh bulrushes rocks plumed in the wind
that blows softly through the bushes of sprouts,
somewhat blinded by the natural beauty
I wander like a child through all the reeds,
drops of water jet when wild ducks fly up,
with rushes suddenly rocking up and down.

Gert Strydom

The Marvel Of Peru Does Flower (Rubiyat Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

After the last big summer shower
afternoon-ladies wildly do flower,
and in all of my days I miss you intensely
as if our love has got a hidden power

and it's a fact that you are special to me,
the perfect woman brought by destiny
but with love I do remain utterly stupid
do not its effect, its outcome clearly see,

and do not as a woman understand you
where my love constantly burns true,
want to tell you the deep things of my need
bring you bunches of flowers out of the blue

while to you my heart with love sings
where I want to love you in all things.

Gert Strydom

The Masked Ball (Koan)

Life, the whole of human existence
is sometimes nothing but a big masked ball.
The depth, the deadly silence can at times
catch and trick us as reflexes.

Gert Strydom

The Masks That We Bear

The masks that we bear
hide our deepest pain,
which disappears behind the smiles
that we give the whole day

Expressions are crafted
for the world outside
and our faces mirror,
only what we want other people to see
and in our hearts
demons and angels are doing their thing.

From somewhere we lost the ability
to be just ordinary people
and everybody have become actors,
for whom the wide world is the stage.

Only the creator sees our deepest hearts
and bears in all our suffering
and on we daily play,
the game of ostensibility
for everyone else.

Gert Strydom

The Meaning Of Lights

Fright burns blue
like lamps outside a police station
where nowadays people do doubt
if you can trust those people at all?

Or if you pickup the telephone
you will in time get help from them,
as continually a vehicle is not available
but at the neighbour's house-uproar
five squad cars do turn up
with flashing blue lights
and sirens that howl.

Red and green lights as at traffic lights
tell you to stop or to go,
or if you do find them in the windows
of escorts
they do spell out another kind of danger.

Gert Strydom

The Meaning Of Lights [2}

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like lamps outside a police station
where nowadays people do doubt
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or if you do find them in the windows
of escorts
they do spell out another kind of danger.

Gert Strydom

The Meeting

I caught your eye
in the Afrikaans literature class
while studying business
at the private university
and you watched me
but the day your car cooked
on the soccer field,
we really met.

I saw your car parked
on the soccer field
and asked Marthinus
my roommate and friend
why it's parked there?

He said that it belonged
to a really beautiful girl
who probably has trouble with it,
but that people like him and me
didn't have a chance
with a girl like you.

So I asked him to introduced us
and your eyes were like the sky,
but not blue,
ever changing
sometimes green and brown
and your auburn hair
glittered in the sun.

I fiddled with a connector on the fan
and suddenly it came on
and when I looked
into your eyes
it was into your soul.

You smiled like an angel
and like magic
we were as if alone

and I was under your spell
and when I smiled back
it did something to you
and I knew
that you were the girl for me.

Gert Strydom

The Meeting Point

Time had escaped from me,
as if it was somewhere else
and I wasn't anymore the kid I had been
when I went to war
the person that I was before
and time had left me
to become someone else.

Before the leaving we were two people
with shared thoughts, shared dreams
two people with a similar destiny
beating as the heart of one

but time had escaped from me,
as if it was somewhere else
the world had changed
and now you belonged to another
as if time had left our destiny

and I saw a pretty girl looking at me,
wondered about what she did see
while I bought her a drink,
lit her cigarette
and time stopped, it did cease
while on satin sheets she offered me peace

and about killing, about life and death
why good men fall and I live on
I couldn't understand
and you were gone,
she offered me her hand
and led me to a nice hot bed
and time had escaped from me,
as if it was somewhere else
while she was still there
etched by the window
and outside the rain was falling
and for moments I was free
from this world with hardship and pain

[Reference: Meeting Point by Louis Macneice.]

Gert Strydom

The Men From The Pans

In Brakpan at a time
lived a breaker
build very well
like a young Tarzan,
that kicked in shop windows
and caused amuck

to get a fight
with the police
and then hit
six or seven of them
into the hospital.

Till one day
that a small young policeman
gave him
a knock out punch
and his giant legs
folded in beneath him

and unconscious
he dropped to the ground
to open his eyes
in a cell.

When he got up
he hooked both of his thumbs
in his braces,
shook his head

and couldn't understand
that such a small guy
could hit him off his feet

and though deep
about what to do
and decided then and there
to stop his wiles

The Merchant

Who could play Portia, but you?
The quick-witted woman
who really loved
and came to the rescue.

The merchant - just me. And it
was that way, with our life together
and the way that life went
and how quickly
my meagre savings was spent.

Inhuman Shylock could probably be
each and every employer
that misused me
and only offered a contract
of which the time ran out
as quick as the job was done
and no sure permanent job
could appear.

My ships sailing against the storm
would probably be my stories and poems
and when the script overtook us
I had to find other lodgings
as quick as magician
pulls a rabbit from a hat.

And then I wondered sweet Portia,
who's hand held the knife
to slice into the inmost core
of the heart,
was it Shylock's or yours?

But now you love me still
and sometimes your sweet voice
thrills me intensely
and your touch makes my hairs rise
and still I am in love
and not really wise.

[Reference: The merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

The Mess In Which The Country Is

(in answer to Fanie Olivier)

That South Africa does die
and that dark works of its own people
caused this
I cannot argue with

but most of the Afrikaners did not contribute to this,
from young boys a blood-sacrifice was asked at the border
and the inheritance that they do get as a reward
is eternal damnation and punishment

and some people have got it totally wrong
about the white holy ones that do look down on others,
about the white Afrikaner capitalist
that they do view as rich and wealthy
and these days the people with the money
are black and not white.

It's such people that do drag God along with them
when they do defend racism with Godly teachings
but do declare that Jesus Christ is not God,
that as a man,
a fabulous incredible myth he did return to the earth
and did not as God rise after the crucifixion.

Even a separate tax is insisted upon
by that so-called holy man,
a youth leader and now the leader of a political party
also wants to claim the farms, mines and properties

and the Fascistic shredding of a society
is the ugly thing into which I do daily look
when other people do go to work
and I am searching for an existence like a person drowning.

The worst is that people do creep
deeper into the corrupt government
while others do wonder

how to come to terms with this kind of life

and the local Aurora mine with its black owners
(a son of Nelson Mandela and a cousin of Zuma)
did rob their workers of a salary, did keep it back
until white men who could not get another work
did hang themselves and so it is reported in the newspaper

and those that still do have a job
do live as if they are small gods,
do want to ride each other out of the road
and in this gangster paradise they do feel free.

[Reference: "my country 'tis thy people you're dying" by Fanie Olivier.]

Gert Strydom

The Message To Mary Magdalene

In her great fear
He read love
and had known how intensely she adored Him
when in the garden grieving and half orphaned

she walked almost stumbling,
as if stripped of all hope
without being able to really comprehend
how to come to Him, to talk to Him

or about the reason of His love, His very existence
and when He appeared so suddenly next to her
she was overwhelmed, totally astonished
and almost blinded for a moment her eyes left Him

as if she was finding him too inundating, but she wanted
to come to Him with arms wide open, come to Him with pain and fear
wanted to wrap her arms adoring around Him,
wanted to make Him her property

and then she realized
that He is God, is mightily with all of mankind
and knew in fulfilment of her fear,
that His selfless love goes to everyone.

Gert Strydom

The Message To Mary Magdalene (2)

In her startled fear
when she walked almost stumbling
He did read love,

where without really knowing who He is
she stumbled along without realising
the meaning of His love and existence

when in the garden she felt sorrow and abandonment
when she cried alone without any hope.
He did read love,

and when he appeared so suddenly after his sentence had been executed
she was overwhelmed, when totally astonished
she stumbled along without realising

that it was Him and was thought struck
and she felt stripped of her humanity.
He did read love,

when she wanted to come to Him with her arms wide open
and then he did understand
she was overwhelmed, when totally astonish

she saw Him for who He is, she was enthralled
and her arms were wide open.
In her startled fear

she knew that His selfless love goes to all people,
that He had risen as the true redeemer
and then he did understand,

she was healed from all of her melancholy
and when she wanted to run to Him
He did read love.

When He prevented her from touching Him
she did know
that He had risen as the true redeemer

and He was full of the Spirit of the Lord
and she was afraid to talk to Him.
In her startled fear
He did read love,

and suddenly she was aware of His essence, His omnipotence
where without really knowing who He is,
she did know
about the meaning of His love and existence.

Gert Strydom

The Military Police

One afternoon
just after returning from work
there was a knock on the front door

and three military policemen
with flat orange hats,
and orange arm flashes

demanded to come in
and wanted to search my place
as somebody had told them
that I was a friend of someone

for whom they had an arrest warrant
for not turning up to camp
and the simpletons thought
that I was hiding him.

Being in the citizens force,
I intensely disliked the military police
and knew that he was quite safe from them
and showed them the gate
which made them really angry,

but they were furious
when I told them that I knew
where to find him

and that they could go
to the local police station
where he was on duty.

Gert Strydom

The Mill-Stream Rushes By (Parody)

(with apologies to A. E. Housman)

The millstream rushes by sounding like a disease
in all this I cannot hold my peace,
under the bridge the devil passes by
and tonight with him escaped from hell, here am I.

Who created the world I know but cannot now tell,
"It was made and I am here and the devil out of hell.
My hand shakes because he's freed,
I never thought that we would meet.

And so, I doubt in all eternity, anyone gone by,
none has suffered here such as I
who could not spend the night alone, the devil isn't gone
and I can't even strike my fist; I am standing here like stone.

[Reference: XIX "The mill-stream, now that noises cease" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

The Minister

When the minister
came to visit the farm
we felt like sinners
and even the labourers looked at him
and he was holy
and dressed as a holy one should be
in a black suit
and shoes that shone.

I heard that poor Nick and Mary
had a child
born out of wedlock
and that they were expelled
from church
when they took the toddler there
as sinners spreading sins about.

We crept around the corner of the house
to see what the holy father did
and he wasn't on his knees,
but was playing house instead
and took the elder's wife to bed.

Gert Strydom

The Mist

Here in Springs the mist hangs in the mornings
almost like the Cape's winter rain
that draws a grey cloak over almost every thing.

At sunrise the street lamps glow amber
and here and there a light is on in a house
and I hear a car, hooting goodbye.

When I walk on the grass
the water rises through my shoes
and leaves tracks along the driveway.

Flowers in colours of ruby red,
shades of pink to purple
and pure white are stringed in between the leaves

and as if every thing is fresh and new
water runs like drops of dew
down from the leaves.

The mist closes every thing off,
surrounds things, into an own world
where visibility is at times
just meters far.

Still the missing
that I have of you
is something with a greater intensity,

no sun early in the morning
burns away,
the being away that divides us.

There's nothing clearing up this missing
but to talk with you,
better still to have you here.

Gert Strydom

The Moment That The Sun Disappeared Into The Sea

The moment that the sun disappeared into the sea
church bells were ringing in the distance,
while I found you alone on the beach
with a seagull with a broken wing.
With streaming tears you could hardly breathe,
to me you were really beautiful
when the wind whirled, were blowing through your hair
and with the poor bird your glance was rigid

while we walked along the white beach
the waterline was glistening
with the orange-red of the last sun
the bird in your hands were suddenly lifeless
and immediately the night was dark,
for the bird we did what we could.

When my eyes caught yours at Hartenbos
the sea foamed blue, alive behind us,
I felt my heart bounding suddenly somewhat anxious,
there was something intimate and magical present,
while I saw stars in your eyes
without deserving them.

Gert Strydom

The Moment When The Sun Disappeared On Its Way

The moment when the sun disappeared on its way
into the blue ocean,
when somewhat early the bells tolled for the hour of prayer
and he had smeared the last putty onto the window
he was caught.
for moments that almost felt like an eternity.

Her emotions was mixed
and in astonishment they did stare at each other,
while they were aware of the golden radiance
that the sun was tossing from horizon to horizon.

When she waited on him in the door frame,
stars did sparkle in her eyes
while he planted the seeds of happiness and sadness
deep in her heart.

Gert Strydom

The Moments Drag Out

After making love
the moments drag out
while I am still in you

the moments clasped in your womanhood
while you look up at me
with those dreamy eyes

feels like a eternity
and the rising of your small breasts
with their red aroused nipples

the tenderness of your look and touch
is something really sweet
a kind of serenity
for which I cannot find any words.

Gert Strydom

The Moments Linger Past Midnight

The moments linger past midnight
while our emotions grow high
with love,
the true love between us.

Both of your eyes look deep into my heart
words are needless
with love,
the true love between us.

For hours we are caught in each other
with only hungry body language
with love,
the true love between us

The two red candles burn to their brim
when hot kisses rain down
with love,
the true love between us.

In my arms you cling to my body
and peace feels blissful
with love,
the true love between us.

Outside the wind jerks wildly at the window
but we know tranquillity
with love,
the true love between us.

Gert Strydom

The Monster

Some people believe
that in everyone's heart, blood and body
there is a monster
and Raka unaware is present

as if deep in us
darkness is overwhelming
and are just waiting
on a destined time and opportunity
to mercilessly strike out

but I rather believe
that the Spirit of God
live in many hearts
and in words and deeds
at times are present in man.

[References: Die mens van God (The man of God) by Ina Rousseau, Gee jou hart vir Raka (Give your heart to Raka) by Koos A. Kombuis. Raka (epic poem) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

The Moon Rose Like A Pirate

The moon rose like a pirate
with one bloody eye
and far away in the sky
a star shell glittered the light of day.

Like ghosts with only minute lights burning
our armoured cars crept
into the death dark night
until someone spotted a enemy tank
and then some more

and gun after gun flashed alive
sending their messengers
into the dark.

Gert Strydom

The More Intimate And Better I Do Know You

The more intimate and better I do know you,
the more I am amazed
by your fragile humanity, by a beauty
that fits perfectly
into the part that my life needs
and like light on glass
you are tuned in on me;
even when life hurts or brings joy.

Gert Strydom

The More Intimate And Better I Do Know You [1]

the more I am amazed
by your fragile humanity, by a beauty
that fits perfectly
into the part that my life needs
and like light on glass
you are tuned in on me;
even when life hurts or brings joy.

Gert Strydom

The Morning Is Cobalt Blue (Persian Quatrain)

The morning is cobalt blue
and somewhere in between it is you,
the afternoon is grey with thunderclouds
and we are caught in love, being true or untrue?

Gert Strydom

The Morning Of Christ's Nativity (Italian Sonnet)

It was the most blessed morn
and men did go on their normal way
as if it was but any other day
when in Bethlehem a male child was born.

A bright moving star did the sky adorn
and throughout the world children did play
while most men lived just as they may,
some men where good, others angry and stubborn

but in all of this the prince had come
to bring to earth peace, tranquility and love
to change the world and quench all sin,
to give to every single man a happy home,
to make an impact that no one can remove
and with his everlasting reign to begin.

Gert Strydom

The Moth

Last night against the enclosed lamp
it did in disillusion flutter and flaps its wings
trying it's utmost to get in
to the scorching deadly hot light
as if somehow it was afraid of the darkness
of the night
as if there was something deadly to it
and to me that poor brown moth was ugly
but to its own kind probably very pretty
yet this scene did draw a sad picture to it

and again here in the twilight
while the sun is rising bloody-red
later stretching out its rays like fingers
it's again fluttering and flapping against the window
with the same disillusion
trying to reach the sun.

While I do open the window to set it free
it comes to me
that each one of us in a way
tries to find an own place in the sun,
do want a life of bliss and happiness
and always somehow destiny does come
with its own ways that do set life
into the direction that it's going.

Gert Strydom

The Mountain Pass

There are bullets that draw sparking lines
on the rocks next to him
and in the mountain pass,
Jan Pieterse and ten men
stand to keep
the English back.

The smoke of shots being fired
hangs like fog around him
and gunlock after gunlock,
are cocked time after time
and Jan Pieterse and his men
shoot carefully while the morning's dusk appears.

At the bottom a Boer commando
goes through the river's ford
and there are horse hoofs resounding
and a liddite bomb,
explodes like a flaming star
in the grey air
before the sun rises.

The dust clears
and the commando rides away
and it's just Jan Pieterse and one comrade,
that is still alive
and they give their horses full reigns.

It's only Jan Pieterse that gets away
and he turns his horse around,
chase back into the bullets
and liddite bombs
to get his mate.

With his wounded comrade
hanging over the front of his saddle
Jan Pieterse and each Englishmen
experience the first red rays of the sun
and his horse walks slowly on,

as if no bullet can touch him there
and nothing can kill a Boer hero.

The English stop shooting
and cheer about the bravery
of a enemy Boer,
that disappears with rifle in his hand
over the horizon.

[References: The historic heroic story of Jan Pieterse during the second Anglo-Boer war. The poem "Rit-rympie" by Toon van den Heever.]

Gert Strydom

The Mynahs

They sit deep in the gutter next to the tiled roof
sounds like machines that do hammer
and is doing something secretive
when scolding, cursing Mynahs break the silence,
are in their nest full of rubbish very comfortable,

quarrel where to each other they hiss like snakes,
on the peaceful doves are a group of demons
that do screeching fly down and peck them apart
before they return to their evil secrecy

or presumptuous patrol up and down on the grass,
as if each other living thing have got to honour them
and I wonder where they do fit into our world,
if a person has got to drive them away or ignore them?

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Gert Strydom

The Mystic Rose

In ancient times
a warrior prince travelled to the East
to find the wisest man on earth.

Stars guided him
over uncharted terrain
to the court of Enoch
who counselled with the Almighty God.

Great and knowledgeable king,
point me the way
to find the most beautiful flower of all,

it's called the mystic rose,
and like crystal its leaves glitters
in colours of blue, violet and ruby red
and its odour is more divine
than that of any other bloom.

Why do you need this spectre flower
the great wise king asked?
To win the heart of the girl that I desire
the prince proclaimed.

Where will I find the mystic rose?
The rich prince asked again
while his servants
brought great gifts to the wise king.

Enoch looked the prince in the eye
and said:
Somewhere in the depths
of your inner soul
lies the flower that you seek.

Without words the prince
studied the wise king
and thought about his words
without really comprehending.

The words were perplexing to the prince.
What is the mystic rose,
the prince asked at last

Its unconditional, self-sacrificing
and called perfect love
the wisest man said to him.

Gert Strydom

The Namaqua Sand-Grouse

(after T.T. Cloete)

When the Namaqua sand-grouse
does bring water to her children
she flies over the dunes of the desert to the river
where she jumps into the shallows
does whistle cheerfully
and splashes her breast, feathers, and fluff wet
before she carries water on her body
in her own kind of aerodynamics.

[Reference: "vleis" ("meat") by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

The Native Fisherman (Cavatina)

He caught the largest cod he had ever seen,
was rowing out
with it drifting right next to the small boat,
sharks were about
turning and again turning around them;
angry, in rout,
he had lost that fish to those predators
that were deadly snapping operators.

Gert Strydom

The Nature Of Love

The nature of love sneaks up
like a soldier in the bush and veldt,
over small streams, through thickets,
past boulders, through dry riverbeds,
at speed through open spaces
to find cover from where it's exposed
while it does reconnoitre, cat-walk,
leopard crawl, snaking ever nearer
and when you do realise it
suddenly it's upon you
to alter the way that you are,
to bring happiness, joy and bliss
sometimes heartache and pain.

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Gert Strydom

The Naughty Baby Dog

The naughty baby dog
growls everywhere she goes
and wants to bite everyone
that passes her.

Sometimes I wonder
what makes her growl
and causes her to snarl,

maybe she just wants
some attention
and to lie undisturbed
close to her master.

Gert Strydom

The Nearer That I Do Come To Thee (Cavatina)

The nearer that I do come to Thee, my God,
iniquity
I find more and much more that are present
in all of me;
I am a creature of sin from my own begin,
my sanctity
does not exist but in Your loving grace,
my painful scars are etched on Your face.

Gert Strydom

The Necklacing (In Answer To Geoffrey Haresnape)

I saw people sending others into eternity
on that dark night
that we were on military patrol
in the black township

and there was evil, something inhuman
that had taken control of a crowd
who with their wicked grins and sneering leers
dragged seven tied men
and there was no salvation at hand
but for the guns of my men and I

and the struggling weeping victims
were pinned down, circled in a ring
with fuel been poured over them
and I heard fearful screams
and yelled at the group to stop
saw them dragging tyres nearer
lighting matches and fired
short bursts over their heads,
trying to stop the killing

and the fire roared,
a living person was aflame,
we had to save the others
and we took deadly shots at the killers
shattering the crowd
and one person was charred,
seven others were shot dead

six lay tied at our feet
shivering utterly soaked in fuel
and the stench of a fried human being
was everywhere, human blood flowed
in red little pools
and I was nauseas and started vomiting,
shivered while our military truck
and military support came to the scene.

[Reference: The Necklace by Geoffrey Haresnape.]

Gert Strydom

The Never-Ending Road

I saw the landscape passing by,
while the car swept
on with a never-ending road.

Buildings rose up into the air
and everywhere people were
packed square by square
in offices, flats and apartments.

White yellow mine dumps
and huge cranes glided by
and I felt small as a fly,
against the immensity of it all

Acres of corn surrounded me
and all the way to the horizon,
I saw no tree.

The green was all around me
and a mechanical spray point,
where showering water in an arc.

The land flattened
while I drove South
and grey thorn bushes flashed by.

Here and there
some rocky outcrops
stood red brown against the flat plain,
but everything begged for a dropp of rain.

In the far distance up in the sky
a lightning bolt twisted to the ground
and when the rain came gushing down,
life sprouted from the sand.

The road stretched on
and in the distance
the black of the tar

met with the sky
and except for the windmills I passed by,
that road could have been
anywhere on this good great earth.

Gert Strydom

The New Day Started Wonderful

This morning it felt
as if I was going to ride
into the red ball of the sun
while the wind
knifed strong past me
and the blue Honda motorbike
quickly eaten up Soutpansberg Avenue.

There's something magical and enchanting
to a rising sun
that is just hanging halfway
above the black tar road
and the colour of that red ball
still stays with me.

I drove with power
up the hillock of Gordon Street
and the rays of the sun
was at my side
and the caboodle of cars
couldn't bother me
and the new day
Started wonderful.

We do not always realise,
how much we have to be thankful.
We are just too much set
in the here and now,
while the greatness
of God's love
are all around us.

Gert Strydom

The New Morning Opens

The new morning opens
and it's spring with pollen
in the air
and I sneeze that it thunders around me.

I wonder if our summer
that is already butting
will also come so pretty
between you and me,
or is the last ripe falling
and killing everything.

Gert Strydom

The New Pretoria

Why does this city with its Jacaranda trees
seem so much like the one
surrounded by mine dumps?

Its lines usually square lie broken
filled with tall towers gleaming
in the early morning summer sun.

Sunnyside once peaceful
resembles Hillbrow, with poor homeless people
and Nigerian criminals walking the streets

and at a park I pause
to sit on a bench under the shade of a tree
and minibus taxis drive past hooting

the sidewalk is full of people
talking at the top of their voices
and unstoppable the crumbling, deterioration

the fading into third world surrounds me
and at a tree not ten metres away
a black man pulls his pants down

to relieve himself and whistles during the act
and the sweet scent of the flowering Jacarandas,
is suddenly gone

and the air is filled with the stench of urine
and excrement and zipping his pants
the man asks me for a cigarette.

Gert Strydom

The Night At Blauwkrans (I)(Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after C. J. Langenhoven)

I

At a bright Voortrekker fire at Blauwkrans
there is an old grandfather and young woman that dance
while the concertina plays its sad song but joy is everywhere
a mother and her toddler boy that strokes her hair
the ox-wagons are not in a laager or in any hindrance
where they are waiting upon Piet Retief and his men to return
it becomes twilight and then night where bright the fires do burn
young people sneak away to take a chance,
there is an old grandfather and young woman that dance

II

children cry where for their fathers they do long,
while a red moon do rise and as families together they do belong,
there are young boys and men that laugh happy
toddlers are tired after the day a mother changes a nappy,
and trusting in God nobody is scared and in hope they feel strong,
the conversations are about building and planting,
about the new farms their views are enchanting
and they read from the Bible and sing to God a song,
while a red moon do rise and as families together they do belong.

III

Where longing for his father does him awake keep
a mother sings her baby asleep:
"daddy went to pay for our home
to Dingaan's huge kraal he did roam"
and through sleepy eyes the boy does peep
"daddy went to pay the full cost
and he will come back soon as he is not lost,
the way is not too far or too steep, "
a mother sings her baby asleep.

IV

Dingaan transfers the ground between the Tugela and Umzimvubu rivers with skill,
at Ngungunhlovu cruelly the Zulu impi do every unarmed white-man kill
and at another fire an old lady prays that her child would be protected from harm
who as a man rode out with Piet Retief to buy them a farm
and her husband she had lost years before where he had fallen from a hill,
the thought brings from her memory to her some great pain
and at the place of slaughtering, Hloma Mabuto, unarmed her son struggles in vain
where to Dingaan they did not bare ill their voices become still,
at Ngungunhlovu cruelly the Zulu impi do every unarmed white-man kill.

V

Under captain Inhela and captain Dambuza Dingaan's impi do go out for war
where at Blaukrans the old men, women and children sleep like every night
before
but their brave men died at the Hloma Mabuto, the place of slaughtering,
while they were in peace negotiating for land and they do not know a thing
but in His record God do take note whom they all did worship and adore
while thousands of soldiers of the bloodthirsty impi do surround the peaceful
camp
do to ancestral spirits sing in their bloodthirsty song and their feet down stamp
in a killing rampage do go against friendly unarmed people while like animals
they roar,
where at Blaukrans the old men, women and children sleep like every night
before

[References:"Via dolorosa" and "Die aand by Blauwkrans"
(The evening at Blauwkrans)by C. J. 's note: "A Voortrekker is a pioneer
and it's a name given to the South African Dutch settlers, known as Boers or
Afrikaners, in the Cape Colony (modern Cape Provinces)who migrated north into
the interior of South Africa and away from Cape Colony and British rule in what
became known as the Great Trek."A laager "is a camp or
encampment formed by a circle of wagons."Inhela and Dambuza were two
of the captains (here the generals)of Impi do refer to a tribal army consisting
out of different regiments of soldiers. Ngungunhlovu does refer to a large
compound in which the Zulu king did live with some of his regiments of soldiers
and his many Hloma Mabuto was called "the place of slaughtering, "
which was a hillock near to Ngungunhlovu where Dingaan (the Zulu king)did
leave the people that he had killed at his compound for the vultures and wild
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Gert Strydom

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leave the people that he had killed at his compound for the vultures and wild
animals to eat.]

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The Night Dream (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Archibald MacLeish)

It had been a dream but seemed much too real;
her eyes, her voice,
had a quiet kind of lovely quality,
even her poise
had maturity, some kind of gentleness,
with no noise
but the buzzing of bees at a flower
while we lay down in fields of white clover.

The sun fell hot on our skins, her smile was
very dazzling,
while her soft hand gently touched my face,
there was something
known in the way that she did speak with me,
how she did fling
her hair back, while my head did gently rest,
on her soft heaving perfect naked breast.

Love I do not know she said and smiled,
but she was mine,
while we kissed in moments of pure bliss,
drank some white wine,
talked about some things close to the heart,
the curving line
I traced of her bended lovely back
while the greatest pure joy we did not lack.

It had only been a rapturous dream,
that was fading
but her skin, her smile was kind of special;
away wading
into the vast ocean of memory
until reading
from the magazine you looked up at me,
I could not pass when your face I did see.

[Reference: 'The Night Dream' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

The Night Falls Black

The night falls black
while the sun dies in the west
under a pale moon
and sleep like the sea
eats away in tides eternally
breaking evermore
on the shore of life.

Some dreams of you and me
feel so real and true
as if it's how life is meant,
but I am lost in
my own feelings
while you just want to be
nothing more than a friend.

The dark night
is cut by first light
and the sun rises
shedding its first flame
and spreading brighter
while it climbs into the blue sky
and I awake from sleep's death
and take the first deep breath
of the morning air
and all around me
life seems fair
but still my heart aches
as if I am lost in
my own world.

Gert Strydom

The Night Hangs

The night still hangs on the twilight
when the first rays of the sun begins
as if the night is a gigantic tree
on which the myriad of stars do glow

and this night is only one of many
but then the sun incinerates the darkness
that the sky is immaculate blue over us
when it brings new hope, beauty and joy.

Gert Strydom

The Night Has Come Early

The night has come early,
the thunder hits with power
at my house against the hillock,
as if it is coming from God himself,
when you knock I am surprised,
see the lights of your car shining,
it is very rough outside
with rain against the windows,
you embrace me, take my hand.

Gert Strydom

The Night Is Full Of Brown Ratel Armoured Cars

The night is full of brown Ratel armoured cars
and Olifant tanks
that drives and rolls in on the ground
and salvos from rocket launching trucks
that draws arcs
and in the distance howitzer canon reports
in volleys
and when a light flare suddenly falls
it is as if the bushes are teeming
with enemy tanks and armoured cars
just where I look
and it looks
like the day of judgement.

Projectiles find their targets
and canister-shot comes down exploding thundering
and it's an apocalyptic night
for some of the enemy
who are burning,
scorched and blown to smithereens in their armour
and when a tank
suddenly appears out of the bushes
there is a hell of a red thunderclap
as a shot from another Ratel hits it deadly
and I realize that even here
a person's time is measured out
and around me there are fireworks
like stars falling from the sky
while we stop and aim
the following killing shot.

Gert Strydom

The Night Is Shy (Free Verse Sonnet)

Some lightning-bolts do explode
and huge drops do fall in the dust
but later it's rain that do only sieve down
and tonight the lights of the city are dull.
There is nothing outside that stirs,
not even doves that coo love-songs
and I smell the rain like love on the ground,
hear the creaking of the yellowwood floor
as if the night is shy like a young woman
who covers her breasts in her nightclothes,
do big-eyed sneak in on her first marriage-night
the drops do still fall outside soft like dew,
yet the night is eager to fulfil the love ritual
when timid the moon peep in at the window.

Gert Strydom

The Night Is Starting (Quintain)

while the blue is slipping away,
gleaming crimson the sun is departing
while its lasts rays decay
and suddenly it is the end of day.

Gert Strydom

The Night Sky Is Crying

There's an old story
that the holy word holds true,
which happened in a time like today
when people lived only for themselves
and thought that they had knowledge
of the things around them.

The ancient poetry of Gilgamesh
proclaims that story
which some see as just a myth
and it is part of the traditions
of many nations
across the earth
and it says that once
long ago there was a cataclysmic flood,
like none other:

The night sky is crying
and tears are streaming
down to the earth
in splattering sheets.

The sound of the weeping wind
howls through the trees
sweeping green and yellow leaves
from the branches.

Thunderbolt after thunderbolt
roars down from the clouded sky
as if the elements are in terror.

The rain turn into hail
and from hail
into a blizzard of rivers
falling from the air,
as if the creator
is emptying a unknown ocean
onto the earth.

Hurricane storm winds shatter
and huge waves
brake with great power
and the water keep on rising
and lighting storms bash continuously
until man and beast are dead,
but for the people and animals
in that one solitary ship
that is save while the Creator
protects them
and even the dark spirits
fear the anger of the Almighty God.

When ever I see a rainbow
the story comes to my mind
and the promise,
that water will not destroy
the world again.

Gert Strydom

The Night That The Moon Like A Red Flower

The night that the moon
like a red flower rose above our heads
you did kiss me the first time,

such a moon can do funny things to a person
as there and then I was smitten with you
and on the sea breeze I could smell gardenia.

That night your eyes did gleam
like stars
while bewitching the moon
did rise higher into the sky

and I wonder if ever again
I will look at such a moon?

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Gert Strydom

The Night Tumbles Down

The night tumbles down
when the last stars are driven off
and even the morning star flees
before the sun and the day-sky

and I hear you coughing next to me
while the morning breeze
it's still somewhat cold
and the beach

stretches out long,
white and fresh before us
and the waves kiss your feet
as it does every morning at this place
and we are madly-happy to be together.

Gert Strydom

The Night Watchman

The fire in the holed drum burns bright
and I can see red coals flickering
like the shining stars up in the sky
and white teeth smiles at me
while I walk by
and the night watchman puffs at a cigarette
and with sharp eyes watches
from his black overcoat
as if nothing passes him
with one hand holding a baton

and somewhere up there
eternally a watchman guards
while the lights of his fires beacons the night
against the dark, against evil things.

[References: Nagwag (night watchman) by DJ Opperman and the
nightwatchman by Fhazel Johennesse.]

Gert Strydom

The Nude Swim

At night the light shines
with a tender yellowness
through the blue pool
as if encased
in a world of its own.

The water is soothing
after a hot summer day
heaving up and down
where I lie drifting
and I see your slender shadow
in the bright moonlight
coming closer.

Your body is white
and stripped of clothing
and in your face
your eyes gleam big
like those of the ginger cat
and for a moment
like a statue you stand
on the diving board
with arms reaching
to the stars.

Sculptured to perfection
with firm large breast thrusting
up in to the air,
long pale legs

and in a graceful motion
you launch yourself
and with a tiny ripple
clip through the water.

Gert Strydom

The Nude Swim (Rondine)

We both lost our loneliness completely
as we were drifting extremely nude,
touching lips was only the prelude
as we were drifting in the endless sea
in each other we found tranquillity,
while a negative kind of attitude
we both lost.

From all kinds of previous bonds we were free,
together some business we did conclude
but our emotions were more than gratitude,
our feelings and our sensibility,
we both lost...

Gert Strydom

The Nymph Oenone (Sonnet Corona)

(after Alfred Lord Tennyson)

I.

At Mount Ida in a place of bliss, a valley more lovely,
filled with more flowers than any other place on earth
was the nymph Oenone's place of birth
where for many years she did roam free,

lived at the cataracts and brook in great tranquility
with a braid of flowers tied around her girth,
as a semi-divine nymph stayed young by constant rebirth
and as the daughter of a River-God she had great beauty

where vapour rises up high from the glen.
Oenone was seen as divine by every wild thing
and almost as in a paradise she did live there,
she was unseen and untouched by mere men,
her heart did constantly with utter joy sing,
she was visited by no pain or care.

II.

She was visited by no pain or care
but on a hot summer day a Sheppard boy
did awake her did into the vale dare
and him she could enchant or destroy

but good-hearted she was to the utter brim.
His hair shone like that of an ancient god
where a kingly leopard skinned covered him
and beauty was in the way that he trod.

Enchanted and in great wonder they both were
where much more than mere friendship did grow,
with still greater happiness and utter joy there
as it a god did true love on them bestow

she cried and sobbed with the greatest joy

while he did a thousand kisses on her employ.

III.

While he did a thousand kisses on her employ
this happiness on another sunny day he did destroy
when with a golden fruit to her, to the valley did come.
"This gift is to you fit, " he said and held it like a toy.

"I would award it to you but then
this is not the work of mere men.
My loveliest Oenone, "for the most fair"
and yet you are semi-divine not like all women."

"By Iris it was delivered to me
to judge the gods and there are three:
great mother Hera, Pallas Athena and lovely Aphrodite
in wonder I do not know what the judgement will be."

Awestruck Oenone stood and stared at the fruit, the beautiful thing,
while with great love for Paris her heart and soul did still sing.

IV.

While with great love for Paris her heart and soul did still sing
where he led a black goat, with white hooves and white horns, away
it turned to the most foul and heart-rending painful day
when Pallas Athena, the goddess of war, appeared with lightning,

when Aphrodite suddenly was there fresh as if just awakening,
draw from her bosom her lovely hair did nothing say
where Hera with a golden cloud appeared and did enticing naked lay
and all of them did for his choice a special kind of gift bring.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me"
Oenone cried in her heart but looked at Paris silently.

Hera:"Sheppard, royal power, imperial rule and gold I am offering
you."

Athena with a godly spear: "I will make you heroic, battle-hardened and
free

will cleave to you, be in your blood that the greatest warrior you will be."

Aphrodite: "I offer the most beautiful human woman with love true."

V.

Aphrodite: "I offer the most beautiful human woman with love true."
"Paris, give the fruit to Pallas as a mere boy with a bow and arrow you are,
"
cried Oenone. "She will stand by you in war, make you the greatest man by
far."
With a warm smile Hera said: "Sheppard boy, your decision is now
due."

Normally icy but now warm Athena said: "Naked and divine we stand
before you
a mere carefully as this decision might your own life and nation mar."
Aphrodite: "Without love life is not a thing, no one can true love and its
power bar."
Turning against his promises to Oenone Paris suddenly knew what to do.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me, "
Oenone cried in her heart and looked at Paris expectantly with hope.
"Naked to the flesh and heart all three of you I did see,
before me a mortal all three of you were without a robe
and Palas Athena spoke of heroism and about duty,
I choose love and with an earthly woman to elope. "

VII

"I choose love and with a earthly woman to elope, "
his words hang in the air and Oenone cried,
Hera and Athena were angered at being denied,
but Paris did not think about his decision's scope.

While as if lifeless Oenone rolled down the mountain slope
Paris hastened with Aphrodite to Helena in the greatest lust,
Athena ascended with great lightning, Hera in a huge gust
and around Oenone gathered the beasts and all the antelope.

The lion, the leopard and panther growled their dismay
the insects the deer, and other antelope were crying with her
while even some of the flowers and plants in the valley did wither

and Oenone could not understand why Paris did their love betray.

"Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me, "
I love him so very much but he does make me very unhappy."

VIII.

"I love him so very much but he does make me very unhappy
and now life is totally meaningless and I do want to die.
Dear mother earth, mount Ida and Cybele please come to help me,
as now for many months my life does go meaningless by.

Oenone cried night and day watched the pitiless sun in the sky
until on a day ten years later, mortally wounded, Paris came
begged her to heal him with bitter tears or remorse in his eye
knew that he had put her and his own name to great shame.

He even begged her to use her magic drug in Zeus's name.
""I choose love and with a earthly woman to elope, "
and here I was where you tossed me away and to her you do the same
where for many years I have been dying without any hope"

and she was crying while he was dying remained free
at Mount Ida in a place of bliss, a valley more lovely.

[Reference:"Oenone" by Alfred Lord Tennyson.]

Gert Strydom

The Ocean (Cavatina)

Till eternity in and out waves sweep,
in sheer terror
at times storm tossed the strong breakers roar,
without error
the marks of low and high water is set,
joy and horror
her shining, flowing, living waters bring
while she exists without any feeling.

Gert Strydom

The Ocean, Sun And Sea

The calm water of Uvongo lagoon
brought tranquillity to you
and we would row a canoe
or float in that transparent pool
watching the cliff and the waterfall.

It was where the ocean, sun and sea
became a part of you and me
and you lay on that beach
of fine white sand

and walked up and down
in your black one piece swimsuit
which showed you big breasts
very alluring
perfectly tanned and looking gorgeous
as if treading on dry land
like the Israelites
before the flood waters came

with your eyes hidden
behind a pair of sunglasses
and a light wind ruffled through
your page cut auburn hair.

Later thunder fell from the sky,
a massive storm struck there,
the floodwaters came
and swept the lagoon,
the beach and shore
and everything away

into the blue sea
and then there wasn't anymore
a you and me.

Gert Strydom

The Offering Of Isaac (Sonnet Sequence)

(after A. G. Visser)

I The night in Beersheba (Free verse sonnet)

For Abraham there was no sleep in that dark night
where he did turn around as if no sleep would ever come again
and he was totally astonished by the words of his Lord and God
where he was waiting on another command, an answer from God.
Before first light he and Isaac was ready and he spoke softly with Sarah
did not know how to comfort a motherly heart and his words were stupid
and to her that knows him so well he could not hide his fear
as she also did know that God wanted him to slaughter Isaac.
He remembers how God did speak with him in Haran,
the great covenant that God came to make with him
and how He did order him to move away into the unknown,
did notice Isaac his promised child with his peaceful face,
thought of love that through God does become reality
and he looked away while tears rolled down his face.

II The Lord will provide (Free verse sonnet)

Abraham and Isaac did walk to the place that God did indicate
to follow the commandments of God where they were serving him truthfully,
silently Isaac carried the wood, did look at his father's worn face
and asked about the offering animal and Abraham said: "God will
provide."
Then Abraham did build an altar of stone with wood on it,
did tie up his own son and did lift the knife high above his head
agitated felt his heart beating inside of him in confusion.
"Abraham! Abraham!" An angel called with a bright face.
When he looked up Abraham saw a ram that was stuck in a bush
and he took the ram and offered it in the place of his son
and the smoke of the offering fire went up and was snowy-white
where on that day he found still greater mercy with God
where Isaac did come to his father and gladly did embrace him
and that God does provide is all that he talked about.

III The Lord Jesus Christ is the lamb (Free verse sonnet)

Before his eyes on that day Abraham saw into the future
the hill with the three crosses and the Son of God on one,
how Mary his earthly beloved mother stands crying,
the pain and anguish and suffering on the face of Jesus Christ

and Abraham gets the insight that He is suffering for all of humanity,
that He is innocently dieing there for the sins of everyone
but the mob does mock Him there and they do curse Him constantly,
do not notice Him as the light in the dark world
where He asks His Father to forgive their sins
and Abraham kneels down there in the dust and hears:
"He is the offering lamb, the only Son of God
who alone does carry the sins of the world";
and Abraham looks up and notices His pierced hands and feet
where He hangs naked and cursed is His cruel lot.

[Reference: "Die offerande van Isak"; (The offering of Isaac)by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

The Ogre [2]

I had bought two-dozen eggs,
some baking soda, baking meal
along with the other groceries,
beef, chicken, lamb,
vegetables and fruit
and had forgotten
to buy icing sugar
on your command.

I carried the groceries
from the car
and placed them
in the pantry, the fridge,
or where ever they belonged.

You were baking cake
and preparing some cookies
and like a blizzard
went through the shopping bags
searching for items.

Demented, for me forgetting
icing sugar, the ogre
awakened in you
and I saw it peering
through your eyes.

First a glass mixing bowl
went flying to the ground
shattering into pieces of glass
and in shock fascination
I watch you
put a plastic bowl
on a red hot stove plate
before slamming it
right into my face.

I screamed in terror
and tried to wipe

sizzling molten plastic
from my forehead
and cheeks,
(thanking God you missed
my eyes) .

You screamed something
smashing the eggs on the floor
and then somehow
the ogre went back
to the cave
where it was hiding in you
and I knew
what the word maniac
in manic bipolar depression meant.

Gert Strydom

The Old Church-Board Member

I

Probably at every congregation
and in every church domination
there is a man, a skeleton
who always is searching for conversation
and some people do think that he is smart
where he keeps himself high holy
and do constantly walk up and down
to look at the visitors.

II

The kind of person
who at a time had been an elder on the church-board
but now does guard rows of benches
and at times do reproach the visitors
and do threaten to throw unruly children out,
a old uncle Barry or uncle Brother
who greets you as if you are blessed
and in old age his days are gone.

III

Its as if has already lost Ben, Baby
and the family
does pinch sweets from the children
when as the executor of the law
he does look narrow-minded at others
and now on pension
he does forget of all kinds of fun,
do not have much to do.

IV

He is like an undertaker
dressed in his black suit,
like a old pleader or advocate
and its as if he does forge plans with Satan,

he only gives short steps
and he looks old till into the grave,
at times do make people embarrassed
when with his news he does jog past.

Gert Strydom

The Old Escort (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to S. J. Pretorius)

At a time far past lovely unsightly she did become old,
where she is drinking coffee deep in the concrete-jungle,
a life of bodily pleasure did curtail her,
she feels effete, unhappy and far past ages-old
and outside the wind blows icy in the streets,
where no one does talk or even look at her,
in a city full of busy people she is totally lonely,
the neon light pulse in her and she cannot hate this city,
but loneliness brings to her an own kind of pain,
where she holds the hot coffee tightly in her hands
and she feels the heat of the expensive porcelain,
when the white liquid washes over her beautiful white teeth,
she could really love someone and this thought enters her mind,
but too long intimately she did adore too many men.

[Reference:"Ou hoer drink koffie in kafee" (Old whore drinks coffee in café)by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

The Old Farm Yard

I see a spade making holes
and shoots of peach trees
Appearing in rows in an orchard.

There's a hot sun
that hangs above in a bright blue sky
and sweat flow in streams,
from under the old dark brown hat.

The old red Massi Ferguson tractors
machine has turned for a last time
and red dirt lies blown thick,
where it stands on the side against an old oak tree.

At the shed there's a big silver tank
full of expensive diesoline
and I hear the boreholes
pump humming monotonous
and I see spill points in the distance
spraying water on the field
and the smell of wet ground
hangs like a blessing
in the air.

An old big Cock
raise its white wings
and crows angrily,
when the green John Deere tractor
with its trailer full of workers
stop in front of the homestead
Where it stands and scratches.

It's great to eat country fare,
but the peace and tranquillity
on the old farm yard
me desire
to also live at such a place.

The Old Guitar (Cavatina)

Without a song or sound it lays waiting,
gathering dust,
in the right hands it could sound quite lovely,
to sing it must,
songs of happiness and of some despair,
very unjust
life sometimes is; death brought the great silence,
that is now a lingering odd presence.

Gert Strydom

The Old Man

From the shack covered hills
of the shanty town
a dazed old man struggles down
with cold chills and hot thrills
going through his body.

Flags of sheets and washing
flap in the strong wind
and in pain he grinds his teeth
while he struggles on to a meeting
past grunting dogs, past logs on hot fires

and he hears the shik-shik chanting of an old witch,
called a sangoma by some, throwing bones, while carrying
his heavy load and he reaches home, where his wife and kids
are waiting on the sack of flour that he carries.

Gert Strydom

The Old Mine

Some would call it almost romantic,
but to me it's nothing more
than dilapidated
the way that the rusting
huge wheel hangs now silent
never to again turn
while the bright evening star
starts shining just above it

and a snail pecking brown ibis
flies up startled by me
screech out its dismay
and there's no solitude, only loneliness
and a huge forgotten rusting spanner
now looking brittle where it's stuck in a spar

and somehow the men that worked here before
are now long buried and done
and the place is empty deserted
with grass and reeds sprouting out

and some bats fly up into the sky
right out of one of the open shafts
when I throw a rock into it
and hear its sound echoing down.

Gert Strydom

The Old Pastor

Just like doctors did do at a time
he visits people,
sometimes into the late hours of the night
and although he serves the word of God

he tries to help them
to get their marriages happy again,
he hear the complaints and sorrows
of people that have lost children, companions
and even parents to death

tries to find answers
where none does exist, in the struggle of man,
he searches for deeper meaning
and when he stands behind the pulpit
and rises his eyes to heaven

a person does hear, does experience
the fragile human being
which that old man has become
and you are aware of his brokenness

until the voice of God
starts speaking right through him
when he leaves people
in the tranquillity of God's eternal and wide love.

Gert Strydom

The Old Savage Dream Again Was Back

The old savage dream again was back
of enemy tanks coming down the track,
useless the light machinegun was stuttering
as exploding shells made both my ears sing
while I could find no kind of escape,
events caught speed like a winding video tape,

I was firing from the hip without effect
had no ready rocket launcher to select,
heard the nearing enemy tank tracks groan,
while my limbs were slow, turning to stone;
from the blue sky a screeching eagle fell,
death was in its claws, triumph in its yell,

while it dropped scorching deadly flame,
heroic returning under fire to do the same.

Gert Strydom

The Old White Head Angel (Sonnet)

Weekends when the longing for a barbeque do catch people
when they long for fried chops, steak or sausage
I can smell the fragrances of many fires
as if in our neighbourhood the smoke of offering fires do hang
when many cars do constantly stop in our street and hoot
and then the old white head angel comes out of his house with speed
where he is selling charcoal, wood and sometimes eggs to them
do talk about life and always asks: "are you doing well? "
Sometimes I see him with his trailer standing in Colliery road,
how fast the cars in the mornings and afternoons do speed past him
where he is sitting with a cap on his and under a piece of canvas do face the sun
and I know that in a way he does understand the heart of every Afrikaner,
when the evening twilight comes the wind brings his song of praise to me
where he is holding vespers to lead his children and grandchildren to God.

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Gert Strydom

The Old Year

When I look at the unsettling things
of the old year
I do wonder how the New Year is going to look
and what kind of things it is going to bring?

or is my whole life twisted
through dark forces that do not abate
or is everything settled in the rays of a new sun
that reaches with its heat to the darkest places?

Am I like a leave that falls from a tree
being swept up by a wild wind
that blows wherever it wants,
that at times does fall and rise again,
when lightning bolts do ominous flash
and are bound to the power of destiny
when the last words come over my lips?

Gert Strydom

The Omen

I saw men thrusting a bayonet and knife
through the enemy
as though life was meaningless
and killing with a rifle,
an armoured car's gun
and war devoured
the enemy and the innocent
local population
and the madness and mystery
of having blood
on your hands
was like a omen
and a token
of more killing to come.

Gert Strydom

The Only Picture That I See

This morning I am waiting
on the light
to start the day
and thinking about something
to say to you
by electronic mail.

I am looking in and out
and seeing things in myself
as if I exist out of my body

and outside the two dogs
are walking up and down
the lawn
as if inspecting new flowers
blooming in the early morning
and they are sniffing
at geraniums and morning glories
which are growing wild.

The two cats are stretching out
on the bark of the fallen tree
ripping their nails into it
and trying to catch
the first rays of the sun

and still my life is empty
while you are away from me
and that's the only picture that I see.

Gert Strydom

The Orange Tree

(after T.T. Cloete)

Where it stands drawing liquid from the earth,
through a system of roots, branches and leaves
while it gathers the sun, rain and wind
it forms fruit with a sour-sweet taste

that is symmetrical pressed into a membrane
of which the smell and taste catches you
when it breaks open in your hand as slices
as if a new wonder hangs around it.

[Reference: 'Lemoenboom' (Orange tree) by T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

The Origin

At night we see the shining beauty of the stars,
in the day we welcome the bright sun
and lovely flowers do open their cups every day
but we do live in grey cities of concrete and steel
some people do even doubt if God does exist,
do doubt that everything did originate from Him.

Scientists do claim that nothing did explode,
was suddenly at its own accord a type of energy,
in pieces of matter and other kind of dust
that does develop from mere anarchy
and miraculous do get life by itself,
do develop to you and me.

A God of love is overlooked
and when we want to separate divinity from God,
when we cannot determine the powers
of a being that is omnipotent,
as with us that kind of knowledge does lack
then we do deviate to a theory and not a law
that is called evolution.

Gert Strydom

The Other Counterpart Of Poetry (On Open And Closed Poetry)

(In answer to Elizabeth Jennings)

At times clarity, which goes hand in hand with simplicity
do the strongest greatest most powerful poems make
where this kind of poems do bare the distinct ability
that even a child can read and understand and in this poetry can partake

and I am sure that some obscurity has got its function and place,
that the dark and the unconscious mind do at times great symbolisms find
but then simplicity is far easier to understand and trace
and here I am not trying to tread on any toes or to be unkind.

The most difficult poems to compose
are those that are flowing, are open and simple, have spontaneity
and from the darkness close to quarrel a image may arose
but great taste cannot be stipulated to classification of that which we see.

The problem is that sound and feeling is lost if we do reason in this way
where the lovely onionskin poems full of obscurity do fall apart
(when they do not say what the poet wanted to portray)
if only one of the onionskins (or segments)is rotten it has stopped being art

and in this even the senses, the feeling and all meaning do break down
when poems are cryptic (when the idea of the poem is difficult to understand)
when we cannot make a-logic transitions of our own
and where the field of reference of the poet do outside our own stand.

Abstract art do certainly have its place, as art cannot be restricted
and wholeheartedly I do agree with being absolutely honest with sincerity,
as we are sometimes writing about unseen things that were predicted
in ways that other people can perceive and see

while we are commenting on life, are giving a confession of life, and its things
but brighter still the truth, the patience and kindness do shine in the night
where life at times heartache, pain suffering and tears do bring
while forevermore God is the Lamb the truth and the clear light.

[Reference:"The counterpart" by Elizabeth Jennings.]

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Gert Strydom

The Owl

You loved the wild doves and their calls
was to you something romantic,
between the apricot and peach trees
the sparrows, weavers and redbreasts
you did at times with breadcrumbs feed.

The mynahs to you were visiting pets
that could be learned to talk
and the barbet another beautiful woodpecker
but not the owl.

One night it did arrive to compete for rats
with the aggressively territorial Jack Russell
that would kill them and line them up
at the back door.

The dog barked and growled to drive it away,
saw the owl as another kind of intruding prey
and where it hissed and hooted its dismay
from high up in a oak tree

you were convinced that it was bringing some ill,
that it was calling the angel of death on someone.

Gert Strydom

The Pain Goes Right Through Me

The pain goes right through me
when I find Tinkie smashed,
lying with popped out eyes,
in blood on her side.

Still this morning she played and barked
and impertinent, undaunted and somewhat silly
jumped up and down in front of the other dogs
and now I dig her grave.

The pain goes right through me
and my small white dog is gone and smashed by a car
and taken from life
and my head and hart burn while she stays in a hole.

l'Envoi

I wonder if my small innocent dog child
also will find a paradise on the other side
and the pain doesn't want to disappear while the sun hangs bright in the sky
and I strike my despair up to the heavens and I am dumb, and bend and blind
as I cannot comprehend the deed from up high to allow it.

Gert Strydom

The Paladin

That You provide for me, make plans for my life
according to coming events,
is what a person expects from an almighty God

but while my life is almost falling to pieces,
I am involved more by Your calling,
times passes quickly in day and night

and in my simplicity I wonder how much longer
I must alone keep the front
have got to protect the gates with the sword of the word

while hordes in the dark night are coming on storming
as if they are totally unstoppable?

It hurts me when people in rebellion against You throw words,
even try to trample, to ruin my own people
and where I see this happening their sword

has been drawn against me as well, I make it my calling, my work
to with words hit thundering hammer blows back
although I am standing alone against overwhelming numbers.

Gert Strydom

The Pale Brown Thrush

Pale brown the thrush scratches in the garden
is pecking at earthworms that wriggle around
before suddenly it trumpets out its joy,
but when an old car rattles down the street
it ascends fluttering into the blue sky,
lands on a branch of the old oak tree,
is silent while school children are raising funds,
as if sits for moments dreaming there,
before its song of joy again streams from its throat,
its twittering cuts through the afternoon's dull weariness.

Gert Strydom

The Pangolin

In the veldt walking through the bushy wold
the winter was touching me with it's cold
but in the late afternoon at almost the end of the day,
the sun turned everything to a lighter gold
while zebras and impalas did run away
and the world seemed both young and very old
when a female pangolin and one of her young came across my way
and in the past of the pangolin many stories I was told.

They looked at me with their narrow tapered heads
fear was in the amber-brown eyes that were like beads
while timidly they glanced toward the knee-high grass
trying to break away the mother took the lead

but became aware that it was just too far for her young
and wiggling her long thin tongue
draw her small one closer to her with her rake-like front claws
as right against her, her baby did belong

closing over the child she rolled up in a ball of mail
which seems immensely strong and not frail
with rough raising scales covering that cuirass
as if every attack from here on in would fail.

For moments in silence near to them I was
before I walked away to that long yellow-brown winter grass
while around me the veldt was alive with its own silent tranquillity
while many of the wild game did me slowly pass.

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Gert Strydom

The Parable Of The Outcasts

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

From the sheep ewes that were lambing
a horde of lambs did come
but then I found my brother sitting against the bark of a tree
and with a little black one he was totally dumbstruck.

The herds of goats bred by the pedigree register
did attract many buyers
but then there was one that was red all over
for which no one would pay a cent

and together my brother and I did raise the outcasts,
as pets did come to love the two of them
when we one morning did find both slaughtered
with the smell of their meat on the wind

from the feast-fires that were burning at the natives
and still I see that picture from my childhood memory.

[Reference: "Sprokie van die spikkelkoei" (Fairy-tale of the speckled-cow) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

The Parachute

I get a brown parachute
and make sure that it's folded right,
strap it to my back
and feel that it fits well.

You must make certain
that a parachute
can carry weight,
if it's a parachute

I accompany a troop of soldiers
into a aeroplane
that takes off roaring from the runway
and we fly higher and higher
until the light first flashes red
and then green
and the aircrafts engines stop
while my heart beats in my throat

I get my turn
to stand at the open door
and see how the landscape
flashes past like a picture
beneath me.

Then I break through the wind
and count wordless
before my hand finds the pull string
and I fly on wings of silk
that folds open and draws me up.

The world lies small beneath me
and the wind swishes gale strong
and in my thoughts I fly up into the sky
past other parachutes
and the aircraft
while the clouds fold around me
and I go through the stratosphere

Later it gets chillier
and I can hardly breath
and I must be near
the mesosphere

In the vacuum around me
the earth lies
like a blue-white ball
at my feet
and I am past the thermosphere
and around me I see the universe
with stars and planets without number.

Gert Strydom

The Parade

I remember us passing
in a parade
where we were receiving honour;

the nightmare plays off in front of me
of people
that will never again be living
and are unpaid for their deeds:

What remains
when a mortar bomb falls like thunder
from the sky
and explodes with a hell of a bang,

how broken a body becomes
when it receives the deadly explosion
of a landmine
that does its thing like a giant trap,

the bits of ash
where a flaming star lands
when a rocket propelled grenade goes off,

scorched black meat
where a tank's projectile
hits like a ray of lightning,

a man that had been shot out of his boots
where a bullet pierced his body
and the puddle of blood in which he lies,

the shattering and the truncation
that a hand grenade brings,
how easy death strikes at anyone

and all of these people
now are forgotten and buried
until they stand before the Godly commander.

The Parrot

Cage in like in a prison
it walks up and down
and looks at itself in the mirror
and it gets food and water
and the days pass
and water and food it gets
and in its prison it has to stay
and it remembers the green woods
and the odours of bananas
and berries and nuts
and the blue sky
that is open and free
and streams
where the most delicious water flows.

It calls to its mate
and ask for salvation
and nobody and nothing comes
and out of the humdrum
it starts to imitate sounds
and its people
take it out of its cage
and scratches its head
and cuts its wings
and bring delicacies,
but back to its prison
it must go en its serve it sentence
until it dies.

Gert Strydom

The Passion Of Jesus Christ Our Lord And God (Free Verse Sonnets)

I. The Lord's Supper

There was suddenly silence in the upper room
when He, the Master, did bow forward and wash their feet
with His hand lifted he did draw their attention,
did surprise them with a traitor among them.
Judas was suddenly startled, dumbfounded and pale
while the others with unbelief repeated His words,
did try and hide his guilty behind a cough
while they were busy with the offering of wine and bread
while He did thank God for all of them and did entrust Himself to Him,
knowing that they would leave Him before the cock's crowing cry
everyone but John, and He did ask forgiveness for their sins,
did in love look at the man that was going to betray Him
the bread was fragile while they were eating and He did pour the wine
and the wine was just like His blood so very red.

II. Golgotha

Unlawfully condemned before Annas and Caiaphas,
the Jews dragged Him to the governor Pilate,
the marks of a cruel cat-of-nails was notched into His back
while during the day he was convicted to death
and in the silence and later uprising the Satan did laugh
while priests full of sin did rave in their righteousness,
a thorny crown was pushed down upon His head in the Roman iron-grip
and others did mock Him the true Son of God and did despise Him.
With hatred he was hanged against a tree as a cross and cursed,
His clothes was divided between the soldiers and He was splayed out naked
and still they did mock Him over and over and did spit at Him
as if man does want no more mercy from God,
where His blood did cover the sin and shame of everyone in the world
while He asked His father to forgive them while they did scoff at Him.

III. The resurrection

On the Sabbath He did rest dead in the grave

and then on the Sunday at first light did rise
by His power, the power the Father and Holy Spirit He was again aware of
everything
and forever the snake, the dragon, Lucifer, the darkness was defeated,
when the Roman soldiers did scatter from fear,
were scared that God would devour them at that grave
but only tranquillity and great mercy was on His face
when that great round stone was crushed to sand and gravel
and immaculate and pure is the slaughtered and murdered Lamb
where Mary Magdalene found that grave empty and did start crying,
the garden did hide Him the true Son of God,
the Godly Son that descends from David and other sinners
where Jesus talked with her and she wanted to come in love to Him
but first had to go to the Father to report to Him.

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The Past Two Years

In the first of these two years
It went from wealth to woe,
marriage to deforce,
victory to defeat,
health to illness,
promotion to joblessness
and the first was shattering,
but the last was sweet.

In the second year I found
a new love
and life got meaning again,
but what the future hold's
only God knows.

Gert Strydom

The Pastor (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

He knows the glances on faces well,
do know about pain, fear and insanity from very near,
do constantly visit hospitals, old-age-homes and mental institutions
where he gets to do with the incidents of destiny,
do notice people that are lost and totally lonely,
do cross in the early morning hours sometimes the streets of the city,
pain, fear and despair is no secret to him
and sometimes people in their poverty are totally abandoned,
where they live in great wretchedness in their nights and in their days,
as if none of their prayers do go to God,
they are dumbfounded with many unanswered great questions
and others that do not want to know Him exist in their conceit,
others do struggle with their own lot
and in this some do know the Lord God very well.

[Reference: "Ou dominee" (The old referent) by S. J. Pretorius.]

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Gert Strydom

The Patriot

I am standing for a return
to the mighty Bible
which our forefathers tried to obey,
for every Afrikaner to pray
to the almighty God
who had protected us before,
but the modern generation
is without discipline falling apart,
following the foreign American culture,
believe that only the fittest will survive
and living as if they have no conscience
are responsible to no one but themselves

and violence, robbery, murder and rape
is at the order of the day
with foreigners streaming in
from all over Africa
and day by day
we play a deadly game
with criminals and crooked politicians

and my patience is running thin
and the situation I am in
cries out for war and much more,
but still the words of Nicolaas van Rensburg
has power to them

while the Afrikaner remains
subjected to unfair laws,
leaderless and weak,
our power still comes
from the almighty Lord
who sets kings to rule, rulers in their place,
who destroys nations and whole armies
at the time that suits Him
and at a time freedom will again come.

Gert Strydom

The Peace Cannot Last

The peace cannot last
and it's already ruined
as if war like a lightning bolt
is looking for a place to strike.

Thousands of my people have been murdered
and somehow humans
have lost their humanity
and have become mad, worse than animals

and blades are sharpened,
there is waited on a moment
to strike at, to kill
and to take the possessions of other people.

Some of my best friends have immigrated
and here I am staying
and what if this thunderbolt now hits me?

Gert Strydom

The Peach Tree

During the yellow-brown autumn season
leaves rain down in golden squiggles
retaining their own kind of smell,
as if the tree is still cherishing them
while the fallen leaves are turned into foil.

Plundered and stripped to a skeleton
the tree retains the revivalist energy
and in the beginning of spring
it is covered with new flowers
and with leaves that are appearing

Gert Strydom

The Pendant

You admired one that somebody
had made
and bought a small pair of pliers,
some silver wire,
clasps, hooks, bits,
different kinds of crystals,
semi-precious stones,
even blue tanzanite stones,
sirkovsky crystals, some pearls
and I saw you bore small holes
and bit-by-bit strung it together.

I watched you with your eyes focused
while you worked
with the pleasure of making something
really beautiful
to hang on your slender neck
between magnificent breasts.

Gert Strydom

The Perfect Girl

Maybe I will have to wait through aeons
to find her, to find the perfect girl
whose feelings reach out to me
softer than the fluttering of any butterfly
whose voice is crystal clear with an own loveliness
and at times she dwells in my dreams
walking at times covered in a white cloak
with slim feet and pearly white toes.

I have heard her sweet laughter
falling softly as snow
but covering me in a kind of warmth
that delights, that at times are amusing
at other times brings sheer tranquillity
and if she's human or something of the divine
I do not really know
only that she is beyond beautiful

One night suddenly she appeared
in another kind of dream
looked straight at me through her veil
her countenance had pure perfection
a kind of untouched innocence
but it was a sheer mystery
as her gaze had a kind of lust, a kind of longing
and it was clear that she know men
probably had made love to many of them
and as she lifted her veil
her eyes were the colour of the sea
but were ever changing in their hue
they were sometimes green, sometimes grey
and at times blue

Her hair was almost onyx black
and streamed down lustrous
streamed down right to her waist
glittering in a blue-black hue
and I was almost thunder struck
as she stepped out of her cloak

and I saw her sublime body
in every perfect line
the contours of her magnificent breasts,
her sleek belly
with its triangular thatch of dark hair
and she looked somewhat ethereal,
sublimely serene
and lovely beyond words
and it felt if I had waited my whole life
just to see her face
with its dimples, her narrow straight nose,
her full soft lips
and now she was displaying
her whole body in sheer nakedness.

I have known many women
have loved some
maybe beyond what love should be
and in reality
she remains to me a mystery
an ethereal being
that visits me in dream after dream

Gert Strydom

The Perfect Woman

(for Annelize)

Maybe I will have to wait through aeons
I thought on a morning
to find you, to find the perfect girl
whose feelings reach out to me
softer than the fluttering of any butterfly,
whose husky voice has an own loveliness
and at times you do dwell in my dreams
walk at times covered in a white cloak
with slender feet.

One night suddenly you appeared
in another kind of dream
looked straight at me through your veil,
your countenance had pure perfection
a kind of naughty innocence
but it was a sheer mystery
but there was something,
something very well known
but I could not place you.

I have heard your sweet laughter
falling softly as snow
but covering me in a kind of warmth
that delights, that at times are amusing
at other times brings sheer tranquillity
and if you are human or something of the divine
I do not really know
only that your beauty is beyond beautiful
but your perfume "red door"
I should have recognized
but could not place you.

Time after time I had the same dream
but on a night it was different
when you did lift your veil
and I did recognize you and was joyous
as you were my first darling,

the first woman whom I had loved,
the one that I do not get out of my heart
as to you there remains a kind of longing.

and without you I am always lost,
in reality
to me you remain a mystery,
a lovely being,
the one that is truly meant for me
to whom I do long through decades.

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Gert Strydom

The Person And Image Of You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

In the eyes and on the face of each woman
memories come of our times together,
sirens in the street echo with your name,
everywhere I always see impressions of you.
Constantly you climb into my heart from the memories,
in paintings and portraits you are framed
and it's as everything everywhere do tell about our love,
as if constantly I am seeing you everywhere,
against lamp-post where ever I come I see posters,
in news reports there are serious darkness,
as if evil does constantly bring the end nearer,
there is a buzzing din of people in the street
but in all of this only you do remain with meaning
where you do live with me in every beautiful memory.

[Reference:"Op alle gesigte" (On all faces)by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

The Pinecone (Sonnet)

I find it half buried under the needle carpet,
listing, half-skew as it had fallen
smudged, loosing colour, with auburn stains
running into the dark brown

half chipped dirty with mud and half rotting
as if anarchy had reached its hand to it,
but from it were sprouting tiny stems in new birth
and roots were anchoring it steady

into its mother earth
and it was a token of the times
were against adversity, the weathering
we all were still growing, still existing:

against oppression still making a living
in a world gone mad, anchored on the Eternal One.

Gert Strydom

The Plain

With tranquil and stretched-out grass fields
that are green after the early summer rain
with veldt that runs up to the edges of the far mountains
and lay as far as the eye can see
for almost immeasurable distances

I had seen the plain in my dream
where full of acacia trees it was wide,
was free under the bright blue
with a summer-sun burning fiercely in the cobalt sky
and thunder clouds building up dark on the hillocks

and everywhere there were game grazing undisturbed,
coots flew up every now and then
at a tributary near to a marsh
where women in the heat of day were washing clothes
and all kinds of wild animals lived in peace.

Hyenas cried and jackals laughed
when they greeted the moon
at the time when people became peaceful after a busy day
and a male lion roared as if beaconing off its territory
when beasts of prey everywhere came to life in the night

and away in the distance a few fires burnt joyfully
and the aromas of porridge and frying meat and the laughter
and songs of the people hanged on the wind
and bright stars with the Southern Cross prominent
filled the night sky

and for years everything was undisturbed
until the rifles of hunters did resound,
and the rattle of machines was unheard,
until modern civilization stepped in
when the gold and diamond mines came
and people declared the stretched out ground as their own property
and development went east, west, south and north

and nowhere there was a place of rest to be found

as in the vastness of nature
and in the concrete cities nature had faded to parks
and development just circled out further and further,
to buildings with walls of glass

as man sentenced himself continually
to the pursuit of work and money
and of the plain and its inhabitants nothing was left
than a mere legend that sometimes did surprise children
while people were continually searching for a greater meaning to life.

Gert Strydom

The Plain Becomes Disorderly

The plain becomes disorderly, is turned upside down
when the canons of Ratel armoured cars thunder,
when rocket-launching trucks fire off their charges,
when for days everything is aflame

and then the river rushes down in that drenched summer,
soldiers are cut to the bone
by the unending barrage fire

and where villages had been
broken sacks hang and flutter
on rusted thorny wire

and all that is left is forsakenness,
the pieces of broken humanity of a shattered people
in the inaccessible pillage that war brings.

Gert Strydom

The Poet On Holiday In December

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

(1)

It's now half past eleven and the stars are bright in the dark night.
Janneman, Letitia and the children are not ready to leave
where you and I and Hannes do wait in your car on them
as we want to travel to the sea, to a special holiday place.
Half night-blind I do not want to drive the car
and we travel to a fuel-station to fill it up
where in the restaurant I find a half-drunk white man
that invites the police from a squad-car to a meal
from fear that they will arrest him on his way back to Brakpan.
the fuel tank of the car is filled and behind Janneman's VW SUV we follow,
you drive slowly as our safety is important to you,
we drive to the N3 freeway past the new petroleum facility,
hear guinea fowls call and doves coo everywhere in the veldt,
I see the red tail-lights of his trailer peeping at us.

(2)

I see the red tail-lights of his trailer peeping at us
where I can only contribute a thousand one hundred rand,
where you and Hannes are paying and do not want a further cent from me.
We pass trucks hauling heavy loads of steal to the sea,
in conversations you touch only on the wonder of love,
while nothing do worry us on this wonderful trip
but at the first fuel-station Janneman does complain about the vibration of his
car
where the sunrise at Harrismith is breathtaking in beauty.
Janneman stops and little FiFie (Gwenevieve) talks about the canvas of Jesus,
I do take photographs and later at Howick we stop at the windmills,
where we wait on Hanri, Herbert and their children,
buy the most wonderful pepper-steak pies and it becomes late
while we look at the lovely Natal midlands
while the grand-children frolic around and play laughing with each other.

(3)

While the grand-children frolic around and play laughing with each other
I remember how later they sit together drinking coffee,
it becomes a bright hot tranquil sunny day
and while we drive we look at where the sea lies shimmering.
It's Freedom Day and Scottburgh is full of a hodgepodge of people,
beneath the holiday apartments a Caspir is parked, the access is controlled,
and with cries of 'a bullet for a boor' the black people are past angry,

where the police do send us away from the beach for our own safety.
When we walk to buy groceries a black youth growls to you:
'white-woman, you are so white that you make my eyes burn, '
where he and twenty others sit on the pavement and I do restrain myself
and barred is the blue ocean and milk-white beach.
We watch television and the black people gambol till late
while I wonder why even children do hate unknown white people?

(4)

While I wonder why even children do hate unknown white people
outside an angry mob gathers and the police do drive up and down in the street,
there are police-dogs barking and growling at the rioting people
and over a public address system orders are given to the crowd,
they are forced to leave the beach in the early hours of the morning,
some are arrested while a multitude jogs past,
outside women are screaming, some are arguing and they are in rage
and I wonder how this strange behaviour does benefit them?
Very early in the morning we are dressed and ready,
do walk in tranquillity to the beach to swim for the first time
and you laugh cheerfully while the sun hangs as a red ball over the sea,
while everything on the new morning looks peaceful at this holiday-spot,
as if a person cannot guess anything about the previous night's uproar,
still a person does remain afraid of a great kind of lingering danger.

(5)

Still a person does remain afraid of a great kind of lingering danger
but cheerfully together we do splash around in the waves
where we do enjoy the holiday that we were longing for,
do body-surf from much deeper to steady ground.
After breakfast together with the children we are hunting for shells,
where Hannes finds a valuable intact beautiful specimen,
and we do carry the shells that we find around in a towel.

I have to stop to take photographs of anemones and coral-reefs.
Exuberant like a mere child you do find the loveliest shells
while we do climb up and down to pools in the rough rocks,
the sun, the sea and beauty does blind a person
while in loveliness the sea glitters to the horizon
and many miles are walked on the beach
where we do experience times that a person cannot tell in words.

(6)

Where we do experience times that a person cannot tell in words
we do visit the crocodile-park where a rain-storm catches us,
where I carry Fifie (Gwenevieve) around and gravel do gnash beneath my shoes
where enchanting times are experience, are lied down in memories.
It's the kind of holiday that we would want to experience again,
while we do hunt for days for shells walking to and thro,
almost every morning is full of sunshine and fresh,
where we do make new oaths to each other,
where from early we do splash around in the sea,
until the busses and trains full of black people do arrive in the afternoons
and beaches become unsafe for us,
where in the afternoons we wash off the salt at the showers,
and dumbfounded we are from the people in front of the apartments
while they do sometimes scream and half-naked cause an uproar.

(7)

While they do sometimes scream and half-naked cause an uproar
we do frisk around in the swimming-pool of the apartments
while the police does protect the beach and road
and speechless we were at the behaviour of a multitude
but at a time the holiday was past,
with beautiful things and events our experiences were full
and on a hot sunny summer day I was driving home,
did stop at the place where the blades of the windmills do whirl around.
On the way through the mountain passes we found a man driving a SLK
Mercedes
who in a fright jumped to his feet in an open car and waved at me,
waving with his arms while his hair was blowing in the wind
where he was stuck behind an old pick-up truck that was turning off
and like this I remember where I am writing down each beautiful day,
it's now half past eleven and the stars are bright in the dark night

[Reference: "Die digter met vakansie" (The poet on holiday)by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

The Pond With Water Lilies

Rooted down into the pond
the water lily's leaves go beyond

the open surface, does cover almost all of the water,
which do fill the battling ground, the small filled crater,

while here and there patches are left open
being places where almost anything could happen,

where the butterfly flutters as to the flowers it passes by
and inquisitive for something to hunt hangs the dragonfly.

The dragonfly rainbow sparkles like liquid metal on the hunt for meat
as it flashes past battle ready to something that it can eat

while much later the eggs of the butterfly hatch in ravenous worms
and enemies do come to prey in all kinds of forms:

as birds landing at the very edge, cats prowling around it
and at a time each one waiting on the moment to strike and hit

while the children's dogs stare at their own reflection
or deeper still into the water beyond and from them there is no protection.

Golden-fishes prowl around looking for mosquito larva as their food
and that everything must survive somehow is understood,

smaller fish swim around and avoid being eaten by the bigger one
and hide among the stems and roots until it is gone

and this cycle of life where each thing does on each other prey
has been in place since the sin-fall day

where smaller systems do fit into bigger ones on which they do depend
and together all do function as if serving each and all without an end

to make a living world where you and I do only the flowers see
where they look as if they are drifting and to us everything looks pretty.

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Gert Strydom

The Poor Bugger Doesn't Even Know What He Is Into

(in answer to Sally-Ann Murray)

How many times does a woman
set a task, wants a simple or more difficult thing
to be done by a man,
expects something like a embrace, a kiss
to proof that he is in love with her?

But when he does she rationalizes
that he is only great at that thing
and thinks about something else
for him to venture in, to proof his love

and the poor bugger doesn't even know
what he is into
and how does a man understand
a woman really well
when she doesn't even know herself?

Let me draw a picture to explain:
it's a cloudy day and Penny wants to swim
and invites Johnny to join her
at the pool
and Johnny doesn't really feel up to it,
looks with a worried eye
at the clouds drawing nearer,
at lightning bolts bashing down in the distance

but to make Penny happy Johnny gets undressed,
dresses in swimming trunks, ventures in,
dives from the springboard
in a perfect somersault
and then things are pretty great
between the two of them
but even before they get out of the pool
where rain, hail and thunder
greet them
Penny is convinced that Johnny
has only proofed that he can dive and swim.

[Reference: Surfacing by Sally-Ann Murray]

Gert Strydom

The Power Of Destiny

When I was but a child
I saw a red tractor,
hit a black boulder
and get jacked right over.

Red dust clouds
rushed into the air
from the spinning wheels,
but the grim reality
of the crushed driver
was there for all to see.

Till this day
the power of destiny,
stays with me.

I wonder if the driver
was late
and drove past that rock,
if it would have happened
at another time and place?

Gert Strydom

The Power Of Words

Sometimes when you had
an idea for a poem
you didn't jot it down
and let it be
to fade away into the naught
as if it really didn't matter
or your words had lost their power

or was there a hidden fear,
something that you didn't
want to talk about
or something that you didn't
want to appear,
something that you were afraid
would kill your luck
or disturb your thoughts?

When we spoke at times
you would sarcastically say
go and write a poem about it
and I wonder if you really
didn't care about writing
or just not about me
or was it jealousy?

Sometimes when the words
of a great poem came to me
you would demand that I immediately
do something for you
to proof my love
and not give me the opportunity
to capture the sacred words.

Yet, as time went by
and I had to leave
the words came back to you
and great verses appeared
and you said that I could string out
poems to the nth power

and wanted me
to write great messages as well
and I was afraid that card like lines
would kill the magic of words in me.

Gert Strydom

The Preacher (Free Verse Sonnet)

Daily he got up in the wagon of the train
with his big family-Bible in his hand
did pull his bright red, or green, or blue tie right
coughed and did talk about forgiveness, love and mercy
that God will bring a big judgement on the earth.
The pretty blonde with her miniskirt and blouse
did opposite me blush bloody red
did close the luring eyes of her long eyelashes
or did only look down and the businessman that tried to woo her
where almost right against her he sat,
did become tense and serious, opened his briefcase,
did take a book with rows of figures out of it
and I sat humbly with a bowed head
when that preacher prayed for us, prayed for the whole world.

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Gert Strydom

The Primrose (Novelinee)

Quite early in spring it is flowering,
delicate flowers on an erect stem
while all the birds in excitement sing,
at the beginning of spring I see them,
there is something in its simple beauty,
drawing big butterflies that do flutter,
is given in love, respect and duty,
in the colour of yellow-white butter,
bringing sweet words that other can utter.

Gert Strydom

The Prodigal Son (Sonnet)

I want to go to my dad, from here go home,
stand up from the way of life where the horror is catching up with me,
although I have already set my own lot in drunkenness and fornication,
I want to go home, to where my farther will understand in his great heart
and the pigs do have more than enough pods to eat under the golden moon,
but here I am in a famine in a far-off land and hungry and lost
and I will cry against my father's breast and ask forgiveness a thousand times,
will for all my unrighteousness goes man to man to stand opposite him
and say: "Father, forgive me as I have sinned against you and against God,
just make me a hireling that do work down there in your fields,
I will catch and fleece the sheep and plant rows and rows of corn, will tend to the
cattle,
as I did stray off greatly and I have been thoughtless while being a adult,
look here I am now like one of your servants young and strong,
I will go right now, I cannot wait here any longer, although I am affected by sin.

Gert Strydom

The Prodigal Son [2]

I

Hunger gnaws at my stomach
and a much deeper hunger of which the pain does not want to fade

when intensely the sun hangs day-long above me,
when I catch the smell of the farmer's barbeque fire

and I have to cover my nakedness with rags
while I have got to graze on pods like a mere animal.

II

When the sun sets in the distance over the hillocks
in my hart there is a kind of uneasiness

and in the dark night when the stars are shining
it's as if I can see my father beckoning in the distance

as if my days of rollicking and jolliness
has brought me to a time of deep regret

and I know that I have got to go back,
to be accountable to my father

and my heart feels heavy-laden while I walk the last bit of the way,
can hear blue thunder roaring in the distance

and in the rain my farther stands waiting
like only a farther can, for a child that comes out of the night.

Gert Strydom

The Properties Of A Leader

A leader must have faith
and trust that his plans
and things are going to work.

a Leader must have integrity
and be able to find a way,
through good and evil
and must not seek his own interest.

a Leader must have a vision
and look at the future
and make long-term plans,
rather than to look
at the here and now.

a Leader must be able to act resolutely
and to stay with his decisions
and not to change,
like the wind blows
and be like one
that sees the unseeable.

[Reference: "And by faith Moses,
when he come to years
refused to be called the son
of Pharaoh's daughter;

Choosing rather to suffer affliction
with the people of God,
than to enjoy the pleasures
of sin for a season;

Esteeming the reproach of Christ
greater riches than the treasures of Egypt;
for he had respect
unto the recompence of the reward.

By faith he forsook Egypt,

not fearing the wrath of the king:
for he endured,
as seeing him who is invisible.”
Hebrews 11: 24-27]

Gert Strydom

The Pure Ethereal Sky (Cavatina)

The pure ethereal sky, the darkness,
the blazing sun,
the blue-white stars and the great golden moon
might fade each one;
eternal does Your light shine from before
time had begun,
forever supreme reigns Your will divine
and yet Your great love, faith and hope are mine.

Gert Strydom

The Queen Of The Namib

In the almost waterless Namib desert
where mirages look like water
that is far in the distance
and the sweat makes streams on my face

I notice between the red-brown dunes
the pretty pink flowers of a cactus
that looks almost like opened shells

while the sun scorches white
in the bright blue sky
and it feels as if
death is present everywhere

and it is known as the queen of the Namib
and it flowers on stems filled with thorns
where it defies the wind and weather.

[Reference: Queen of the Namib with the scientific name "Hoodia gordonii".]

Gert Strydom

The Queen Of The Namib [1]

In the almost waterless Namib desert
where mirages look like water
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where it defies the wind and weather.

Gert Strydom

The Rain Platter Against The Closed Window

The rain platter against the closed window,
lightning bolts flame down in sheer blue-white light
and outside everything flees before the storm
as if it's a kind of gigantic beast growling.

I have not know a person like you,
who likes to dance in the pouring rain,
as if you want to touch the sheer thunder
that comes powerful like the voice of God.

You cling to me with your wet rain washed clothes
with the smell of your twisted damp hair,
with the heat of your body glowing through
the covering, with a deep need for togetherness

with a intimate thing in every single kiss,
tasting like honey and ripe fruit
and in the depths of your eyes there is happiness
while my poems, my words fall like rain on you

and in the morning I will pick fresh flowers,
arms full of grass carnations,
sweet smelling jasmine, some roses
and many, many more bunches of kisses.

Gert Strydom

The Rain Splashes Soft Against My Cheek (Crystalline)

The rain splashes soft against my cheek,
while it patters wet to the earth.

Gert Strydom

The Rainbow

I saw it first,
That giant magic tree
Just over the Magalies mountains

With thousands of Jacaranda trees
Lining the streets acknowledging
That soon the sun would shine again.

The pepper tree in the front
Of the yard took its notice
While birds started singing in it,

And the avocado tree stopped lashing the roof
And was looking at the majesty
Of different colours.

That great clear rainbow was huge
Spreading its beauty and indicated
The end of days of rain,

But our bedroom's windows
Were drawn close
With thick mauve curtains
Fencing you off
In your own cave
Which was as dark as a grave

Where you hated any light
And laid in darkness
As if the fourteen day's rain
Would last forever
And the only safe place
Was the big warm copper bed

And yet, outside the sun
Was hanging brilliant white
In a clear blue sky
While you wished to die
And felt more blue

Than the heaven above

And when I opened the curtains,
Opened the windows wide,
You saw me as a member
Of the inquisition
And thought that I was throwing
A searchlight in your eyes
As if I wanted to question you
And I wonder why
You wanted to spend the whole holiday
Sleeping and playing dead?

Gert Strydom

The Raven (In Answer To Edgar Allan Poe)

On a summer December I do remember
the sun like an ember, poetry on the floor
life in pieces, while my troubles increases
nothing eases the sorrow for the girl Lenore
while I read of a farmer who lived long before
while destiny had closed a door.

In that new tomorrow, the book I did borrow
and my own sorrow was replaced by the lore
with pain in my heart, life was falling apart,
my art was shattered as the tale I did explore
out of the blue I saw a raven black as ore
with its feet red with gore.

With a bolt of lightning that was frightening
happened something to the bird I did deplore,
with eyes green, her hair shone a bluish sheen
the loveliest girl I have seen then came to fore;
with her I would do almost anything just to score,
suddenly I did her adore.

Her voice had a melody, life was fair and free,
it just could not be, surf crashed on the shore,
I was not fit I did deem, or it was just a dream;
nothing was as it seem, it was a fable from yore,
I was thinking I am nuts, totally mad therefore,
but nothing I wanted more.

She was human alright, as we kissed in daylight,
loved during the night; to stay I did her implore,
I had just met her, suddenly we loved each other
without a bother, in my back her nails did bore
and what did my life without her have in store?
Our souls had bonded forevermore

Gert Strydom

The Raven 2 (Free Verse Sonnet)

With fever in a dream it landed next to me,
did wander in the mad dreams of my mind,
screeched and with red eyes looked me up and down,
walked up and down from one side to the other
and black its feathers gleamed like the darkness
but that bird was in a rage when I climbed out,
it came from somewhere as a messenger
and the ways of it was much too clever for a raven
but the rite of your prayer expelled it
and hot and soft against me was your naked body,
that I am a man and still do exist was very clear
and holy things I cannot write down right here
only that love do all things placate, seal and cover
and your kisses did revive me from a deep sleep.

Gert Strydom

The Real Depths Of Love We Do Not Know (Roundelay)

In the morning we are awakening
to the rising sun as a shining thing,
during the year seasons come and they go;
while the real depths of love we do not know.

From a baby's first inquiring small cry,
until the very day that we do die
endlessly rivers to the sea do flow;
while the real depths of love we do not know.

From the very act of our own creation
to sin our parents had an invitation
and by his own death God did his love show,
while the real depths of love we do not know.

We teach each child, our own daughter and son,
the principles of love until we are gone,
while the wind eternally dies and blow;
while the real depths of love we do not know.

Gert Strydom

The Realization Stays (Couplets)

(after Breyten Breytenbach)

The realization stays in my mind
that in my life you are lovely and kind,

that the course of it makes no difference
of how sincere you bring to me reference,

that I do find acquiescence and love from you
with faith and trust just like a child would do,

this is what my memories bring in their recall
where I do not know what will us in the future befall

but do know that your kind of love does stay
and to me it comes free on each and every day.

[Reference:"36. die gedanste dans" (36. the danced dance)by
Breyten Breytenbach.]

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Gert Strydom

The Red Arum Lilies

The red arum lilies that I did bring to you
you pressed into the ground at the garden-flat
as if you wanted to forget me
and when we later did marry and live together
you found those flowers again,
did know of a better place for them
and pulled them one after the other out of the ground
and planted them at the palisades in a row.

Gert Strydom

The Red Ball (Crystalline)

I want to catch the sun's red ball,
before it light the world with its warmth.

Gert Strydom

The Red Breasted Dove

The red breasted dove swooped
over me
and giddy eyed
went to land
on the fallen tree
overgrown by flowers
in the rock garden
watching itself mirrored
in the window.

It didn't see
the ginger Persian cat
until the last moment
and with paws stretched out
almost landed on its head.

It still had flight and swooped up
landing in the driveway
at the gate instead,
where the golden cocker Spaniel
went for it.

It flew up into the nearest tree
and disgusted cooed at the dog
who sat watching it
with big brown eyes.

Gert Strydom

The Red Candles Are Almost Burn To The Brim

The red candles are almost burn to the brim
and the faint golden light still flickers,
in the wind that goes through the bedroom.

Your eyes are big and golden and it's like
I can climb down in the depts of them
and there's a dropp of sweet glittering on your brow.

Your light skin is soft against me
and I see how your one breast still prominently pointed pink-brown
rises up and down while you breathe

The wine glasses are empty and the scent
of Berg kelder port
hangs strong in the air,

but your lips are much sweeter and more caressing
than any wine and it's as if our passion
doesn't want to stop tonight.

Somewhere in the garden a bird calls its mate
and I hear the church bell clanging eleven o'clock,
but the night is young and your lips tickle my ear.

Gert Strydom

The Red Weaver

The red weaver flies from a plate of bulrush
dances on a branch while it slap its red wings,
walking whistling to and thro,
before it whispers twittering deep in the reeds.

It flutters around draws sparks through the air,
swoops down at it's weaved nest
with a beak full of grass, twigs or some hay,
flies up and down and suddenly back.

There is something pretty to it that catches the eye
when through the blue sky it draws a glowing line,
when early in the morning it awakes me
when it hangs twittering at its small nest,

the red weaver flies from a plate of bulrush
before it whispers twittering deep in the reeds.

Gert Strydom

The Red-Black Rose (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In the world the tempest of the rain and wind was strong
and while the summer sun was white hot and high
like an angel you my precious love did catch my eye
while a red-black rose its perfume gave and wilted young

while under a cobalt-blue sky its fragrant beauty hung,
you spoke to my heart and soul while days passed by
but broken into pieces my heart did far too many tears cry
as destiny on its tumult way swept over it and went along

while my poems did my joy, love and woes record
while like a dying thing our love was almost spent
yet after more than three decades it does survive still
and still our love do grown by its own accord
but like everything in life it is far too evanescent
and yet its essence do still all of these pages fill.

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Gert Strydom

The Redbreast

On the garden gate it does sing
its welcoming song to the rain of spring
and dances up and down and to and thro
as if this song is its essence of living

and so it does continue while the first drops fall
as if it has a build in knack for the rain to call

and yet on a sunny bright hot day
it does on the mown lawn hunt its prey
in coiled movements do deadly peck
and from its sharp gaze nothing gets away

while for a microsecond it does inspect
be it a snail, worm or a insect.

As a terrifying little machine that does some killing
it picks up a twisting little thing
or using a stone as an anvil hits a snail shell against it
where it's preoccupied on its own instinct for living.

Gert Strydom

The Revealing

Never in the time that I exist
did You declared human secrets
like now to me, things intertwined so deep,
given to me with illustrious meaning

enable me to become aware of the true facts
of mighty people threatening me and my nation
and there are pain and sorrow everywhere
coming from oppression and I cannot remain silent any longer.

Everyone wants a bit of happiness, an own little place
and now the smudging clouds are rolling away like fog
and without any fear You want me to go
with big and sincere pity

to them that are the enemies of me and my nation,
in spite of resistance, to go to them
to warn them, to spell your sentence out,
to tell about your judgement that is threatening.

Lord these people do not fear You,
they are caught up in modern knowledge,
believe that You do not exist, are only a myth
but now I will put it straightforward with all inherent meaning:

I have irrefutable prescience that destruction waits
and this is not something that I allege
and the coming disaster is unknown in world history
where dying people, weakly gasp for breath.

l'Envoi

Lord God, if these oppressors do not come to repentance,
then let Your judgement fall, if they do not pray to You.
Almighty Lord, loosen Your winds to destroy,
give the command for Your war, as I have to reveal Your will.

Gert Strydom

The Rinkhals In Muckleneuk Ridge

We were living in the mansion
in Muckleneuk Ridge
when Heinrich wheeled the
rubbish bin out to the street
to leave it for the collectors,
and the red haired neighbour woman
started to shout at him.

I was just getting out of my Volkswagen Polo
and within a minute I was there
like a avenging angel,
telling her to leave the boy alone
and that the pavement
doesn't belong to her
and that we have got the right
to put out the rubbish bin
for the rubbish collectors.

She got red with anger in her face,
hissed like a snake trying to spit
and cursed me in English
and I told her to get lost.

That woman was aquatically
quite funny and always dressed
in a track suit,
(as if she had no other
type of clothes)
living in a dilapidated house
like a hermit
with rusting sink plate roof
and weeds standing knee high
in her garden
in that rich man's neighbourhood.

It was when the dogs
tried to catch a half grown coucal
which the wind had blown
out of its nest

and I jumped down the steps
of some terraces
to rescue the poor thing

and I and that wild bird
got to love each other
and it would start to scream
with excitement as soon
as it heard my car
coming near

that Heinrich trapped a venomous
ring-neck spitting cobra
in our garden
and I wanted to kill it
and you said
that even snakes
have a right to live.

I told you that the snake
was apt to kill somebody
as I was leaving for work
and you took the kids
to let it free in the field,
(or so I was told) ,

but a few days later
that utterly rude woman
was really surprised
and screamed for her life
when a snake hissed at her
spitting in her eyes.

[Rinkhals = ring-neck spitting cobra.]

Gert Strydom

The River

I see a couple of leaves
spinning around in the river
in a small whirlpool
circling back,
around and around.

A canoe glides past
with its occupant waving,
dressed in brilliant orange,
and it sails on
without losing motion.

Tranquillity washes over me
where I am fishing
next to the fluid continuity
that looks the same,
but very subtle the hue changes
like the colour of the sky.

My eyes are on the policemen
of the fishing lines,
but I watch the vibrant river
rushing past, the deep blue sky
and some finches sitting twittering
on their nests in a willow tree.

I am here to catch some equilibrium,
to get balance in a busy life,
to hear the river's voice,
for a time to let nature
talk to me and to experience
sun, wind, sky and breeze.

I think of you and I
and how suddenly passion
like the river gets an own power,
goes to a new high water mark

and although your body

is so familiar in aspects of shape,
texture and structure
there's always something new.

You leave me breathless
and like the water
make me rise
in power and strength
and bring serenity to me.

Gert Strydom

The River [2}

Where it whispers over rocks and pebbles
the river flows on
through timid pools

sometimes through dried up dongas
as a mere stream
flowing with its life giving liquid

at times in flood
thundering with water
streaming over its set banks.

Native women carry buckets
balanced on their heads
to its banks that they scoop full

seeing their own reflection,
hearing the murmur of its song
before they travel on.

Commercial farmers spray their crops
of maize and wheat from pivot points
pump water for their herds of cattle and sheep

that graze upon the fields
and pray for rain
when the river runs dry

and then day after day
watch the sky
for signs of falling showers

and where it whispers over rocks and pebbles
the river flows on twisting and meandering
through timid pools on it's way to the sea.

Gert Strydom

The Road Ahead Dissolved Into Dust

The road ahead dissolved into dust
and we could not see the track
nor any of the other fighting vehicles
consisting out of Olifant main battle tanks
and Ratel armoured cars that were ahead of us.

Bushes were covering the veldt
on all sides and around us,
the early morning fog
had drifted over from the river
and worse still tried to cover things

and in the distance I heard the cannon
of a enemy tank blasting off a projectile
and almost felt the impact hitting us,
but it shrieked past

and at speed we left the track
rammed through some bushes
and the Ratel-90 armoured car
draw to a halt
and our return shot
found its mark

and we had to take another one
to make dead sure
of the destruction
of the Russian manufactured T-55 tank
before speeding away
trying to avoid being hit

and found another target
and one more and another after that
and later even filling the night
with bright flashing canon flame,
sending death out with projectiles
to whichever enemy that we found.

The Road Ahead Was Meandering

The road ahead was meandering,
while I drove at a steady speed
taking the path as it did swing
with the wind rushing at my chest and feet,

the sun shining hot on my body
and the action of driving,
had a pleasure to it, while I felt free
a part of the motorcycle

which roared with power beneath me
and I was one with the black stretching road
while far in the distance I could see
a truck creeping along with its load

and I enjoyed speed and sheer tranquillity,
felt one with the passing nature
and the elements of the wind and sun had a kind of affinity
while the feeling was in perfection awesome and pure.

Gert Strydom

The Road Back Home

Controlling a motorcycle on the road
is a lethal skill at which
you have to be a master
in order to survive on the road.

Dodging lorries, cars and luxury busses,
overtaking some very slow vehicles
on route twenty-one
in order to turnoff at the Benoni off ramp
I was in the left hand lane
when a old lady almost scattered me
on the rushing tarmac
by changing lanes while
I was right next to her.

The narrow piece of road
on the other side of the yellow line
came to my rescue
but anger ripped through me
and enraged dragons
wanted to throw flaming words at her

and the guy behind me
with the black pee pot on his head
driving a Hardly Davidson
almost ran right into her
and said the words instead
sounding like "you unreal foolish woman"
but realistic it was something much worse
while a car carrying truck
changed lanes cutting us off

and I still smell the rubber
from my motorbike's braking wheels
and both of our motorcycles
narrowly avoided hitting that truck

but fortunately rows of cars parted
to let us through and the freezing wind,

some heavy fog and light drizzle
was with me the rest of the way home.

Gert Strydom

The Rock

Departed species are caught
to eternity in stone
and the mastodon, Compsognathus, Archaeopteryx
are forever frozen like plants, trees
and marine life buried in shale,
limestone and sandstone.

Yet, the rock of the ages
are still sheltering me
from the impact of destiny
in a world of sin
where the havoc
of life wants to enter in

and alone by His sacrifice
I am totally free.

Gert Strydom

The Rod Of God

I

What a mighty rod I saw
through which God
did His wondrous deeds
from the moment
that Moses met Him
on holy ground
at that miraculous burning bush

turning into a snake
that consumed other snakes
before becoming a staff again,
striking the water
of the river Nile to become blood,
making the fish die
and the river stink
making frogs appear all over,

striking the dust
invoking lice to appear,
calling big stones of hail
and thunder to fall
from the sky,
causing locusts to appear
along with the East wind

opening the Red Sea
and closing it on the Egyptian enemy
to wipe men, horses and chariots away,

splitting the rock open
for a stream of water to flow out
and butting alive with almond flowers
while resting in the Holy Ark
in the sight of the almighty God.

II

I wonder where it is now,
to where did the Holy Ark disappear
and the Rod of God?

While time glided away running on
day-by-day until thousands of years
have past
and people doubt its existence
and call it just another tale,
but to me the story rings true.

Gert Strydom

The Room Was Brightly Lit With The Sun Streaming In

(after Stephen Watson)

Afterwards we both were dazed on a natural high,
where your lovely body did cling to mine
as if the act of making love did not want to separate us,
your brown-green eyes were filled with specs,
with a blush your face were filled with happiness
and your smile was full of joy and tranquillity
while the moment lingered as if it would not past,
the room was brightly lit with the sun streaming in
with the wind only touching every now and then
the curtains stirring them and leaving them,
and the smell of making love was everywhere
was like that of rain that had fallen on the earth.

It was another sweltering hot summer day
with only a slight wind coming from the beach
with the sun scorching down in a cobalt sky
which is ordinary for Scottburgh,
at the very edge of Africa on the ocean
where in the late afternoon the sun was high,
and unusual for this December holiday time everything was quiet
with only a car passing every now and then outside,

Young people laughed at the swimming pool below the apartment,
we heard the splashing of someone making a bomb,
doves did coo their love songs in the big old tree
and your skin was as smooth as silk and soft against me
where we were part of our own little world in the bedroom
but also a part of the bigger world out side, which ran to the beach
with every small sound that the light breeze did carry to us
as if we both were everywhere and also just right there
but this room, this very moment,
made us aware love will never be as right here
in this place where we were living,

where I am now only reliving memories
of days which are running months back
but which will come again on another holiday

as the normal ancient rite of people that love each other
where I have longed to be carefree
as that time on holiday at the sea.

[Reference:"9. Another Space" by Stephen Watson.]

Gert Strydom

The Rugby Player

Exercising he jogs around the field,
stops, stretches, do some push-ups,
pushing with power against the scrum cart,
later running some sprints

between the grid lines
thinking about the tackling mob
how to avoid,
to sidestep at speed
how to plunge through

with almost raving fury
on the battle plain, when the war
of rugby rages,
adrenaline and sheer willpower
overcomes the enemy.

Gert Strydom

The Sabbath Day

I see the sun setting in the west
and lingering is the Sabbath rest
and of all the days in the week
I do love the day of the Lord the best

as there is something that it does possess
and on this day all of my worries become less
while a kind of tranquillity stays with me
and from God's law I will not digress

as holy is His sacred day
and any other day may be as it may
but this one with my life I will sanctify
and in the rest I will work and play

and I do know that God does visit me
on the day that He deems holy.

Gert Strydom

The Sad Truth Is That Love Does Not End

The sad truth is
that love does not end
when its dream still lingers
and it is never spent,
if it was really true

and although it flows
like sand through fingers
falling to bits and pieces
it never really decreases
as the thing of you and me
and even treason is forgiven
in the coming and going of seasons

and feelings are indeterminably extended
in the hope of it been mended.

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Gert Strydom

The Sandpiper [2] (Italian Sonnet)

(after Elizabeth Bishop)

The roaring thunder of the coming wave and the trembling
of the sand beneath its tiny feet lets it run with more speed
while the beach hisses with water coming sheet upon sheet
and that sandpiper is a brave running small thing

that builds its whole existence around water coming and going
and when the ocean drains it does for moments remain for its need
to scan and to pick up the morsels on which it does feed,
it focuses with obsession while its world is constantly changing

while the beach for a minute moment is sunny and clear
or filled with drops and mist of the next crunching wave
and millions of pebbles in different colours it does see
before it runs again without any kind of fear
before the water rushes out and for something it does crave
as if this is the only way in life for it to be.

[Reference: 'Sandpiper' by Elizabeth Bishop.]

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Gert Strydom

The Sardine Run

Near autumn each year
shoals of spawning sardines gather
to travel from their living arias
(in the Southern and Western Cape)
along the hot waters of the Agulhas Current
moving inshore against the coastline
(up to about Durban)
before dispersing and travelling
back to their home waters.

Hungry gannets hover above the shoals
before diving from heights
of up to thirty meters
with wings half closed
piercing the water like arrowheads

gulping down fish
as fast as they can,
floating on the water in great numbers,
having lost the ability to fly.
squawking as if complaining
that they cannot eat anymore.

On the fringes of the shoals
huge numbers of sharks, stingray, kob,
skates, kingfish, tunny,
barracuda, snoek, tuna, and bonito lurk
in the warm water
but never going
right into the shoals

and ashore numerous anglers
are trying to catch game fish
all along the coastline
while the sardine run is on

and some people
gather buckets full of sardines
from the waves on the beach

if the fish dare it
too near to the shore.

Gert Strydom

The Saviour (Free Verse Sonnet)

God did make a promise when sin did come
that a saviour, a lamb to sacrifice will be provided
and the whole Old Testament does point to Him
where it speaks about worship and returning to God,
where God as a human on the cross makes reconciliation,
even the Roman soldiers are totally astonished
as nobody can talk away or disguise the love of God
and of His omnipotence even those guarding the grave do know
when that rock in front of the grave did break into pieces.
When Jesus did rise as God from death,
He had compassion with Mary Magdalene in the garden,
did tell her not to touch Him
as He had to go back to His Heavenly Father
after He had paid the ransom for you and for me.

Gert Strydom

The School Toilet

Early in the afternoon they did almost like a band
smoke in the toilet
and it was Camel, Lexington and every kind of cigarette
when they did enjoy it to their later misery
and I did not mix with this kind of fun
but about the girls we did talk in depth,
did tell each other about falling in love,
the girls that were cute and beautiful were regarded high
and the others were left out of our conversations
as everyone of us did yearn for a beautiful companion
but for their sake I was on the lookout for mister Rhode
who did come along riding on his red Vespa motor scooter
as smoking was at that time strictly prohibited
and that teacher did not take any trouble from pupils.

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Gert Strydom

The Scorching Sun Burns (Crystalline)

(for Annelize)

The scorching sun burns the sky blue
and I do so intensely love you.

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Gert Strydom

The Sea And I

I ride on a little ship round which the storm foams
with the sea trying with green fingers
to drag me down to its depths.

Still I bob up and down
while many bolts of lightning fall around me
and I see myself mirrored
in the mighty water
folding around me

and in unfathomable depths
I see my spirit
struggling on without boundaries,
interminable of what destiny determines
and it is ready to survive
and bonded in friendship until death.

[Reference: Les Fleurs du Mal: Man and the sea by Charles Pierre Baudelaire.]

Gert Strydom

The Sea Is Calm

The sea is calm
and the tide is low tonight,
I can see no moon
and the sieving rain
is even blotting out the stars.

Somewhere out there
I hear a ship's horn blowing in the fog
that rises from the cold deep,
next to me you lie asleep
and I wonder how our love keeps growing,
exactly what causes us to love more and more
and love to be between us like a living thing.

Gert Strydom

The Sea Is Lost In Your Eyes

The sea is lost in your eyes
and sometimes there is a kind of green
that shines right through the dark brown depths
in a secret kind of beauty,
something much deeper
than only the perception of pain
with some character shining in them
and sometimes I do continually wonder
what kind of thoughts do you think?

Gert Strydom

The Seagull

I see a gull with wings swept back
fall into the deeper blue
and with power ascend from the ocean
with a codfish of which the tail hits to both sides
and its shade glides over the mirror smooth surface with a fish
when that bird is just for another moment there.

Gert Strydom

The Seasons With You I Cannot Forget

Your smile like a lingering star's ray
shines from the early morn,
while you do brighten my life through the day
and never will you be from my soul torn.

Daleen, you follow me like a shade,
again meet me in person when we go to rest
and to me you are divinely made,
are the comfort and passion against my breast.

The seasons with you I cannot forget,
nor each following cooing dove
where in our garden early and late we met
to live a life of sincere love.

Nothing can the imprints on our hearts efface,
the memories of springs and summers in the past,
the times when we were together, did kiss and embrace,
where through turbulence and cold winters it did last.

The butterflies fluttered just out of the door,
from flower to flower on the grass so vividly green,
the fragrant roses and lilies flowered like never before
amorous like a part of lost Eden was the enraptured scene

The flowers were almost everywhere
the sparrows and finches fluttered up and away,
as children of a God that does care,
while far too quickly passes every day.

Still impressions scenes like this in my memory make
while of our garden and love God is aware,
and about everything He notes takes
where He does a lovelier garden for us prepare.

Daleen, you follow me like a shade,
again meet me in person when we go to rest
and to me you are divinely made,
are the comfort and passion against my breast.

Gert Strydom

The Second Coming

Some people call the name
of the Almighty, before they kill
and have no compassion of their deeds.

Planes filled with people
crash into two very high office towers
and burn before they collapse.

War beasts crawl on tracts
through the desert
and blow fire over a distance.

The air is filled
with flying scavengers,
that strikes more deadly than any living thing.

Oil wells are burning
like huge torches,
throwing flames and smoke into the sky.

Bombs rain down
on the guilty and innocent
and surely the entire universe takes notice.

The sphinx arises from stone
and the nightmare walks the earth,
pitiless and without compassion.

In an evil spiritus mundi man kills one another
and the second coming of the Lord of lords,
must be very near.

[References: The second coming by William Butler Yeats. Spiritus mundi=>
"Literally, the spirit of the world or analytically - the morals and mores of the
times." Matthew 24: 6-7, Revelation 11: 18, Joël 3: 9-14.]

Gert Strydom

The Second Coming (Cavatina Sequence)

(after William Butler Yeats)

Anarchy, mere madness is loose,
a president
for life is enthroned (while voted out) ,
an incident
of total corruption occurs daily,
not diffident
a country is laid waist, in merriment
brought to an utter impoverishment.

His fifth brigade cleans Matabeleland;
killing, raping;
farmers are driven from their property
just escaping
with their bare lives from some murderous crowds,
with mouth gaping
he smiles on the conquest of fertile farmland,
causing famine, in victory holds up a hand.

While havoc reigns some blood flows everywhere,
chaos is spreading,
the opposition is sent to prison,
he is leading
the country to ruin, its falling apart,
its degrading,
it looses all kinds of decent order,
some millions flee south and cross the border.

Without any conviction destruction
is on the earth,
while people want to rob, rape, pillage and kill;
are told from birth
that they have been robbed from a future,
anger they girth;
pray to their ancestor spirits for war,
surely God will now be coming once more!

[Reference: 'The Second Coming' by William Butler Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

The Second Coming [2]

It's now eons past at El-Karnak in the valley of sands of fire
that Pharaoh did ride on his chariot his pylons to admire
and anarchy, revolt rebellion has for centuries been loose
while the earth did continually continue on its own gyre

while in the wild the wolf, jackal and hyena sing selenologues
to the rising moon and the ibises in the swamped bogs
screeched their dismay at receiving no more lamentations
from the native people and only hear the barking of their dogs

and yet at Zion the hope of the second coming does remain,
of the Son of God who has the power to with love to remove pain
that the Great Day of Judgment is drawing near, is very close,
and to some people this may only be myth and something inane

yet the signs is everywhere, with famine, war and illnesses at hand
with drought, hatred, nepotism and oppression in the land.

Gert Strydom

The Second Coming 2

1

Tonight in the sky hangs a red moon
and so very ominous I do it find,
as if the destiny of man has been hewn,
it brings cold shivers to the human mind,
speckled stars in the darkness have been strewn
and I know God do constellations bind.

2

We both walk out on the dew-splashed lawn,
do look up on high at the Greater Bear,
are to the majesty of Orion silently drawn,
smiling you do point out the Lady's Chair.
"How strange seems the sky, " it does to you dawn.
Silently I do embrace you with care.

3

"It's through lovely Orion that He will come, "
Again destiny does in my mind loom
while you do a solemn hymn to God hum,
close the gardenia and jasmine do bloom,
loudly music boom from the nearby slum
and I think about salvation and doom.

4

The breeze silently bares the flower scents
and the great love of God does come to me,
intimate to each other we bare sentiments
and in His omnipotent will things will be
as nothing can stop the coming events
and the fragrance is present lingeringly.

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Gert Strydom

The Secret Mine

Very long ago
when the world was still young
skilled miners and metal smiths
as members of the Lala tribe
lived in the valley
next to the Tugela river
and at night
their smelting ovens glowed red
while they were smelting
and casting metal.

With their arrival in the Tugela valley
the Zulus left these people unhindered
as they had valuable skills

and they supplied the Zulus
with iron hoes, spears and war axes
and as duty
also provided beautiful silver armbands
in different designs
from a secret silver mine.

When Shaka became ruler
of the whole Zululand
he gave these armbands
as a great token of honour
to his best, most brave
and most highly regarded followers

but then some of notables
got a obscure skin disease
whereupon the witchdoctors
were called in.

The sangomas accused the miners
of treason
and said that they were descendants
of the Karinga tribe

who the Zulus defeated at the Zimbabwe ruins
and that they are taking retaliation
and are bewitching them with the armbands
and are poisoning
the leaders of the Zulu nation.

Shaka then gathered in
every armband that he could
and with the next delivery
that the Lala people made,
they were tortured
to tell the whereabouts
of the secret silver mine.

Then a whole regiment was sent
with al the armbands to the mine
and every member of the Lala people
were gathered there

and were murdered to the last child
and thrown on top of the armbands
into the mining pits
to let spirits guard
that prohibited mine,

but there are still
a few of those armbands left
and fortune hunters
in the Tugela valley are seeking
for the ruins of that secret mine.

Gert Strydom

The Secret Room

In the big old white house against the hill
my mother had a pantry, a secret place
which she locked,
where she kept ingredients
for cakes, cookies, ginger beer
and all the lovely surprises that she made

and there were baking powder,
icing sugar, raisins, cherries
and dried fruit
and sometimes I would wiggle
the lock open
with a small piece of wire

and just looked at the shelves
with stacked things,
in the twilight of the room
trying catch the great smell
of everything around me,
but wouldn't dare to touch a single thing.

Gert Strydom

The Secret War That Is Raging In South Africa

The secret war that is raging in South Africa
asks for white blood,
these black people first kill and torture
before they take your possessions.

Incident upon incident I can tell about
where white families have been killed,
just think about the Orffer family
who was killed in Stellenbosch

on Friday 31 July 1994
by black people:

First the trustworthy black maid Sannetjie,
who tried to ward off the attackers with her bare hands
like a Amakeia of days gone,
then the blonde small girl

then the dad and the deaf little boy
and last the mother
were chopped with a axe to death
and everywhere there was blood.

Nowadays the tendency is
to first bind up the head of the family,
the man, to assault him
and to torture him to death in front of his family

and then to rape the women,
even toddlers and babies
and if the women are lucky
they survive

when the criminals
leave with their possessions
and it seems as if the police
do not want to, or are not able to stop this thing

and then it is claimed

that these people kill and steal
because they are hungry, while people in government
sings songs to wipe out whites.

From April 1994 when Nelson Mandela became president
the wiping out of white families is our destiny,
the Afrikaner nation is in the melting pot
we who have an own culture, language and identity,

who cannot become part of the hurly-burly
are killed, not only robbed
but tortured and horribly killed
and our women and children are raped.

Even Eugene Terreblancé
had befallen this same lot
and if this is not a war
that is raging against us,

where we are systematically
bit by bit, family by family
wiped out, and the numbers
are already in the thousands, then what is it?

[References: Klaaglied: Stellenbosch, Vrydag, 31 Julie 1994 (Song of
lamentation: Stellenbosch, Friday, 31 Julie 1994) by Lina Spies. Amakeia by A.
G. Visser, Amakeia, Amakeia then and now by Gert Strydom.]

Gert Strydom

The Secretary - Bird

Out of the air it lands
with wings flapping
before the snake can stop it.
Out of the air it lands
strikes deadly at the poisonous adder
with a razor sharp beak that injures,
out of the air it lands
with wings flapping.

Gert Strydom

The Sense Of Real Loveliness (Novelinee)

Something ethereal I am seeking
like the cobalt-blue of the open sky,
something awesome not only good looking,
like the loving in my cat's golden eye.
The sweet fragrance of jasmine haunting
through the open white wooden window blows
and I am searching for beauty, something,
that does not only loveliness disclose
like the sheer deep red heart of the rose.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Serengeti Plain

(after Jan F. E, Cilliers)

Long ago the Spirit of God glided over me
when God created everything of which I do exist
and at that time everything was perfect,
my fields and flowers were still untouched
but the snake with its evil
did disguise itself in a tree
and everything was wonderful and good
until man came to sin, pain and death.

I did experience the big flood
when water fell forty days from heaven
and did stretch right over me, when all kinds of life was killed,
I did hear the thunder roaring ominous,
felt the crust of the earth break and tear at places
when the earth did divide into different continents,
did once more see and feel the sun
with butterflies, bees, birds and animals playing upon me

but now I do sleep while seasons come and go
and I lay waiting in my eternal rest
for God to come again over this earth
on His big re-creation day
and the blood of man and animals does flow
while this old world's time is running out
but continually I am astounded by the day breaking
by flowers, plants, trees and animals
and it's as if each day comes with new hope.

On my bosom the grass grows luxuriant
where wild game graze peacefully
and here and there a leopard sneaks around
but without fear a herd of giraffes walk past
until a male lion roars in the distance
and then a dust cloud rises
when all kinds of animals go rigid
and gallop away in fear into all directions.

When in the late afternoon the sun hangs lower
Long shadows are thrown by the acacia trees
when a tranquillity and silence lingers
and birds fly up and down and twitter without fear
and baboons gather together in big groups,
while meercats hop up and down in the long grass,
when springbucks triple around playfully
and a crocodile splash into the water.

[Reference: "Die vlakte" (The Plain) by Jan F. E. Cilliers.]

Gert Strydom

The Seventh Day (In Answer To Louis Esterhuizen)

Very interesting that He told them
to rule and to multiply
and after that first Sabbath's rest,
the lot of them were refreshed.

God completed his work on the seventh day,
(go and read it if you doubt.)
As God, he did not have to rest,
He was still aware of everything.

Sin later came with the snake,
not from Him or from His dream,
where the choice of man brought the separation
and still God is getting involved with man.

Gert Strydom

The Shadow Of Cain (A Reply To Edith Sitwell)

Man did not heed the cloud,
the cloud looking like the hand of man
and I saw lightning falling from the sky
and it was manmade,
thunder that exploded in flame
came down and down again

and in the dark clouds of death
the sun was blotted out
the bright cobalt sky was torn away
and men died as if being dolls made of clay

but on the hands of the living
the marks, the shadow of Cain remained
as killers of fellow men, slaughters in war
of a enemy
decided by politicians
whose hands were covered in blood

and these soldiers were young once,
only boys just out of school,
whose manhood, humanity had been stolen
and now were bomb happy
half crazy soldiers
who wanted nothing more than peace,
who needed tranquillity
and on their knees knelt to the living God
and sought his presence
while coming back from the bush,
from war, the fires of hell

begging forgiveness for taking killing shots,
for launching rockets, mortars
and throwing grenades to remain living
and was now torn in body and soul
and never complacent
offering their lives to the Greatest of generals
not knowing how to dispel
their own suffering, memories

and overpowering guilt
that made some weep

and they trusted
that the gates of hell
and eternal damnation
would be smothered, quenched
by the blood of the One
who died for all
knowing that He did not die in vain
and offering Him the pain,
standing in His shadow
as mortal men
true to the living king
when the day of Judgement comes
as did the thief on the cross.

[Reference: The Shadow Of Cain by Edith Sitwell.]

Gert Strydom

The Shadows Of Many Years Do Fall

The shadows of many years do fall
and without fear
the old man goes stumbling on his way,
at times somewhat angry
early in the morning he searches the world,
wants to find signs
that this day will be better than any other
while his life is changing mercilessly.

Gert Strydom

The Shadows Of The Afternoon Are Drawing Long Lines

The shadows of the afternoon are drawing long lines,
against the hillock there are specs of red aloes
while the afternoon lingers, the sun descends,
and a neighbour takes his first sip of wine;
old ladies chatter softly at their back doors,
a woman peeps to the street through some curtains
and on the hot roof of a big old house
some cats are baking in the sun.
When another neighbour unpacks his briefcase
I do wonder if you are coming to visit,
while the dog snarls at the passing postman on his bicycle
and at twilight it's still a great maybe,
while I am growing hunger
and am wondering if our relationship will last?

Gert Strydom

The Shark

Living in the blue deep,
without rest like, a machine without sleep,
it does cross the ocean unseen
and goes to places that no man has been
but it does create great fear
when on the crest of a wave it does appear
with deadly teeth shining
it becomes a terrifying thing

Gert Strydom

The Shattered Town

While on military patrol
I saw a broken town, bombed, rocketed,
shot to ruins,

with the few white walls
that was still standing
full of pock marks

where bullets slammed
the remains of where houses once were
lurching, shattered with a few
rusting corrugated plates

and the place was totally deserted
as if ghost are living there
with stark trees standing stripped stark naked,

when suddenly some people appeared
from shelters further to the back
with big white smiles in their black faces.

Gert Strydom

The Sheets Retains Something Of Your Smell

(for Annelize)

The sheets retains something of your smell
and the darkness is now overpowering
and I am sleeping in the same bed
where we made love
a few hours ago
and on the pillow
there is a faint odour of you,
you are with me in the bed
and the dark nigh stretches out long
as if in it's passing
while I hear you breathing
at peace with the entire world.

Gert Strydom

The Shrike

I am astonished with the shrike
where on the fence and a pole
it hangs its prey and a lizard and a small snake
and later to eat do land with slapping wings.

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Gert Strydom

The Signatory

Am I that sign here, God's last prophet
and do I carry the burden
that I through my self-conceit do not always know His ways
with somewhere where I do fit into His plan?

Still I wonder how I a sinful human
can ever be holy,
where mighty people execrate my people, and me
I sometimes see hatred in their eyes?

Let every thing that I write down
reach for pure truth, justice and being noble
making the unrest trivial, winning the struggle,
that every Afrikaner and I surprise our enemies:

May God Himself be in our midst,
He Himself be fighting the struggle with His saving Spirit.

[Ps. as salvation only comes from Him.]

Gert Strydom

The Signs Of You

There are stars,
not in the night
but in your eyes.

Stars shining
with a own ferocity
glowing like amber gemstones.

There's autumn not in the trees
but in your hair
that hang rust brown
like copper wires.

Hair glistening
as if the sun
gets a own life
in every particle.

There are roses
not in your garden,
but caught on your cheeks.

Roses witnessing of life
and innocence
bubbling through you.

There are words
not on your lips,
but in every verse that you write.

Words uncovering your depths
and telling me of your love.

Gert Strydom

The Silent Countdown

Beyond computer screen they sit
with missiles aimed and primed
and are waiting on that moment
to on command turn keys simultaneously
to unleash somewhere on earth the fiery hell
that man has built
but the days stretch on and on
and run into many years
and might to eternity go
or in a great bright flash
the moment may come
to extinguish every living thing.

Gert Strydom

The Singer

She stands on the stage
and her eyes catch mine
in front of giant speakers
that is in a row
with a cordless microphone
in her hand
and the power in her blue eyes
is magical
and I see endless energy in them.

There is something intimate in her voice
and the foreign girl bedazzles me
while she pulls a electronic piano
nearer with a white cord
and the guy next to me
says something crude
and I hit him
with my elbow
is making him windless
and his voice gets a hoarse sound
and pain
written all over his face

and she bends in front of me
and look deep into my eyes
and throw a nonchalant kiss
and the crowd cheers
and I wonder
for whom she is intending it

and a guitar hits a high note
that cuts right through everyone,
the drums boom thundering
and for moments she is only singing for me

and the audience pull out cigarette lighters
and everywhere there are bright flames
burning romantically
and a blonde girl takes my hand

and I barely notice her

and then the crowd asks loudly for an encore
where she again sings beautiful
and when I leave the super dome
there's a bodyguard
placing a hand on my arm
and the man with the aching stomach says:
"your ticket is punched, friend"
and the bodyguard looks strictly at me
and says that I have a appointment with her.

Gert Strydom

The Singing Falcon (Hybridanelle)

I heard the falcon's cry,
a myth of native lore
from high up in the sky

like a golden-hot ray
it came from the sun
at the break of day

sublime the notes came as I
walked the veldt, with beauty at the core.
I heard the falcon's cry;

it was very high and far away
only a speck in the solar gradient,
it came from the sun.

I could not see it with my eye
it turned on upper winds to explore
from high up in the sky

it was triumphant, glowing radiant,
pure as light turned to sound
only a speck in the solar gradient,

the air was azure and the day was dry
and I was on the track of a lone lion before
I heard the falcon's cry

and great beauty that I found
as if hearing a flying trumpet sing
pure as light turned to sound

I saw the soaring predator fly
with claws and beak ready to gore
from high up in the sky

and it made my ears ring,
inside its resonance
as if hearing a flying trumpet sing

a thing no money could buy
or imitate in a musical score.
I heard the falcon's cry
from high up in the sky

pristine without dissonance
like a golden-hot ray
inside its resonance
at the break of day.

[References: The Singing Hawk by Roy Campbell. With great thanks to Ronald Peat for his help.]

Gert Strydom

The Sisters Of Mercy

I have known some sisters of mercy
and when my life fell to pieces
they were there
and gave warmth, care
and some consideration
at a small price.

When my life was bare
and the one that I loved
had moved on
to another,
the sisters of mercy
had compassion
and installed faith
that I would overcome.

Gert Strydom

The Skin Of Light

The skin of light of the moon disappears,
are replaced by the bright sun
and outside there are insects and birds
are busy gathering

but inside I am woken by first light,
see a ray splashing down upon your beautiful face,
the heat of the bed is comfortable around us
and even in your sleep you look lovely.

Gert Strydom

The Sky Is Bedecked (Cavatina)

The sky is bedecked with the stars that shine,
the Milky Way
shot-gunned with millions everywhere
in their display
gleaming, glittering white, green, blue and red
quite far away
but feeling as if you can only reach out
to pluck some jewels where they are about.

Gert Strydom

The Sky Is Bright Blue

with a golden sun that is still summer
while the first leaves of autumn begins to fall
and there is peace and tranquillity in my universe

until the phone curses shrilly,
the neighbour's children run around in the street
screaming wherever they go,
while they throw each other with lumps,

guests that come visiting
ring the front bell
and the dogs bark
running up and down in the yard.

Gert Strydom

The Sky Is Dull Blue

The sky is dull blue when I do notice you,
while a butterfly suddenly flutters
and land on your arm
on this perfect day,

we embrace and you do smile
wiping a string of hair out of your face
and without saying anything
we look at each other for long moments.

Its as if the sun hangs radiating over your hair,
as if your fragrance suddenly rises like gardenia
and you fill my eye and heart with moments
of utter beauty and happiness.

Gert Strydom

The Slaughter Of The Little Lambs

(after E. E. Cummings)

In the years when like some innocent lambs
boys were forced
by acts of John Vorster, PW, FW and Co
to the slaughter
of themselves but of mostly enemies;
death, shell-shock came
during the epoch of righteousness
of sister churches

with war raging in Namibia and Angola,
boys lost their souls,
where forever changed, by the killing;
trying to survive,
while generals, that are known, medals drew,
while commanding
from out of danger, from as far away as Pretoria,
in safety and bliss

while every John, Dick and Harry in their country's love
fought fierce battles,
destroyed Soviet controlled Cuban / FAPLA divisions,
lost limbs, sanity,
were only wishing for tranquillity and peace,
they were sold out,
their bravery trampled, victories lied about as defeats
by a new government,

and some with degrees by affirmative action are jobless.

[Reference: "The Season 'Tis, My Lovely Lambs" by E. E Cummings.]

Gert Strydom

The Small Hours

(after Dorothy Parker)

No more the joys, of jubilant poems come back;
and at this end of day
I see the wide world that's turning black
and nowhere in it there's any grey.

Far too sad is the sheer loneliness
while the skyline glows
before darkness suddenly flourish
and painful it is to know

that another solitary day will come
with time in it moving much too slow
before I will return to an empty home
and I am like a leaf that in the wind blows

with my life a falling, twisting
kind of thing.

[Reference: "The small hours" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

The Small Hours (English Sonnet)

Only mosquitoes turn around my head
where in the dark on my bed I lay
as if all my words are done and dead
until the morning twilight is grey

and the morning sun in the east do glow
while like this day upon day do come
and of the pain and joy of love I do know
but in love I am very stupid and dumb

while constantly you do read my poetry
do call me with words of joy and cheer
became the truest friend in the world to me
even where I have lost my whole career,

when the ominous power of destiny is pressing
love is not a curse but a true kind of blessing.

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Gert Strydom

The Small Redbreast Sings And Dances

The small redbreast sings and dances
up and down, up and down
while it is longing for the rain
and under the tree my two dogs are barking,
are jumping to try and catch that bird
and it's a curious kind of thing
but the small redbreast is not disturbed
until the first lightning bolt comes
and great drops of rain pour down around him.

Gert Strydom

The Small Writer

As I walk on Guido Gezelle's birth ground,
Bruges, a city full of people is spread around me,
there's a small boat with sails flapping in the wind,
cathedrals and channels are everywhere, a place where you can love

and in a channel there's something small circling
dressed in black armoured skin
but maybe it's only my imagination
comprehending secret words written on the water surface

and when I look up into the sky
there are clouds closing
and suddenly it's as if the clouds open
with His great presence coming down,

I have to cover my eyes against the bright light
and I see a water beetle drawing the names of God on the water.

[Reference: Het Schrijverke by Guido Gezelle. Bruges is a city in Belgium.]

Gert Strydom

The Smell Of Coffee

The smell of coffee
that is boiling in the early morning
goes right through the room
and it reminds me of you,
that makes the most wonderful coffee.

It stands at work
and boils black in a machine
and I hear it gurgle
like a fountain
that wants to flow over.

I wonder if you
are getting coffee at that place,
or is it too healthy there
that they only stay
with fruit juice.

At times a person needs to be
silent over the things in life,
but I want to grab every day
and build a wonderful life
with you and make the very best of it.

Gert Strydom

The Snake

Lord, when the leviathan rose
out of the dark depths
of the raging sea

uncoiling itself
twisting to strike at Thee,

Thy mighty great sword
stroke the serpent dragon
piercing and slaying it

and to this day I wonder
what this creature could be,
as no such creature have being seen.

While some speculate on crocodile
as being too powerful to be caught
like a fish,

or killed by man with a spear, sword or harpoon
having a neck, strong frame, nostrils
and scales

it doesn't truly fit the picture
as it doesn't live in the ocean
or dwell in the sea

and Canaanite mythology
tells of a seven headed primeval monster
untwisting itself to fight Thee.

¶Envoi

Yet still more the snake from the tree
took a bite at Thee

and Thy sacrifice
set all men free.

[References: Isaiah 27: 1, Ps 74: 14, Job 41: 1-33, A cylinder seal from Tell Asmar,  Genesis 3: 15,2 Esdras 6: 49-52.]

Gert Strydom

The Snake (2)(Free Verse Sonnet)

In its age old sinful writing
as far as he goes,
his marks are carved into the sand
which he leaves just where he goes,
saying the whole earth is now my property
as if forever it will remain his
where his head had been crushed two thousand years back,
where he is only giving the last convulsions through the ages,
when with so-called saints and rulers he forges covenants,
do with them decide about distasteful things in secret,
as if this will halt an omnipotent God in His tracks
and of the second coming of the Lord for ages he does know
but do believe that he as an evil created being that had fallen to be monster
can stand, be victorious and rule against the omnipotent God of the universe.

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Gert Strydom

The Snake Was In The Tree

The snake was in the tree
and watched the woman and man
and both of them were free
and at the woman he looked
and both were innocent and happy.

He wanted the woman for himself
as she was beautiful
and had some grace
and in his plans
the man had no place,
but of all of this
Eve heard never a word.

She was on her back
and looked at the blue sky
and the shadow of Adam
fell over her
and his smile he couldn't hide.

His hands was like magic
and he spoke of love
and of God
and they were one
with the setting sun
and God smiled
and blessed all lovers
in His new world
called earth.

Gert Strydom

The Soft Brown Earth Lies Under Me

The soft brown earth lies under me,
with the cool blue sky as the canopy
in which birds fly swirling,
forever free.

Your works my God, is filled with beauty
and in the distance I see
the outline of the mountains
the sanctuary where I feel carefree

Gert Strydom

The Softly Brown Earth Lies Under Me

The softly brown earth lies under me,
with the cool blue sky as the canopy
in which birds fly swirling,
forever free.

Your works my God, is filled with beauty
and in the mountains I see
the outline of the mountain, the rock
the sanctuary where I feel carefree.

Gert Strydom

The Solitary Reaper

I behold him single,
walking on the street
and his face is covered
by the long black cloak
that the evening wind
bristles against.

From a distance he looks
like a ancient priest,
or somebody trying to
get the better
of the foggy raining weather.

Something sinister is in his step
and I have seen him before
and the knowledge of it,
brings the hair on my arms to life.

I greet him like a old friend
and he smiles at me
like regular passers on the street do
and his voice is part of the wind:
"I am not coming for you, yet."

The moonlight glitters yellow
in a crescent shape in the sky
and falls on the sickle in his hand
and death walks by,
to take away the very pulse of life
somewhere nearby
and he's in a hurry to be in time
before destiny's clockwork reach its mark.

Down the street
I hear a young man sobbing
in a old white house
where all the lights
are burning a soft yellow
and just for a moment,

the solitary reaper hesitates
before unnoticed
he walks through the door.

Gert Strydom

The Song Of Despair

Somehow you are missing from my memory.
The night falls slowly, coming with tranquillity.
Deserted is our once happy home as you are gone,
my whole life has turned into stone.

You swallowed all our possessions, left an open door,
and only empty spaces on the wooden floor.
In your love I once was lost,
but your betrayal came at an extremely high cost.

You wanted me only for the body's bliss
and went to a lover and that is the way that it is.
Too many times I had to draw curtains back,
in life and coming death change the ways that you did act.

Too many times as my wife
you were part of me, were too important in my life.
Now what was once ours fades to oblivion,
as life not ending just moves on and on.

This is the time of departure
when birds go to their nests in nature,
when to ashes wood in the fireplace burn,
when you left on a journey of no return.
Much too slowly this night moves on, once happy one.

Gert Strydom

The Song Of The Bride (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Eugène N. Marais, in answer to Johan Myburgh)

The bright sun shines in her eyes when she does awake,
when she moves blue-white thunder roar as bracelets,
all of the winds she does gather in her hands,
when she prepares winter for her own time and place.
Grass does sprout and blossoms do flower where she touches,
her secret rites and formularies do land everywhere,
shy she sneaks around in her own great sacrifice
while she guards with great care the coming of new life.
When the antelope do smell her coming they do tread dust-clouds,
while the insects and birds do sing about her coming,
rain do fall for her as confetti right across the land,
while the sparks of her bracelets shake and flash blue-white,
a paradise appears when she brings great magic,
where she is just another season in the scope of the universe.

[References:"Die dans van die reën" (The dance of the rain)by
Eugène N. Marais."Lied van die bruidegom" (Song of the
bridegroom)by Johan Myburgh.]

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Gert Strydom

The Song Of The Merchant Ali (Refrain Stanza)

(after I. D. du Plessis)

The fortress of sultan Rameer in Shalimar gleams red as fire
and beautiful is the women that do Ali desire,
where Ali the merchant yearns for the Sultan's wife,
do watch her through binoculars on every day of his life
while her hair flutters like a flag where she climbs the steps to a spire
he notices the moats and guards and even her small smile
where he is away a little less than a mile.
One night he sneaks in defying the death penalty and the Sultan's ire
and beautiful is the women that do Ali desire.

[Reference:"Die Sjalimeer" (Shalimar)by I. D. du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

The Song Of The Redbreast (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after John Keats)

I heard the redbreast sing in the winter wind
while fog hanged over the lower meadows,
while the pines did swing frosted up on the hill,
and the stars seemed frozen as the mountaintops,
that spring was coming like it never has before,
while I was studying into the hours of the night,
did not know you yet as if you were far away,
while rain-swept the days were grey and dark,
that the spring would be greater than anything
and any more knowledge the bird hand not,
but its song were as warm as the coming spring,
while it kept singing that simple lovely song
but when that spring and warm summer came,
you did lovely walk straight into my own life.

[Reference:"What the Thrush said" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

The Sorceress

The storyteller is pierced with an arrow
and all the hunters are gone
as if they are part of the field
and the fire has been burnt out for a long time
and the red coals
has become white and cold
and the young girl
can now only hear the wind
that twists around with the sand devils
and blows storm strong past her ears
and there's nothing that impresses her
and the beautiful words are gone
as if the wind is blowing it away
and only the wind stays with her
and she and the wind are both alone
and there's red sand that hits her.

[Reference: => Die towenares by Eugene N Marais.]

Gert Strydom

The Sounds Of Cars, Trucks, Trains Disappear

The sounds of cars, trucks, trains disappear
when the night comes dark and suddenly the moon shines.
Somewhere outside a dove calls to its mate
and amber lights wink one after the other
when I do wonder about what you are doing, are longing more
as to now I did know that I could.

Gert Strydom

The Southeast Wind Howls

The southeast wind howls while it's livid,
tossing whatever it can get up and down
and Table Mountain slowly withdraws
into fog and the never ceasing rain.

There is loneliness to the old man,
who tries to light a cigarette
under the shelter of a shop,
where his lighter suddenly flares up.

Far too many days and nights
have passed him without meaning
and tonight he might eat
in a grand posh hotel,

might later return to his mansion on the hill
with a young lovely living girl,
but he yearns for much more,
for someone, for something

that will let him know that he is truly living
he flings the smoked cigarette away
and when he gets into his German car,
his thoughts are still far from him.

Gert Strydom

The Spark That Is Life

From the most early times
man did aim to immortality
as if he could shake off the impact

of life and time from himself,
did build pyramids in the desert,

did prepared people who died as mummies
and after years man could find

no answers by himself
to catch the spark that is life,

while daily lives do still hang
in the claws of destiny

but at a time the omnipotent Lord God is going to come
on His great Judgement- and salvation day,
to bring to the people that does believe in Him
salvation and eternal life.

Gert Strydom

The Sparkle In Your Smile (Elizabethan Ditty)

The sparkle in your smile
fall like morning dew,
the shining of your eyes beguile
the toil that is waiting fresh and new,

but had you charmed me
at early morning light
from work we would be free
until the darkness of night.

Gert Strydom

The Speedwell (Novelinee)

In small bushes brilliant blue wild it grows
and if picked the tiny flowers fall,
in spring it is among the hedgerows
with eyes constantly watching it is small
and in the early red morning new born,
something living tranquil and really free
like a inviting berry on the thorn
it has a kind of serene beauty
is very fragile and somewhat lovely.

Gert Strydom

The Sphinx Of Memphis (Refrain Stanza)

(in answer to Totius)

The sphinx I did behold
and where it does observe the world it is old,
I saw a heathen wicked god smile,
about its hidden secret power I thought for a while,
did not trust the tranquillity that of that beast is told
and nothing did its evil reveal to me
where it stares into eternity,
but I did not like that thing which stares so bold
and where it does observe the world it is old.

[Reference:"Die sfinks van Memfis"(The sphinx of Memphis)by Totius.]

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Gert Strydom

The Spirit Of The Times

He made them heroes
who was forced
to take on brigades of the enemy
who were armed with a multitude
of tanks and armoured cars
and turned them into death and rubble

and later did declare them to terrorists,
made them unemployed,
tried to impoverish them

and then he made the attackers of farms,
the ones that placed landmines, the bank robbers,
the so called freedom fighters,
who burned down schools, the planters of bombs
heroes and rulers.

Gert Strydom

The Spoor

We were flown in
by a Puma helicopter
hot on the tracts
of a group of terrorists
who had attacked some farms.

A Bushman tracker was in the front
on the spoor, armed with a old R1,
two of the section
was armed with LMG's
and I carried the a short barrel R5
and it was very hot
under a merciless sun.

The tracker told us
that one of the enemy
was wounded and at places
we saw drops of blood
and it looked
as if he was dragging his leg
in the way that he walked.

The going was fast
as we didn't want to let them pass
the chop line back into Angola
and we were at a jog.

Suddenly in the distance
there was a firefight
and some shots rang out
sounding like AK-47's
and locking our weapons
we hastened,

not knowing if another patrol
or who or what
had run into the enemy.

When got on the scene

the wounded terrorist was dead
trampled by a African Buffalo
who gored him
before setting on its enemy's tracts.

He was left behind
by the group
who had come across an African Buffalo
and had fired at it,
only wounding that black beast
and had run away in the front of it.

The Bushman smiled and shook his head
laughing because of the actions
of the stupid terrorists
and we were hot on the tracks
of the Buffalo

following through a rocky dried out wadi
past some bushes
and into longer grass
when suddenly the eyes of the tracker
went huge as saucers
and he turned around
stumbled past me
and dropped his gun
on the ground right
next to me
running as if for his life.

This was quite awkward
seeing a man run
who had fought numerous
firefights with me
without a whimper of fear
now running as if
the devil himself
was on his heels
but the Buffalo
had turned around
on its tracks.

I saw that African beast
with eyes glaring almost red
and nostrils wide open
and horns lowered
and knew that my rifle
wouldn't stop it
and if I didn't I would be dead,
but the R1 would probably
since its larger full metal jacket bullets
could rip right through trees.

It must have been the quickest
that I have ever
picked up a gun
exchanging it for mine
bringing it to my shoulder
and started firing
and I could scarcely
believe my luck
when that buffalo bull
dropped there at my feet.

[References: R1= A rifle similar to the Belgian FN. R4= A rifle similar to the Israeli Gaelil. R5= a Shorter barrelled version of the R4 with folding stock, sometimes used by paratroopers and other special force soldiers. LMG= Light Machinegun. Chop line= Cleared area on the border between South West Africa (now Namibia) and Angola.]

Gert Strydom

The Spring Does Begin With Dragonflies

The spring does begin with dragonflies
that everywhere does appear
fluttering from flower to flower,
do drink nectar and do rollick around each other

and in the back gardens in the city
the fruit trees are flowering
they are suddenly covered with blossoms
with the promise
that fruit will come later in abundance

and bees do fly around and around

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Gert Strydom

The Spring Is Blossoming (Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

The spring is blossoming with a myriad of flowers,
daily the sky is filled with an ocean full of showers
while the redbreast on the gate does dance and sing
and in this time it is great to be alive and existing.

I wish you were right here to experience this
to enjoy the beauty the loveliness that life is
that with your eyes you could this beauty see
and I do love you selfishly and selflessly

as a man does love the one that changes his life
as a person that is truly in love and alive
and now that you are away and far gone
somehow your essence and presence do linger on

but maybe it's just the subconscious and the feelings of the heart
that tries to overreach the boundaries that do keep us apart.

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Gert Strydom

The Squatter's Camp

White, black, coloured and Indian children
play along the stinking tributary
where drain water sewers in
and try to catch
small frogs and crabs here and there
while the sun hangs exhausting
next to the squatter's camp.

People working for daily wages
walks along tiredly
in the late afternoon
and wonder where to find food
for the next day
while snot and spittle
run from the noses and mouths
of the playing children
and flies circle
around them.

In the distance thunder roars
from a nearing storm
and the air is steely grey
and everybody knows
that nobody will tonight be dry,

but a boy points to a rainbow
that hang bright
with beautiful colours in the sky
and speechless the people look
at the marvel
from the hand of God
and it's really difficult times.

Gert Strydom

The Starlight Shone Through The Window Frame

The starlight shone through the window frame
while it broke here and there
through some clouds
and I heard you breathing against me

and every now and then your hand stroked
over my head as if you wanted to make sure
that I am all right or really there

and I heard you mumble in your sleep
and there was a golden full moon
when the clouds later opened
and much too early the alarm went off.

Gert Strydom

The Starling

With my glistening green-black feathers I sit in the sun
in the top of the apricot tree where I do cry out my authority
and from here I view the whole world from up high,

for long moments do reflect on how wonderful my life is
and when the first white blossoms appear before the leaves do come
I do peck at them, do already taste how the fruits are going to taste
until I am though the whole orchard from tree to tree

and from up high I am aware of the fig trees
with their fruit that already do appear in the early spring
and even before they can bulge and become ripe
I do inspect them and then do also devour them

and later when I do fly into the pomegranate hedge
do swing up and down from branch to branch
there are everywhere fruit around me
which I do eat to my heart's content

but the peach trees I do avoid like a pest,
do leave the peaches for the weavers, the coly and the worms
but when the gardener has mowed the lawn
I do spy on it for caterpillars and insects
before I do dive down and peck them up one by one.

Gert Strydom

The Starry Night

(in answer to Anne Sexton)

With stars exploding above my head
the moon creeping
as a large yellow ball in to the heights
there is no sight
of the unseen serpent
striking at the light,
neither does it roar out with flaming breath,
nor do I see it causing any death,
only do I see the hand of God
in the intensity, the pleasure
of the sparkling shiny things
as a minutely small human being
against the enormity of it all.

[Reference: "The Starry Night" by Anne Sexton.]

Gert Strydom

The Starry Three Sisters

The starry three sisters
are rising overhead
and the hot day
is dead.

The winter night chills
and spreads ripe,
over grass and plants.

There's a playful
charm to the icy wind,
that stir some fallen leaves.

Your smile
has its own warmth
and the taste of your lips,
are sweet and soft.

Your eyes has a glimmer
that sparks to the soul
and where love burns,
no winter can chill.

Gert Strydom

The Starry-Night (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Soft falls the rays of an amber streetlight
and above me is the whole starry night
but very slowly the hours do go
where the deep meaning of silence I do know
where a thousand things in my mind burns bright
and it's if for years I have waited on this tranquility
where the Southern Cross and other stars shine over me
but over God's authority even the silent death has no might
and above me is the whole starry night.

[Reference: "O stilte van die sterrenag" (Oh the silence of the starry-night) by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

The Stars (Refrain Stanza)

In the night the fire of the stars I did behold
where they guard as the beacons of God from times of old
did wonder how God do Pleiades bind
and do again the unbinding of the seven stars find
when the dark heaven did before me open fold:
some stars did gleam vaguely others did bright clear stay,
nebulae did glow and comets with tails did glide away,
beyond Orion in His presence the splendour of the stars were manifold
where they guard as the beacons of God from times of old.

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Gert Strydom

The Stars Had Been Blotted Out

The stars had been blotted out
while great thunderclouds did mill about
with lightning-bolts coming down thundering
and I could scarcely hear my mother's warning.

A few cows did graze in the veldt,
did try to find shelter against the rain under a thorn tree
but that odd action of them
did bring death

when a giant lightning-bolt did split the tree,
I saw small crackling blue-white lightning bolts
while the smell of burnt hide and frying beef was in the air
and I saw that nothing could be free

from that kind of jumping energy.

Gert Strydom

The Stars In The Sky Was Bright

Last night the stars
in the sky was bright
and the moon,
was in a sickle shape

The five stars
of the southern cross
twinkled at me
and below them,
the two pointers
was sparkling much lower.

The yellow half moon
was grinning
and your eyes glowed
and shined like pieces
of tigereye quartz
and your smile,
sparkled like a string
of the whitest pearls
in the candle light.

Last night every thing
was much better than
just alright,
when I held you tight
and your lips
were sweet and soft
on mine.

I can still hear
the soft wind blowing
and the charms
playing their own song
and it was more than passion,
that joined us together.

Gert Strydom

The Stars Wink From Above At Me

The stars wink from above at me
and I wonder how many stars,
I can see with my eyes

I still wonder more
to where we go at the end of life
and to where that last life energy disappears,
when it leaves a human body?

Is it measured out at another place
to be out of this universe and far past space and time
and what we can see and know and distinguish scientifically
and does it get stature again
on a new horizon outside our sphere?

Or when we descent to earth,
is it the last thing in our life story
and are the lights that I see above me
just more suns that goes to extinction,
without the hand of a Almighty being
guiding our eternal way?

Gert Strydom

The State Of The Nation (In Answer To T.T. Cloete And Clinton V. Du Plessis)

The country have got too many people
that fancies themselves but really know nothing,
being in possession of jobs as if they belong there
without any comprehension how to do the work
while employers come in line with affirmative action.

The country have got too many
political leaders who are corrupt
that wants to tread on others as if they are elephant
or want to rip apart, want to slice others into pieces
with too many women
surrounding them like heroes
while they are supplanting others.

There are too many people
that takes that which belongs to others
with force, trying to steal the lives of others
while they play as if it is a computer game
killing farmers on farms, taking the right to existence
and humanity from others.

There are too many people only living for themselves,
trampling others around them
to get somewhere in life
who drive others out of their way,
who will do anything to earn more.

Too few people are still in love and love each other,
know how to protect
the sanctity of the marriage
and in vain lays the blame
with each and every beautiful escort
while the rotting
is already in their own hearts.

There are too many people
streaming in from other countries

with a dream to live here
while there is too little work
for the people that are here
and oppression is in place
over the jobs that exist
as if you want to go back
into the years of racism.

[References: Behoeftte aan ongunstige weers- en ander omstandighede (Need for unfavourable weather – and other circumstances) by T.T. Cloete. tussentydse verslag (interim report) by Clinton V. Du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

The State Within The State

Black cars with flashing blue lights
come screaming down the highway
filling three lanes at a time,
as if any road in the country
belongs to them.

Sometimes I see their occupants
on the street,
hiding behind sunglasses,
with short cropped hair,
dressed in neat suits
with left armpits bulging
from the guns
that they wear.

They invade uninvited
in the early hours of the morning
and burst into dwellings unexpectedly
with drawn guns
as the method of persuasion.

Some people are arrested,
taken away to interrogation
and face charges in court,

others are abducted, cuffed,
transported to a military airfield
to board a foreign aircraft
with stars and stripes on its tail,

to be deported and disappear
from the face of the earth,
without a trace and without a trial
and never to be free again.

Gert Strydom

The Statue Of Uncle Paul

(after Toon van den Heever)

In the summer sun the great colossus rises
where paltry yet gigantic he still stands
with his eyes looking northwards
and his gaze sweeps right through veldt and bush.

Still he struggles on without being swayed
and his whole being is fierce and always true
as if nothing can stop that keen eyes
and his gaze sweeps right through veldt and bush

to find liberty whatever it does cost,
beyond him lies death that could not break a people,
it's the hope of a free existence that is looking
and his gaze sweeps right through veldt and bush.

In the summer sun the great colossus rises
and his gaze sweeps right through veldt and bush.

[Reference: "Die beeld van oom Paul" (The statue of uncle Paul) by Toon van den Heever. Poet's note: The ANC Youth league is trying to remove this very statue.]

Gert Strydom

The Storm Between The Two Of Us

How you swell like the sea
in the storm between the two of us
and while it rages
I cannot find land anywhere
and drift along

and your waves brake constantly
and more intense over my body
drags me on

and closes very intimately
round my steering-rod
and your labia surrounds me
while I drift through your waters

and later anchor against you
and see how two mountains rise up and down
showing their sharp peaks

and I rest out while your waves
are now more caressing,
before the next storm comes.

Gert Strydom

The Storm That Hangs Threatening

From Margate beach
I see a ship sailing past,
with people that are
dots on it.

The summer sun is hot and high
but there's a strong wind
that swishes over the sea
and waves that like white spectre horses,
curl and twist and rise foaming
and shattering
fall to death against rocks and the beach

On the horizon grey clouds hang ominous,
where a storm is rising
and the sky breaks the water.

I am caught up in a life
that is broken into pieces
and I wonder when
the storm is going to overwhelm me.

Gert Strydom

The Study

When I walked with small,
almost baby small steps into his study
after coming slowly down the long passage
I saw him writing in the half-light,
marking exam papers or reading some poetry,

getting the words, the rhythms into balance,
and I walked in deeper to be with him,
where I heard the hoofs beating of the horse
carrying its headless Boer citizen,
and my emotions were sometimes on the edge,
when his mighty voice

folded and pulled along the Afrikaans words
but without any kind of worry or fear
for even the cannibal I heard him reading verses
that still does awake feelings in me.

Gert Strydom

The Stuffed Men

I

We are the men stuffed with what
society needs us to be
and when the government draws the strings
we jump; we obey against our own will,
we are the stuffed men who were taught
lethal skills to be turned on and off
like mere machines
to be unleashed against a enemy
consisting out of other men
and our lives, our own humanity
to the government is totally meaningless.

II

We were shaped and formed
and forced into military training camps
into a stark cohesion
where the individual soul perishes
and the group reigns supreme
where those who goes into eternity,
goes into death, knows us
as if we are some of them
where violence, killing is measured out
by great and sincere men
who like rag dolls are stuffed,
like marionettes have to obey
the commands given to them.

III

In dreams there are eyes that we avoid,
situations that reoccur,
the stark reality of living
after others have perished
and reliving through the slaughter of war
as if we were made for greater things
and have eternal difficulty to comprehend

sending men to their end
and voices, screams, events, people and places
stays with us
and the pain, the desolation
return in dreams
as if they are trying to draw us to the kingdom
where death reigns supreme.

IV

The battlefields remain,
where from burial trenches
images rise, where shot-out tanks
armoured cars and weapons of war
that were destroyed are nothing more
than rusting metal coffins
left in the wind and rain
and forever remain as testimony
of the cruelty of man
under the lonely stars of the Southern Cross
and these places are now left alone
are only visited by wild animals
digging up the bones of killed men
to gnaw on them.

V

But we are destined to return
in memories, in thoughts and ultra realistic dreams
to these valleys of death and desolation,
to the bushy plains
where corpses lie as skeletons
and eyeless gaze at the setting sun
as if these are the last places
where we meet with the effect
of the deeds that we were forced
to participate in
and in this world of sin
the stars of the Southern Cross
seems to give direction
to another world beyond
and not just to determining

how to go north.

[Reference: The Hollow Men by T. S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

The Substance Of My Self (Terzanelle)

The substance of my self remain
in every speck of dignity,
in humility and pain,

the shadow of my soul remains me
in fogged out looks
in every speck of dignity,

in every word, in poems in electronic books
fading away, lamenting, cry
in fogged out looks

every thing, where nostalgia runs dry
in the well of my spirit and soul
fading away lamenting, cry

like a unreachable goal
with love crumbling into hallucinations
in the well of my spirit and soul

flowering like a bunch of bloody carnations.
The substance of my self remain
with love crumbling into hallucinations
in humility and pain.

{References: The shadow of my soul by Federico Garcia Lorca and The shadow of my soul by Roy Campbell.}

Gert Strydom

The Sum Of Life

Sometimes I wonder
how life is,
like a sum
with no true answers
and have no result
until its end.

Life stretches
into the distance,
with a end and a beginning
or that is what humans believe;
while nothing can
determine the before and the thereafter
and everything is determined by faith.

What lies on the other side
of life
and what you are
before and after it,
goes from negligibility
to infinity
and I wonder
how that mathematics
still makes sense;
while the clockwork keeps striking
and time goes on
with its own passage
and life
stands still for no one.

Who knows how the Almighty
determined the life energy
and determines who and what we are
and make much greater sums,
than we can determine
with derivatives, differentiation, limits
and pure mathematics;

or do we want to believe

that destiny
holds the clockwork for everyone
and everything responds to the things
around it
and reacts on its own
and life evolutionary ticks at its own rhythm
and nature
and every thing about us
runs down into the nothingness
into which every thing slowly disappears?

[Reference: "To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? Says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, "My way is hidden from the Lord and my right is disregarded by my God?" Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable." Isaiah 40: 25-26.]

Gert Strydom

The Summer

The summer is busy
catching speed
and I see how the bright blue sky,
is changed by clouds
that suddenly hangs dark and breeding.

In the distance a thunder rolls
and there are big drops
that falls about me in the red dirt
and I can almost see the grass,
bushes and trees
jump centimetres
from the power
that the clear drops bring.

Small sprouts are bursting green
out of the red brown ground
in the vegetable garden
and the magic of new life
is everywhere to be seen.

Gert Strydom

The Summer Is Slowly Going

The summer is slowly going
with the dark grey sky
that switches between being cool and hot
and it rains almost every day.

Autumn leaves are falling golden
at the chestnut-tree
next to the garage
and bunch together
as if it's trying to cover the grass
drawing a golden cloak over it

and I can almost not keep ahead
with mowing the lawn
and raking up leaves
and wonder if a person
can pack troubles
also like this in black bags,

but I miss you so much
and my life is just as empty
as the tree
that stands almost stripped
and nothing can take the longing away.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Flees Confused

The sun flees confused
but you are in my heart
and I am fulfilled this winter
while the winds are howling outside
and you do grow into me
while the clouds blot the sun out,
rain sieves down continually
and you do bless me with enthusiasm,
and of time I do not take any notice.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Hangs Orange Red

The sun hangs orange red
for moments
like the smashing sound of a gong
in the air
before it becomes white hot,

the screaming of plovers hover
long and stretched out
just as if somebody
has discovered their nests

and the black-collard barbet knocks
outside on the window
as if it wants to come in

and while I am still laying in bed
the world turns
and the new morning starts
outside around me.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Hangs Red Like A Ball

and the high shooting tower skeleton
against the setting sun

and in the distance
there are the flames of Impala warplanes
where they take off
one after another into the night

and later there are a few puma helicopters
that land chattering
and the seven sisters and the southern cross
shine brightly above me

and I wonder
what God thinks about man and his wars
while a red beacon winks
on and off at the tower.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Is Hidden (Terzanelle)

(after Lewis Turco)

The sun is hidden, huge shadows gather
while the wind rocks branches blow the leaves
and milling dark clouds draw together

this is the moment when thunderbolts cleaves
when rain drizzles, then pours down steadily
while the wind rocks branches blow the leaves

when full of superstition old people speak guardedly
of branches of thunder, sheets of blue-white lightning
when rain drizzles, then pours down steadily

and the bolts of thunder comes down somewhat frightening
when people draw curtains, sit in the semi-darkness, are afraid
of branches of thunder, sheets of blue-white lightning

and without power at candlelight the table is laid
while the acts of nature, its sheer power we cannot ignore,
when people draw curtains, sit in the semi-darkness, are afraid

and we have experienced this kind of weather sometime before.
The sun is hidden, huge shadows gather
while the acts of nature, its sheer power we cannot ignore
and milling dark clouds draw together.

[Reference: 'Terzanelle in Thunderweather' by Lewis Turco.]

Gert Strydom

The Sun Is Like A Golden Copper Bell

The sun is like a golden copper bell
on the other side of the blue curtain,
shadows are already creeping up against the wall
when here and there the sun is shining in hot,
while silently your first smile does vanish,
when you sleep again and I already are missing you
and I do love you in happiness and pain,
look for moments with great care at you,
do even find meaning in your bearing
as if you are part of my soul and spirit.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Over The Sea Died

Slowly the sun on the sea died away,
with sunset glowing over Table Bay,
in the distance at the end of day
did the Robben Island lie somewhat grey.

Waves rolled in breaking on the beach
while the island was away, out of reach,

in the evening stars were in the black sky,
while the full moon hang yellow and high
with glittering water catching the eye,
quickly did the romantic evening fly

and your soft tender hand were warm in mine
while our blooming love felt somewhat divine
and the day did very slowly decline
with lights on the sea drawing a straight line.

Gert Strydom

The Sun Was Flaming Your Face Was So Close(Sicilian Sonnet)

(in answer to Thomas Hardy)

We stood at Nigel dam on a summer day,
the sun was hot and white as created by God
and the water was smooth with nothing odd
but for a cloud in the distance that was grey.

A branch of the nearby willow did slowly sway,
the grass was green but down by many feet trod,
with here and there the black almost muddy sod
and with your rod whistling I threw the line away,

you smiled happy your face lit under the leaves,
drawing my head kissed me softly under the tree,
knew that the glare on the water at times deceives,
the sun was flaming your face was so close to me,
just each other persons at such a time perceives,
the falling lightning from the cloud we didn't see.

[Reference: "Neural Tones" by Thomas Hardy.]

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Gert Strydom

The Suricate (Free Verse Sonnet)

Straight-backed upright the suricate sits on the anthill and watches the world
with small sharp eyes it's cut fine where it looks at the sky and ground,
as life can in one single moment totally stop,
an eagle can dive down or a predator could hunt where the others do dig
but nothing moves on the plain or is to be seen in the sky,
it's only heat waves that in the summer-sun do tremble
and the watcher looks ahead, to and thro and back again
where everything around him is living in abundance.
He becomes aware of a caracal sneaking nearer in the grass and do shrill,
in all direction to holes suricates do scatter
but then the veldt and everything is suddenly deadly silent
and forward on soft paws the sly cat sneaks
while every suricate waits deep down in the burrows,
while a babbler high up in a tree laughs at the world.

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Gert Strydom

The Swallows Do This Year Late Fly Away (Couplets)

The swallows do this year late fly away,
like me in this land they want to stay

and the sight of them do this verse inspire,
a whole swarm of them sit outside on the wire,

there is a picture of you in my deepest memory
where we do the last days of autumn see

but your summer still does linger on
as if with your love even winter now is gone.

Gert Strydom

The Swan (Terzanelle)

I saw a swan reflected on a pond
majestically with bended neck
with some little ones trailing beyond

speck upon speck
reflected on the glittering surface,
majestically with bended neck

as if sailing solemnly to efface
all doubt to its grace and splendour
reflected on the glittering surface

and emanating from the bird some warmth, some ardour
the tale of Andromache was reminded to me.
All doubt to its grace and splendour

was made insignificant by sheer beauty
and without mate with widowed grief
the tale of Andromache was reminded to me

who loved the hero Hector but brief.
I saw a swan reflected on a pond
and without mate with widowed grief
with some little ones trailing beyond.

[References: Les Fleurs du Mal: The Swan by Charles Pierre Baudelaire. The swan by Roy Campbell.]

Gert Strydom

The Sweet Kiss

The sweet kiss of our meeting
is a wonderful thing,
that daily brings pleasure to me.

There is something sad to goodbyes
and yet something awesome,
when our lips touch.

The waiting to the next hello
has some magic to it and builds expectations,
of a coming thing.

When we embrace
there's something special present
and the sweet kiss of our meeting
is a wonderful thing.

Gert Strydom

The Tale Of The Sparkling White River

At the sparkling white river
that cuts its way through the earth,
some green reeds grew in bushes into the water.

Tranquillity and the magic
of water, sun and wind
was the spirit that dwelt in the reeds.

a Really ugly god appeared and started to cry,
as no beautiful nymph
would set an eye on him.

He washed his face in the water
to try and transfix some of its healing magic
to himself and washed his face again,

but the image reflected upon the gentle pool
remained the same
and deeper into the water he went.

Half blind by his crying,
he stumbled into the reeds
and walk still deeper in,

to hide away from the creatures
that lived upon the water
and dwelt in the sparkling stream.

There was power in his tears
and where they fell upon the reeds,
they were cut from the stems.

To Pan on that day,
the river and the reeds
came as a blessing.

With reeds in his hands
he walked to the shore
and the setting and sounds did something to him.

He cut the reeds into pipes
of different lengths
with notches and holes

and blew life in to them
and to this very day,
that instrument bears his name.

Gert Strydom

The Tar Road Lays Open

(in answer to N.P. van Wyk Louw)

The tar road lays open under the burning sun
and the house is far over the hillocks
my feet are sore while the tar glows
with the sky stretching out blue to all sides.
As a young child there is meaning
in thing what other people might miss
and my hair at times do flutter in the wind
but about flowers I do have some knowledge.
In a short sleeve shirt and pants as a mere child
I am blinded by the bright hot light
as if Your summer hangs great over me
while I am trying to find my way home
and it's as if I am already longing
for Your safety and nothing does frighten me.

[Reference: "Dit brand my voete" (It burns my feet) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

The Tear

While we have our greatest joy
a tear rolls down your cheek
and this symbol that glitters there
comes with deep meaning

and although our words
does not bring forth pain
that drop still remains
and maybe it's a sign of integrity

the loving between us
as love hurts as much as it blesses
hopes as much as it distresses
and there are no wounds to mend

and even when the moment of parting arrives
as it is meant to be
something still lingers between you and me.

Gert Strydom

The Tempest

I saw the Lord God fishing
while we were sailing
on a stormy sea

and gigantic waves were crashing
while He cast His lines in
landing here and there
and later landing almost everywhere.

The lines of God were blue-white
hitting the ocean and some the boat
and while the storm ripped, tossed us
to and fro
that ship almost came apart.

His lines thundered in sizzling the water
where they fell
running up through the pitch black clouds

and no gale force wind, no raging storm sea
could deny His will
while His lines
with thundering flame came in

and I looked up into that howling sky
with rain bashing against me,
wanting to see Him
and heard the sea scream
in its anger, saw the torrent wind
ripping the sails to shreds

and the storm died down instead
with a great rainbow
against the horizon up ahead
and His lines were all gone
and I didn't see one more
and the boat set a new course
to reach the shore.

The Temptation Of Being Near To Her

There is something in how she looks at me and looks away again
and I think aloud Satan, Lucifer, demon, devil be gone

as she is going to seduce me with her summer sunshine laughter
in the twilight, dark night or bright day

with her eyes that glitter when she notices me
and I wonder if God does provide such lovely girls

with her walking away that continually whispers promises
and her voice that falls sweetly on my ear

but when she stands right in front of me
and talks to me my breath is taken away

and I notice a small muscle jumping, jumping in her throat
and her snow-white teeth, her hands, freckles and feet is something
against which I do not know how to resist
and then she brings her lips right against mine.

Gert Strydom

The Temptations

When He was hungry in the desert
and Satan appeared to Him,
tempted Him to turn the rocks into loaves of bread,
the light of God shone over Him

and along with that demon
every hungry person talked and that wish
He wanted to fulfil but the word of God
was in His heart lying there without being bordered in.

When the world, the city lay beneath His feet
the demon said
that He must fall from the height
to express God's power

but He did not want to tempt God
for that great liar
and He knew in His heart that God is His Father,
even in times of pain and amuck.

When He stood on the peak of a very high mountain
the wide world was lying beneath
and momentarily it would be His
if He bended His knees before the devil

but Christ knew that He had to suffer,
that He could not escape the crucifixion,
that man must only bend his knees before the almighty God
and told the devil to be gone.

Gert Strydom

The Temptations [1]

When He was hungry in the desert
every hungry man spoke along with the demon
when Satan appeared to Him.

When the whole world, the city lay beneath His feet
when that demon wanted Him to jump from that height
He did not want to use His own Godly power,

the light of God shined over Him.
God's word was unlimited in His heart
when He was hungry in the desert,

when He did not want to create breads like the demon wanted
and did not want to tempt God.
When that demon wanted Him to jump from that height

He was already smitten by every hungry urge
with the cities of every human being beneath Him in the distance.
When Satan appeared to Him

(in His time of tiredness and amok)
the whole world was beneath Him
and He did not want to tempt God

and suddenly His hunger did disappear
when the words of God was in His mouth.
When He was hungry in the desert,

when He stood on the peak of a very high mountain
Jesus did know that He had to suffer,
the whole world was beneath Him,

the power of evil was sophisticated,
and the devil subtle with each suggestion.
When Satan appeared to Him

Jesus did know that He could not avoid the crucifixion.
To express His love for His fellow-man
Jesus did know that He had to suffer

and the light of God was on His face
and the horizon was the border of his eye.
When He was hungry in the desert,
when Satan appeared to Him

He did not want to impress anyone
when the whole world, the city lay beneath His feet.
To express His love for His fellow-man
He did not want to use His own godly power.

Gert Strydom

The Things In A Town

In a building there are people singing "Gloria in excelsior";
and it's beautiful like a choir of angels
but I do receive a track that insists on my salvation
and the traffic light does change.

Around me people past in a bunch
and on the other side an old white man holds out his hand
with a "good afternoon to you, sir"; he greets me
and just there tries to block my way.

A flower vendor tries to push a bunch of deep red roses in to my hand
and says "buy them for the madam";
while the wind is jerking on his thin shirt
"mister, she will really like the roses."

Right at the home affairs building
a camera is lifted to focus on me,
a hand with a pen is held out
and I slip and almost do lose my balance

and right there I wonder about the things that are happening in this town,
I want to escape into the veldt,
do see everybody standing with a stretched out hand
or maybe I want to return back to my Pretoria.

Gert Strydom

The Things That Befall You

Sometimes the things that befall you,
come from your own choices,
but sometimes destiny just befalls you
as if life acts at its own whim.

My life is passing
as if on a road to nowhere
and outside the winter wind rushes,
swaying the smaller branches of the trees

but inside I am frozen,
into my own thoughts, fears
and ambitions that circle away
like water down a drain.

Outside I see children
playing in the street,
shouting at each other
on this winter holiday

with one voice continually shouting:
"Christiaan, Christiaan"
sounding like an echo on the wind
and to them I am

just a mirrored window,
reflecting the garden,
the dull blue sky
and something of life.

Gert Strydom

The Things That Is True In My Heart (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

The things that is true in my heart to you I want to say:
I do find you lovely and wonderful on every day
while mere moments in your company do last a little longer
daily our love and hope and faith grows stronger
while constantly I do you into my life pray
and in my heart's greatest joy and its sincere endeavour
I want to love you here and now and forever
and even where you are now so very far away
I do find you lovely and wonderful on every day.

Gert Strydom

The Thought Is Enlightening (Rubaiyat Sonnet)

The thought is very much enlightening
and maybe somewhat kind of frightening
that from glorious loveliness such as yours
comes a wonderful, special kind of thing.

Man perceives God almighty in greatness
and in His works perceives His kindness,
this I find when I am closely looking at you
who in vivid beauty has some meekness=.

I wonder if sincere love is blessed like this,
in the thing that is much more than bliss,
that sparkles bright with a kind of magic
always comes free in the way that it is?

Still I do lack in my understanding you:
of what makes a woman good and true.

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Gert Strydom

The Thresher

I remember feeding that bloody machine
while it was whining,
feeding and keeping on feeding,
hay and maize straws and Luserne
and working with an aching back
while I was but a small boy
and that thresher was carnivorous
would slice anything that it got hold of,
cutting even limbs off clean.

Gert Strydom

The Thrush Sings Its Twittering Song

The thrush sings its twittering song, picks up worms,
the Jack Russell snatches wild at the bees,
startled they try to escape,
the sunbird gambols from flower to flower
while we are at the washing line
where I catch you in my arms,
as the sun laughs white hot at us
from the blue sky
on this glorious day
and I wonder if another like this will come.

Gert Strydom

The Thrushes

When the female thrush is busy with insects
while teasingly she walks ahead
the male tries to make eyes at her.

When the female thrush is busy with insects
infatuated the male protects her,
spreading his wings full of hope,
when the female thrush is busy with insects
while teasingly she walks ahead.

Gert Strydom

The Thunder Cat

In the bush I see a strange thing,
a secret cat
that like a phantom
follow our tracts, shadowing behind
leaving no tracts of its own.

Red eyes glow at night
with the intensity of a fire burning
but every time that I really look
it's out of reach.

Around the orange-yellow fire
where we are barbequing the meat
from the day's hunting
I can almost smell the monster
where it sneaks out of sight
around us.

I wonder what has awaken
in the wild veldt, the jungle
and what hell of a thing
we now have drawn
from its sleep?

My.308 rifle and hunting knife
both lie near to my side,
but something let me comprehend
that no usual weapons
will stand against this monster

but at that time I am still convinced
that it's only imagination
and the tiredness, the party
at the fire
and my thoughts are playing with me.

Totally unconcerned we go to sleep
and with time the flames
burn lower and lower

and there are only glowing coals left.

When I wake up with a start
a bright moon is in the sky
and something strange
stand over me
and it looks part transparent
but still with a fixed
dark form.

I can smell death
on the breath of it
and see its teeth glittering
and it's as if thunder
flames from its jaws
when it bites at me

and an urge for survival
let me jump from the ground
to the other side
of the glowing coals
and its teeth clash on each other.

Next to me lies a shovel
and some of the coals
still have small flames
and I see that the coals
make it hesitate for a moment.

Desperately I grab the shovel,
scoop if full of coals
and when the monster
opens its jaws again
to take another bite at me
and I get the rotten smell
of its foul breath
I throw the whole shovel
down its throat.

For a moment it roars thundering,
is filled with bright white thunderbolts
and stand ablaze

and looks like a thunder cat
before it disappears into the darkness
and becomes nothing
as if suddenly it's in another dimension

and everybody stares at me
with eyes huge as saucers
and from the sand
I pick up two teeth
that shines strangely, like diamonds,
but with an unknown blue-white fire
glowing from the inside.

Gert Strydom

The Thunder Storm Came Suddenly

The thunder storm came suddenly; the air was drawing close,
with grey and black clouds covering the heaven
and suddenly there was no more blue
with the whole day being only grey
while leaves were falling in yellow and brown everywhere,

with the wind cutting icily, trying to grab onto jackets,
untimely the rain came without respect
for the rules of nature,
the thunder storm came suddenly.

Suddenly the weather was in each conversation
of the doctor, lawyer and architect,
as if it contained something incomprehensible and evil
nobody trusted the sudden bad weather;
early in the afternoon people left for home,
the thunder storm came suddenly.

Gert Strydom

The Tikoloshe

The whole yard becomes full, becomes full of him,
without anyone noticing
while the shadows are drawing nearer

is in the bright day he already approaches full of danger,
when darkness comes to the earth
without anyone noticing

he unexpectedly enters a house,
and someone screams agitated
when darkness comes to the earth

and he comes and goes as he wants to
with eyes gleaming red and bloodthirsty
and someone screams agitated

where he enters the bed of an innocent girl,
when he sets out to kill
with eyes gleaming red and bloodthirsty

and still come and go unseen among people.
The whole yard becomes full, becomes full of him,
when he sets out to kill
while the shadows are drawing nearer.

Gert Strydom

The Tikoloshe (Free Verse Sonnet)

The whole yard gets full, becomes full of him,
with shadows that slowly do come near
and so he sneaks slowly but silent
are camouflaged and extremely disguised
without any one noticing him
and in the bright day he is already present
but the sun does blind when you carefully try to look
and the black night comes with danger
when darkness does fall upon the earth,
then unexpectedly he comes,
do suddenly murderously attack in a bedroom
and when the first rays do awake the people
then suddenly anxious they do scream
while he comes and goes just as he wants.

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Gert Strydom

The Tikoloshe [3]

Outside something sneaks around during the dark moon
and it comes nearer and nearer and stands still
when the voice of a child calls in the distance
and I imagine it's already on the porch.
At the window I see red eyes gleaming,
it looks as if something from hell wants to climb in,
I hear it walk around the house
and it pushes and bumps against the kitchen door.
The yard is full of fear and him
when in terror every child wants to run away
but evil comes nearer and still nearer
and a kind of alarm comes with him.
Outside there is the smell of sulphur and fire,
in the distance a bell counts off midnight,
somewhere a woman yells from pain and fear
and suddenly everything is silent and it is pitch dark
when only a shadow moves past
and disappear into the depths of the narrow alley way.

Gert Strydom

The Tikoloshe [4]

At night something is jogging between the houses
that is neither animal nor man
and the face of it is distorted
full of hatred with a unearthly meaning,
with eyes gleaming bloody red
that makes people freeze from fear
when he climbs through a window,
comes nearer, grabs you with mighty arms
and everywhere the dogs of the neighbourhood are barking,
howl and cry in great fear
as the figure is something more terrifying than from the grave
and everything that comes across it wants to flee and hide from it
as where it comes blood does flow
before the first glowing of the morning.

Gert Strydom

The Tikoloshe In My Imaginings

In my imagination in the primitive rural aria
this midnight comes alive
with something sinister and ominous
that is suddenly full of life
and it's sneaking stealthily all the way to town,
all the way to the house where I am living.

Besides the street lamp's lonely white glow,
outside there is a sudden evil presence
but nothing extraordinary which I do see
and the neighbour's dogs do stop their howling selenologues,
do stop singing their songs to the big yellow full moon,
do snarl and bark viciously as if they want to rip something apart
and some do whine as if they are in the utmost fear
while the fighting tom-cats
do dart away to their hiding places.

Apart from the rooms light, the reading-lamp's friendly yellow rays,
the computer screen's blank white word-processor page
by own volition my fingers type
and through both windows of which the curtains are drawn open
I can see the Seven Sisters, Orion and the Southern Cross peeping in
and the moon has turned red
which my rationality tells me is from the air
that is full of pollution and maybe dust
but yet this late night has somehow become menacing,
as even the sky is reflecting it,

as if something powerful, utterly evil is right here,
as if the dogs and cats do more than just sense it,
as if something is sneaking closer in the deep darkness
that is shadowing disguising it
while it is coming closer still
and the crunch of footfalls in the driveway
almost into the trees,
two burning red-hatred filled utterly evil eyes
I suddenly see and then I do not
while I smell sulphur and my own fear
while the shadows do swallow it again.

I do know there is something very near
that is present as something much more than a mere myth
that has come with its evil intent
and one of the neighbours is returning from a night out
with the lights of his car lighting up the yard
like a spotlight falling on the evil sub-human goat-like demonic thing,
for a mere moment it does stand menacing.

The reading-lamp's friendly yellow rays still burns,
through both windows the Seven Sisters,
Orion and the Southern Cross still do shine
and the moon, which has shifted its position
is much higher and white
and not a sound can be heard from outside
as if everything has gone to sleep,
the computer hums on
and the poem is typed on the screen.

Gert Strydom

The Time Has Rushed By [1]

The time has rushed by, love.
I have forgotten how we once were
there is something different when we go to bed
and it's as if everything has been said,

as if no words can ever again
be spoken as we once did
and you will never again
lie hot with your body against mine
as if sheltering against life

and the strong wind from outside
is rattling at the windowpanes
as if still searching, trying to find something
or maybe to come in
and even it passes, passes me by

but there is something different to everything
a special kind of feeling
as if still closer and closer we do bond
as if even arguments and heartache
does not their toll take.

Gert Strydom

The Time Has Rushed By [3]

The time has rushed by, love,
but still bliss remains as if not touched by time,
as if there is more magic to each kiss
even when days have turned to months and years.

Gert Strydom

The Time Has Rushed By, Love

the days are different from what they had been,
as if all great things our eyes have seen
as no greater feelings to each other we can prove.

The time has rushed by, love,
outside the winter is gone, everything is green,
while in our hearts our love grows unseen
as if nothing can it quench or remove.

Every day have got the capacity of great happiness
as if in it there is something great, something deeper still,
that just waits to come true
as if you are part of me, part of my consciousness
as if daily somehow we will
stick to each other with a bond much stronger than glue.

Gert Strydom

The Time When Suddenly Spring Does Unfold (English Sonnet)

The time when suddenly spring does unfold
when skies are crystal clear, sunny and blue
in blossoming trees and flowers I do behold
and still my deep feelings for you are true

when all of nature is gay, full of life,
when the season is more hot than temperate
and it's a great blessing that you are my wife
that together daily we do face fate

and although at times you bring me pain
there is loveliness that on your face I see
and our feelings of affection and love does remain
as if by God's own hand they are set to be

as if from the creation together we do belong,
still my love for you daily grows more strong.

Gert Strydom

The Toddler Girl (1)(Refrain Stanza)

Rosy her small finger points into the book
where we did the search for wild animals undertook
while like a small lion next to me she does growl
and with bended fingers she hoots like an owl,
on a canvas picture perfect she would look
where her vivid blue eyes are smiling at me,
to turn the page she asks softly
while the little girl does her tiny fingers into mine hook
where we did the search for wild animals undertook.

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Gert Strydom

The Toddler Girl (2)(Refrain Stanza)

With two soft arms you did reach out to me
in your small dress in church I did a real fairy princess see,
undaunted you drove your own electric-car up and down
pass the barking dogs in the streets of the town
with sky-blue eyes smiled at me with love and tranquillity.
You started to talk, in church wanted papers on which to draw
went to the elder to ask for them and held the church in awe
and no other grandchild could the stereotype of you be,
in your small dress in church I did a real fairy princess see.

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Gert Strydom

The Tokkelossie

At night when the sun sets
and the dark night folds around the earth
a short man appears,
who is darker than the night
and he waits for the moon to disappear
before he slyly sneaks into places.

His hands are claws
like those of a baboon
and with his long nails
he draws sparks
out of quartz rocks
and as far as he walks,
it sounds like buck hooves trotting
and in his heart
he's a demon.

At times the dogs see him
and bark and growl,
but far too fast he passes by,
that anybody
can really see him.

Where he strikes
there's never another tomorrow
and his works is black like the night
and before Orion appears,
he is long gone
and the life of a woman
with him.

Gert Strydom

The Too-Late Born (Cavatina) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

We were too late born to escape from war,
was forced to go,
have caused with great manmade bolts of thunder
the slain; do know
the soulless agony that comes from killing,
saw phosphor glow
as it burns red with a projectile strike;
the destruction, killing, we did not like.

[Reference: 'The Too-Late Born' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

The Totals Of Life

I have tried to find a solution
for the sum
of my existence,

tried to find the reasons why
I am here,

have tried to find answers
for the impediments that life brings,
for the shattering that destiny
sometimes holds

and the only conclusion
is the need for somebody
to share life with.

Gert Strydom

The Tower Of Babel

When man build his ziggurat,
did build a tower so high
that he wanted to reach
the Lord God,

man was already twisted,
did regard himself as equal to God
and when God commenced with the different languages
and man was in chaos

while thunder from the blue sky
did leaking rush to below
and the massive monster
of tar and rock

did burn like a gigantic flaming torch,
man was well aware about the omnipotence of God.

Gert Strydom

The Tractor

No ploughing could be done
without

the red Massy Ferguson
tractor

that broke right next to
the field

of hard brown-red earth
baking

in the hot summer sun
next to

the whispering big old
oak trees.

Gert Strydom

The Tranquil Swim

In the late afternoon we walked on the beach
with the sun hanging low in its golden glare.
I said, "Look! Your eyes are the colour of the sun on the sea."
Frowning you glanced at me and shook your head.
"They are green-brown," you smiled.
"They are golden," I replied while we entered the lagoon.
The water was warm while we swam to the small waterfall,
found a unknown grotto behind its sheets of water,
small fishes were drifting all around us
while the water was crystal-clear and buoyant
and lazily side-by-side we floated.
Deeper inside there were some pink coral
and many more brightly coloured small fishes
dashed away from us as they scattered.
Much later totally alone we were on a flat rock,
moments became eternal,
smiling you did cling to me
and somehow we had lost time
as it was twilight
when we did return to the beach
and the evening star was shining bright
in the still azure sky.

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Gert Strydom

The Translucence (Italian Sonnet)

As if these moments caught each emotion
where the tender passion of a single kiss
was something that will never again be like this
that came purely without any instigation,

that does at times return by own volition
as if all meaning of how true love really is,
was built into mere moments of pure bliss
as if leading to this was every other motion

and my mind, heart and body cannot ever forget
as if that way of love was burnt in to all of me,
in the translucence of how with you it had been
where the intimate loving came long after we had met
in mere moments did become the sweetest memory
of your skin, intimate touch as sacred and clean.

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Gert Strydom

The Tree (Rime Royal Sequence)

Sitting still in the cool welcoming shade
of a natural place where things do thrive
enjoying the peace the shadow has made
it adds to the sheer quality of life
and I wonder how it does survive?
Against the thick trunk I have set the spade;
nothing, no argument can persuade

me different, while I think of good things
which brings some old memories back to me
I hear a myriad of small birds that sing
as if this is how things have got to be,
I am happy, feel wonderment and glee,
a kind of serenity that comes unseen
as if this is how life had once been.

Gert Strydom

The Trip Back

The sky is grey
with ominous clouds
that whirls and churns
and there's thick fog
hanging like a cloak
low over the earth.

The visor of my helmet
is immediately covered
by the impact
of fine drops of rain
and I open it
to be able to see
where I am travelling.

At places I have to leave the road
to clean the lenses
of my glasses
and then the motorbike
again roars with power under me,

but I have only gone a small distance
when the cars come to a halt
and I have to twist through them.

Twenty kilometres further
I come upon the accident
that is blocking the freeway
just where I have to turn off
to Benoni
and blue and red lights
flash through
the fumes of mist.

I turn the throttle open
but at places
the fog banks still hangs low
and mini buss taxis, busses and cars
appear like ghosts in front of me.

At a place a stream flows
strong like a river over the road
and although I lift my feet
and open the throttle more
to give power to the motorbike

a four by four
passes over the middle line
and throws a wall of water
right over me
and if I can get hold of that lunatic
he will surely know it.

The helmet, black leather jacket
and backpack
stops the water,
but my jean
and shoes are soaking wet
and the motorbike eats the road
and somewhat frozen
I drive to get to home,
as if Springs
is just behind the next hillock

Gert Strydom

The True Blessing Of Spring (Limerick)

The true blessing of spring
when the lark, the nightingale and thrush sing
is like the most sincere friends that seldom meet
or maybe each other seldom in goodbye greet
as it's a seasonal thing which is reoccurring.

Gert Strydom

The True Stories That My Mother Did Tell (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

Of a leopard that pounced upon my great-grandfather as a beast from hell
my mother did many true hair-raising stories to us as children tell,
how with a mere folding knife he did loose fingers but did it overcome,
the old people believed of witchcraft at the swamp and it was gruesome,
how a baboon left excrement in the chimney to try the people to expel,
how as a policeman her uncle Koos did to the house of a murderer race,
his weighty partner shouted: "more men are coming, " at that place
and how the criminal handed himself over as he was frightened by the yell,
my mother did many true hair-raising stories to us as children tell

of my uncle Koos with a Lee-Medford on the porch when they were gone
(where the members of my family to me as heroes do live on)
where with old bullets from the Boer-war at the dairy he took aim
how the rifle kicked him and for damage he was to blame
where his mischief left a hole in the dairy's wall of stone
and as jewels I hold onto the stories of the history of my family,
which tells me how they and I do fit into life and they become real to me,
how my grandfather Danie Brand fought in a war that the British had won,
where the members of my family to me as heroes do live on,

where Grandfather Danie as a boy did return with blisters on his hand
and it comes from him to in honour and respect take a stand,
where the barrel of the rifle did burn him to leave a huge scar
but as in our own bush-war that he felt in vain was every war,
where grandfather Danie with the breaking of his pipe acted grand
where he was embarrassed by smoking in another's house he did dare
and more for the man where he was buying cattle did care,
where he respected every citizen and also the ground and the land
and it comes from him to in honour and respect take a stand.

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Gert Strydom

The Two Sparrows (Free Verse Sonnet)

I see the two sparrows chirp and sing twittering
where they are eating the miniature Christmas cactus to pieces
as if they do know something of the leaves of it
when they do notice me like two naughty children do jump away,
then again do fly in a wide circle,
do believe that I did forget them and their deeds
and before I know it they have started again
and they jerk at the plant and eat string upon string
before they do flutter and fly
at a distance do look attentively at me
do comb their feathers at the outer wall
to mislead me with their intentions
but it's as if always they are looking at the plant
then again do jump in and eat it to the stem.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Ultimate Question

The ultimate question:
what is love,
why does it exist
and why sometimes not?

Or was it life?

It all depends on how you look at things:
by the heart or scientifically.

Gert Strydom

The Unseen Presence Of Him

The unseen presence of Him that created all
is constantly among us as we dwell in a world of sin
and He has been visiting like this from the very begin,
since the very day that Adam and Eve did fall

and as spring follows winter and summer moves in
all of nature rejoices in beautiful colours and fragrances
while daily insects, birds, flowers and trees enhances
the blessings that usually come unseen in the daily din.

Gert Strydom

The Vampire Bat, Dragon And Snake

(in answer to Robert Nye)

Falling, falling aflame from the heavenly high height
stripped from power, from all his positions, and God's might
scorched black from the defeat of the Great War
where he saw destruction and rebellion as his right

Lucifer, above God tried to take his whimsical flight
but burning, burning falling red-hot and hotter white
came like a bat into hell as a sapphire sparking flame
and the destruction of all humans is his great delight.

He thinks he is godly, a master, a prince by his birthright
but against the omnipotent Lord God his power is slight
while his evil servants do bend to his will, to his majesty,
as the master of disaster and into his heart they have no insight

where he has the ability to change to an angel of the light
or to a unearthly evil creature of the night
that sucks out the souls of mortal men,
who do find his way by other means than just sight

but in anger in the form of a man he clenches his fist tight
decides to bring men with each other to war to bring them to fight,
as the highest demonic being he does bubble up things
that to mortal men does bring great fright,

under his own absorbing sinful spell
are still falling, falling deeper into his own hell
but do remain to God's great Judgment Day
while constantly he and his messengers do lies tell

and in his essence he is the vampire bat, the shivering snake
the Leviathan, the fiery dragon of the sky and of the sea and the lake.

[Reference: "Kingfisher" by Robert Nye.]

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The Vantage Point

In plantations of emerald green pine trees
I am looking for the spirit of man
and try to find some serenity,
and on that knoll halfway up the hill
above me the peaks
of the black-grey Helderberg mountain
leap like pointed tooth
high into the air.

At the bottom far off houses, cars and men
in Somerset West are smaller than kids toys,
but farther still the ivory white beaches
of the Strand and Gordon's Bay
meet the aquamarine sea
and the ocean the cobalt blue sky.

Gert Strydom

The Veldt Is All Around Me

The veldt is all around me
and I am beyond enemy lines
camouflaged, clothed in
military uniform, wearing tracking boots,
with the soles almost like
running shoes,
with a weapon in my hands

viewing, taking reconnaissance
of enemy soldiers, driving by
on pickups, in cars without roofs
in trucks waving guns
in the air and sometimes
firing as they pass by

and suddenly a young boy
is beside me
clothed in a blue short sleeved shirt
and grey short pants
looking like school uniform
but being too young for school
and walking barefoot
right next to me.

Wherever I run from bush to bush,
catwalk, leopard crawl
and hide behind bushes
getting nearer to enemy positions
he stays at my side like a shadow
running, walking and standing openly

and it annoys me
and that he keeps talking to me
as he can draw attention to us
and I say:

"Gerrie, come and lie down.
Hide behind this bushes. Stop talking.
You will draw the enemy to us."

Unconcerned like walking in the veldt
in my young days, and being ignored
by the natives passing by
the boy looks at me
shaking his head and asks:

"Why are the enemy shooting in the air
while they drive past?
Why do they sometimes
rob their own people? "

Realizing that it's my own thoughts
and I look at the child again
and see my younger self
with childish innocence
accompanying me.

Gert Strydom

The Veteran

I know that every matter
cannot be only black and white,
but what is right is right
and a lot of wrong things are going on.

Inertia bothers me,
while life keeps on happening
and constantly I need activity,
as it's a strange philosophy.

I am not off to set the world right,
have had my conflicts, wars and fights
but still I am trying to change things
with words and deeds and small happenings.

Gert Strydom

The View From The Window

Picturesque the garden,
the flowers, the lawn, the trees
and even the sky with patches of clouds
is set out through the study's window

but no artist, even a supreme master,
is up to get the exact hues, of colours
depth and variations of light
exactly right

and this scene is vibrant
with bright colours and living light
and movement caused by the wind,
insects and birds
and it is ever changing in tone and hue,
always to something new.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Visit

You were residing in Anne Fisher house
and I in Salisbury
at the private university
lying at the foot
of Helderberg mountain.

□

I bought a box of chocolates
early one night
at a Café in Somerset West
and they even wrapped it
and while the sun
was still high in the sky
I went to visit you.

The student on duty
called you
over the microphone
and suddenly you looked shy
but was quite happy
to see me.

We walked out on the ramp
leading to the foyer
and you had a white jacket on
and stood chatting
in the open,
and we were just
a guy and a girl
that was falling in love.

I could see the beach
over your shoulder
and the blue sea
but my attention
was on your smiling face
and your mesmerizing eyes.

You gave me a quick kiss,
just a peck on the lips

to say thank you
and my heart sang
but suddenly
a camera flashed
catching us.

A day later
I was called in
by the men's dean
and he spread
some photos
on his desk
out in front of me.

There was anger in his eyes
and he said
that my ridiculous relationship
with you must end immediately.

If I went out of my way
to do something seriously wrong
I would have been able
to understand his reaction,
but for trying to date you
and for a moment
I was dumfounded.

"I have proof that you were
closer than three meters to her
and you even kissed her
and it's totally against the policy."

Before coming to University
I was called up by the military,
completed two years of service
and I wasn't a boy
after seeing action in the war
in South West Africa
and in Angola.

I told him
that he just as well

can stop the ridiculous relationship
with his wife.

He was well built
and probably a fitness freak
and got up so suddenly
that his chair
went to the ground.

His hands was on my chest
and he rammed me
into the wall
pushing his face
into mine
screaming: "Say that again."

My anger went away
but the calm was the same
with which I had faced
the enemy
and in my eyes
he saw death
coming on.

"Take your hands of me, "
I said to him
and didn't have
to say anything more
and he stepped away,
closed his eyes
and prayed for me
and then dismissed me.

[Note: The sun at times in summer sets at eight (20h00) in the Cape Town
aria.]

Gert Strydom

The Visit [2]

I come from Pretoria
with the sun rising in a blue sky
to see where I lived as child
for more than thirteen years
and I will return home before it sets.

The change I notice
as I want to take the road
creeping past the dam
up the hill,
is that it exist no more
and a high fence
blocks off the dam.

The walkway across the dam
is overgrown and where the road
used to be
there now is grass and small trees
as if it never was
and the field where maize used to grow
does not exist anymore
and now is covered
with knee-high grass and weeds.

I walk miles back
to find a place
to cut across the veldt
and find the red roofed house
against the hillock
where it is dilapidated,
left without care
and it does not look
as if anybody still comes there

and the garden that I tended with care
have a few flowers still
that grows among the grass and weeds
and a puff adder that hisses at me
now dwells there.

Gert Strydom

The Visiting Prince (Italian Sonnet)

The Son of God who became a human being
did walk upon the water of the Sea of Galilee,
when He came to set all men free
from sin and His love still is something amazing

and when I hear the birds sing their praises in spring
then I see the One who made things like they are supposed to be
and the humiliation of that dark Calvary does stay with me
as humanity's most terrible crushing thing

but although the Prince does not walk on this earth anymore
He still at times comes visiting in disguise
and when a poor beggar knocks at the door
I do some great caution exercise
as Jesus does change lives from what they have been before
and in that wretched man the Lord God I might just recognize.

Gert Strydom

The Voice

Woman whom I loved once,
now you call me, tell me
that you have changed through the years.

Can it really be you, you who were really lovely?
In the picture, that I have in my head
with an angelic smile, big green eyes with brown spots
you look even more pretty than before?

Or is it only in my mind that I still see you
or a nightly dream that you are in
or a apparition walking in my garden
in the early morning fog?

¶Envoi

Thus I stumble forward
as if in a dream, seeing the morning glories opening
and everything looks so much like spring
and the early morning air brings your scent to me
and somehow I know that the voice that I hear
is really yours and sincere.

.

[Reference: The Voice by Thomas Hardy.]

Gert Strydom

The Voortrekker (In Answer To Tony Harrison)

A track from a kraal
goes direct into the veldt
decked in blood
from the remains of cattle.

The sick Boer walks alone,
now abandoned of dog,
children, farm labourers
with a .303 rifle wavering in his hands.

Somewhere in dense green bushes
in front of him to the right
lions roar and at speed
one, two and three more
appear with tails flashing like whips.

The rifle is still wavering in his hands
but an expert eye finds the sight
with the trigger at his finger tip,
the exploding sound of bullet after bullet
are followed by a whack and some great roars
and the lions are no more

and like his fathers protected in God's hand,
although outnumbered many times
by natives and wild beasts
stand a lonely believing man.

[Reference: Voortrekker by Tony Harrison.]

Gert Strydom

The Waning Moon

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

Shapelessly white it spread its light
ailing like a old withered man
in the darkness of that night
its half a thumb's span

rising very slow
taking half steps before pausing for breath
it had a whimpering kind of glow
as if it was very near to death

wandering in the elemental space half-insane
trying to find its way through a myriad of bright stars
as if feebleness, atrophy had rotten its fading brain
as if it wore a crisscross of scars

while its colour was a kind of pale
thinly covered by a cloud's veil.

[Reference: "The waning moon" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

The Warning

At a crossroad just beyond the tunnel
of the Hartebeespoort dam
on a starry night
I notice a young woman next to road

and she is lovely
wears a blue dress
and a white jacket
while she is hitchhiking

and in the roof light of the BMW
she looks somewhat pale, so as if
she does not come into the sun
and her black strings of hair

hangs in waves down her shoulders
and the fragrance of almond blossoms
fills the car as she gets in
and after travelling a small distance

she urgently asks me to pull off the road
and we both do wait
until a car without lights does pass at speed
on the wrong side of the road

and without greeting the girl does disappear,
fades into the naught
and on the seat next to me lays a branch
with some white almond flowers on it.

Gert Strydom

The Waves Comes Rushing From The Sea

The waves comes rushing from the sea
they brush against me
licking my toes, touching my feet
and there's something sweet
in the light sea breeze
that frizzles through my hair.

Washing in and out
the foam comes back and forth
where you stand
to me like Eve
but dressed in black a designer bikini
and the light in your eyes
is brighter than the clear blue sky
and the sun twinkles
on your teeth that shines more pure
than pearl

and some might call it love
if we could give expressions
to the feelings of that which are between us
and to me you are lovely
as if sent as an angelic being
to act out some of God's great mysteries
and while you smile at me
the hissing sea, the blue sky
and your presence
brings utter joy.

Gert Strydom

The Waves Comes Rushing From The Sea [1]

The waves comes rushing from the sea
they brush against me
licking my toes, touching my feet
and there's something sweet
in the light sea breeze
that frizzles through my hair.

Washing in and out
the foam comes back and forth
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and your presence
brings utter joy.

Gert Strydom

The Way Life Now Goes (Italian Sonnet)

As if it's a great unending adventure,
daily we search for life's essence,
do not realise that we are in God's presence
where He does our imperfections endure.

About tomorrow we are not very sure
where we fabricate our own pretence,
at times run into other's incompetence
while life with its excitement does us allure

and most important become our appearance
but much more than this we do experience
that which we think makes life very great,
as if to the future we have forbearance
but to a deadly thing we have inexperience
and on God's omnipotence we do wait.

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Gert Strydom

The Wedding Gown Of The Spring Is More Fair (Rondel Prime)

The wedding gown of the spring is more fair
than the stark nakedness that winter does bring,
when many trees do their bright garments wear
and day and night birds do rejoicing sing,

while insects buzz and flutter in the air
and happiness is in everything living.
The wedding gown of the spring is more fair
than the stark nakedness that winter does bring,

than the silence that is cold and bare,
when some birds do frolic, to and thro wing
their way and gladness is in their flying
until the sun's late afternoon red glare.
The wedding gown of the spring is more fair
than the stark nakedness that winter does bring.

Gert Strydom

The Werewolf (Sestina)

One night just after eleven the pastor does get up
and urgently to a farm he has to drive
where a young girl was almost raped and a father did it stop.
He knows that on the road the police he would possibly find.
God is great as the farm-murders are nowadays many
and in the lights of the car the cornfields do pass.

The farmer and his people are shocked but the incident did pass,
The farmer shot a tikoloshe but a human was picked up.
He did bleed badly; did stare at them in anger and his curses were many
and the people are sincere he thinks while he does drive.
They are confused he believes and the right thoughts they have got to find
but ahead in the road suddenly a monster rises and wants him to stop.

He pushes the accelerator down and do decide not to stop
the car is running at speed and he just wants to pass
when the machine does cut out and he struggles an escape to find.
The car comes to a halt and the pastor from the dashboard does look up
notices a werewolf that stands on its hind legs and he does pray to be able to
drive.
He looks at an evil, vicious monster and his thoughts are many.

Overwhelming evil comes from the creature and his fears are many.
The door is pulled open and he is jerked out without being able to stop,
there is no possibility to jump back into the car and to drive.
The creature walks around him and then do pass
but howls angrily and to the moon looks up
and then the half-human looks into his eyes while it does pleasure find

from the fear. "I am going to rip out your throat and your blood I will
find/";

Near to the pastor there are stones and they are many.
He bends down to pick some up
but does realise that no rock will this creature stop
and whatever he does this creature he cannot pass.
The police as if they do not notice them with speed do drive.

He is more afraid than he has ever been while away the police do drive.
He thinks: "they are never coming when help you do have to find."

He prays aloud and says: "Lord Jesus, let this thing pass."
The monster laughs and says the reasons that Satan wants him killed are many.
"Stop right there! In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ stop!
my work for the omnipotent Lord is not finished" and into the sky he looks
up.

The monster does pass, becomes human and the pastor's questions are many.
Away he wants to drive from this strange human some help to find
but first he has to stop while to God he sends a prayer up.

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Gert Strydom

The White Breasted Crow

From the sky it swooped down shrieking
completely black
with a white patch at its breast
gazing with small black intelligent eyes at me
with feet stretched out
and four claws on each
opening and ready to close around a branch
during the landing

but I was sitting on a bench in a park
with the nearest tree
twenty meters away
and it landed on a wooden spar
of the bench's backrest
right next to me
and sitting upright it said: 'hello'
amazing me with the greeting

and looked curious
at the slices of bread
that I was eating
and it was obvious that it wanted some.

Gert Strydom

The White Girl

I fill my blue motorbike
at the garage
and the smell of fuel
is strong in the air.

The early morning sun
hangs bright in the sky
and already it's a hot day.

I go to the shop
to buy a can of Coke
and get caught
in the middle of a fight
of a white girl
with the black cashier
and she tries to draw me
into her argument.

She's beautiful and spoiled
and shouts and slams her fists down
on the counter
and in a temper tantrum
grabs the card reading machine
and throws it on the ground
and there's hatred in her eyes
and her words lack respect
and any dignity.

I see how the machine
breaks into bits
and paper rolling
down an aisle
and time freezes
into parts of reality
and I have no cash on me.

Suddenly I am dismayed
at being of the same race
and culture and nationality

as that spoiled grown up child.

Gert Strydom

The White Lily (Novelinee)

As if constantly caught in a prayer
sprung from the very painful tears of Eve
white petals reach holy into the air
as if in purity it does believe
that it can bring a kind of loveliness,
a type of radiant flowering light,
as it flowers in a kind of eagerness
with a soft fragrance filling the night,
as if being a saintly vessel, it might.

Gert Strydom

The White Man Blues

An AK-47 submachine gun shoots stammering,
a rocket propelled grenade whooshes past
and I am in the middle
of another country's civil war
shooting off short bursts, trying to stay alive
while forced into military service
by the government
and this day could be my last,
but it's ok as I am still alive
and praying to an almighty God.

Having lost two cars, in less than a week
from theft by some black hooligans
who thinks that what you own
belongs to them
from which the insurance absolved themselves,
having lost my job by affirmative action
and only receiving a few months salary as pay
with all the fringe benefits being cut away

with the wife and her kids walking out
into the arms and the charms
of her new boyfriend
and in Soweto and wherever
the gangsters and politicians live, they know,
they wait and try to relieve me
from my humanity
and to turn me into a ravenous hating thing
and it isn't news to them
they see my plight
as they are causing it
and even the government holds out its hand
for taxes when and where I have a contract work
but it's ok as I am still alive
and praying to an almighty God.

Gert Strydom

The Whole Town Is Like A Deserted Post-Apocalyptic Zone (Villanelle)

It's hard to be locked-down and still from you away
where by circumstance we do live on our own,
of the depth and sincerity of my love I want to say

and so much I wish that life could just the same stay
but the whole town is like a deserted post-apocalyptic zone.
It's hard to be locked-down and still from you away

and more and more I do miss you on every day
where it's hell to be from you totally alone.
Of the depth and sincerity of my love I want to say

where all our plans for the future have turned to clay
and steely measures are set as hard as stone.
It's hard to be locked-down and still from you away

while futuristic with a virus life and death is at play
and your voice seems so very sad on the telephone.
Of the depth and sincerity of my love I want to say,

that I will love and adore you come what may
and when this hellish time will end is still unknown.
It's hard to be locked-down still from you away,
of the depth and sincerity of my love I want to say

Gert Strydom

The Whole World Spins (Rondelet)

The whole world spins
when you are on a carousel,
the whole world spins
on its axis from the begin
while all on earth is going well,
and children do laugh play and yell;
the whole world spins.

Gert Strydom

The Widow Viljee

There's a pretty lady
dressed in pitch black
that passes
with two angry spotted dogs
that groans and barks the whole time

and step after step I have to take
but wanted to jog past
the widow Viljee,
but the dogs want to pull loose
and then I had to walk by slowly
and greet her)

and I wonder why she is crying
or did sand
blow into her eyes?

She walks for miles
armed with a staff
with a blade like a sword
on that holy day
to lose her soul at the sea
or maybe to find it?

[Reference: Met apologie (With apology) by D.J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

The Widow Viljee As By Johann Johl (Parody)

(after D.J. Opperman with apology to Johann Johl)

Next to the sea
where a bird in amok does scream
the widow Viljee strides on
and she is so lost without her man
with two Dalmatians following her close.

The poor woman, Viljee
and the dogs cannot understand
what the bird is screaming
while they walk on.

Oh woe, oh woe the widow Viljee
when the lot of them
detonate a landmine,
and pieces crackles-thunder clap
as if reaching for the sky
and later her basket of knotted birch-cane
are picked up by two people that are in love.

[References: "Met apologie" (With apology) by D.J. Opperman,
Dubbelloop: 'n pastiche (Double barrel a pastiche) by Johann Johl,
"Bostelegraaf" (Bus htelegraph) by Johann Johl.]

Gert Strydom

The Wild Coast

(after W.B. Yeats)

I will take my things and go,
go to the wild coast
and there buy a small piece of un-ravished land
where wild birds still sing

that is still at nature's prime,
and it will be right against the sea
and there I will wash all of the city grime away.

It might be at the beginning of spring,
or any season will really do
and it will only be you and me.

We will build a little holiday-house
with a tiny track leading to it,
maybe a cottage
where we could manage a life of our own,
or a bigger house might suit you,
where as my spouse
you will have a studio of your own
where the outside pressure will cease
and peace and serenity will come to us.

We will walk for miles on the beach,
will be out of reach to everyone,
but a couple of close friends,
we will be sheltered against the fiends
that life had brought on our way
and there we will stay
and work and play till the end of our days.

[Reference: "The lake isle of Innisfree" by W.B. Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

The Wind Blew On The Beach

The wind blew on the beach
and our hands were each in each
while our hearts did beat like one
and all of our yesterdays were gone
but the new morning was just out of reach
while the moments lingered and slowly time moved on.

Gert Strydom

The Wind Blows Rustling Through The Bush

The wind blows rustling through the bush
and only it and God knows where it is going,
when it disappears and nothing move in the veldt
and when it returns some grains of dust are blown away.
An ibises raises gleaming copper into the sky
while God finds some answers for His earth,
and it chatters while big wings slam against the wind,
as it flies high over a small wooded hillock.
Guinea fowl peck along in the red grass,
after the rain some small bulbs are growing,
some lovely flowers astonish the veldt
but still this world is wounded by man.
The wind blows rustling through the bush
and when it returns some grains of dust are blown away.

Gert Strydom

The Window

The summer-sun burns blinding
on the window, mirror image on my eye
where trees, the rocky garden and plants
change gripping to an arched sky

above a domed sea
with reflection of light,
with fencing poles that are crossing rearranged
to a float drifting in equilibrium.

I am for days in the doldrums
and nights long, how long I cannot say
while I wait on the gusts of wind
that have to carry me away and I am full of apathy

until the wind, the sea thunder foaming throws me
in into eternity, far past damnation and the hell.

Gert Strydom

The Windows Was Closed Behind The Curtains

The windows was closed behind the curtains
and shut out was the world, the night and the breeze
as if you and I was locked in
away from all heartache, pain and sin
and our loving did begin
with passion and a certain kind of ease
and of your love I was certain
while I did cling to you.
It was as if all good things were coming true,
as if all evil and everything that brought ill
had to wait until
out time together was spent

Gert Strydom

The Winter Is Coming

The cat tells me
that its time for its food
and outside bees
still fly past in a swarm

and I realise that it's late afternoon,
that the shadows are drawing long lines,
the wind rustles through the tree branches
and it's already almost cold
as the winter is coming.

Still there's something in the late autumn
that catches me
where here and there leaves
hang like dots on tree branches,

that the sun sometimes still gives hot rays
as if it does not really want
the cold to come
and the grass is still green
like in the summer.

Gert Strydom

The Wish To Live On (Cavatina Sequence)

(in answer to Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

The wish to live on, to still love, to know
beyond the grave
is probably in each mere mortal soul
and we act brave
in the face of daily devastation
at times do rave
at the meaninglessness of mortal life,
find withering in all that we do strive,

yet each lovely thing points straight up to God,
to some existence
that was once perfect, beyond all reproach,
and we do sense
that once we were much greater still than the
incompetence
to which we are bound and that everything
still yearns for company with a supreme being.

[Reference: "In Memoriam A.H.H." by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.]

Gert Strydom

The Wish To Live On (Cavatina)

(in answer to Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

I

The wish to live on, to still love, to know
beyond the grave
is probably in each mere mortal soul
and we act brave
in the face of daily devastation
at times do rave
at the meaninglessness of mortal life,
find withering in all that we do strive,

II

yet each lovely thing points straight up to God,
to some existence
that was once perfect, beyond all reproach,
and we do sense
that once we were much greater still than the
incompetence
to which we are bound and that everything
still yearns for company with a supreme being.

[Reference: "In Memoriam A.H.H." by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.]

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Gert Strydom

The Witch Of Hex River

According to legend
a beautiful girl
Eliza Meiring stayed

on the farm Buffelskraal
at the foot
of the mountains

and so many suitors
were interested in her
that she would only
be the girlfriend of the man
that brought her a red disa flower.

These ground orchids
only grow on the highest peaks
and it was extremely difficult
to get the flower.

The few guys that tried
quickly got discouraged
but Frans whom she really loved

climbed up Groothoek ravine
against a wet moss covered cliff
and there fell to his death.

Eliza was deranged
when she heard the news
and was kept by her parents
in the loft of their house
where she notched Eliza Meiring 1868
onto the wooden windowsill

and one night
she got the top window open,
went down to the ground,
wearing her long white night gown

and climbed the foot hills
and sat down crying on a rock
which suddenly crumbled beneath her
and she also fell to her death.

It is said
that when the first winter snow
falls on that mountains
and the moon rises
glittering on them

her spirit dwells
on the mountain peaks
and that she still mourns
the death of her lover.

Gert Strydom

The Witnessing Of Tears (Quotella)

THE times spent with you,
SOUL-searching through the years
WOULD have been totally in vain,
HAVE we not been in love,
NO meaning, no treasure would it hold,
RAINBOW after rainbow would not unfold
HAD you not been sweet and dear to me,
THE pain and sorrow would not wet
EYES with your passing,
NO inner peace would come;
TEARS are the proof of what we once had.

Gert Strydom

The Wizard

Some might call it a laboratory,
to others a place of unclear science
but to me it's a place of trickery
looking like a kind of factory
where a little man with vast experience
studies a old tome, a mystic book of his trade
with sketches and funny arithmetic, all hand made

and his fingers write arcane signs
in neat little lines
and I see nothing really gruesome
but an awful power is set in his deep eyes,
blackier than the night sky, than the darkest dye:
looking as that of someone, that has viewed the beyond
with a secret incorporeal bond, sizzling with unknown energy.

Gert Strydom

The Woman That I Adore

The wonderful woman that I adore
live in the Song of Songs deep in my heart
and is almost in every word and sentence,
in all of my joy and all of my sorrow.
Psalms whirl out in words for her,
like butterflies that flutter away in the wind
and the sun gleams in her eyes when I notice her,
she is like an innocent beautiful girl.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Women With The Coin

There's a French coin
hanging around your neck
that every now and then
catches the light
between your big breasts
and there's something fragile
and soft in your dark brown eyes
while you pour
another glass of Adelprag.

At the candlelight dinner
you tell me about your failed life,
your previous lovers,
why you are divorced again
and begs for sympathy,
that lies deeper
than just the glass.

You say that you cannot
comprehend life
and why relationships fail
while your eyes
watches every other man
that passes by
and you try to tempt me.

You do not want to
care for your children anymore
and one is in a boarding school,
since his father is dead
and the man
that brought him up
is now out of your life
and it was a mistake
to have children.

The coin around your neck
shines every now and then
while it draws eyes

to the place
where it hangs luring
between your big breasts
that is naked with hard nipples
under your blouse.

Gert Strydom

The Wonder Of Being You

The wonder of being you,
surrounds my whole world
brings joy, spontaneity and beauty,
throws light
and gives life
to the darkest part
of my soul
and makes me completely whole.

You are my greatest blessing,
the one who knows
me inside out
and comprehends without words,
are there when life rages about me,
with wit, audacity
and great beauty.

Gert Strydom

The Words Of A Child

When we were small
my younger brother and I
had to stay with the Von Hörsten's
during the day,
when my mother went to work

and we had to play outside
and was threatened
that we would get dresses
when we wanted
to come into the house,

but this staying
ended dramatically
in my sixth year.

One night my mother wanted to know
how it is going
with out daily visitation,
whereupon I told her
that every thing was well
and my brother said
that I eat my food very slowly.

I told her
that I do not like cabbage
and that we have to eat everything
or get a hiding
if something is left
on our plates.

My mother said that vegetables
are good and necessary to eat
and I accepted it like that,
but it wasn't the end
of the story.

As a innocent child
my brother told this incident

to one of the Von Hörsten boys
who told it to his dad.

I played in the hillock above their house
when all of the Von Hörsten boys suddenly
came running out of the farmhouse
and went in all directions
calling for me,
but I could immediately see
that there was big trouble
from the way
that they were shouting and searching.

So I stayed where I was
and wondered about what was going on
and what terrible thing
I had done unknowing?

The much older and bigger boys
sneaked up that hill
and jumped on me
from behind
and grabbed me
and I was carried
right up to their dad.

Uncle Hendrik was a man
that didn't take nonsense
from anyone
and wanted to know from me,
why I did not want to eat
his wife's food
and why I am saying
that her food tastes awful?

So I said that it isn't true
and he shouted
that I must stop lying
and jagged me closer
on my neck
with the hook of his walking stick
and hit me with it.

Stuttering I couldn't get words
to explain
the circumstances
and then he shouted
talk man talk
and stop thinking
what to lie about
while he was still hitting me.

So I said
that I didn't like cabbage
and got another hiding
and was said to be silent
or to talk the truth.

So I said that God is my witness
and that a day would come
that his words would also dry up
and be totally in confusion.

Like a dog I was chased away
with a footsack shouted at me
and fled away from
his walking stick
to our house.

The Von Hörsten's called my mother
and told her about every thing
and she knew
from where my trouble came
and for a whole month
my brother had to eat cabbage,
because he talked
out of the house
and never again
we stayed over with the Von Hörsten's.

¶ Envoi

Many years later
when I was at University

I saw uncle Hendrik Von Hörsten
on the campus
and we greeted each other
and spoke normally
about the things happening in the country
and about our families,

but when he walked away
other students spoke to him
and the once known writer
spoke back in jabbering language
as if he didn't know
what to say
and was totally confused.

It was said
that he had Alzheimer's,
but until today I wonder
about the power
coming from
the words of a child.

[Reference: The word uncle used here out of respect and local custom and not
to point out family relationship.]

Gert Strydom

The Words That I Do Leave

The words that I do leave
will like the paper
on which it is printed out
at a time become yellow and dull,

maybe disintegrate for people to nothing
and in my world of which I am telling
they may not be interested
as if the one that they are in
are more perfect and important

but in the letters on the line I do leave
small parts of myself.

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Gert Strydom

The World Displays God's Great Glory (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

The world displays God's great glory
even when industries downwards trod
nature with a steel crunching rod,
destruction is noted history,
still lilies and violets do bloom
with the earth at the brink of doom,
tranquil nature just a memory.

Gert Strydom

The World Displays God's Great Glory (Septilla / Spanish Septet) [1]

The world displays God's great glory
even when industries downwards trod
nature with a steel crunching rod,
destruction is noted history,
still lilies and violets do bloom
with the earth at the brink of doom,
tranquil nature just a memory.

Gert Strydom

The World Does Change When You Are Gone (English Sonnet)

The world does change when you are gone,
in my heart there is mitigated pain
and slowly, very surely life goes on,
the summers come with their rain,

the dove calls wooing for its mate
while a great longing fills my soul
and this night is turning very late
but constantly you do make my life whole

and your thoughts and longings I do know
where my feelings for you, our love flares up strong,
and without you my life goes extremely slow
while I know that together we do belong,

that you love me eats me up while I am alone,
and together we must be as you are the only one.

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Gert Strydom

The World Stops For Us (Persian Quatrain)

The world stops for us when we kiss,
my feelings testify of all of this
and lips on lips is something
that relates to pure and true bliss.

Gert Strydom

The Writing Is On The Wall

Now the writing is on the wall
and with the umpteenth killing
a know leader is dead
and dishonoured in hatred

and now the king ask for tranquillity
as if "give me my machinegun
and a bullet for a Boer
and kill a farmer, kill a white"
has no consequence

and I wonder what he wants to do
with his machinegun

(and at the court
blacks cheer killers as heroes)

or is the plan
to kill us one by one quietly?

Or is he begging for a chance
to let the army loose
on white people?

Is he still too stupid
to read the writing
of another blood river
coming almost unstoppable?

Gert Strydom

The Year Is Revived In New Blossoms

The year is revived in new blossoms
with a golden sun in the cobalt sky,
in my life only Your principles bloom;
bright flowers are preparing to carry fruit.
Days are hot, full of promises stretching forward
to a time of fruitfulness, of full maturity,
when suddenly nature works secretively,
when love in my life comes to expression;
the loveliness of flower upon flower is astounding.

When the loveliness of flower upon flower astounds,
there are birds everywhere singing of joy,
the year spins around from winter to summer
when Your blessings pierce the darkness,
life becomes more full of love and perfect
without any type of strange hindrance
when You create living things to Your image
when new life sprouts out after the pruning,
the year is revived in new blossoms.

Gert Strydom

The Yearning For A Higher Being

Sometimes I wonder why man
yearns for a higher being
yearns to spend time with God,
as if he is hardwired
to long

for something like a perfect eternity
and although he lives in cities of concrete
does build great memorial signs,
sometimes man lives
as if everything is only for the here and now

but there remains a homesick urge
to something higher
in which meaning comes to perfection
as if man does realize
that he is no god
and only exists mortally
on this planet.

Gert Strydom

The Years Of Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Like a pomegranate the spring does burst open
with flowers like the red pits that are white
on the cherry, almond and peach trees
and the lavender-bushes and jasmine smells sweet like syrup
where a person walks suddenly through the fruit orchards
with apricots, peaches and plums soft to the pit,
with bees grumbling taking nectar to the hive
and in the springs the trees are baptised in all kinds of colours
when suddenly the winds do whirl
sultry nights do come with tranquillity
when life stops twisting
but in this winter of life in early old age
I am tired of the daily rummage
and are still astonished at your beauty.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Yellow Weaver (Free Verse Sonnet)

Shot from a branch of a fig tree
by a BB pellet by the boy
I picked the yellow weaver up
where it was shocked,
felt its anxiety while it was in my hands
where fear pulsed through that small bird's body
just ruffled by the closely passing pellet
it did twittering grope into the air
accelerated wing-beat after wing-beat
circled once over me
and in anger took the pellet-gun
away from the boy
as I had taught him not to shoot
at any living thing.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

The Young Farmer

The young farmer is not dead
the earth that loves him, still remembers him,
where his young wife was raped by barbarians
and his small toddler daughter as well
where his farm house has been burned down to rubble
and is still smoking after the mad plundering
he lies half scorched, his face distorted
and who will be able to bring some justice here?
The farmer lifts his fists against the wind,
stand against the horizon somewhat blinded,
searches perplexed for missing answers
tries to find a judgement from God
and the wind turns dust up from the red ground,
even the earth is wounded.

Gert Strydom

The Young Man

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Under the shower her man is soaking wet
where she wraps her arms around him
and around him water splashes.

His skin is soft under her hands,
she washes down his spine
and she almost slips, are against him

and the floor of the shower is slippery
when she moves still closer to him.
Under the shower her man is soaking wet

and he smiles softly with white shining teeth,
she can feel his muscles tightening with power,
she washes down his spine

and when she slips, she has to move her grip on him,
with water flowing over both of them
and around him water splashes.

and he stops her from falling, grabs her with power
and she washes down his upper leg,
she can feel his muscles tightening with power

and the floor is slippery but flat
and she wonders from where his manly power comes?
Under the shower her man is soaking wet

and she washes him as low as every heel,
her fingers grips
and she washes down his upper leg

and his chest hairs are smudged black
and his gaze is full of lust without any suspicion
and around him water splashes.

over his arms, his strong rib cage

She sees his member tightening, totally set
her fingers grips

where suddenly takes him
looking at him with conceit.
Under the shower her man is soaking wet
and around him water splashes

and his smile almost swallows her and it's bold,
his skin is soft under her hands,
she sees his member tightening, totally set
and she almost slips, are against him.

[Reference: Jong seun (Young boy) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

"Tog, onvolkome afgerond,
hoe sal die lewe hom nog wond:
in sy Achilleskern vind
hy geen beskutting – man of kind:
geheg aan die benedebuik
waar blink haarrankies reeds ontluik,
deuraar, teer soos 'n ooglid, sag
soos murg, hang weerloos die geslag."

My translation:

"Still, not yet rounded off,
how life will still wound him:

in his Achilles-core
he finds no cover – man or child

attached to the lower abdomen
where shining hair-sprouts are already unfolding

veined, tender like an eyelid, soft
like marrow, the sex hangs defenceless."]

Gert Strydom

The Yuppie In The Grey Land

I

The office door closes
behind the man that leaves embarrassed
and the yuppie smiles
and sees himself as a banker
and knows that he takes much more
than he gives.

The usury act is gone
and fifty percent interest on loans
is a nice thing
and if people want to be stupid
it fits him well
and something bothers him
and he ignores it
as silliness.

With a burning cigarette in his mouth
he gets into his shiny machine
and cut three cars off,
when his car leaves rubber tracts behind.

He blows the smoke out with pleasure
and his car stops at a red light,
where a blonde doll bends forward on the sidewalk
and he looks at two firm D-breasts
with hard nipples.

The lust froths in him
and he looks her out,
but she's too near to forty
or maybe past it
and he grabs his cell phone
to get a number on it.

The whole time is playtime,
a lovely voice greets him
and he smiles

and ask if he can meet her
and makes an immediate appointment.

On the other side of the street
there's a man with long hair,
a beard, t-shirt and jeans
and he snubs at him
and the man replies
Jesus saves
and when he drives away
he hears
peace to you mate.

II

a Beautiful blonde
waits for him at the door
and pushes a glass of KWV wine
into his right hand
and when the door closes behind them
he greets her with a hungry kiss.

She works alone from her house
and they go and sit
at her bar counter,
where he counts of some notes
and she pours a glass of Johnny Walker.

They chat and drink
and smoke for a while
as if he's her boyfriend,
before they start spooning
and their clothes lie
in a line along the carpet to the bed
where he makes love to her.

His hands plays with her firm breasts
and big nipples
and they get intimate
past all pleasure
and when he showers later
she joins him and they play again.

In the lounge against the wall
there's a painting
of a Madonna figure
and he looks at the golden cross
that hangs around her neck
and the words of the man at the traffic light
keep repeating in his mind.

They drink a few bottles of Johnny Walker,
before he walks on unsteady legs
to his car,
where she greets him with a kiss.

III

He drives through the suburb
near his house
and the car
is all over the road.

Near a school
he accelerates for the last bit
and hits a girl
that crosses at some zebra stripes.

It's a terrible smash
and he's really drunk
and the child lies lifeless
and he feels nauseous
and hear that the car's engine
still running.

He knows that if the police
finds him at the accident,
he will be arrested and jailed
and the words of the man at the traffic light
hangs bitter over him.

IV

Suddenly there are people
about him
and when he drives away,
it's too quick for somebody
to get the number
and in the distance
he hears the siren
of an ambulance getting near.

There are tears in his eyes
when he stops in his garage
and he is almost sober from fright
and looks at himself,
for the first time.

He stays in the dented car
and prays
and he doesn't know
how to fix things,
but decides to try anyway.

[Reference: grey land=> a Place between right and wrong. Grey is somewhere
between black and white.]

Gert Strydom

The Zombie

(after C Louis Leipoldt)

His skin was pulled thin
and his face was pale like that of a skeleton
and it was in my direction that he was marching,
looking cold like gravestone he was coming on.

His eyes lacked all energy of life
and his body did not look as if build out of flesh
while his legs folded out like a clasping knife
but some energy this foul thing did possess

but it had a kind of sense and sensing
which was full of evilness
although it was walking like a sleeping thing,
but it had some kind of aloofness.

It was passing under a streetlight
and I was wondering if it did from some grave crawl?
I was stunned at its strange sight
while it looked as if searching for a brawl.

Two old people at its feet did lie
where from fear they did pass out
as they were afraid to die
and a well build man in fear at it did shout

but to the square it went on its way
and did not look at me while it was passing
while children who did in the street play
in fear at it was glancing.

In the square a crowd was gathering,
and those people wanted peace,
while veterans were speaking against war and killing
and as it did approach everything did cease.

Some women did pray and others did weep
but I wanted to know who this Zombie was?

Away from it every one tried to keep
while its eyes sparkled like glass.

One elderly man shook his head
and honoured the thing that was almost dead
and I shouted: "Who is this? "
"It's the president, " he replied to my dread.

[Reference: "The Zombie" by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

Gert Strydom

The Zombie [2]

At midnight I was woken from my sleep
with eyes barely open into a bright flashlight I did peep
and someone unexpected and uninvited was in my room
fear's little tentacles did up and down my back creep

before chloroform did let everything fade away
but when I did awake again it was bright day.
They did cuff my hands and feet
while outside some sombre music did play.

Un-cuffed I was dragged onto a stage through a side door,
there was of a demonic cult hundreds of people or more
and at the sight of me they suddenly turned from sombre to happy.
Jesus changed people's lives from what it was before

and to being Christian of this cult I had converted too many
where they did not want me to talk with, to pray for any.
There was a golden throne that was empty and imposing
and I realised a crucifixion they were going to see

on this Easter Sunday when the high priest lifted a thorny crown
but great surprise was his when I did meekly bow down
did aloud pray: "Jesus, Lord God forgive them"
and somehow he had made my words his own.

"My Lord, anything is possible for you,
you are present in everything I do
and here I am in need of help
please do come to my rescue."

Maybe it had been the teachings of his parents as a child
but his grim deadly stone face had turned to mild
while he did repeat my very words
and almost exploding with anger the crowd went wild.

Lucifer did appear on the throne and suddenly there was utter silence,
I looked into his overpowering evil eyes as his evil presence I did sense
where he appeared as a man who was handsome in shining white,
did slap his fingers at the high priest's words or at his incompetence.

One of the devout members, a huge man that was holding me
started to transform from being human into a zombie,
into a living-dead walking thing to destroy the high priest
and the high priest tried to run away off the stage to be free.

The zombie was a skeleton with flesh and bone,
his eyes looked lifeless as if they were from stone
but all his senses were at the prime
and he leapt to where the priest had gone,

who realised that he could not outrun it
and turned, pulled a .375 magnum and fired and did hit,
the zombie did not falter and did jump on him,
then slowly did tear him to pieces jerking of limbs bit by bit.

The congregation were silent and did not move
as if each one of them was scared of reproof
as if anything would draw the zombie to one of them
or that the Devil would of one them disapprove

and in all improbability
while to freedom I did flee
a police squad car I did find
and in my mind I still at times do that zombie see:

with its huge bony hands moving crunching
with its skeletal teeth on the victim munching
and it being a walking dead half-human
ultimately ugly disciplinary half living thing

that ripped from the victim the guts and gore
while revolting it acted more and more
and the people caught were seen by the police
as some maniacs who do the devil adore.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Theatre Enactment (Parody)

The wrath is depicted,
he refuses to be feared.

Even though everything is on the floor,
thrown out in a reversed ambush
of Tina's shadow,
for the scared hobbling journey-
of the half child, halfway mad around him, the shining comedian,
but he knows:
from the stage images spin out to the horizon,
where what they act is stitched into dreams
that does not feel shackled in.

The stage closes in due time in the evening,
with a attempted hour that shrinks
to how it could have been -
hidden sentiment falls on dead ground.

Gert Strydom

Then I Longed Back To My Own Place

I was looking at the wide ocean
while standing for moments on Table Mountain,
I saw seagulls swarm under in the bay,
when the Southeaster blew everything into a jumble;
then I longed back to my own place,
to my home at the Sugar-bush-hillocks.

At the Strand I wanted to dream on my own
when a mishmash of people suddenly streamed around me
bolstering from busses, swimming in their underwear,
with one screaming deafening with a shrill voice;
then I longed back to my own place,
to my home at the Sugar-bush-hillocks.

At Clifton the girls were topless
they were coaxing and I wanted to blush,
at Sea Point lights flared into the night
but in Gauteng one was waiting on me;
then I longed back to my own place,
to my home at the Sugar-bush-hillocks.

Gert Strydom

Then Jesus Does Come With Every Inhabitant Of Heaven (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to André letoit)

to rescue and save His followers,
to raise those that does love Him from the dead,
to bring judgement to the entire world
and this time as the omnipotent ruler and God
where every eye will witness Him at the same time throughout the world,
where everywhere on earth every ear will hear Him,
where every knee will bow in acknowledgement to His omnipotence,
where those that had stood against Him will call out for the mountains
to cover them from Him,
those that held themselves blinded against Him do know
that He is a reality as the omnipotent Lord God,
where offices of governments and the parliaments are jerked to a standstill.
No weapons or any other power can stop His will and coming,
while Lucifer and his demons are perplexed and powerless against Him.

[Reference: "dan kom jesus weer" (then jesus do come again)by
André letoit.]

Gert Strydom

There Are Bars Around Me

There are bars around me
and at times I cannot
break the obstruction, the things that divide

and like an animal I am caged, like an inquisitive person
I look at people, things that pass
and at times I cannot

get my eyes
to the other side of the wire which breaks every thing into bits
and I look at people, things that pass

and with every breaking day
things comprehend less, without a new beginning
to the other side of the wire which breaks every thing into bits

and I am caged without a life with you in it
and I do not know where to find someone to unlock my life
things comprehend less, without a new beginning

into eternity I serve out a jail term.
There are bars around me
and I do not know where to find someone to unlock my life,
break the obstruction, the things that divide.

Gert Strydom

There Are Blue-Gum Trees That Rise

There are blue-gum trees that rise
where now just some of the stones are left,
next to a big old burned down house
and I am gripped by the sad story,

do walk into the remains, the ruin,
do notice that it had been a lovely round double storey
where still some black marks are visible and some spider webs
and at a time it was carefully tended

where now it is pillaged,
stripped of window frames and glass
when suddenly a grown snake hisses at me
as if it does fit neatly into the rubbish

and I wonder why life does sometimes
throw twists without any chance of deliverance?

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

There Are Dew Drops In Your Eyes

There are dew drops in your eyes, their green,
that laughs with me that look past all of my masks
that does strange things to me
when your eyes do not waver before mine,
then your tears fall like rain between leaves,
when both joy and pain flow from them,
and I smell gardenias in your hair,
while you let me realize some secrets of love,
when you do tell you about your feelings.

Gert Strydom

There Are Drops Of Rain

There are drops of rain
dropping and they are dancing,
on the outside of my windowpane
they are spluttering

falling, falling in a great shower
and outside everything is wet and gleaming
while lightning bashes down with great power
and everywhere there is water streaming

and here in the cosy comfort of the bed
away is the weariness of the week,
while you breath brushes against my cheek
your lips are slightly open and red

and I wonder if why other moments are not like this,
when everything is perfect in the way that it is.

Gert Strydom

There Are Few Things In Life

I

There are few things in life
that will equate,
the freedom
that you get on a motorbike.

II

Speed and power is something
that can easily grab you
and maybe you can fetch the same
adrenalin rush
if you parachute
or go down with a bungi rope,
but it's maybe better to be part
of a iron horse
and alone with your self
and with the wind and the sun
see the road flashing by.

III

Let cars stand in rows
and busses full of unknown people
stop at many places,
while my blue motorbike
passes them
and drive to my destination.

Gert Strydom

There Are Many Things In Life That Bring Heartache

and sometimes when I talk to You it feels as if I am not get through
as if only the four walls and do hear me
but then unexpectedly Your answers do jump into my way.

Gert Strydom

There Are Numerous Things That I Find

There are numerous things that I find,
on the atlas of your lovely body,
sometimes eddies with wandering deer,
deep valleys where tranquil waters flow

places of shelter where my ship can anchor
and also a storm tossed raging ocean
with in its blue goes to the depth of your soul

and dreams, silences and hopes and joys
I find with you and a kind of intimate trembling,
that yearns for a much deeper kind of contact
as if in our togetherness in pleasure we are dying

in tender touch, in bliss and in sweet tranquillity
we celebrate the life that pulses as we come together,
you open to me like morning glories waiting
upon the rays of the sun, with blessing of sudden heat.

Gert Strydom

There Are Only Eyes Appearing Above The Surface

There are only eyes appearing above the surface
in the brown water of the river's pool
before they again disappear without a trace.
There are only eyes appearing above the surface
when it notices a prey, are covered by the water-curtain
where the crocodile hides in the depths of the river,
there are only eyes appearing above the surface
in the brown water of the river's pool.

Gert Strydom

There Are People

There are people
that claims the street as their own
and stand
at parking places on the sidewalk
and do no work
but to look after cars.

If you park there
and ignore them
and do not
want to use their services
you immediately
become a racist in their eyes

and they will make a scene,
threaten to damage your car,
or make sure that it's stolen
or so they tell you
since they believe
that you owe them something.

Some spray soapy water
without invitation
on the front window
of your car
when you stop
at a traffic light
and wipe it off
demanding a price.

I wonder why the education
is still lacking
since they have already
got their liberation

and just as odd
these people are ignored
by their compatriots in government
as if they do not exist,

while the country
falls slowly
but surely to pieces.

There are people
that claims the possessions
of others as their own
and at night
prowl around in the streets
shooting, stabbing
and robbing
and estranging people
from their cars.

¶Envoi

Still I wonder where
the problem lies
and would really like
both of my cars back

and I do not know
about white people
that sneak around
in black neighbourhoods at night,
hijack cars,
brake windows
and demand possessions
with loaded guns.

All that they do,
is try to make a living
or hurry away in their leaving.

{Reference: "First liberation, then education." Political slogan of the ruling party.]

Gert Strydom

There Are People [2]

(in answer to Mteto Mzongwana)

I am astonished at how things in the new South Africa do go forward,
see the mountain and places around Pretoria in flames,
hear a the ramble of a uprising at the universities where people are fighting
and others pray in groups for peace amid great suspicion.

At schools some girls are raped until they are pregnant
and Christian teachings are unknown,
boys are chopped with axes and swords and are bladed
and some children do disappear without a tract and are missing.

The false prophets in parliament keep telling people
how they create jobs,
that it goes well right through the country
and people are hungry, impoverished and at the portals of hell

because as in the far past crowds are coming from eMbo
(from every African country to the north)
under a new Nguni and Dlamini in a second great roving expedition,
while the country looks like Eden and a rainbow nation paradise
and everywhere there is racism and political correct fraud,

terrible unemployment
and in South Africa it goes far better than it ever has,

on the highways in Gauteng people pay e-tol
and most motorists are fed up with this new tax
where the other roads are full of potholes
and the conditions in state hospitals are terrifying.

I'Envoi

A poet must tell the truth
and cannot talk injustice, dilapidation and lies good
of a country that is sketched as ideal
but in reality is nothing but another rubbish heap state.

[Reference: "Es daar mense" (There are people) by Mteto

Mzongwana.]

Gert Strydom

There Are Rays Falling Through The Window

There are rays falling through the window
where a small girl plays with her doll
and she is caught in her own small universe,
are busy distributing empty cups full of tea.

Years later the sun again falls hot on the floor
and it's a woman peeping through her long hair at me.

Gert Strydom

There Are Rooms Of The Heart

There are rooms of the heart
that is closed to others,
places that no other human ever see
and at times that darkness is overwhelming
in our internal journeys
where we mask our vulnerability
from the whole world

until another individual comes
who we do love more than our self
and the uncovering and revelation
begins systematically bit by bit
and a person believes like a child
that trusts implacable
in hope, love and the illusion
that the world
can be a bit better
without despair or any fear.

Gert Strydom

There Are Rooms Of The Heart [2]

There are rooms of the heart
that are locked to others,
places, which no other person does see
and sometimes that darkness is overwhelming
in our interior journeys
when we do hide our vulnerability
from the whole world

until another single person does come
that we do love more than we love ourselves
and the uncovering and the revelation
does start systematically bit by tiny bit
and a person does again like a child believe,
do implacable trust in hope, love
and the allusion that the world
can become a better place
without any despair or fear.

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Gert Strydom

There Are Things Of You

There are things of you that do not pass me:
every morning you smile spontaneously
and there is a kind of simplicity and beauty
when early in the morning you do rise.

Gert Strydom

There Are Things That You Cannot Avoid

There are things that you cannot avoid
like the call-up instruction which cruelly
brings you to another world and measure you out
for whom you must become and be and stay
and you can never find escape
from violence, killing, guilt and grief.

There are things that a soldier cannot avoid
like war that cruelly let people suffer
with flames, bullets and bombs
and there are events that you cannot forget,
although you and your comrades freed the innocent
and at night it's sweated out in dreams
and there are things that you cannot avoid.

Gert Strydom

There Are Thousands That Act Both Selfless And Brave

There are thousands that act both selfless and brave,
some feel the planet's agony as they love beyond death,
others labour for what is right and good in what they sense
but with great incompetence man lives his mortal life,

some look as visionaries at a world beyond mere sight,
others dwell in the wonders of human form and grace
and in all of this we dwell in the darkest kind of night,
while we live, laugh and cry as members of the human race

and yet there is loveliness in what we experience,
in what we see and act upon and feel at times
as we hope and love and are caught in passion,
as if mere man was destined for something much more.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times

There are times
that life really goes wrong
and no brother, or friend
or acquaintance
can help.

In the largest crises
He still stays
with me,
although it looks
as if I am standing alone.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times [2]

There are times when the sky is so blue
that it's almost a touchable living thing
when birds do constantly praises sing
and I am blessed in all the things I do.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That Destiny Does Want To Devour Me

There are times that destiny does want to devour me
where I am extradited against the stormy wind
and if you in a time like that keep near to me
I am blinded like a child

and know that love goes much further
and are deeper than a person can understand.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That I Am At Peace

There are times
that I am at peace, in tranquillity
with the world surrounding me
even with my enemies
who in a godlike way
judged me, stole my life
my job from me
with a certainty of the perfect correctness
of their actions and decisions
without having all the facts, without walking
in my shoes, without judging me on merit.

There are times
when the world seems a friendly place,
where I see great beauty
in the way that the world functions,
in every shrub, every flower and tree.

There are times where I am free
from men who take political decisions
about my future, where I am free from the military
free from the influence, the mangling of men

and then there are times when I know
how much you mean to me,
where the meaning, the sheer beauty
compassion and joy that you bring
floods me like an everlasting spring.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That I Do Not Notice You

There are times that I do not notice You
when a friend is robbed in his own house,
when another motorist tries to push me off the road,
when a toothache almost drives me off my head

but then the weavers and sparrows in the garden
chatter and twitter
and the doves sing their songs of praise
about everything that comes from Your hand

and the deep red colour of roses do astonish me,
and I notice an iris flowering unexpectedly in spring,
and a bush of daisies carries yellow and orange flowers
and it's as if the daylilies dance in the wind

and with every beautiful sunrise
I experience Your presence
and know that the powers of darkness
are increasing their rebellion

but that You are still standing omnipotent at my side
and the impression of Your love is in everything around me.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That I Pray (Italian Sonnet)

There are times that I pray
for those that I love and know
and sometimes the words just flow
and at other times I have got nothing to say

and on every single day
God does His goodwill bestow
and with compassion my words do sometimes glow
or they are swept away

like leaves blown in the wind
and sometimes some thoughts do remain
when some problems to me are too much
but before I know it I do find
happiness instead of pain
when God do lives silently touch.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That My Whole World Does Change

There are times that my whole world does change,
that I am without any friends,
where my career comes to a standstill,
where deliverance looks like an unreality
and I do not comprehend
the up and down interchange of life
and then I do come upon my knees in front of You
and ask for Your salvation,
and then I want You to help me to believe
and to teach me to trust.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times That The Walls

There are times that the walls
of the bedroom wants to fold in,
when sheer loneliness becomes too much
and the power of love focuses on loss
as if nothingness wants to fill the whole body
and we are stripped naked by it,
when it concentrates on love that still survives,
lingers while death have robbed us
and we yearn for something new,
for someone unknown.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times When A New Tomorrow

There are times when a new tomorrow is almost touchable,
when the sorrow, pain and heartache of yesterday disappears,
when people feel as if every new day holds something special,
when a person again wants to trust like a child
and does know that God holds everything in His hand
when there is something joyous in the sunshine
and nature in the garden rejoices with secret knowledge

and there are moments like now
where your presence brings joy,
where I know how absolutely precious
our love, your company and friendship
and every moment can be, where I want to save it,
want to nurture it as if I can save it up
when our hearts both sing of joy,
when the sun glitters outside on drops of dew

when days stretch out and I am aware of your beauty,
when times become as they are meant to be
and are without any fear
and nothing is more important than the being together,
when I read your own feelings in your eyes,
when nothing can curtail our feelings
when every moment is full of happiness and is true

and just like this I want the rest of the year to be,
as if it's lying right against my fingertips like you.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times When Hope

There are times when hope,
when the belief in what can be
is the only thing staying with me
and however life slopes

up and down mountains and dales
there are far too much unsaid
and the painful goodbyes
at times leave tears,

are full of fears
and of misunderstandings
that people suffer silently
and when I am judged by other people

may my actions, my words,
my motives and intentions
lead others to true conviction,
to happiness and how things should be.

Gert Strydom

There Are Times, My Darling

There are times, my darling
that you are far away
that loneliness
along with dusk sneaks in
that the calls of the plovers
cut right through the dark night
and I am wondering
what there is still remaining
between you and me?

Gert Strydom

There Are Waves Breaking Foaming Around Me

There are waves breaking foaming around me
hitting with angry power,
while a storm is unleashed on the sea and in my life,
a boat in the distance is twisting as if it is sinking

while it is dangerously recoiling up and down
with stormy winds bashing at it,
it seems as if it is going to disappear under the swelling water
and still You are there to protect that boat and me

and today I want to make You the helmsman of my life,
I ask You to steer me safely to the harbour of rest,
I pray that You will protect me in my ways
and like that boat I am missing on a stormy sea

where only Your almighty hand
can bring me safely to land, to the other side of darkness.

Gert Strydom

There Are White Flowers In Her Hair

There are white flowers in her hair,
blue-white stars when she laughs
in her eyes shining like rainbows,
with a own innocent beauty

with the coming of spring in the air
between the blooming flowers,
in rainbows shining like her eyes,
she finds where the prettiest flowers grow,

she is bounded to loveliness,
she notices roses that are dark like blood
in her eyes shining like rainbows,
but in her cheeks there is a gloss.

Delighted she stands at corn fields
clouds dark and white,
in rainbows shining like her eyes
there is somewhere a pot of gold.

Gert Strydom

There Are Words And Deeds

There are words people have said
that does try to destroy my integrity
and I do have the power to take action,
to reciprocate and to destroy,
but I do remain silent and do leave them
to the righteous judgement of God.

There are deeds
that people have done to me
that keeps piercing
as if their impact
never ceases

as if they have got the right
to make my career,
my whole life totally undone
and here I do let them remain unknown.

There are jokes that people have made,
even the principal officer
at the charity where I do work for free
that I have got to earn absolution,
as if I have got previous great big sins
and as if by free work
I can attain a kind of redemption,
where faith in Jesus Christ
and a relationship with Him
is the only way to salvation,

even where I do peel and dice and slice
I have got to sign a form
stating that I am not busy with undue competition
and I wonder how it is possible
to enrich oneself by doing just this?

At times I wish to disappear like the sun,
leaving each evening
and yet somehow

every morning brings a new surprise
with power again to rise
as if destiny which accompanies me
keeps giving me hope
for the next new day.

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Gert Strydom

There Comes A Time, To Us And To The City

There comes a time, to us and to the city
when summer spreads its wings upon a day,
that the sheer loveliness touches all of us
with a sense of fun, a sense of tranquillity.

From the moment that this has begun
the open blue sky, the clearness of the ocean
draws us to beaches where the water
touches the land, touches our feet

and happiness is only but a moment away,
when a day is like no other before it,
with the promise of how life and living
is really supposed to be.

Gert Strydom

There Had Been A Kind Of Loneliness

There had been a kind of loneliness, a brokenness,
deep in your eyes,
a searching for greater meaning
and deeply moved
I wanted to bring something holy and honest to you,
with inadequacy
I did tattle when you did come right up to me
when with your loveliness I was moved.

Gert Strydom

There Had Been More But Now

(for Daleen, after Elisabeth Eybers)

There had been more than spring that your body did bring
and the rosebuds of your breasts,
the bouncing of your buttocks and the walking away
that came so cheeky with the new season
as if every blossom did want to flower with you,
more than the heat of the blood that brings new life
my hart did sing along with the birds.

There was more than the sunlight in your golden eyes,
also the golden new tomorrows were mine,
the magic of the afternoon on the hillocks,
the bright yellow and darker golden irises of the summer,
all of the golden summer you did bring to me,
as a sunny angel of the light.

There was more than your sparkling smile,
when into my arms you did walk in the mellow evenings,
your proximity did bring heat to my life
when the night did spread out her black blanket
in which the stars did twinkle like diamonds
and pampering soft the evening breeze
did rustle through our hair.

In the darkness of my nights
you did bring my dreams to reality
as if all possibilities could become reality,
you did bond with me like a woman with a man,
did believe deeper and more intimate in me
and it was as if God was between us in this love

but now in this winter of my life
with the icy wind
it's as if I do only find destruction,
do have to learn once again how to forgive you
for inhumanity, sometimes senseless outbursts
with which you try to break me down into pieces
and where chaos and rebellion do prevail

in the coldness, the chill where the silence does cut deep
and your words and acts
do not count the impact on me and on others,
do cut right through me
and I do only notice the nemesis and witchery,
as if with demonic forces you do try to get me down
as if suddenly you have become, an angel of darkness, a harpy.

[Reference: "Die geskenk" (the gift) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

There In The Dwaika

In the Dwaika in the Murderer's Karoo
the world looks to me as turned upside down
as if inapproachability there becomes reality
but it's a place where people still do believe in the Lord God.

[Reference: "Karoo (Also Karroo) An elevated plateau in South Africa."]

Gert Strydom

There Is A Black Hair Cat

There's a black hair cat
that comes and lies with me
while I wait for you
and the sun
draws long lines
just before the dawn comes

The beautiful cat gets up
and stretches himself out
and I see you,
coming down the stairs
and I am happy
and you smile at me.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Dark Way

There's a dark way
that cuts through us
and leads us from each other.

It swings through
all the hurt,
that lies at times between us.

There are times that you have to go
through life's swamp,
to be on steady ground again.

Yet like an eagle
I rather want to get wings
to find the right way,
to your heart
and I want to trust in you,
unconditional like a child

Gert Strydom

There Is A Darkness Where You Hide

There is a kind of darkness where you hide
while my years are dragging past
and sometimes I wonder if a day will come
where you are again mine?

Sometimes it feels as if you are near in my thoughts
while I am waiting to hear your voice over the telephone
and I wonder if the sky where you are,
are just as blue, if the stars there also kiss the heaven

and in astonishment I want to stand
when your eyes catches mine, caught like a child
on the day when you are mine
but in reality I may be searching

for something like dust blowing in the wind,
something that I may never find?

Gert Strydom

There Is A Day In April

There is a day in April when autumn
truly sets in, when fallen leaves
smells like mould and loam,
when trees are stripped skeleton.

When windless the sun is still somewhat hot,
and there are only touches of clouds
here and there hanging like fingerprints
in an open clear sky.

Its then that the fear of death,
the fear of the winter's helplessness,
the coming cold sets in,
even before it truly begins.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Glance (Crystalline Poem)

In your eye there is a sweet glance
that do me beyond human enhance.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Light In My Darling's Eyes

There is a kind of light in my darling's eyes,
a kind of deeper thing
that pierces everything in me
as if a bond between us
does lie in her golden eyes
and at times I would want it different
and do not want to tell her
about my deepest things
as that which is between us does expose me
so that she really does know me
and it makes my defencelessness great
so that she really do know what she means to me
as if every moment does confess my dependence of her
and as if I cannot explore the whole wide world without her.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Loneliness

There is a kind of loneliness, brokenness
deep in your eyes
a searching to a deeper meaning
and deeply moved
I wanted to bring something holy and honourable to you,
my inability
had me tattling when did come near
and with your great beauty I was astonished.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Love (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

There is a kind of love and loving,
that is a very strange kind of thing
that even with separation and death
still keeps living and existing.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Love That I Do Not Really Understand

and when my thoughts go to the bible story
then I wonder in my own sinful human nature
how an almighty God comes to a word of fear?
Through the ages the hammer blows keeps ringing
as man did crucify the God of the universe
who did not keep them that murdered Him accountable
as darkness and sorrow came over the earth
and when even an idol worshiper out of the Roman legion
realised that it was the son of God and reconciled himself with the Lord
a price was paid in unmentionable love
and this pain and sorrow keeps lingering in my thoughts.
When the world looks threatening and terrible
I still see His eyes looking in love from the cross.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Obscurity

There is a kind of obscurity
when you have just lost someone
and see others much in love,
a kind of feeling that you do not fit

while their happiness scorches you
and you wonder if ever again
for you love can be true?

Then upon a day the world does change,
when you do meet someone
whose eyes, heart and voice
does secretly hold the promises
of how a life full of love could be,
everywhere only happy people you do see
and you have changed me and my life.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Kind Of Silence In Your Eyes (Stave Stanza Sestets)

There is a kind of silence in your eyes,
a glimmering purer than all the skies
that with tranquility speaks to my heart
draw me much nearer when we are apart,
there's something that I grasp, in a way hear,
something very frail when you are too near.

As a perfect white rose during the spring
is petal by tiny petal opening
so very fragile you do enclose me,
so very lovely is your sheer beauty,
there is something that becomes quite clear,
something very frail when you are too near.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Know Cosiness

where you do lie right against me,
a kind of nurturing while we do sleep
as if even you unawareness
does say secret things to me.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Know Cosiness [2]

There is a known cosiness
where you do lie right against me,
a kind of nurturing while we do sleep
as if even you unawareness
does say secret things to me.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Land (Cavatina)

There is a land of endless light, where night
never does come,
where spring and summer boundless stays in that
eternal home,
where love and delight only true joys bring,
where no fears roam;
in that bright place that brings eternal rest,
there is a God, that selfless loves me best.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Light In Her Eyes (Strambotto Siciliano)

There is a light in her eyes as they shine bright,
as in the twinkling yellow-green starry skies,
and in the night, dressed up she is a sight,
that draws admiring glances from men, women's eyes;
as a royal princess as if it's her right
she is treated but I know where her heart lies;
to meet her some men are in a kind of fright,
as no one her grace and loveliness denies.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Limit Set

While the inhabitants of this planet do still rebel
as for centuries their ancestors have done
under Lucifer and his forces of hell
the great Creator does not expel
one single one
and his Word and his works does of his kindness tell

but at a time there is a limit set
that is to mere man unseen
where every word, deed and ill
is being met
by the righteous boundary between
God's mercy, His wrath and His goodwill

and to cross that line means an end,
an end to that, which does exist,
even if we do not witness it
and do at ease with our conscience insist
that the laws of God we may bend
and slowly do stray bit by bit.

Yet time has not run out
to change our lives from sin to love,
to repent and be sincere and true,
to let Jesus remove
that which we cannot and to bring about
the change in what we say and do.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Link Between The Two Of Us (Cavatina)

(for Daleen)

There is a link between the two of us,
with you and me,
as that binding the meandering river
with the great sea;
in you there is an uncommon sheer grace,
some great beauty
that I cannot express within a word,
nothing does its lovely spirit record.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Moment In Time

There is a moment
where the interaction with the female form,
where the attraction of eyes, mouth, touch and skin
is drawing you in
and it's as if you are living
in a time and place devoid
of any other thing
where religion, heaven and hell
is swept away by sheer bliss
where a moment is truly limitless
in the ebb and flow of mating
and the being together becomes everything.

[Reference: I sing the body electric by Walt Whitman.]

Gert Strydom

There Is A Moment That Is So Perfect

There is a moment that is so perfect
that I do not want to disturb it with a word
as love becomes a perfect melody;
there is a moment that is so perfect,

that I do not want to disturb it with a word
when your glance frolic over me like a butterfly,
where any movement can hinder it
that I do not want to disturb it with a word,

when your glance frolic over me like a butterfly,
where love matchless radiate through each other
and I for moments long barely breathe,
when your glance frolic over me like a butterfly

where love matchless radiate through each other
there is a moment that is so perfect,
when you love me with an intimate knowledge,
where love matchless radiate through each other,

there is a moment that is so perfect
that I do not want to disturb it with a word
as love becomes a perfect melody;
there is a moment that is so perfect.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Mystery In The Intricate Way That Nature Works

There is a mystery in the secret magic
And intricate way of how nature works
And in a almost barren semi-desert
A water-pan becomes an object of survival
And a natural wonder of the world
When it makes the difference between
Life and a thirsty death
And although a pan might be largely dried up
A little bit of water attracts
Wildebeest and zebra
And the predators like the lions,
Hyenas, jackals and wild dogs
That does follow them.

Ants burrow lime up from beneath the earth
Which attract the big game to salt licks
And the buffalo, eland, gemsbok, kudu,
Wildebeest, impala and springbuck
Churn up the earth
As they do create
A small muddy hollow.

Later a small shallow salt pool appears
Which the game uses for wallowing and drinking
And when the heavy seasonal rain comes
The rain swells the salt pool to a larger pan
Where some more game wallow, drink
And carry some of the mud away.

With the passing of time
The pan becomes a larger lake
That is not more than a few meters deep
Where a myriad of game
And predators gather
In the eternal struggle for survival.

There Is A New World Between You And Me

There is a new world between you and me
where we find something more than just love,
where we do forget all of the past pain and heartaches,
where we only know about how we feel now.
In a place far away from memories and the reminding
we do meet where love is not measured by possessions
and sometimes the misery of life gets hold of me
while deeper things are only waiting to unfold
and when I feel your breath soft against my cheek
and do look very deep into your eyes
then there is far more than only the heat of your body
and then I know of the impact of you words and actions
and I get a glance of how that world looks,
when I find the essence of love which no words can describe.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Park

In the middle of a busy city
there's a park
where the noise of the rushing traffic
and passers by
do not transcend the tranquillity
and where nature cares
for its own
and the sound of silence
let me almost hear the shrubs,
flowers and grass grow.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Place

With God's infinite grace
beyond innumerable galaxies, planets and almost every star
there is a perfect place
where angels victorious against Lucifer in war
daily see God's loving face
where no illness or heartache or anything does mar
the tranquillity with menace
where Enoch, Elijah and Moses are,
where God do daily trace
the lives of every human and by far

Jesus' sacrifice outweighs sin
into which human beings had entered in.

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Gert Strydom

There Is A Place (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Marlene van Niekerk)

I have got a place where the sun burns bright
where you do hold me intimate against you as if no new tomorrow will come
and there we are in love and walk hand in hand,
while every new day do leave us speechless with its surprises.
There is a house that you are building deep in my heart,
where on the walls your own paintings do hang everywhere,
where a person can believe in love and keep trusting with great hope
where friendly conversations do settle all disputes,
where the moisture is gather in each marble jar
and I know you in naked truth and beauty
where you and I can never use our love up,
where together we do loose and win,
while the sun and moon peep at us as if they are in love
and life does take us away to our won little paradise.

[Reference:"Domus" by Marlene van Niekerk.]

Gert Strydom

There Is A Place Where Everything Comes Together

There is a place where everything comes together,
where life comes to a kind of crossing point
where joy, pleasure and deep anguish
even every crisis does get an answer,
where the blood of God covers sin,
where man is not being forced to believe
but have got a own choice,
and the selfless love of God does comes free
and here where our earth
by our own choice has gone to tatters,
we that are mortal live like gods
until everything that is living wants to avoid us
and we are never without our own will
but in all of this we do loose God.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Saviour

There is a Saviour who came as man
but was really God
and He loved with His whole heart
taught selfless imparting principles of brotherhood
teaching people to share what they have
telling the absolute truth
and yet at a time
He was misunderstood
even by His disciples
who thought that His kingdom
was for the here and now
and yet somehow
He had enough love
to suffer and die
while being innocent

and sometimes when I look
up into the night sky
I see lights blazing
and know somewhere out there
the Creator still watches me
and every other man
and maybe only He
knows really what love is.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Seashell

There is a seashell that on a time I want to give to you
wherein you can continually find the presence of the sea,
and it's something with the echo of the sea
and it roars on sunny days and during the stormy wind

and I wish that just like this
I could hold you to my ear
while we are apart from each other
and can feel how your arms embracing me.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Secret Force

Life is a school
that teaches in abundance
and in every thing about us,
there's a secret force
that guides and upholds.

There's a great power
that patterns galaxies
throughout immensity
and structures where,
every thing fits into
a master design
and sets the planets,
in a circuit
that brings seasons
and determines time.

From the structure
and life of the atom,
to every living thing,
in beautiful flowers
of every colour and shape,
insects that crawl
and leap and fly,
big and small
birds in the sky,
animals that graze
and hunt and feed
there's a mysterious force
that sustains it all
with infinite power.

That same power
is working in every human being
and in every body
a design is structured
to regulate and maintain
a complex system
and the energy called life,

but yet man has a choice
to interact with or deny
the ultimate being called God.

[Reference: "To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? Says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, "My way is hidden from the Lord and my right is disregarded by my God?" Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable." Isaiah 40: 25-26.]

Gert Strydom

There Is A Silent Tranquillity (Free Verse Sonnet)

There is a silent tranquillity to the night
where the age-old waves do lap and break,
the evening wind does gently touch your hair,
where one candle burns romantically,
your eyes are big as if they can swallow me
and the glance is intimate of a woman for her husband,
our words become silent, as words are unnecessary
and the moment lingers and stretches out between us
when your lips are soft, hot and sweet under mine
where the moon does draw a line up to the horizon
outside over the stretched out dark ocean
where it hangs with a soft yellow colour,
shadows do jump around on the walls
but of all of this we are unaware.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

There Is A Sudden Silence

In the distance the thunder rumbles,
the smell of rain falling on the earth
is in the air
and suddenly there is silence
that is only broken by a croaking frog
when softly your hand rests on my shoulder
and like always
there is magic in your touch.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Swimming Pool In A Small Town (Orléans Rondel Prime)

There is a swimming pool in a small town
where water sparkles as blue as the sky,
where some bikini clad girls draw the eye,
with skin tanned to mahogany brown,

where from a diving board people dive down,
where time gets wings and quickly rushes by.
There is a swimming pool in a small town
where water sparkles as blue as the sky,

where a myriad of beautiful girls daily lie,
where the garden is somewhat overgrown
and children buy sweets, chips and pie,
while teens frolic until the sun does die.
There is a swimming pool in a small town
where water sparkles as blue as the sky.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Time

There is a time that I am surrounded by bliss
when in the late afternoon you lie in my arms,
when the last rays of the sun peep in,
when I feel your breath against me
and then I do know how deep love is.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Time [2]

There is a time
where at last
the wanderer finds a place of rest,
where the nomad does stop wandering,

are not blown around,
do find steadiness against the wind
and in that time
he is blind for the lure
of the highway.

Words do go to the depths of his heart,
while he has faith like a mere child.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Time When Night Sneaks In

There is a time when night sneaks in,
when the roof creaks, while losing its heat
when chairs, tables, cupboards and all objects
become indistinct
part of the darkness of the night
and then my love
it's a magical thing
to have your hot body against mine,
to feel you're lips brushing on my skin
to become enveloped by you
as if everything is away
in a different reality.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Tingle

There is a tingle in you heartbeat,
a smile that brings a sparkle to me
and outside spring is bountiful in white,
while birds frolic branches full
and I do wonder
when a day like this will come again?

Gert Strydom

There Is A Troublesome State Of Mind (Triolet)

There is a troublesome state of mind,
when I hate the first morning light
and feel rebellious, bitter and unkind.
There is a troublesome state of mind,
when in everything I something wrong find,
a type of spite that nothing turns aright.
There is a troublesome state of mind,
when I hate the first morning light.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Universe (Crystalline Poem)

There is a cosmos in your glance,
a whole great world caught there by mere chance.

Gert Strydom

There Is A Void

There is a void, a sheer nothingness
that fills my life that is almost boundless
when you are away from me
when I see the world with a strange kind of aloofness

and in every misunderstanding
that is yearning for a kind of understanding,
there is something that is yearning for love
that comes selflessly and undemanding.

Gert Strydom

There Is Blood Between Us

I

There's blood between us
that flows very strong
and that red
bind us to each other
with genes and ancestors
and you will forever be my brother.

II

There's blood between us
and our hands
are full of it
and it's blood of enemies
that had to flow
for us to stay alive
and that blood ties
you and me
in a own companionship
and you are my best comrade.

III

There's blood between us
that binds you to me
and maybe a child
will appear out of us both
as sign of how sincere
our love is
and that blood
ties you my love
to me
as the one that I adore.

IV

There's blood between us
that flows on a cross

where the Son of God
suffered for me
and that blood
wash all my sins away
and tie me
to become a child
of the Almighty Father.

Gert Strydom

There Is Far Too Much Disintegration (In Answer To T.T. Cloete)

There is far too much disintegration,
ruination
that now occurs in our country
and much too scared
for the killing, raping and crime
we search for accessibility
to a place to also make a own life
while our humanity is being lost somewhere.

Far too many people being begrudged
the right of making a life while other stream in,
as foreigners who get citizenship,
while they are able to begin their lives,
while criminals reign supreme,
own gain
eats like a cancer on the government,
while we have to forget the better times.

Still we do believe in an almighty God
that holds His hand
over the destiny of nations, leaders;
in pain and mourning,
in suppression that circles out wider,
we still stay trusting
that a much better day still has got to come
and lie all of our cares only on Him.

Gert Strydom

There Is Fear Of Religious Mad Men

There's fear of religious mad men
who crash planes into places,
where innocent people live and work
without any apparent reason.

There's fear of religious mad men
to be able to find,
acquire, or make
nuclear materials
and the ingredients
of the bomb
and to have the blue prints
to build that device
and to use it without any regret
on their fellow man.

There's fear of religious mad men
to try and change the world
to the backward society
that they want it to be,
but I fear leaders without
any integrity
and with a lack of character
more than all these things,
since they force people
to live empty lives.

Gert Strydom

There Is Gladness

There is gladness in your pretty eyes
but they are wounded
and are the colour of grass and dark ground
and I wonder about your thoughts,
see a cynical smile around your pretty mouth.

Gert Strydom

There Is Just One Woman That Is Like You

(in answer to Louis Esterhuizen)

There is just one woman that is like you
and this insight bares meaning to me,
where you do know me through and through,
also know how to really wind me up
but it is more that mere secrecy
where you do carry happiness and sorrow in your hands
and only do ask sincere love from me,
as without you all of my life is missing
and this insight bares meaning to me.

[Reference:"daar is maar net één soos jy" (There is only one like you)by Louis Esterhuizen.]

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Gert Strydom

There Is Loneliness In The Autumn Wind

it whirls leaves and clouds of dust up
when by accident you walk into me
and we stumble and fall over each other
when our eyes meet
and suddenly you smile at me.

Gert Strydom

There Is Magic In Your Nearness

There's magic in your nearness
and the pleasure
of being with you
changes my world

You bring the best out of me
and let me perceive things
in a another way
and you
make me experience new things
and experiences.

With you the world
lies open before me
and it's exceptional
to laugh with you
and to have you
as a part of each lovely day.

When you are with me
time rushes past,
while I get more and more
of your humanity
like the breath of life
to quench my soul.

Gert Strydom

There Is Much More Than Longing In This (English Sonnet)

The whole world now lives in great fear
and locked-down we do our lives spent,
while a deadly virus does linger near,
is almost everywhere suddenly present.

In all of this so terribly I do miss you
and there is much more than longing in this
where life comes to a halt in what we do
and with it contact and every sweet kiss,

I do miss the way that you look at me,
I do miss the sound of your husky voice,
miss your smile and kind words terribly,
miss in all of this the freedom of choice

and to be right there, with you at home
while you do give me a great welcome.

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Gert Strydom

There Is No Colour

There is no colour, no shade
with your body pressing against mine
on the crisp sheets, even their white
is colourless in this dark night

but bodies unite, spirits, souls
reach out for each other's
with a almost mechanical clarity
joining form and shape
and energy escapes
in moans and groans
and pleasure is reflected
on faces almost undistinguished.

Gert Strydom

There Is No Face As Fair

There is no face as fair
and dear to me
as yours
and no light shines as bright
and pure
as the look in your eyes.

If anything endures
it's your heart that is true
and pure
and strike me with sincerity.

You alone satisfy the hunger
of my soul
and come as the drug
that brings sense and sensibility
when I want to brake free
from the things surrounding me.

Even if the world is sick
and malignant with horror,
pain, unfairness, cruelty
and hardship,
you still remain
the light in my life
and the one
that brings clarity
to the abyss around me
because you love unselfishly.

Gert Strydom

There Is No Other Saviour

There is no other saviour for all the woe of humanity
than You my God,
no other person in the universe that does set men free
and some people find it odd
that I do find my peace and hope in Thee.

Gert Strydom

There Is Nobody Like You

With the sun rising orange-red this morning
my heart is open for you after a night of dreams,
after our separation for months I had been without words
but in the night you took a short cut through my thoughts.

Sometimes in my dreams you come to me
and for a meeting in a far off day I have got great hope
but the reality of becoming awake, these thoughts are stripped away.
With the sun rising orange red this morning

the reality of the cruel world was still somewhat disguised,
so many things I still wanted to say to you in a profound conversation
but now in the awaking reality I feel somewhat stupid.
My heart is open for you after a night of dreams,

but the short time that we had together passed far too quickly
and suddenly unexpected our break up did come
when the leaving went as such things do go.
after our separation for months I had and without words

and hours, days and months like a leave did turn around and around.
Outside a redbreast does twitter before it dips its head in the water,
against the window red roses are flowering
but in the night you took a short cut through my thoughts,

outside dogs bark at the property of the neighbour,
alone I do wake on a white pillow,
again do realise there is nobody like you in the whole of humanity
and I do imagine that your hair do glitter, that you do walk out
with the sun.

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Gert Strydom

There Is Not Much More I Can Ask (Couplets)

Now that the garden is covered by darkness,
you are not here to fulfil my life and it's in its starkness.

and in this time there is a black mood,
while this lock-down is for our own good.

It rains with thunder as if God speaks in holiness,
where I have to ward-off my loneliness.

In summer you were here with me,
where we now the first chilliness of winter see.

Where humanity bare heavy in misery,
there is not much more I can ask my life to be

where longing lies heavy on my heart,
than to have you at my side and never again to be apart.

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Gert Strydom

There Is Nothing That Your Glace Do Miss (Free Verse Sonnet)

My Lord, You know that the virus
is not yet at its worst peak
and over everything You do bare knowledge
as You are even aware of each small thing.
You know our country from coast to coast,
every person in it carries meaning to you
and there is nothing that Your glace do miss,
where You do not have to rest like a human being.
You also know where life is bringing pain to people,
even age-old yesterdays are still in Your remembering,
You do understand things that no human being does conceive.
Where I entrust my wife and humanity to You,
I ask that You do omnipotent intervene worldwide
and hold back the winds of destruction.

Gert Strydom

There Is Rain Falling Somewhere Far Away

There is rain falling somewhere far away
and I do smell it in the air
when just before dusk
we wander through our garden
and a lightning bolt
flashes in the distance like a searchlight

but the last glory of the sun
still glitters in your laughter
when you take my hand
and astonished like a child
look at one flower after the other.

Gert Strydom

There Is Silence (Italian Sonnet)

There silence in each hurting memory
as you walk on the footsteps of the past
but between us there is hope that last
in the things with which you trust me

where to my life you do bring tranquillity.
Even if life does us at times leave aghast
to this you stand in beautiful contrast
where for long moments I do you see.

Where new paths do together before us lie
God is guarding us against the infernal.
Your laughter is intimate and intense
and all cares do in such moments die
as if this summer will be eternal
while each thing and word you do sense.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Almost Holy Clinging To Your Humanity

I adore you without any fear,
try to day after day only to live for you,
as you are a part of my thoughts and my flesh,

for me like an angel given by God
and from a deadly virus the threat is great
but now we have got a life that is turned upside-down,

where I long for things to be as they was
and the lock-down and limitations has become a way of life.
I adore you without any fear,

and everywhere that I go there is of the pestilence acute distress,
the virus hangs in the air and comes into your blood
and from a deadly virus the threat is great

As a woman you are in my heart, soul and spirit
and for your happiness I do strive,
as you are a part of my thoughts and my flesh.

To your mere womanhood there is a hot glow
and in my thoughts are every word and your laughter.
The virus hangs in the air and comes into your blood

and thousands die and many more are healed,
where daily a person dares into life.
I adore you without any fear,

where locked-down I wait on the end of the virus,
where still my life is touched by your love
and in my thoughts are every word and your laughter.

My heart beats wildly when I read your remarks,
there is something almost holy clinging to your humanity,
as you are a part of my thoughts and my flesh,

the one with whom I want to awake in the morning,

the one who I love without any boundaries,
where still my life is touched by your love

and away from you I feel totally lost,
and my life is without meaning when I experience things without you.
I adore you without any fear,
as you are a part of my thoughts and my flesh,

the one in all of my dreams and wishes,
for me like an angel given by God,
the one who I love without any boundaries
but now we have got a life that is turned upside-down.

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Gert Strydom

There Is Something Closing In This Winter

There is something closing in this winter
that suddenly appears
something sad, merciless, something not earned
which in each fallen leave, dead flower

carries death as if everything living
in a way is now handed over
as if customs, hope, convictions
are shredded in the coming darkness.

There are thunderbolts descending
and drawing blue-white lines
as if the Godly voice once again attempts
to awake everything

while any kind of sheltering
is swept away by the one natural disaster after the other
and man's technological wonders are in vain
while the planet is busy changing

and manmade destruction is spreading throughout nature;
radioactive radiation, pollution and earthly heating
has a impact on everything that lives and animals and man begins to suffer
while extinction circles out wider and wider.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Different To The World Tonight (Rondine)

There is something different to the world tonight,
something that changes mere existing,
that with its essence reaches out to everything,
that brings joy that happens out of sight;
I see some stars dazed others shining bright,
hear bats, some owls that are fluttering.
There is something different,

and life feels great everything is alright
I wonder what strange thing is happening,
but then your presence gives me the feeling,
brings to my life some bliss and delight,
there is something different...

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Earthly About You

where you are planting a bush of yellow marigolds,
around you the wind blows,
in bright hot sun
and I smell the Moondrops perfume
coming from your neck, face and hair.

The grass and ground are like your eyes,
your blouse and skirt are moss-green
and between us there is a comfortable silence
where along the palisades
we are removing weeds and grass shoots.

In the distance I see the chimneys
of Impala Platinum
that shines like quicksilver
where as always
white smoke is going into the air

and as on every Friday
in the distance alarms are ringing
one after the other

but the silence between us
say more than words
and I press my nose into your hair,
embrace you for a moment,
see the four-by-four of the neighbour pulling in
while his dogs are barking excitedly

and I smell rain and sunflowers
and are tied to this country
and feel how vulnerable you are,

red and pink Iceberg-roses are flowering
brown, yellow, blue and white irises,
marigolds and geraniums of every colour
and the garden is a wonderland in the sun.

There Is Something Great (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrains)

There is something great when in the dark
in the distance we hear the dogs bark,
while your hand creeps warm over my chest
and your voice sounds sweet as that of the lark

and comfortable we lie together and cuddling
while the dove to its mate does continually sing
and even when it's raining and thunder blasts down
being close to each other is a really great thing.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Great In What Music Is (Orléans Roundel Prime)

There is something great in what music is,
something holding a beauty of its own
with a melodious kind of stirring tone
that comes forth in tranquil sweet harmonies,

with some flowing lovely consistencies
that dies off when the sweet music is gone.
There is something great in what music is,
something holding a beauty of its own

and maybe sometimes I am the only one
who hear those linking similarities
when a trumpet or saxophone is blown
when deep into my soul those notes comes down,
there is something great in what music is.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Great To Gardening (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

There is something great to gardening
and in these early days of spring
some birds do frolic and flutter
while others do sing

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Great To The Early Morning

There is something great to the early morning
that remains with me,
when the sky is more pure and bluer
than cobalt-blue,
while on the tussocks of grass, on leaves,
drops of dew do glitter,
when the great white-hot sun
for moments is only a small orange balloon.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something In The Sparkle Of Your Blonde Head (Sonnet)

There is something in the sparkle of your blonde head
that brings a tingle to my heart
and when I look at you it starts beating wildly
as between us there is something, which is unsaid
and if I want to talk my throat gets a knob
and I do not know what to say
but a shudder, a tremble goes through my body
and maybe you and I would want to have it different
but wherever I find myself
you do follow step after step.
You are pretty, more lovely than beautiful
and it's as if you are following me like my own shadow.
My golden eye darling, my most beautiful girl
I see your blonde hair fluttering in the wind.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Special About The Sun

At six o'clock the sun blinded me
in Soutpansberg avenue
and I opened the helmet's visor
to find a way to see.

Still it's great to ride
in the early morning with the motorbike
and to see something of the greatness
of God's creation.

There's something special about the sun
in a blue sky,
if it hangs like a red ball,
or even if it blinding catches your eyes.

The fresh wind that cut past
and at times pulls
as if it wants to touch you
and the cars and busses
that still has their lights on,
brings another atmosphere
to a morning ride.

The motorbike that feels
as if it's alive under you
and shake and trembles
with bumps in the road
and the raw power,
that lies in your hand in a throttle
brings a sensation
of the wonder of existing
and to life on this planet.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something Special In What Life Is

There is something special in what life is,
something that is far more than mere bliss
as if there is much more to life than just this,
as if some magic is present in every kiss

as if life is far more than that which comes

through each and every sense,
far deeper and much more intense
than just that which we do experience
and even if we do act with a incompetence

still life goes on as it runs the sands of time

and life does find its own way
in all of the thing of every day
that we do and in what we do say
and there is something more when we play

and when we laugh and cry

as if a hidden meaning is constantly present
as if a secret kind of depth is just to be found
in each experience and intent
and something is caught up in every sound

as if the whole world is filled with a kind of joy

and we wilt and are effervescent
but it's as if God in all things does glow
and there is something in how every moment is spent
and in what we are learning to know

and together you and I have grown

to be part of each other
and we will not find the same depth with another
and wherever we may go
we do love each other so

and you are far more

than just my intimate play thing
you are my companion, my wife and darling,
the one with whom I find a kind of inner peace,
without whom all the meaning of my life does cease.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something To Loneliness

There's something to loneliness
that are much more pleasant,
than to experience
the rage
of a relationship gone wrong.

There's a time to walk away
and to stay far
from someone that does not
love you anymore.

Some call that strive
the way of life,
but there's a time
when love is gone
and it's far better
for you to be too.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something To Love

There is something to love that reaches beyond
the outer covering, even if we just do kiss and play,
that draws us to return, to continue on another day
and it binds us unseen with a kind of magical bond.

Some people endlessly search for youth's natural fond,
to find a kind of place where age is swept away
but there is something eternal to love, to its sway
to the way that it makes people to each other respond.

Even if our feelings, our energies are at a time spent,
if we have loved fully, have loved to the heart's intent
there is still something drawing, that we feel and see
as if there is something that does in the heart descent
that is acting much deeper and totally independent,
a strange kind of thing that turns bliss into tranquility.

Gert Strydom

There Is Something To Summer Nights

There is something to summer nights
that makes me think of you
and I am expecting something special
when my heart gambols wildly
and away in my hidden thoughts
your love did penetrate deeply

but sometimes like now
there is pain in the remembering
of how things can go wrong
but still your image keeps unfolding

and how much you are able to hurt me
is maybe something for another time
as love does forgive and does change the recollections
so that a person does just brush things aside

while constantly I do hope and trust
and always do see you with new eyes.

Gert Strydom

There Is The Smell Of Rain In The Air (Novelinee)

There is the smell of fresh rain in the air,
the perfume of jasmine on the breeze
while you smile at me, beautiful and fair
and doves coo in the twilight in the trees.
Outside the rain pours like some babbling springs
that runs anywhere in small meandering streams,
our life and love is full of little things,
of bliss, joy and care, deeper than it seems
while you affect even my secret dreams.

Gert Strydom

There Isn't Always Meaning

There isn't always meaning
in everything that happens
and sometimes things
are rather grey than black and white,

but the grey is something
that bothers me at times
when I try to find answers
in what happens with my life.

I am sick of standing
on the sideline
as the game of life is always continuing
and sometimes I also want to plant
the ball between the poles.

Gert Strydom

There Now Is Decades

(for Annelize)

There are now decades and many years into
on our faces, our bodies and our hair
but still I do love you as when we were young
although there are many dangers of the darkness in our country.

Gert Strydom

There Once Was A Man

There once was a man
who had the impact
that even princes
refrained from talking,
when they saw him
and young men
disappeared in respect
and even old men
rose to greet him.

His words and wisdom
impressed everyone
and he treated every man
like a son
and he was like a king
and his life was
a lesson to all
and although
death, ruination and tragedy
befallen him at a time,
and his wife
begged him to curse
the Lord and die,
he trusted
though he didn't really understand
and God stretched out His hand
and restored him
too much greater than he was.

Yet, his riches and importance
didn't go to his head
and he stretched out his hand
to others instead
and the poor, the fatherless,
the helpless, the blind,
the widow and the stranger
knew him well
and to this day
almost every one can tell

the test of the Almighty
and the story of Job.

[Reference: Job 29: 4-16.]

Gert Strydom

There The River Is Bridged (In Answer To Fanie Olivier)

There the river is bridged,
meandering place to place is bounded,
a road cuts right across the mountain's back
and when in the evening you find a tired traveller

he has stopped at a place
where the sea to the furthest horizon
stretches to the heaven
and there are lorries crawling up the hill,

the town lies beneath sparkling like stars
with lights everywhere shining
where people from near and far
at times find a resting place

even the old black man riding past on his bicycle,
or the braggart that cuts through the mountain pass with his grand car.

[Reference: "hier breek die dorp die pad se rug" (here the town breaks the road's back) by fanie olivier.]

Gert Strydom

There Was A Dark Night

There was a dark night
where I was waiting for you,
the hour stayed far, somewhat confusing
as you were carrying my name,
had gone to a lover
and I did feel the pain in my heart
and did know that you were lying
when I came upon the truth,
your eyes betrayed you, left only sorrow.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Farm Near A River

There was a farm
near a river
where on patrol
we sometimes had to get provisions.

A commandant stayed there
and he was a real patriarch
that read out of the Bible in the evenings,
gave biltong away from a barn
and his wife
could cook the best Boer food,

but we had to cross the river
which teemed with crocodiles
and hippopotamuses
which could snap a boat in two

and when we walked to that farm
we couldn't wait
to get there.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Gorgeous Summer

There was a gorgeous summer
at the sea,
when she still loved me.

She sat under a umbrella on Uvongo beach
and the hot water,
of the lagoon touched our feet.

She smiled and her hand was in mine
and her dark curls,
hugged her face.

I rubbed lotion unto her back
and the softness of every curve,
felt like magic to my hands.

We watched the azure blue sea
and children dived from the hillock past the waterfall,
somersaulting into the lagoon.

Like all great holiday's that one passed to soon
and like our relationship,
Uvongo beach and the lagoon is gone.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Guy

There was a guy that didn't want to marry
and wanted to gather women and love them
as if he was preparing them for a harem
and magically he could tie them to him
and do with anyone as he pleased
without one of them ever arguing.

There was a guy that didn't want to marry
and wanted to gather women and love them
and drove distances to meet them
and at night before the morning dew
one after the other held him in passion
until he lost his heart and she didn't like him
and there was a guy that couldn't marry.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Lovely Maiden

(to Minette)

There was a lovely maiden
whom I met, with sky-blue eyes
blonde hair and she could
take men's breath away
almost anywhere

but she slipped away
as if just part
of a summer breeze

and sometimes
it's as if she visits me
and somehow still
I am in her heart.

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Gert Strydom

There Was A Moment

There was a moment that I knew you are wonderful, my wife,
when you did treat me as if I am your very own
and in your heart there was much more than just pity
when you did trust me with your heart's deepest secrets
but to every moment I do not want to cling
as in every other experience
there is a kind of deeper knowledge
as if days with greater promises will continue.
It's as if I find something beautiful in everything of you
and there is greater value to even the most insignificant thing
as if everything makes a person more bonded and happy
and when at times you and I are lost like children
it's as if greater and better things just wait to jump into each day
and life continually becomes better in the grace of God.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Particular Day

There was a particular day,
that was filled with a life-changing event,
that changed my view,
my perception about beauty and love
and it was the day that I met you.

A day where with suddenness
like the strike of a lightning bolt
your inner beauty, your outer loveliness
changed me, captivated me

and on that day
by the hand you lead me
to your special places, the secret places
that was beautiful to you.

Your laughter, your voice
was sweet in my ear
and I wanted to draw you near to my heart
while with every sincere look
every word you changed my view of life,
helped me to know that I was really living.

Gert Strydom

There Was A Time

There was a time when the wide world
seemed immense, when every tree
was gigantic, streams were like rivers
with something celestial
that touching my eyesight
when I was but a child

but now as a man
it's with different eyes that I look
and although things have taken
their normal size
there are still things that are sublime
that I at times comprehend.

The rainbow with its bright colours
that arc above the earth,
has a kind of magic
which science explains,
but still there's a kind of mystery
that nothing can really measure.

The rising sun that paints the sky
and clouds in its loveliness,
even the moon and stars
have an own influence
on feelings, on well being
as if in their presence they can bless.

Gert Strydom

There Was Something Wrong On That Day

(Written on 7 December 2007 to R)

There was something wrong on that day
when you cursed me, did break my laser disks
under the heels of your shoes
and you did fire shots
leaving bullet holes
in the door of the bathroom,
did just miss me
with a bullet leaving a burn-scar on my upper arm
and the children did laugh while I was crying out
while I did take cover and were hiding in the bath.

There was murder in your eyes
when you pressed the barrel
of the pistol against my head
and I heard the hammer click
and I did know
that you are totally mad.

Gert Strydom

There Was Suddenly Light

There was suddenly light, air, water that does divide
that started to exist, which reacts on His command
when He started seasons and time did start to pass
but man with His own hands He did form,
did give the breath of life

and that while a once perfect, once holy angel
did brood on his dark plans.

Gert Strydom

There Were Late Afternoons

There were late afternoons when as a child
I would see the tall popular trees
making the pale blue sky seem much higher
where they grew next to the old farm dam

with there branches whispering
in the early night breeze,
with doves and finches calling
from their nests in the shelter of these trees,

when an early moon would appear
and the evening star would suddenly start twinkling
blue-white in its sheer brightness against a darker blue sky,
like a mother goose leading all of the other stars.

There were early evenings when the sun
died with its deep red glow touching
the hillocks that were covered in sugar bushes,
and red flowering aloes,

when the scent of protea flowers was sweet on the air,
when blue changed to darker black,
when darkness came suddenly
and a myriad of stars sparkled all over the sky

while in the distance fires came to life
at the rural mud huts, while jackals
and dogs started to howl at the bright yellow moon,
while I knew that mother would be home soon.

Gert Strydom

There Were Late Afternoons As A Child

There were late afternoons when as a child
I would see the tall popular trees
making the pale blue sky seem much higher
where they grew next to the old farm dam

with there branches whispering
in the early night breeze,
with doves and finches calling
from their nests in the shelter of these trees,

when an early moon would appear
and the evening star would suddenly start twinkling
blue-white in its sheer brightness against a darker blue sky,
like a mother goose leading all of the other stars.

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at the rural mud huts, while jackals
and dogs started to howl at the bright yellow moon,
while I knew that mother would be home soon.

Gert Strydom

There Were Only Days In Which I Kept Missing You (Free Verse Sonnet)

Deep in my thoughts I did remember you
every smile, every bit of laughter and the sound of your voice,
I tried to keep you deep in the places of my memory
and with sincere love my heart did beat.
I searched for you in the veldt, on the plain while you were away
and in the city other women did really look like you
but in the darkness of nights I kept reaching for you,
I wanted to embrace you for mere moments.
I knew you as if you were right here with me,
did relive every previous moment in my thoughts
but there were only days in which I kept missing you
even if I forgave you for every bit of pain
but in these bright days you have returned to me,
where your intimate intense love is something that leaves me speechless.

Gert Strydom

There Were Sparks In Both Of Your Golden-Brown Eyes

When I did arrive
there were sparks in both of your golden-brown eyes
when I found you in your garden at the roses
and how eagerly I wanted to kiss you,
when I did chase up
a small weaver
while your body did gleam through your dress
and the spring was blossoming around us.

Gert Strydom

There's A Ancient Story

There's an ancient story
of God and of men,
of the holy Lord Jesus
born in Bethlehem.

Of shepherds in the field
watching their flock at night
and an angel so bright
that they had to shield their eyes
telling about the Son of God,
the Prince of Peace being born
and angels that sing praises to Him.

Of wise men from the East
following a bright star,
coming from very far
with gifts of gold,
frankincense and myrrh
for the newborn king

Of king Herod
when he heard about the child
let his soldiers kill
all the children
in and around Bethlehem
who were two years and younger
and of Jesus Christ escaping to Egypt

Of God the Son, Jesus
in innocence being crucified
for the sins of all men
and rising from the dead
to be alive and God again.

Gert Strydom

There's A Big Painting

There's a big painting of a girl
with a light pink skin
that lies on a white skin cloak
in front of a dark pool,
where snow white water lilies drifts
and I can see into her soul.

I have felt like taking the fan
next to her
and to wave her cool
yet she looks fragile
and self-possessed and calm,
where she lies with her peach pink dress
looking at me
and I wonder for whom she is waiting
and why the door behind her
of which the steps goes into the pool
are always locked?

[Reference: Painting of a girl at a pool by Mandi. See the painting at my webpage:

Gert Strydom

There's A Black And White Green-Eyed Cat

There's a black and white green-eyed cat
that comes at night
to lie on my bed
and also wants
the hotness of my body.

However I roll around,
turns over or shifts around
he still comes and lies
right against me,
as if nothing can part
him from me at night.

Sometimes I wonder how a animal
can love man so much
that its whole existence
turns around you
and only one touch
gets purr sounds
and let appear
teeth and a smile.

I wonder where he will lie
when I go into my last sleep,
or will he also find a place
with me there?

Gert Strydom

There's A Black Child (In Answer To Fanie Olivier)

There's a black child
finding his way with goats through the cliffs
and his hair is blown in the wind
while grasses are braiding galloping around his feet.

He knows of the urge to want more,
how to take with force,
to draw his cross on the ballot paper, to say his say
and his feet walk on a dusty road

and in the dark night some of the tribe
gather around the fires, where spears are being melted
leaders armed with rifles arrive, who talk about plundering
torture and murder

and they are laughing as the war is over,
on what their hands fall they can take,
when suddenly they strike
a shaking white woman is raped

and there's darkness hanging black over the country,
a darkness that no light can pierce,
with black faces smiling
in a circle around the fire.

[Reference: "by ruacana" (at ruacana) by fanie olivier.]

Gert Strydom

There's A Dragon Fly

hanging at the mirror image of the window
catching the eye of a shrike
and the bird flashes past with stretched out claws
and for a moment the insect vibrates scared

and are swept away
by the bird that later twitters on the barbed wire
where it pierces the insect with a nail
and I am caught in the scene

and see the spreading its black wings
preparing for the next victim
and every insect that it spots
it catches.

Gert Strydom

There's A Kind Of Loveliness (In Answer To Percy Bysshe Shelley)

There's a kind of loveliness
a kind of unreal beauty,
while in nature it is displayed free
from any unkindness,

and it has the divine instruction to bless,
are present in everything that we see,
are in the best hopes of what we wish to be,
in every tender touch, are caught in every caress.

Its presence is everywhere
and although it is unseen
traces of it can be seen
all about us, right here and there,

in faces that sometimes look and stare,
in places where people had been
and something of it's is keen
to reach out with a kind of loving care.

Its presence is in every flower,
even the grass,
in stormy clouds that together mass
and in lightning bolts and every rain shower

there is a kind of hidden power
and it's in every thing that is and was,
even sometimes reflected on the window glass
in every hill with sheer cliffs that tower

and I define what I have written here
as the very presence of the Lord God
and some may not regard it thus, may on other ways trod
while by their choice with their lives He does not interfere

but He is always somewhere near
and to some people this may sound odd

but His will he does not on people prod
and I worship him with love and without any fear

but He is omnipresent is touching everything,
has created all that exists, the way that things are,
and man's choices left this planet with a scar
while He is still maintaining it and mere men he keeps on visiting.

[Reference: "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

There's A Light Breeze

There's a light breeze
that blows hot in this summer
where you lie with your feet on my lap
on the pig-leather lounge suite,

at times our words are scarce
while the sun goes down breathtaking beautiful,
your eyes are sparkling magically
and there is something bewitching in our being together,

when we touch glasses of St. Anna,
I later pour almost the whole bottle out,
the being together becomes really precious
when the first stars shine in the night sky.

Gert Strydom

There's A Light Breeze Blowing

There's a light breeze
that blows hot in this summer
where you lie with your feet on my lap
on the pig-leather lounge suite,

at times our words are scarce
while the sun goes down breathtaking beautiful,
your eyes are sparkling magically
and there is something bewitching in our being together,

when we touch glasses of St. Anna,
I later pour almost the whole bottle out,
the being together becomes really precious
when the first stars shine in the night sky.

Gert Strydom

There's A Male Baboon Loose In Town

There's a male baboon loose in town
walking on its hands and feet
opening all the rubbish bins in town
where eagerly it looks for any food

and it's easier for him than the bush,
while cursing he talks to the dogs.
There's a male baboon loose in town
walking on its hands and feet

stripping everything that it finds
and as an outcast it did desert,
he scratches between rubbish, old papers and mail,
trying to baptize himself in the sewerage,
there's a male baboon loose in town
walking on its hands and feet.

Gert Strydom

There's A Place

There's a place
where lost flowers grow,
in spite of no care.

An old dilapidated house
is half torn down
and litter lies everywhere,
like on an old rubbish dump.

Purple irises and blue-violet lilies
burst through the weeds
and I wonder what tale,
the old house could tell.

Gert Strydom

There's A Place With Rows Of Cypress Trees

There's a place where rows of cypress trees
stand to attention
at the foot of a rocky hillock
and there are graves planted in rows.

As a child could have sworn
that there are ghosts among the graves,
when the wind went through the trees
and shadows move at night
over the graves.

We lived fifty meters away
in a old white house
and it was only
my dad, mom, brother and me.

If I were naughty
or did not want to eat my food
a man with a hat, raincoat and dark glasses
came in through the back door.

In the evenings my dad read poetry
to me and my younger brother
and his voice with the cannibal
and the rider of skimmelperd pan
resounds in me.

Untill a day that cancer
took my dad forever,
fifty meteres further.

[References: Die mensvreter and Die ruiter van skimmelperdpan by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

There's A Shore

There's a shore
on the other side of destiny,
where forever I hear
happy voices singing
praises to the Son of man.

I simply cannot understand
how an almighty God could choose
to become a frail man
and live a selfless life,
in the way that the Messiah did.

The depth of His love
still shines like the sun and will
forevermore remain immeasurable,
while His sacrifice remains
the key to freedom and eternity.

Gert Strydom

There's A Time That The Sun Sets

There's a time
that the sun sets
and it's also
how life goes.

My dad read the last time
the poem that let the hairs
on my arms raise
of a horse
with a rider without a head
like only he can

and when I was naughty
the man with the hat and jacket came
and never again
and later I find it hanging
in his wardrobe.

Red-brown lumps fall on a wooden chest
and what does a toddler know
of final farewell,

except that the sun sets
over the hillock
on the other side of the place
where he lies.

Gert Strydom

There's A World

There's a world
that lies between your arms
and between your lips kissing,
playing and touching
I become part of a cosmos

like a astronaut
that lands on a new planet
and makes great discoveries there

I just want to become
more and more involved with you
and make my life
an adventure with you

and almost forever
be in you.

Gert Strydom

There's An Anarchic Element In Me

There's an anarchic element in me,
an opposition to government,
a aversion to control, preaching disorder

coming from being forced into the military,
being forced in subjection
to order and discipline

forced to kill
ignoring your beliefs, forced to buckle to
the demands of society

to learn lethal skills, against your will
and ignoring the impact
as if you as a human being

is just another machine
that can be turned on and off
and are ready for use for political ends

and I am not wanting to participate in RICA
where big brother wants your name,
address that accompanies your cellular phone number

as if the government wants to control sanity and peace
being a exile against it, wanting isolation and freedom
from government and it agencies

which deal with you with atrophy
as if not geared to meet expectations
in a obverse phase with indifference
as if you are just another meaningless human being.

Gert Strydom

There's An Inaccessibility

There's an inaccessibility
in the steel-blue sky,
a chilly winter cold that comes without modesty
and I see doves turning in their gambolling flight

in a swarm gathering around me
and they seem hungry
when I spread crumbs of bread from a paper-bag
but in this winter all heat is missing

while the wind is pulling on tree branches,
making a dust cloud of leaves and sand,
blowing things higher than the roofs of the houses,
causing the blue to disappear.

Still I can stare in wonder,
where doves gather dog tame around me.

Gert Strydom

There's No Thunder's Match Falling From The Sky (Rondine)

There's no thunder's match falling from the sky
while for days without end rain sieves down,
while we both live in a world of our own
and the cold, wet winter passes us by,
something much deeper lies in your eye
while darkness covers the earth like a gown,
there's no thunder's match

in the winter rain, while time does fly
no shining stars are seen that make a crown,
the big pinewoods seem totally overgrown;
some twilight comes, as if the sun did die,
there's no thunder's match...

Gert Strydom

There's Something In The Rain

There's something in the rain
that makes my plants jump
and there are beans
growing in a row in stools
and tomatoes that stand around in small bushes
and beetroot everywhere
and there are carrots
growing between the other vegetables
and onions pushing out fingers
like grasses,
but the spinach
fills the whole place
and at the end of the garden
there's parsley coming out in places.

At times I wonder if the Creator
is also as happy and excited
about His earth
and if everything
makes a impact in his heart
and I see the wonders
of His magnificent works
in the world around me.

Gert Strydom

There's Something In Your Eyes

There's something in your eyes
when I look at you
that makes me totally vulnerable
makes me realise how precious life,
my life with you is

that we are not extradited to this world
but sometimes find someone perfect
and when the wind pulls-pulls on your hair
a small frown begins between your eyes
against the bright light
I know how intense
my feelings for you have become.

Gert Strydom

There's Something Indescribable

Sometimes I do not
want to touch you
and it's just great
to have you with me.

There's something indescribable
that your humanity
brings to me
and I feel relaxed en peaceful
when we are together.

Sometimes you ask
if I do not want to do other things,
but you are too precious for me
to get greater satisfaction
from life when you're away.

Gert Strydom

There's Something That Falls

There's something that falls
with the sun's early rays
and life begins
ad infinitum
on every lovely day.

The warm sun bakes
the moist from the earth
and joyous clouds form
to return the essence
of life back to the ground.

[Reference: Ad infinitum=> Without ending.]

Gert Strydom

There's Sometimes A Silence

There's sometimes a silence
hanging pregnant,
a silence that says that something
almost unstoppable is going to happen,

but sometimes words are totally needless
when eyes, mouths and bodies
are talking a own language,
when things turn into making love.

Gert Strydom

There's A Colour To The Ocean

There's a colour to the ocean,
telling of its coldness, of ice much further away,
that comes all the way from the very south
and that particular hue has a pureness
that it brings to the blue
while a flat mountain rises above a city
that at a time you became to love,
where the summer sun stretches on
into the begging on the night,
before much later comes the fading light,
where winters drizzle weeks long
without a sight of the sun
and although you do not anymore live there
at times like your memories
you return to visit it.

Gert Strydom

There's A Different Path

There's a different path
that everyone walks,
a different way where lives go
and along the way
at times we are hurt,
at times we laugh and play,
at times we pray
and everyone is journeying
through this life.

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There's An Understanding Between Me And You (Stave Stanza Sestets)

There's an understanding between me and you,
we are twin souls in what we think and do
severally Cupid's arrows did us strike,
we are different and very much alike
our views, beliefs and minds are quite the same
I call it love, you belief or another name.

I am bewitched by your sultry voice
people call you my only object-choice,
while you do bring life to every day
your loving go further than you do say,
at times to you it is a kind of game;
I call it love, you belief or another name.

Gert Strydom

There's No Other Country

There's no other country
where I have seen the same blue hue
in the sky, have experienced
the same notion of experiencing
something so pure.

There's no other country
where day by day
I have experienced the sun
flying up in its arc
like a eagle on its wings

but then one morning
a series of gunshots awakes me
where my neighbour across the street
lies bleeding

with robbers racing away
with his stolen car, passing me in a blur
and I wonder if he is still living,
rushing over the road to try to help him.

Gert Strydom

There's Something Eerie To The Morning Mist (Novelinee)

There's something eerie to the morning mist
as if the world is closing around us,
about all other things have not a gist
and at the open fields away you rush
leaping through the long grass at a fast pace
while I walk and as a big dog you run
with a kind of amazing flowing grace,
bark at whatever you find in great fun,
its early, the day has hardly begun.

Gert Strydom

These Hands

(to Minette)

So strong my hands had gripped
the hands of great men
but they were only mortal
as everything living in this life is

and these hands were far too frail, my darling,
to hold you with me,
to keep your heart
when death at its time did call
and now they are getting withered and old.

Gert Strydom

These Have I Loved

Hearing the doves
cooing from the sycamore tree
constantly as if they are in love
reminds me about your tender care

the blue hue of the sky above
in the middle of a sunny day
filled with birds of all kinds
flying around, much freer than me,
the sun looking down
like the huge eye of God

rain pattering down onto the ground,
streaming in little rivulets
down the window pane
full of cheer,
is the kind of experiences
that stays

but much more than any of these
are having you with me
as a companion, lover and friend.

Gert Strydom

Theseus And The Minotaur (Free Verse Sonnet)

He did hunt everything that does exist
and also he searched for the mystic bull that walks on two paws
which claimed human sacrifices from its followers,
wanted to destroy that beast for once and all,
wanted to get to him in the labyrinth of Minos
but he was scared and had to steel his nerves
while he rolled off Ariadne's rope to come out again
where carefully he went into the labyrinth
and to die was a huge probability
when suddenly he noticed the sleeping cruel beast
did free the young people who in his eyes did deserve freedom
and they cried from happiness and their hearts was full of hope
while they followed Theseus out of the labyrinth.

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Gert Strydom

They Are No Longer Part Of Me

They are no longer part of me,
your arms, your legs, your thighs
and as far as I can see
although you are lying
spread out against my body

we are now dismantled,
after the passion, the intimacy of love
has passed
we are lying torn from each other
cheek away from cheek,
eyes not anymore focussed
into each other's

and still we were one
a few moments ago,
(such a pleasurable whole thing)
consisting out of man and women
coming together in a loving act
and now we are two different beings
lying next to each other
while moments pass
and life is again catching speed.

Gert Strydom

They Call It A Mall (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after S. J. Pretorius)

They call it a mall
which is full of all sorts of chain stores,
that now stands right across the marsh
where I do miss all the many birds that had been there.
The butterfly fluttering has now also stopped,
all the black long-tail widow birds have disappeared
and people had build buildings of concrete right there,
with creeping-tractors that filled the marsh with rubble.
The weavers, the coots and the doves have disappeared into the nought,
while lorries t brought their loads through the day and night,
while scrapers wiped everything flat into the distance
and all the people are happy that do live nearby,
while the moorhens and stone-plovers stopped calling,
in the urbanization of the twenty first century.

[Reference:"Stadsuitbreiding by Crestasentrum" (City expansion at Cresta-centre)by S. J. Pretorius.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

They Came In The Middle Of The Night (In Reply To Daniel P. Kunene)

They came in the middle of the night
in a huge crowd, almost like a lynching gang
the type who previously had torched,
burned their own alive
and in their hands were panga-blades,
spades, crowbars, pistols
and AK-47 sub-machineguns
and then there were the younger ones
who carried assegai spears and knives

and they were there to destroy home and hearth
to wipe the white farmer from the earth
singing: "a bullet for a white"
and had formed up like a ancient impi
in full might
and they assaulting the farmer, his children and wife
while shouting:

"Amandla! Amandla! Ngawethu! "
and took law into their own hands,
robbed, tried to rape, to kill
while receiving an inhuman thrill from it.

[Reference: Do Not Ask Me by Daniel P. Kunene.]

Gert Strydom

They Couldn't Understand

They couldn't understand
that your kingdom wasn't
from this world
and that You were both
totally God and man.

Your life of love
and the things that
You set out to do
wasn't understood
while they nailed You to a cross
and ridiculed You.

Stupid mortal man
killed the Creator and Son of God
and the earth shook and the sky went dark.

Gert Strydom

They Hide Behind Their Kind Of Democracy

They hide behind their kind of democracy,
where the barrel of a gun, a gleaming knife
or knobbed baton speaks an own language,
to affirm the rights to life and possessions

while using human rights and socialism
to mask their much more darker demonic ways,
they break down culture, languages and religion
playing on the destructive need to possess

while scrapping merit, honour
and integrity along the way,
while opening the country's borders
for every criminal in Africa.

They live in well-protected palaces,
with people serving and following
them like gods,
while they decide over the lot

of minor nations,
declare that AIDS does not exist
and make false promises
about farms and houses to their followers

while they are chasing after money, power and esteem
and herding women into their polygamist harems,
while a whole country is caught in the matrix
where robbery and killing is at the order of the day.

Gert Strydom

They May Try To Sensor My Poetry

They may try to sensor my poetry,
may classify it as unwanted literature,
not true to political correctness,
it may be seen as a threat to the country,
they may throw it away as rubbish
in the nearest bin

but I will write about beauty, love
help people dream
and nothing will stop me
to write about atrocities,
about suppression, about bombs
exploding in the street,
about war and even jails

and as long as the precipice is there
I will be writing about it as well,
as life does not have only
beautiful, peaceful
and religious things to tell
but sometimes its own particular kind of hell.

Gert Strydom

They Meet At A Nightclub

They meet at a nightclub
and dance on the pace
of a drawing rhythm.

She's pretty and blonde and slim
and he's tall and well built
and they smile at each other
and there's sparks
That flies between them
and it's just a boy and a girl.

Two people are for long moments
caught up with each other
and the dancing with each other
makes intimacy grow between them.

JC Le Roux sparkling wine
and Cape Velvet Cream liqueur
rounds a off a wonderful evening
and her hand lies soft in his
while he walks with her
to her car.

She invites him for coffee,
but at her living place
no coffee is poured
and it's forgotten
while they kiss each other
and passion grabs them.

The condom breaks
and the make love without it
and she doesn't become pregnant
but he gets AIDS
that she got unknown
from another lover.

It becomes a wonderful night
for both of them

and with time
they really start to love each other,
but their sentence has been given
and at a time
when others count the days down
to a holiday and other great things
there lives disappear slowly.

[Reference: "Sometimes there is a way that seems to be right, but in the end it is the way to death." Proverbs 16: 25.]

Gert Strydom

They Say

They say that some of the words I write
are neither bad or good
while sometimes my poetry is misunderstood
and try as I might

some people will never catch the light
while they continually playing a game,
know how to walk over others in poetry's name
but their words and deeds are dark as the night.

Despite their advice
I try to make my words crystal clear,
while I tell heroic tales and some of fear
and although their friendship would have been nice

I leave my poems to make me great
or to crumble under the judgement of fate.

Gert Strydom

They Say Its Puppy Love

The whole time we are aware of each other
from the moment that you come into class
and then I am dumbstruck
and they say its puppy love and lust
that we want to see each other far too frequently
and they think that maybe
we like each other far too much,
while they do not trust us with each other,
they are right that we want to touch,
but there is something much deeper,
that is awaking when we are together;
some sparks suddenly come.
I am not in doubt about you,
neither do we only look at each other with lust.

Gert Strydom

They Say My Verse Is Bad (Parody)

(with apologies to A.E. Housman)

They say my verse is bad: no wonder,
its measure too narrow spans
tidings of eternity, and of no tomorrow
neither mine; nor man's.

Whenever ill-treated I bellow
about what I have not and have got,
for those who read to be of trouble
as if a poet, I am not.

[Reference: "They say my verse is sad, no wonder" by A.E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

They Visited Her

They were happily married
and had one or two or three children
or none at all
and shared there lives
with their wives or sweethearts,
but they visited her.

Some had wealth
and some were poor
and some had magazine cover wives
and some were attractive
and some were dull,
but they visited her.

Some were elders in the church
and some were businessmen
and out of every occupation
they came
and even church ministers
visited her and shared her bed.

Somehow she understood
better than any head doctor
what made men happy
and what made them tick
and without any special trick
she shared her body
and cared in a way.

Gert Strydom

They Went Home (Terzanelle) (In Answer To Maya Angelou)

They visited her when the wife was not around,
they found her house antiseptic clean,
tracked her down where ever she was to be found,

while she was full of passion like a nymphomaniac Herculean
all kinds of men knew her lips,
they found her house antiseptic clean,

knew the shape of her legs and hips
but some was treated better still,
all kinds of men knew her lips,

and they visited one night or more to get a thrill
before they went home to the sweet wife,
but some was treated better still,

before they went to a loving family and a clear-cut life
they experienced her really intimately
before they went home to the sweet wife

and everyone that were visiting her left separately.
They visited her when the wife was not around,
they experienced her really intimately
tracked her down where ever she was to be found.

[Reference: They went home by Maya Angelou.]

Gert Strydom

They Were Only Doing Their Duty (Two Ballades With A Prologue)

I. Prologue: Four days of terror

The arrest was just before five o'clock
on a Thursday afternoon,
with one white and one black constable
waiting at his work
and when he returned from business
cuffing him and searching his body
and taking him into custody.

The employer notified his relatives,
seeing the incident
as a blot on the company's name
and then his job was hanging in balance
and the charges was
based on a false affidavit
made by stepson
on persuasion of the mother in law

and where his car had been stolen,
criminals had broken into his rented house
and robbed him of the TV, DVD-player,
hifi and everything valuable
no arrest was ever made
and the police was only doing their job
and will tell you
that another unit
is responsible for robberies
and hijackings
passing the buck endlessly.

Three days elapsed before a bail hearing
as the black state attorney
was that Friday busy
with another case
in another town
while he was innocently locked up.

It is no joke being innocent and locked up
in a police cell with eighteen other people
with one toilet,
in the middle of the room,
no shower,
no bathing facilities, dirt everywhere
and lice jumping into your hair,

not being able to close your eyes
and knowing if you will be safe
from a attack from any of them

being prohibited to receive any cigarettes
or food from the outside,
being served with three dry pieces of bread
and coffee without sugar for dinner,
an iron bowl as big as you hand
with brown porridge, without a spoon
and any sugar or salt in it
without any eating utensils for breakfast
and having to eat it with your bare hands
like a barbarian

receiving a small bowl of porridge
with mince in it as lunch
and having to eat it
in the same way

and after four days of this treatment
having to appear before a magistrate
on a Monday morning
without clean clothes, a shave
or a comb through his hair
he had been stripped
from being treated humanely
by the South African Police
and have been treated
like just another third world citizen
being made equal to a culture
where living like a animal
is regarded as being humane

and then after his release
he had to get rid of all his hair
to get rid of the lice,
had to take a hot bath in antiseptic
and another shower after that
and had to throw his clothes
and shoes
into the rubbish bin.

II. Honour your father and mother

As a society Afrikaners had respect
for older people,
addressing older people
who were not even related as uncle and aunt.

I have been raised with the bible commandments
and one of them
is to honour your father and mother.

At South African schools
naughty children are not anymore disciplined
by caning, children's rights, human rights
these days even take precedence
above the teachings of the Bible
and caning is viewed as assault.

I have been raised with the bible commandments
and one of them
is to honour your father and mother.

An eleven-year-old boy
one afternoon while his stepfather
was working at the mortuary,
played with a ten year old girl
from next door
and both stripped naked.

I have been raised with the bible commandments
and one of them

is to honour your father and mother.

That evening the girl told her mother
that the boy had sexually harassed her,
the government welfare was contacted,
the boy was taken to a kid's clinic for evaluation
where that boy stated that his step father
had sexually assaulted him.

I have been raised with the bible commandments
and one of them
is to honour your father and mother.

III. Only doing their duty

During the trial of the mass murderers
in the Second World War,
some people on trial stated
that they were only doing their duty.

Children's rights is the in thing,
and on insistence of the boy's grandmother,
and a declaration of the boy,
the police
went to arrest the stepfather at his work,
which he almost lost
as that company does not want to be associated
with people who sexually harass children.

They were only doing their duty.

The police grabbed him with their hands
going into the back of his pants,
locked him up on a Thursday
at the cells at the police station.

They were only doing their duty.

The stepfather is dyslectic, works as a mortician,
and earns a very small salary,
could not afford a proper lawyer

and it was clear that the state lawyer
wasn't really up to it.

He was only doing his duty.

The mother of the stepfather,
(an eighty three year old pensioner)
had to get an advocate (a supreme court barrister)
for the bail defence
as her son was seen as a danger to society
and being locked up
in a proper jail was being considered.

They were only doing their duty.

The court decided that the boy should for a time
live with his grandmother
and she went with the story
to the local newspaper
and claimed that she and the boy
have got to live behind burglar bars
in her flat and are too scared
to even go shopping
with the stepfather out on bail

but the grandmother and the boy,
was seen in a local pub,
where she was drinking
and the child was playing pool.

The newspaper and the grandmother
were only doing their duty.

At the court while the boy's mother
was waiting in the passage way
(as the court case was being held in camera)
a police detective asked her
why she was still living with the stepfather?

The police detective with a pistol on his belt,
was only doing his duty.

During the trial that proceeded for days upon days
under cross examination
from the defending attorney it came out
that the boy's own father had molested him,
that the stepfather was totally innocent
and the stepfather's mother (a pensioner)
had to pay more than sixteen thousand rand
in legal fees
and the court felt sorry for the poor boy

and the legal system was only doing its duty.

Gert Strydom

Things At A Time Were Simple

Things at a time were simple, small things are full of danger
everywhere I walk into your things, as if you are here
while time passes much too slowly,
your things fill the whole garage
and I wonder when a relationship ends?

Outside children ride past on bicycles and life goes on
and everything feels muddled,
when the church bell in the distance rings off the time,
things at a time were simple.

How our relationship ended is disputable
but it remains a fact that I have got to accept,
I am wet with sweat while I am hitting of a tennis ball,
standing ready for the next one,
almost staring at the women with the short skirt,
things at a time were simple.

Gert Strydom

Things Bothering Me About South African Policemen

While visiting a friend
who was innocently locked up while awaiting trial,
I saw how unapproachable,
chilly, almost emotionless the law officers
are against detainees and their families.

After the fiasco where ostensibly
I wanted to take a photograph
the action of the men surrounding me
locking their hands like cuffs around my wrists
and putting hands in the back of my pants
to hold on to my belt

even the insults and threats
to assault me right there in public
has shown to me how obsessed with force,
how arrogant and absolutely impudent
policemen have become
as if they do not serve the public.

The thing that bothers me even more
is that like in the Anglo-Boer war
white Afrikaner men in that force
are like joiners, like traitors and to survive
they make a mockery of their own culture

will do almost anything
to creep deeper
into the backsides of their black comrades,
as if they are valueless,
totally without manners,
or respect for the rights of other people,

going into life
like the bad white people
that you meet at times,
when called up for military service,
who share naked photographs
and sexual experiences of their wives.

I read the words of a prophet
who forecasts difficult times
and says that the laager of God
is drawn around the houses of everyone
who stays faithful, who stands with their own people,
but they who are one with the enemy
are awaiting destruction.

[References: "Police intimidation" by Gert Strydom. Visionary
Nicolaas van Rensburg.]

Gert Strydom

Things That Are Dear To Me

The orange-red colour of the new morning,
the first blossoming flower of spring
and up in the big old oak tree
the chatter of little birds that sing,

the blue of the sky's canopy,
the buzzing of bee after bee
from flower to flower
are things that are dear to me

and when life comes with thundershower after thundershower
and even the smallest problems do gigantic tower
like solid rocky hills of the hardest stone,
then there is still beauty in even the simplest flower

and when at times I am all-alone
and every friend is gone
then life seems far too much
until I hear your bright voice on the phone.

Gert Strydom

Think Of Me

Think of me
while the horizon glows red
at dusk,
that folds like a translucent cloak
around the earth

where on the porch
you watch the wild doves
and people
passing in the street
and the church bell
counts the evening hour in the distance

and the sweet taste of the tea
disappear with satisfaction into you
and the night flowers
open their cups.

Think of me
while nights draws out long
and the smell of jasmine
comes sweet through the window
soaking in from the garden

and you awake
from your dreams at night
and the old black dog
make whimpering sounds in her sleep

because I am the whole time
right here next to you
and want to remember
every moment with you.

Gert Strydom

Think Of Me[2]

Think of me
when the rays of the sun
put its first fingers
over the horizon
and a new day
without you in it
arrives for me.

Think of me
when the moon
pale white greets the night
and shrinks behind clouds
and I am somewhere else
away from you
and we can only still meet
in dreams.

Think of me
when the darkness
folds its arms around me
and the eternal sleep
pacifies me away
because I love you
without it ever ending.

Gert Strydom

Thinking Of Your Work And Life (Cavatina Sequence)

Thinking of your work and life, a yearning
to earn much more;
where now I do lack all kinds of good things,
where you deplore
me for my lack to breed, build and to become
great as before;
still I have a good sense of confidence
while my words are reaching for excellence.

Yet with similar conviction I am
still reaching out
to a world that is beyond all human sight,
loud you may shout
and act in word and deed very harshly
and bring about
great acts of violence and great strife
while unseen forces of darkness wreck my life;

but hours and days of utter loneliness
wreaks their havoc
and forever ticking and running on
is the old clock;
wealth and snobbism enfolds you like a cloak;
running amok
are the words and deeds of my enemies
while constantly I only long for peace.

Gert Strydom

Thinning Out

At a time an excess of trees was broken off,
the veldt so trampled
that it threatened the existence of other animals

game wardens had to intervene
and elephants ran away startled in different directions,
while a helicopter was driving them on,

in the death-acre a marksmen
fired shots into the brain
and labourers were loading carcasses

but then a known scientist
did some research and invented
elephant contraception

and everywhere herds could dwell in peace
and the mad chase, the thinning out
forever has ended.

Gert Strydom

This Afternoon

(after Herman de Coninck)

This afternoon people did bump me off a train,
and on the concrete platform I fell under the wheels of a train
but when Gwenevieve does awake everything is still well
and then unexpectedly I get a heart attack
where my blood pressure is so high as if there are no bounds to it
but where that three-year-old grandchild expected the worst
she finds me alive when I visit them at night
and the joy that radiates from her
lifts me up and give me new power,
as if I do promise to never die
but even in this every human being has an inability.

[Reference:"Opluchting" (Lifting up)by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

This Afternoon When You Meet Me Radiant

Today the sun will burn this winter day
brightly open,
and this afternoon when you meet me radiant
I will take your hand
and for lingering moments
you will lead me to another place,
where even the seasons will disappear in the naught
while stars in the heaven are jumping.

Gert Strydom

This Century

The time of innocence
and the age where men were men
and women were wives is past
and women compete
with affirmative action
rather than merit
paving their way

and in this century
if a wedding lasts
for more than a year
it's an achievement
and maybe not love,
but some other need
holds it together
and the working wife
receives a fee

and the quick fix now applies
to most things
and most things are being sold,
even integrity, responsibility
and not just sex
where the price of visiting the madam
may be far less
than the one paid at home.

Gert Strydom

This Could Not Be The War We Fought In (Cavatina)

The new government talks down; they deceive
about winning
against us, the war in which we did fight;
the beginning
of this deceit is at primary school
and by sinning
they rewrite history to suit their lies,
to look brave in their supporters eyes.

We did destroy a Soviet controlled
Cuban army,
never lost any battle nor the war,
but liberty
given to their imprisoned leaders,
they are now free
to say whatever nonsense they want to,
in their actions atrocities to do.

Citizens did pay the ultimate price,
and went to war,
some died from cowardly terrorist acts,
as was in store;
some women and children were slaughtered
in blood and gore
by planted bombs, some in church mowed down,
in these things this government finds renown.

[References: 'The battle at Cuito Cuanavale: 'The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down.' (General) Jannie Geldenhuys. (1994) : At the front. Jonathan Ball Publishers. P240.

'The South African force, under the command of Colonel Deon Ferreira, was tasked with carrying out three operations (1) Operation Modular - The aim of which was to halt and reverse the FAPLA / Cuban advance on the UNITA strongholds of Mavinga and Jamba, (2) Operation Hooper - The aim of which

was to inflict maximum casualties on the retreating FAPLA / Cuban forces after they had been halted and (3) Operation Packer - The aim of which was to force the FAPLA / Cuban forces to retreat to the west of the Cuito River.' Nortje, Piet (2003) .32 Battalion. Zebra Press.

'In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 UNITA fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla brigade and mauled several others out of a total Fapla force of some 18,000 engaged in the three-pronged offensive. Estimates of Fapla losses ranged upward of 4,000 killed and wounded. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officers played a central role in its execution.... Huge quantities of Soviet equipment were destroyed or fell into UNITA and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat... The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms and its strategy.... As of mid-November, the UNITA/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of FAPLA's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters.' Crocker, Chester A. (1992) High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood. (Crocker was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Reagan Administration.)

John Turner claims that: 'following their losses, the Cubans were convinced that further military confrontation with the SADF would not succeed.' Turner, John W. (1998) . Continent Ablaze; The Insurgency Wars in Africa, 1960 to the Present. Cassell Plc.

Comments made by a Soviet adviser to the Cubans in Angola: 'The people's armed forces for the liberation of Angola have not been able either, even with the help of the Cubans, to decisively defeat the enemy and drive him out of the territory or the country.' M. Ponomarev, Krasnaya Zvezda Magazine; 20 May 1988.]

Gert Strydom

This Earth And Time Is Not Mine (Sonnet Corona)

I

This earth, climate, country in 2013
where I have been placed by destiny
by birth as a man among men
is not mine and this isn't mutiny,

but I would rather have the place
where my ancestors dwelt
with the veldt being almost endless space
when before the almighty God the whole nation knelt

as simple sincere people of their word
that followed a work ethic with respect
where sex was enticing, not spurt
out as the offering of a Manichean sect

but still the sky at times is hued blue,
love at least at times is true.

II

Love at least at times is true,
on the first of May it was a holiday
and I could not be with you,
while autumn leaves at my feet lay

and trees were being stripped,
I could smell the decay
of the city, the whole country on a road trip
as if we had gone without delay

back in time, as if we had stepped into
a third world life,
that sticks to you like glue,
where only criminals and the rich can survive

and undisturbed we live our lives; go work and school,

like the circling swell in a whirlpool

III

Like the circling swell in a whirlpool,
is my country's love to me
and like a simple fool.
I am smitten with her as if there isn't any

other that can be true,
as if I am inseparable from her
I dance on sheer cliffs gazing at the blue,
beyond the edge that I see there

and I know in cause due
destruction will come from her hands,
from her and her whole retinue
with horrific demands

and still I call upon the Lord and his angelic host,
when I think of all I have lost.

IV

When I think of all I have lost,
at the hands of my fellow countrymen,
try and count the cost
brought on me by mere men

with the weight, the severity dealt to me,
even if oppression, dispossession is running rife,
yet in a way I am still free
in my daily living and strive

to be happy and I will keep calling it home,
believing that in His time the Lord God will restore,
even if all over it I will have to roam
and He will make everything better than before

and to me this place is still heartfelt;

give me a country with the open veldt.

V

Give me a country with the open veldt
that stretches out onto the blue sky,
where falcons and eagles fly,
where in ages past my forefathers knelt

before the almighty Lord and had beheld
the salvation from his hand and as time passes by
His blessings still lie
on their descendants and who with heartfelt

humility walk in the steps of their fathers
and live in dignity
where words and deeds do persuade
and no ruler and all his followers
will strip honourable men from their integrity
but how surely did the vision fade.

VI

But how surely did the vision fade
of a new bright republic without decay
and with hatred unfair laws were made,
bringing new oppression into play

with corruption and inadequacy killing merit,
sweeping all hopes of making a living away,
as not to permit
the white minority to also have a day

but at the heart of all of this lay
the need to take by force
to make the Afrikaner pay
and to possessions and property the divorce

and from the corruption and oppression I want to be free;
my world, my life and time will never be.

VII

My world, my life and time will never be
as it had been before
and never will I again see
the sheer innocence, the passions of youth will be no more

as I pass my prime,
out of my sight
this whole earth will fade sometime
as my last energies past and I go into the night,

the things that I adore
will be swept from me
but then never more
will I dwell in a world of iniquity,

away will be then
this earth, climate, country in 2013.

Gert Strydom

This I By Experience Know (English Sonnet) (In Answer To Dorothy Parker)

This I by experience know,
that although to some love brings misery
or a severe kind of woe,
some people trod its path quite happily

and although at times I had been alone
in my later years,
I now have got the very one
who brings bliss and joy instead of tears.

Even if I had experience heartache before
now my life is merry and gay
even though a lady showed me the door,
another is at my side on this happy sunny day.

This I know that sometimes love brings happiness,
has something magical in every caress.

Gert Strydom

This Is How Christmas Is

With cupped hands I see him standing at a traffic light
and around him lines of cars drive past,
while people go on with their own lives
and some drive faster,
others cut in before others
and in silence he stands there without a single word.

At a shop window he sometimes stand with wide eyes,
where new clothes, very expensive toys
are almost touchable near to him
and he does wish on this Christmas
to get something special

and his clothes are in tatters,
his black skin almost grey from hunger,
impatient cars continually blow on their horns
and he dreams about a large and pretty house
where the most delicious smells linger in the kitchen
and sometimes people look at him with pity,

while he longs for a very special kind of place
where a lost son is always welcome,
where God Himself stand welcoming with arms open wide,
where you can smell the fragrance of roasted lamb
and nobody does experience grief, are hunger or cold.

An old lady sincerely takes pity on him,
pushes a hot loaf of bread and a bottle of milk in his hands,
while others avoid him
and he does miss his father and mother who are both dead,
thinks this is how Christmas is
and suddenly his teeth glitter in a smile.

Gert Strydom

This Kind Of Love I Have Not Known

Like a thunderbolt from a blue sky
you came suddenly into my life
and now that you are my wife
there is great heartache in each goodbye

and day and night
I do miss you when you are out of sight
and when you are gone
I am alone

and this kind of love I have not known
before you did become my very own.

Gert Strydom

This Morning

This morning your auburn hair
is tied in a cocky string
behind your neck
and in the dusk
before you drive off to work,
your Madonna eyes
are big and bright
and I can feel the chill
on your small nose.

When the car's
red tail lights
disappear in the distance,
there's still a star
shining in the morning light
and already I can't wait
to see you in the afternoon.

Gert Strydom

This Morning [2]

This morning like every other one
You touch here and there in your preparations
And outside a myriad of sparrows fly past
When you put on the light and sleepy I open my eyes.

After a hot bath you comb your long hair
And you blush your cheeks and your lips get a bit of red
And in your bath water the tiredness of my body disappears
And to me even without makeup you are lovely.

Gert Strydom

This Morning At The Barbershop

This morning at the barbershop,
a barber is busy with the hair
of a much older grey haired man
that he is trimming neatly
and a young man
sits in one of the barber's chairs.

When I sit down to wait
the young man rises
turning to me
and asks if he can cut my hair.

I was happy to get attention immediately
while the other barber was finishing
with the older man,
as he looks to finely tuned to me.

My hair was smartly cut
with a pair of scissors
and the young barber
held his fingers
to determine the length
and I wanted it shorter
than just cutting off the ends

while the other barber
first took a hair blower
from a drawer,
sprayed something over his own hair
before he started to blow it in the mirror
and he then said
that he cannot go
to the bank to wait in line
with a head looking like Tut's ass

and I saw my locks
falling dark brown
with dots of grey around me
and saw the other barber

combing his long hair
and smiled at myself
about the vanity of humanity
while I looked at myself
and were starting to look much better.

Gert Strydom

This Morning I Lock The Cold Wind Out

This morning I lock the cold wind out
with a nice hot leather jacket
that I zip close up to my chin

and on the motorbike
my hands are almost frozen,
but my thoughts are with you.

While I pass a string of cars
I wonder if you are stuck in traffic
or already at work?

It's as if your eyes are burning into my soul
and constantly you accompany me
in my thoughts
to all the places that I go.

As if I will somewhere leave the road
and you will also get off the bike
and in a coffee shop
will take my hands in yours.

Gert Strydom

This Morning Six Thirty We Drive Past A Church

This morning six thirty
we drive past a church
where a lot of cars are already parked.

While we pass the church
I wonder about what
the people are praying
and I think that they
must truly be Christians.

The church has a neat yard
and looks out of place
in the inner city where everything dilapidates
and I hear a song softly
that people
is busy singing
and then I know that Gods amazing grace
goes through every thing and every place.

Gert Strydom

This Morning The Rain Is Sieving Down

This morning the rain is sieving down
while I drive my motorbike
to town to get a few things
in the shops
and I have to visit the Internet café.

The drops of rain is somewhat blinding
and my leather jacket is nice and hot
and the helmet guards my head,
but my jean is really soaked

and when I stop
it's a great thunderstorm
with rain pouring down.

People walk with umbrellas
while some
with shopping bags above their heads
run to the nearest shelter
and here and there
a car is waiting for another to pull out
in the full parking area
and I wish that the rain
will disappear for a while.

Gert Strydom

This Morning The Sky Glitters Blue

This morning the sky glitters blue
as if it is made
from lapis lazuli
with a deep azure colour

and I do wonder
to where the grey clouds of last night is gone
but the wind
that had blown them away
is also missing
and the fragrance of flowers
hangs sweet in the air

and it seems
as if it is going to be a nice hot day.

Gert Strydom

This Morning When I Pushed The Door Open

This morning when I pushed the door open
the day was lying open and great,

in the early hour of the twilight
the sun flamed redder than fire,

awe-struck with the beauty you stood with me
while we saw the Lord's morning walk,

you said that there could be something wonderful in such a day
and I read love in your eyes.

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Gert Strydom

This Morning[2]

This morning it's as if the sun
are rising beyond the domes
and the mosque
bows into the air
and in the background
the Union buildings are towering out.

This morning it's hotter
and the wind
has lost its chill.

It's as if the happiness
of the weekend that is near,
is skin deep with the people
about me
and everyone
wants another day like this.

Gert Strydom

This New Spring (Sonnet)

Daily I am astounded with the beauty of nature
where the spring rain now pours down constantly,
where I do realise that there are beautiful things in the universe,
not only things that do come to death and trouble,
where in this spring I see flower upon flower,
do hear the lightning roaring far and near,
while sometimes I am inundated with joy
although the years of old age is rushing nearer,
it's much more beautiful than I do expect of spring
with birds that do continually build nests and sing their songs of joy,
as if God is for a time in our presence
with mercy and power in every day and night
which do jump into life and bring us love
were holy days do bring us to Him in a tight bond.

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Gert Strydom

This Poet On Holiday

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Where the waves smash thundering against the banks of rock
I notice a lonely fisherman standing,
it's as if the rhythm of the verse do continue to build
try to like his line go into the unlimited depths.

The wind does jerk on his clothes as if on it,
it can find a kind of meaning (do sweep over him with cold fingers) ,
do warn him about ominous things
and it's as if this verse do deepen to something secret

and this speechless poet do notice nature and the man,
do want to draw equations as if I can capture the power of the sea
somewhere in my verse, do notice how the fishing line do strain
as if the catch does give new life to the fisherman

but there is water that reaching do splash at his feet
and with a broken line the fisherman do stand soaked on the rocks.

[Reference: "Die digter met vakansie" (The poet on holiday) by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

This Simple Picture (Hybridanelle)

(after Lord George Gordon Byron)

This simple picture of your charms,
(is what I in my poetic art can give,)
leaves me speechless and disarms.

Here, I look into eyes of liquid gold,
I see your fair hair in wave upon wave,
I look at the eyes with meaning manifold,

the lines of years of unsought harms,
where you are my reason to live.
This simple picture of your charms,

the face that came from God's mould
make that no one can your beauty deny,
I see your fair hair in wave upon wave,

your strong fingers and slender arms,
the way you glance says you are attentive,
leaves me speechless and disarms,

it's something more than the expression in the eye,
something in the colouring of the hue,
make that no one can your beauty deny

and the smile that the heart warms,
adds to you being more than just attractive.
This simple picture of your charms,

are to your lovely character true,
where you are far more than just dear to me.
Something in the colouring of the hue,

does other men both attract and alarms,
is of a sharp mindset representative,
leaves me speechless and disarms,

as special you to me are meant to be

and this poetic picture is just simple art,
where you are far more than just dear to me

and your smile and mind that with wit rearms,
paints you vivid, friendly and active.
This simple picture of your charms,
leaves me speechless and disarms

and this poem is just simple art.
Here, I look into eyes of liquid gold
as you are in my soul, mind and heart,
I look at the eyes with meaning manifold...

[Poet's note: "To Mary, on receiving her picture" by Lord George Gordon Byron.]

Gert Strydom

This Summer Has Grown Old

This summer has grown old
when I suddenly found you,
when your eyes looked deep into my heart,
soft like those of a child
and now we are exclusive;
outside the autumn wind is blowing
thoughtless without a motive
as desires wants to devour us.

Gert Strydom

This Terror Just Keeps On And On

How dark and terrifying is each night
where the hope of man slowly fades,
with the impact of a virus day after day

and responsibility for it is just gone,
as if the earth does swallow communist China
and humans are under a deadly evil siege

but no one knows what is awaiting humanity,
while a virus do challenge science and equipment.
How dark and terrifying is each night

and to all explanations something rings false,
as if China and the UN wants to cover up things,
as if the earth does swallow communist China.

The virus continually demands precaution and attention
and some politician dare their own theories.
With the impact of the virus day after day

there are people that are despondent over the measures,
while they do not realise the terrible impact and destruction.
As if China and the UN wants to cover up something

nobody lays any real charges
and from where this virus do come remains a core question.
How dark and terrifying is each night.

Preachers rise and say that humanity do not serve God in the right way,
people do believe that the judgement of God is now on the earth
while they do not realise the terrible impact and destruction,

how this virus do only some target to die
and loved ones and the dead are being lamented,
with the impact of a virus day after day

as if God is now deciding on the lot of mankind,
where all of humanity are handed over,
people do believe that the judgement of God is now on the earth

but it's actually a evil demonic assault
and terrified some do drive up and down.
How dark and terrifying is each night.
with the impact of a virus day after day.

as this terror do continue as if endless
and responsibility for it is just gone,
where all of humanity are handed over,
and humans are under a deadly evil siege.

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Gert Strydom

This Thing That Seems Like Flue Kills (Couplets)

Where this Corona virus in China do originate,
nothing is let out that it exists until it's far too late

and it spreads worldwide and everywhere attacks bit by bit,
where no person in public can miss it

and at the outset it is unheard off and undisturbed and unseen
where this virus destroys in places it had never been,

it seems like flue, do kill and do the liberties of people twist
and on the impact of it no answers do exist,

where people are locked-down to try it to avoid
but many are infected, some die and existing research is at a void.

This wretched thing gives
its disease to every innocent person that lives,

as it does in manifold spread from human being to human being
and scientists struggle to get against it a vaccine or just something,

where all of humanity waits upon it to abate while its impact is huge
and a thing like this reminds a person of the great deluge,

but this evil thing does not come from God but from hell,
His words are fixed and it does of His character tell

and I wonder if this thing will everywhere disappear,
or will it at a time again reappear?

By the thoughts of men I am speechless who do this virus connect
with the theory of Thomas Malthus and think that it is taking effect,

that nature brings a balance to the abundance of man,
while this illness now exponentially spread as far as it can.

God do exist with every answer from eternity to eternity
where He does the sparrow and each human being see,

gives each person a chance to a choice in how a life would be,
do touch and protect humanity with love and great mercy.

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Gert Strydom

This Time Has Brought Great Clarity (Sicilian Sonnet)

From me locked-down you are miles away,
I miss you much more than you can know,
I wish God His protection on you to bestow
while I long for you and also that I may

be so close to you on each sunny day,
while everywhere tears like rivers do flow
as death and devastation on do go
and forever true to you I do stay,

where this time has brought great clarity
in that which is most important in life,
where you are the most important to me
and that we falter in what we do for strive,
that life is temporal and it does go fleetingly
and that you are much more than just a wife.

Gert Strydom

This Winter

The air is grey
and the cold bites with the rain
and this morning, there's fog folding around me

I am goalless and empty without you
and I do not know what your words mean,
but you have no place for me and my life is grey.

The sadness falls
like a cloak over me,
while goallessness folds around me.

My cheeks are wet and there are drops that stick to it
and its not rain and it is wet from weeping
and I do not know where to find light in the greyness.

Everything is dark and I wonder what my future holds
and your heart is made of rock,
while pain and blackness falls around me.

I am searching for a heaven that hangs sapphire blue
in the future over our lives and like the Lords blessings,
comes right through the darkness and meaningless grey
and fold open like a new morning.

Gert Strydom

This Winter Is (Free Verse Sonnet)

This winter is like from somewhere
it has got a watering can
and for days the rain pours down,
with icy chilliness that it brings so suddenly
but you smile where you do lie in the hot bath,
the bath is full of bubbles of soap,
there is bliss that the bath does bring
and I want to woo you
but your are climbing out
do first dry your hair, body and one long leg
after another
and when you do embrace me
you are hot and soft against me,
and it's as if the winter and world does jerk to a standstill.

[Poet's note: in the Southern hemisphere of the earth the seasons are opposite to that in the Northern hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

This Winter²

It's as if this winter
is more deadly,
than the cold with which it bothers.

It's as if there lies greater evil
than the pig flu,
that comes with this winter.

My life is now empty from you
and our love,
is almost dead from frost and freezing.

Will there ever be
a hot summer between us
and will that which are left between us,
sprout out and flower again?

Gert Strydom

This Winter³

The air is overcast and grey
and the cold chills with the rain
and the end of our love cuts right through me.

The winter rain is unusual
for this time of year,
but just so is the decision
that you are finished with me.

There is fog
that folds around me this morning
and my life is just as grey
that I am goalless looking for you
without finding you
or getting direction at all.

Could independence and freedom
have such an impact on you,
is that you are prepared
to lie our love
down in a tomb?

Gert Strydom

Thistles

They come and come up again on dirt-roads
as if there is never going to be an end to them,
do balance on three spikes or more
while they do stung into bare feet,

into hands that are hoeing
even into the rubber-like tongues of the cattle,
with the thrusting splintering thorns
as something almost evil in its savagery,

do draw blood and stick to where they pierce
as if some ancient revenge is being played out
time and again, as if they have got a hatred
of animals and of children, women and men.

Gert Strydom

Thomas

Thomas knocked the secret code on the door
and immediately it swung open,
all of his friends were talking simultaneously.
"Thomas! Thomas, Mary spoke the truth,
He lives." But Thomas did not believe them.

"Unless I see the marks in His hands
and stick my fingers in his wounds,
I will not believe that He is living."
Only a week later while the group was gathered

Jesus appeared among them and said:
"Peace to you," turning to Thomas
He said to him: "Take your fingers
and investigate my hands. Push
your hand into my side."

Thomas exclaimed: "My Master and my God!"
"You believe what your eyes have seen,
but blessed are those who believe
and hath not seen."

Thomas did never doubt Jesus again
and while visiting Calamina in India
Thomas destroyed an image of the sun god
that the people there were worshiping.

The priests caused their king to arrest him
and Thomas was sentenced
to be burned with red hot metal plates
and then to be cast

into a burning oven
but to their astonishment the fire
did not harm him and he was still
alive and well inside the oven

and in great anger the priests
of the sun god grabbed spears,

throwing them into Thomas
until they killed him.

Gert Strydom

Those Who Drowned

With their fists hammering in desperation on the ark
they would give anything to be inside,
while in despair they cried and shouted
to the people in that big sheltered room.
were the people outside mad with fear
while they were expelled by themselves?
When the first rain came suddenly
were everyone scared of the God of the universe?
Did there mockery die down
for the big old ark and the people and animals inside?
Maybe some were somewhat lonely
but not unknown to Noah.
Were Soldiers scared in the guard room
at daylight with lightning bolt upon lightning bolt falling?

Gert Strydom

Though The Night Passes Too Soon

Though the night passes too soon
and the brightness of the moon
fades too quickly with day's light,
stars disappear
as if they are not anymore shining bright

to you I will forever be near
while you hold me dear
and my loving will not be roving,
but will be true and sincere.

Gert Strydom

Thoughts About A Child That Does Not Exist

I. Newly born after the first scream

Newly born after the first scream,
you gaze at the world
already do not want anything to pass you
as a child born early in the new age

but your eyes burn with intensity like that of a lion
that can claw anything,
you look at me where I stand with you in my arms
and outside on the grass a starling is pecking

totally unaware of you
but I am bonded to you
at this specific hour,
where I see how women take and kiss you
with tenderness experiencing motherly instincts
and to us there is a life full of adventure lying ahead.

II. Outside innumerable stars twinkle

Outside innumerable stars twinkle through the windows,
when you come into the world,
astounding me with a blonde lock of hair
and it's a world full of sparkling lights on the outside

while you are in my arms with the smell of anise rusks,
miniature fingers wants to take and hold and I am stupid with you
see my own face disguised in yours
and in the early morning the birds are whistling cheerfully

busy going on with their lives,
while my world is changing,
with you suddenly a part of it,
where I stand with you in my arms
you twist and turn in joy like a small salamander
and we are bonded with an unbreakable bond.

Thoughts About You And Me In The Low Lands (Haiku's)

In this Netherland,
our own small country is bright
where it is far off.



It has dyke on dyke,
and build with sluice upon sluice,
but you are restless.



A lovely church stand
with stained glass but is empty
with no worshiper.



In a large window
God is portrayed in glass,
we know He exists.



I see old Vermeer
when Holland come into sight,
ship on ship sail out.



With a boat we sail
through shiny moat on moat
in the sheer darkness.



On a adventure
very far from our country

we are together.



A troubadour
sing about the way of love
when we do embrace.



The water does lap,
your sweet lips burn upon mine,
you are right against me.



I love you intense,
where we look upon the world
far from our own land.

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Gert Strydom

Thoughts Of Saddam Hussein

Missiles, bombs and rockets do rain down
just where I look
and do explode on women, children, houses
and apartment buildings.

Orphanages lay in rubble
when the American warplanes do disappear
and it's an unknown sun
that now does shine over my country.

Foreign mercenaries, unbelieving Kurds
and soldiers from the satanic country
do drive in armoured cars and battle tanks,
do descend from the sky,
do march with rocket launchers and rifles

and just outside Tikrit
I am jerked out of the well
while the heathen barbarians do cheer,
as if they have won a lottery
and they do fire off victory shots.

While I walk with long hair
to the death wall,
an unbelieving foreign soldier
from the satanic country
does smile self-satisfied
and my people, my nation is without hope.

He stands smoking
blowing the cigarette smoke into my face
and talks about sexual things
with a Isabel woman
from the same group of heathens
with stars and stripes
that like a loathsome emblem
does sit on their sleeves.

Everywhere the outland

English speaking foreigners do loot
buildings, offices and even houses
and ancient treasures are carried away,
holy symbols are desecrated
and oil installations
do pump oil into the foreign ships
that does sail away to America
and worldwide the price of oil and the price of fuel
does sharply rise
as America is forcing other countries
to pay her war debts

and in vain the serene moon
does hang over my Arabic country
that now does belong to America
and our culture, our way of life
from ages past is dying
and I am blinded,
hear shot after shot being fired
and everything does fade away into nothing.

Gert Strydom

Thoughts Of You And Me At Langebaan

(after John Donne)

Let us live in love
for a time at the blue lagoon
and to each other pleasures prove,
under a white hot sun and golden moon

where the river to the sea twisting run
and let us there kiss and play
have an own summer season in the sun,
enjoy each other day after day.

When in the crystal waters you swim
like a mermaid you will be to me
lovely, kind and supple and slim
and beautiful fish we will see

and there one another we will adore
with feelings, intensity not being able to be more.

[Reference: "The bait" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

Three Green Snakes

I was gathering dead branches
and rotting leaves
and mowed down grass
and with my bare hands,
scooped it up
into a wheelbarrow.

From there I carted
it away to where,
a trailer attached
to my car waited.

The leaves and grass
felt humid and hot
in my hands
and a compost smell
hang in the air,
but suddenly three
deadly green snakes twisted
out where my hands
had been seconds before
and in dismay
I jumped away.

My little white dog
ran around the heap
of leaves and grass
and barked excitedly
and although did not
want to I had to
kill them all,
before they brought
death and trepidation
to my door.

The lawnmowers petrol
splashed like water
down on the brown heap
and a match,

flicked onto it
made bright orange flames
leap into the air.

Suddenly three snakes
twisted in agony
and it was like
driving the gods
of the dark earth away
and although every thing
was well,
it was quite sad
to kill three living creatures
with the flick
of a match.

[Petrol=> gasoline.]

Gert Strydom

Three Kisses (Novelinee)

(after Elizabeth Barrett Browning, for my wife Daleen)

Your first soft kiss was on my fingertips,
as to sanctify the words that I write
leaving the two red impressions of your lips
and for many more I had an appetite
while the second kiss only brushed light,
as a butterfly fluttered away
in its fragile kind of lingering flight;
full on my lips the third kiss did not stray
and you became my true love on that day.

[Reference: "Three kisses" by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.]

Gert Strydom

Three Prayers During Spring

I. I did not expect this early spring

I did not expect that after this severe winter
that destroyed flowers, grass and plants
that this early
without even rain falling, showering down
spring would come in all this glory

with trees blossoming in bright white and pink colours
plants flowering
unfurling and to be again really living.

I did not expect these blessings,
in life's early winter
that even though I am constrained,
my career is falling to pieces
and not by my own making
my words, my verses
are coming to their own

and this has brought me
to see that God is truly great
that even the seasons of life
is in His hand.

II. My buds are form Your hand

I thank you Lord that you by grace are blessing me
causing my slender flowers to grow,
that you let my words pour down like rain

hanging flooding over in bell like strings
in internodes, joints of roses
in a pure white colouring which catches the eye

that by love you delegate me as the one
who is worth to blossom in your shade.
I thank you Lord that you by grace are blessing me

not like others of my kind, but hanging
with odourless buds opening
in internodes, joints of roses

in strings upon strings
and although some people want to prune me of blunt,
that you let my words pour down like rain

although people hit in nails
ridicule, hold my words, my verses in parody
with odourless buds opening

my abilities are formed on your grindstone,
although my stems are struggling against a stormy wind.
I thank you Lord that you by grace are blessing me

folding your strong hand over me,
although they are thinking of flowers like roses, irises, geraniums
ridicule, hold my words, my verses in parody

you are sending my verses out to all places
and I thank you that they are flowing from your hand,
that you let my words pour down like rain

that your light shines like diamonds in every drop,
that you are causing my cups to burst open
although they are thinking of flowers like roses, irises, geraniums

which brings forth fragrant odours, but I am
tempered by you to glow with an own beauty.
I thank you Lord that you by grace are blessing me
that you let my words pour down like rain

ingenuous, pure and fresh
flooding over in bell like strings
that you are causing my cups to burst open
in a pure white colouring which catches the eye.

☐Envoi

III. In your shade and care I am blossoming

I thank you Lord
that you by grace are blessing me
causing my slender flowers to grow
flooding over in bell like strings
in internodes, joints of roses

not peach, purple or pink
like others of my kind
but in a pure white colouring
with odourless buds opening

and some ridicule, hold my words,
my verses of rhyme and free form in parody
but my flowering is from your hand

and I can understand that they are thinking
of flowers like roses, irises, geraniums
which are tempered against the elements
bringing forth fragrant odours
that perfumes the air
but in your shade and care I am blossoming.

[Reference: The blossoming by Tatamkhulu Afrika, Vier gebede gedurende die jaargety in die Boland (Four prayers during the yearly seasons in the Boland.) by N.P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Three Wise Men

Three wise men passed Herod's palace
searching for the newborn king
keeping their countenance and grace
before again leaving.

In Bethlehem I saw three camels coming in
on Christ's birthday
with little bells on the bridles ringing,
following a star at night, they never went astray

and when they met Him, saw the baby boy
they offered myrrh, gold and incense
and bowed cheerful in great joy
glad to be in the prescience

of the eternal king
and wanted to receive His blessing.

Gert Strydom

Threnody

(after Dorothy Parker)

Jacarandas flower in the street,
and maybe for you my feelings did not matter
while the trees' scent hangs pervasive and sweet
my life is broke as if our love does shatter.

Maybe our separation is a blessing
and I wipe the tears away,
while it feels as if all meaning is missing
and the sun is bright at the beginning of day.

Outside birds in those trees are whistling
and there's tightness in my breast
from our painful parting
and in my own city I feel like a guest

that has overstayed his welcome
while I am lost without a home.

[Reference: Threnody by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Threnody (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Dorothy Parker)

Where in my heart and life everything does shatter
in the garden the roses still blossom sweet,
other people do still walk happily in the street
and you are the only one to whom it does matter,

where the birds outside do still constantly chatter
I have laid my pain and sorrow at your feet,
but a thousand miles are too far to meet
while life does me down on my knees batter

and innocent the attacks of her friends never cease,
tearful lips they say are the greatest for kissing
in the dark embracing arms are much whiter
while you do help me to pickup all the broken pieces
and now I realize that you for years I have been missing
where days with you in them seem very much brighter.

[Reference:"Threnody" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

Threshing (Wreathed Quatrains)

With all the green corn stalks neatly cut off
in the old big loft the sweet smell of maize,
brings some grace and the blowing wind is soft,
oft the grass is still the colour of baize,

some cows graze, the threshing machine whines on,
its task is not done under a cobalt blue sky,
time does fly until the last stalks are gone,
hot like stone is the earth and hours pass by.

Gert Strydom

Thrice I Was Refused By The River

Thrice the river refused me
and it spat me out on banks of sand
as if I belong to dry land

and at times I hide beneath the waters
teaming with crocodile and a few
hippopotamuses and a water bird or two
and breathing through a reed
while the enemy passed on the riverbank

and bitten by mosquitoes
feeling the inner flame of fever
and being weak and I overcame
the nagging death
while listening to the flowing river,
the wind in the reeds
singing glory
to the creator of all things.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Throbbing Almost Spasmodic

Veining the mind, the neck,
the head and eye,
spasms of pain starts throbbing
with a full flung migraine emerging
at the very time that I am relaxing
next to the river
with a line cast into the depths of it

like the small vortex, with drifting leaves
or the perplexity of shining sun
reflecting blinding from the surface
of the flowing stream

as if pulsing, ripping and suddenly
the line tightens and it starts jerking
and I hit the rod back
feel life pulsing through
from fish to line to rod
and reel
and start reeling it in
with the fish jumping
and fighting

and the pain does the same
in a throbbing almost spasmodic
action on eye, neck, head and mind
but I am winning the fight
with the fish and are trying to ignore the other.

Gert Strydom

Through The Eyes Of A Child

You wanted to know
what lies beyond,
the endless stars
and was intrigued by the moon
which was at times small or full.

The endlessness of the sea
and the sand on the beaches
and the ever rolling waves,
enthralled you.

Your question,
where we stand in all of this,
was very deep
and I was thrilled
that you knew;
that we are just
specs of sand
in the creation of it all.

Gert Strydom

Through The Eyes Of A Field Coronet (Epic)

Introduction

In the kaki coloured tent in Umbilo he writes
his life's story while women, children and babies are dying,
slowly but surely are obliterated, he see how his nation is suffering
while the events are notched into his mind.

Lying even heavier on him is the treason
of some other Afrikaners who for own gain
have delivered him, to imprisonment in this place of hatred
and thoughts go through him to write a book.

Prologue

The Afrikaner nation sprouted
from Dutchmen,
who fought decades without defeat
against the super power Spain

mixed with French Huguenots
who left their homes and belongings,
with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.
Associate this then with the fact

that these people fought formidable
for seven generations
against every onslaught that they got
from savages en wild animals

becoming marksmen, riding
and taming wild horses
with one bullet per day
to hunt a wild antelope,

who migrated right across the country
over hills in mass protest
and then you have
the most formidable adversary

and then let them fight

in a natural wilderness
where the hunter,
the sniper and horseman excels
and any enemy is at a lost.

Let them then also be patriotic
into their souls,
believe in and read
out of the word of God
and then there is almost nothing
that these people do fear.

The Zuid Afrikaanse republic
existed out of twenty one districts,
each with a magistrate for civil ethics,
a commandant to deter the enemy,

in control of a commando as their leader
and so structures appeared
with a commandant-general for much greater authority,
for the whole country.

A field coronet was in control of a ward
to issue commands in it
and the citizens themselves chose their men
as they thought best

and all men from sixteen to sixty had to do service,
if the need be, be prepared for war.

A field coronet was a respected man
as the magistrate, justice of the peace and prosecutor
and a military leader of a ward who could
call up citizens for duty to a commando in a laager

and he was a political representative
of the government and in a district
citizens chose own officers

as they saw it fit.

Commandos arouse when the Boers
had to defend themselves against attacks
from black tribes
and they came together in numbers

to be able to give proper resistance
and to stop pillage, murder and sorrow.

I. Battles against rebel captains Mesotie, Sebboel, Mapit and Magoeba

On the farm of Daniel Page
all the citizens of the ward come together
and Jacobus Potgieter hurried there
and they crowd around the rifles and ammunition

that the government was providing
just a little distance from the cornfields
and Jacobus was like many without a weapon,
but ready to serve his country

and from many hunting expeditions
with his brother in law, Jacobus was very capable
with a rifle.

This was however the first time
that he had been called up for war
and at dusk he was on the porch

when the field coronet arrived with a letter
addressed to the four black captains
who were rebelling
and it happened on the same night
that the field coronet still awake and active

had to depart with sixteen citizens
to Agatha near the native village
of captain Mesotie
and they were totally unaware

that they were awaited,

where they fought bravely
hurrying to the little fortress,
firing to try and win the struggle.

At Agatha they were cornered,
had to make holes
through the walls
to shoot from the building
in their fierce task
to resist the attackers.

The government after this incident sends
a big commando to help,
but the Mesotie tribe
fires at them with canons
from up high and from below
and with rifles and spears
they assaulted the Boers.

The Boers answer their attack
with their own cannons,
shooting into the bushes
where a little war erupts,
and the commando as both horsemen
and foot soldiers
rush down to the village
opening fire and the village starts to burn.

Mesotie surrenders
after his tribe loses the battle,
being tired from the events of the past days.
All his tribe's rifles,
spears and many other weapons
are destroyed
and the village is stripped
of grain before the fire destroys it.

General PJ Joubert manages to
get captain Sebboel in control
and captain Mapit's tribe
is caught and are crestfallen.

Magoeba flees with his tribe
into the thick bush and his village
is burnt to the ground and stripped,
but the Magoeba tribe circles out
taking half of Houtbergbos
and the town was almost lost to them.

Six forts are constructed
to try and get the Magoeba tribe under control.
The enemy however
draws the citizens manning the forts
out of the forts
while they wait in ambush
and surround them.

The government again calls up
a large commando
and even tribesmen from Swaziland come to help.

Some of the Swazi warriors
behead Magoeba and nineteen others with a sword,
praising the ancestral spirits
and the Boer citizens

win the war against the rest of the Magoeba tribe
pinning them against the hill
and taking them prisoner
and come to the aid of the Swazi's in times of trouble.

II. The Jameson raid of 1896

Jacobus Potgieter was busy
trading yellow-wood planks
for cattle and was far from his farm,
when he heard about the nonsense
due to Jameson and his little gang

and he hurried to render his services
while they were invading the Transvaal,
but when he did reach Pretoria
the shots had already been fired

and the enemy had been imprisoned.

General Cronje had decided
to lead Jameson's band into a trap
that was set near Krugersdorp
and at Doornkop the little battle was fought
and some of the citizens,
as agents of the government,
took good quality rifles and canon.

After this incident President Kruger
had set a ultimatum to the foreigners
and a large commando went to collect the rifles
that they had smuggled into the country.

Judge Gregorowski gave the members
of the reform committee the death penalty
but President Paul Kruger had mercy
and changed the sentence
to fifteen years imprisonment
and once again he considered the requests
for leniency, by changing the sentences to a large fine.

Even Cecil John Rhodes was involved
with the invasion
and he lost his position as prime minister
of the Cape colony

but the British government had refused
to pay a single cent
of the claim of damages,
and the problems with the foreigners
had not been solved.

III. The Magatoe war of 1897

Back in 1867 the parents of Jacobus Potgieter,
all the inhabitants of Schoemansdal,
had to flee from the forces of Magatoe
and the farmers were anxious
of the raids of pillage and plunder

of the "Babbler"
and Jacobus himself saw
the destruction of Magatoe's tribe

and how the town and church, had to be left
to the mercy of Magatoe
and how they had to flee
further back into the republic.

The situation became more serious
and in 1897 the government
called together a commando
of four thousand citizens to stop the plunder
of Magatoe's tribe and before the attack,
a day of prayer was held
asking God to have mercy on His nation.

The commando was still far away
into the hills, the cliffs,
when firing started from the Magatoe tribe
while their view was still obstructed

and Jacobus was in the front lines of the battle
where he and other Boers, with accurate shots
drove the enemy back
as most of them were marksmen.

Suddenly a thick cloud of fog appeared
enveloping the whole enemy village,
giving the Boers time to build entrenchments
from behind which they could harass the enemy.

When the entrenchments were ready
the thick cloud of fog over Magatoe's village
started to dissipate and to general Joubert it seemed fit,
as he gave orders
to drop canon shells and bullets
like rain on that village.

In a half hour's time they stormed
into the village
while firing at will.

Most of Magatoe's warriors
fled to safety
and some was killed,
and one rose from a hole
to try and resist,

but Magatoe's tribe, the Matabele (Ndebele)
then fled to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe)
and that formidable tribe
was taught a lesson
and after thirty years stopped harassing the Boers.

IV. Preview to the war with Britain

Jacobus had just been back at home
when in 1899 he had to leave it
and had to leave his family behind,
to get involved with the war against Britain.

He had been gone
on a two month long hunting expedition,
where he was hunting from the back of his horse
and so many animals were shot
that he filled an ox wagon,
but out of duty he had to go on commando
and had to leave his wife and children behind.

Along with his friends they hunted fifty animals.
The game consisted of giraffes, cape oryxes
and eland, many was shot at a time

and he first went back
to greet his family as he had to be on commando
by the eleventh of October
and he went on horseback without fear of the British.

After five hours on horseback from Houtbosberg
they got to the laager,
greeted other men there,
but had to leave again to the Soutpansberg hills

to meet with another commando coming from Spitskop
at the Crocodile River and was told,
that the government had declared war
on Great Britain and was ordered to go to war.

That evening one citizen was of the opinion
that the war would not last long,
as they were civilised men
and every one a marksmen

and he did hear that the British
was also a civilised people
and differences
could be sorted out, in a civilised manner
and he gave big value to that quality of them.

Somebody else thought
that it would take months long
and another person that for many evenings
they would have to gather around fires
and that the government has another plan
apart from war
to resist the British.

V. The start of the war

From a hillock
two Boer commandos storm from the back
into a British camp and start the battle
and a couple of British soldiers are shot,
a lot of them are captured, but it's almost in vain
as most of them flee and get away.

The Boers follow them
in the direction of the Tuli River and at daybreak
some of the enemy combine forces
with comrades at a ox wagon
and the Boers shoot accurately
to try and stop them
and the British break from cover

and the enemy flee
to find shelter in a house
that is empty
and try to resist from the cover of it.

The house is shot to pieces
and for the third time on one day
the British again flee from that area
against the superior numbers of Boers

and the next day
the Boers capture nine wagons, left behind
with ammunition and food.

The next day Boer scouts
find a large abandoned British camp
with tents, horses and mules where they stop
and while Jacobus tries to rid his feet from cramps,
he notices a large cloud of dust
that is coming in their direction,
that he interprets as enemy.

There's a field coronet
that stands his man,
to resist the enemy
while two Boer commandos flee past him.

At dusk Jacobus Potgieter finds more men
with a canon on a hillock
and with just more than twenty Boer citizens
he is worried,
but prepares for and waits the enemy.

The more the night darkens,
the nearer the cloud of dust comes
and the Boers are ready to resist the enemy,
to let no Englishman pass them
and there's a rumbling sound
and something is wrong

as no enemy appears

and they are taken by surprise
in the moonlight
without a shot being fired,
by a huge swarm of grasshoppers
of which the whole veldt is covered
where they swarm like ants.

Jacobus was really disillusioned and angry
about the cowardliness of officers,
of which some
do not return to the commando
and to him this is nearly treason
and to him they are worse than animals.

Sometimes some of the Boers
just asked permission
not to participate in the battle
(of which the general just had to bare knowledge)
and in that way the Boer forces decreased
and the permission could not be denied
and then the men went home, went away.

Generals could only react
against men deserting without permission
and some left the others
and was sometimes nearby

sometimes seen near to battlefields,
as spectators watching
how the battle develops
and some of these later worked for the enemy.

VI. The siege of Kimberley

The Soutpansberg commando got instructions
to go to the Modder Rivier,
to stop the enemy
who were marching along the railway track.

The commando was divided in two
and Jacobus Potgieter was ordered

to ride along with field coronet Alberts by train
to Modder River near to Magersfontein

and the other field coronets and the commandant
went to Colenso to help put it to siege
and to surround that town.

At the Modder River they met general Cronje
and seven thousand other citizens
and greeted each other.

Just a little later commandant-general De la Rey
and the Transvaal citizens were added to strengthen
the citizens from the Orange Free State
and quickly they got to work.

The Boers wanted to stop the British march,
before the enemy could cross the river
and tried to beat them with trenches and ramparts
and by this method break their attack.

The river was a natural strong point
for their defence
with sheltering that the enemy
would not be able to see
and trenches were placed near to the steep banks

The train bridge was blasted away
and three places was left to cross the river
from where they would stop the enemy.

General De la Rey thought that the main column
would come along the railway
to cross the river near to the bridge
and wanted to break this superior numbered force.

Just Bosmansdift and Rosmeadsdift
were the other places where the river would suit the British,
considering the depth of the river and exposure
to fire that the Boers could manage.

The southern banks of the river

was taken by the Soutpansberg citizens to cover it,
with the men of general Cronje
as part of his plans

that covered the area between Bosmansdrift
and the intersection of the Modder
and Riet Rivers and the men were enthusiastic
to try and shoot accurately.

General De la Rey with about eight hundred
Transvaal citizens was waiting on the right
near the rail crossing.

In the long grass and sand on the left
between the Riet River
and the Modder River some more citizens
were positioned to cover Bosmansdrift
if the enemy wanted to cross it.

General Prinsloo with a few thousand
Orange Free State citizens were
to the west of general de La Rey's men
lying from the bridge up to Rosmeadsdrift
between rocky ledges.

In the shelter of the riverbank
behind the men the horses were kept
with them neighing every now and then
and on the northern side
of the Riet River a few canons
were placed behind the men.

Most of the canons were set up
next to the railway track
to cover the area in front of general de La Rey
and to hit the main oncoming column.

A prayer before the battle was:
"Dear Father, here we are together
before the big battle
coming tomorrow, to pray
to you. We are scared,

that's why we are here,
praying like we are now doing.
Over there are the British
also Christians like us. Maybe they
are also praying
just as we are doing. For this reason
I want to ask you
please do not take the part
of either one
and if it is your will,
stay out of it,
then tomorrow you will see something! "

It was shouted: "Here they come! "
When the canon behind them started shooting
the citizens started firing on the oncoming enemy
and the enemy took cover in an open area

and the whole day long
they had to stay there on the ground
as they got shots
from Boers sheltered in trenches.

Every time during that day
that the enemy tried to storm forward
the Boers were taking marksmen shots
with their Mausers
and pinned them down, hour after hour
until the dark night.

For ten hours long
the enemy was lying there and nobody
was able to move
and every one that tried to get up
was shot down with Mauser fire
coming from positions that they were not aware of.

After the first rifle fire
the British answered with canon fire
whereupon with big success
the Boers answered with their long-tom canons
and the machinegun of the enemy

was destroyed by the Boers artillery
at the beginning of the battle
and the British were halted for hours long.

A British column moved past from the left
and swept general Prinsloo's men back.
Under orders of commandant general de La Rey,
the Lichtenburg commando went to free them.

Following this the British was shot back
from Rosmeadsdrift, but a small number
of the British got past Bosmansdrift,
from where in the heat of the battle
they were also shot back
and the battle lasted into the dark night.

After sunset general De la Rey ordered
his men to fall back to Jacobsdal
and the citizens were happy with this decision.

The Free State citizens went to
their set positions at Spytfontein
and Scholsnek about twelve miles from Kimberley
to disappear into their trenches there.

General Cronje got about 7000 citizens
back from Mafakeng
to come and help at the Modder River
and Lord Methuen waited on reinforcements
to be able to stop the Boers.

Then the Boers went to work
to dig trenches at the feet
of the Magersfontein hillocks,
to strengthen their positions
and then they took cover in the trenches.

From the Merthon train stop for about three miles east,
at the foot of the Magersfontein hillocks
the main force of about 3500 citizens was set
in trenches up unto a low hill.

Next to the trenches, well camouflaged
small forts were built
from where the Boers could fire
at any place on the battlefield.

Jacobus Potgieter was placed with 600 men
in a position right against the railway track,
where general Cronje thought
that the British would try and break through.

About 1500 citizens were placed on the right wing,
north of the Modder River station
under command of general Andries Cronje,
but the left wing with 2500 citizens, east of Magersfontein
was without trenches and without a defence line.

To mislead the enemy
a few forts were build on the hillocks
with eleven canon set on the hillocks
and the trenches was hidden
by the camouflage of branches and grass.

When the British on 10 December 1899 started firing
with canon fire from Scholsnek
and were covering the aria with bombs,
it was the first time
that Jacobus Potgieter resisted them
under direct canon fire
and brave men with rifles fired back at the British.

General Piet Cronje called the citizens together
while looking at them earnestly:

"Citizens, the enemy is ready to move against us.
We have to remember one thing.
To fall back the lives of others
are placed in the balance,
and 20 to 30 lives are lost.
When the enemy move out against us, I will
set up a flying commando en lead it to them."

General Cronje ordered them to wait

until the enemy moves and then to storm forward
for about five hundred paces
and then to take deadly shots

and not to look if anyone is being hit,
just to be aware of the enemy
and to read their movements.

General Cronje's words were:

"This is the place where we have to beat the enemy! "

Just at about midnight the British
started their march to Magersfontein
with general-major AG Wauchope leading in the front.

It was very cold and pitch dark
with rain pouring down
and they reached the hillocks
while thunderbolts were dropping down,
totally unaware of the trenches
onto which they were marching.

The enemy came in on an unexpected wing
and the citizens then killed a large number
of British soldiers in the dusk
and shot after shot was taken
and in the front Wauchope received
seven shots simultaneously
and the enemy was confused
while the Boers were mowing them down.

Some turned about to run back
and were falling over the ones behind them
causing still greater chaos
and it was still dark when the canons
were already getting involved.

The Boers were surrounded while the enemy
tried to break through,
to try and win Kimberley back,
but their attacks were stopped
at a great cost to the British,
who time and again

stormed into the Boer fire.

Then the enemy turned right to try and demolish
general Cronje's left wing, to kill the Boers there,
but were shot down by the resisting Boers.

The whole day long the bombardment
of the British canons were falling
and at about twelve o'clock
general Cronje gave orders
to Jacobus Potgieter's commando
to move running onto the left wing.

They stormed onto the enemy
and their attack was so effective
that the enemy turned around fleeing
and the Boers took the initiative
driving a great number of the British back.

With the British defeat
Jacobus could not establish
the number of enemy dead
as some were already taken away during the battle.

When Jacobus Potgieter walked on the battlefield
three days after the battle
there were bloody British flags
and some wounded moaning men totally without hope

and by then the dead had been driven away for days
and there were still hundreds that he found there
and after five days the enemy were still digging graves
and were still busy with funeral services.

Commando after commando
went home after that battle
and left the rest of the Boers there.

Cecil John Rhodes
were at the point of handing Kimberley over,
of letting the Boers into the town,
when Methuen attacked with 40000

soldiers as a flashpoint.

With a battle lasting three days long
the British broke through at Paardeberg,
firing hour after hour at the Boers
but the Boers broke this attack.

Then the huge British force tried to break through
the forces of the Orange Free State,
but were waited upon
by the men of commandant Jacobs.

Then they sent a column past the backside
and they faced general Christian de Wet
and his men shot them out of their territory.

When the Boers had halted
the whole of the British force,
the British got some more reinforcements
to try again to break through on the eastern side
in such a great force
that the Boers could not stop them.

Jacobus Potgieter was at Scholsnek
with the Soutpansberg commando
for almost three months
under unstopped cannon bombardment
and after the breakthrough
general Cronje gave orders to draw back.

"Leave your trenches and fight a way through to the laager."
The next day the Boers were gone.

During the night Jacobus Potgieter
fled with the laager
and there were a lot of wagons
that had to go back.
Over farms and in the veldt,
women and children were joining them
and Jacobus caught a wild horse
and tamed it in that night
as if it was destined for him.

The wagons kept general Cronje's commando back
causing the British to catch up with them
and they began shelling
from one of the woman's farm
in a huge bombardment.

At eight o'clock that night
the Boers again moved out
and the superfluous things were thrown away
as many horses and oxen had been killed
by the bombardment and the distress was huge

and then general Christian de Wet
almost fought right through the British
to come and free general Cronje's men.

Until eight o'clock that morning
the Boers were fleeing
as the enemy was formidable
and field coronets Jacobus Potgieter
and H Schnell were ordered
to go and find some horses
but to try and avoid the enemy.

The walking Boers were tired
without a proper opportunity
to get away from the British
and the remaining oxen
were thin and tired from the pulling

at the continuous fast pace
and from a shortage of grass
and they did not know
to eat the lye-bushes.

Jacobus Potgieter caught up
with general Cronje.
General Cronje was at the front side of the laager
and strong like steel,
checking the canon and was very worried
and then the commando again

came under British canon bombardment.

In the bushes Jacobus heard horses
and were chasing them
catching them and waged his life in the dark
before Jacobus took the horses into a bush
and decided not to go back in the dark
as it was too dangerous.

The next morning Jacobus tried
to go back to the laager
and came across other citizens
that had fled from the laager
and they told him
to turn back as the commando
was surrounded and the whole time
under enemy rifle and canon fire.

Jacobus Potgieter did not listen to them
and another group of citizens
that he crossed paths with
told him the same thing
and he was annoyed:

"If we turn around and leave our brothers
in their position of distress,
it can cost their lives
and we do not deserve anything better than death.
Come on brothers, bring your rifles! "

Then on his own Jacobus Potgieter rode
still nearer to the laager
and he was in a hurry, not saving the horses
and he met commandant P Schutte
who asked him very worried:
"Where do you think,
you are going with those horses? "

He explained that he was taking them
through to the laager
and commandant P Schutte was totally amazed
and said to him:

"Brother, before God nothing is impossible,
but those citizens in that laager
will never again come out of it.
The enemy has more than enough to take there.
Do not take more booty to them.
If you go to that laager with these horses
they will catch you and all of these horses.
Rather turn back and go to Brandfort and wait
for my report about the outcome."

He listened to the advice of the commandant
and later he came to know that the enemy
had put 150 canons and 75000 soldiers
with continuous bombardment
against 4000 citizens and their 6 canons.

At long last general Cronje had to surrender
against the overpowering numbers
that day and night
came nearer to them
and without mercy the citizens
that were captured were sent
to St. Helena Island for imprisonment.

Of the fourteen field coronets ten was killed
and only Jacobus Potgieter and H Schnell did escape
while shots were fired at them
and a while later the British
marched into Bloemfontein
with the Boers
not really being able to stop them.

VII. The invasion of Natal

After the defeat at Paardeberg
Jacobus Potgieter was sent home
to rest for a month
and the trip took days
but it wasn't really dangerous
and he took the horses along

as did not want to leave them with anyone.

Jacobus returned to the war
and had to go to Burgersberg in Natal
where he was very unhappy
with the leadership
of the commanding officers
and the fact that they did not take action
against deserters

as general Piet Cronje and his men
were known for careful plans
and their bravery
and Jacobus was responsible
to give supplies like food, clothes
and ammunition to his comrades.

With the outbreak of the war
the citizens of general Joubert
went to Newcastle and Dundee
to conquer the coal fields.

The 4500 citizens of general Lucas Meyer
were on their way to the Talana hillocks,
to take the enemy on,
with general Erasmus leading his 5000 citizens
to the Mpate kopjes
and general de Kock's 750 men went
to cut the railway connection at Elandslaagte.

Without great adversary Newcastle
on 16 October fell to the Boers
and on 20 October 1899
Dundee was bombarded
from the hillocks with shots
falling into the enemy camp

where big chaos broke out
among the 3800 soldiers
where the British general Penn-Symons
got them under control
and began with a counter attack

and then the British
were held behind a wall.

To inspire his troops
Penn-Symons ran through
the opening in the wall
where he got several fatal shots.

The British infantry
then stormed the hillock
and came under fire
from the Boers at the top
and their own artillery
that killed some of them.

After the Boers were driven away
from the hillock
they pursued the fleeing Boers
but the whole British horse battalion was unaware
of the men of general Erasmus
and all of them were captured
and their horses were taken from them.

On 19 October general de Kock's men
assaulted the British trains
where they drew the few British soldiers into a fight
and started to unload the wagons.

An angry general White
rushed his 3500 soldiers to Elandslaagte
where they started to shell the Boers
catching the Boers of balance.

At Dundee brigadier general Yule took command
and under instructions from general White
the British were fleeing back to Ladysmith.

Another 9000 Boers
under chief commandant Prinsloo
were shelled,
but saw the British soldiers storming
over a open piece of veldt

from where they shot them back
with rifle fire, driving them right into Ladysmith.

When general Meyer resigned
field coronet Louis Botha got his position
and it did not take long
for him to proof his bravery
and to rise as a great leader.

In the hillocks at Ladysmith White's soldiers
were waiting on the Boers
but started their bombardment
on a hillock without any Boer on it

and then the canons of the Boers fired back,
out shooting those of the British
and while the Boers long-tom canons
brought destruction
general Joubert attacked the British from all sides
where in humiliation White had lost
954 soldiers as prisoners of war.

From the surrounding hillocks
Ladysmith was bombarded by canon
where 12500 soldiers
and 7800 citizens were housed
with bombs coming down on them
and they were left with food
for two months and feed for only one month.

On 9 November the Boers attacked the town
with their commandos but could not take it
and the counter attack
of George White was resisted,
but then it happened

that the liberation column
of Buller started its march
trying to penetrate the Boer commandos,
but the Boers were waiting for them
on the other side of the Tugela River
and the British army

was unable to find the drift
to try and pass through the river
and were defeated in chaos

and 143 were killed, 755 wounded
and 240 were taken prisoner of war
which had an impact on the career of Buller
and he was fired as supreme commander
and become only the commander
for the invasion through Natal
with Lord Roberts replacing him.

Although Buller then had 30000 soldiers,
his soldiers were thrashed
at Spioenkop and Vaalkrans
but with his great superior number of men,
eventually Buller liberated Ladysmith and Colenso
and Jacobus Potgieter
had been two months in Natal
when Buller's big army attacked them.

With the death of general Joubert, from illness,
general Louis Botha
was appointed in his place
who ordered the Boer forces to pull back
to the border with the Transvaal
where trenches were prepared
to try and stop the enemy.

The British numbers were far too big
and a lot of Boers were killed
and the Boers could not stop the big force,
with which the British went through them
and later the Orange Free State and Transvaal
republics both
came under annexation from Great Britain.

VIII. The changing face of the war

After the defeat on the border of the Transvaal
the Boers gathered on 17 March at Kroonstad

and all their military and political leaders were there
and general Christiaan de Wet accepted leadership,
as commandant-general of the Orange Free State
and they talked and planned together.

Commandant-general de Wet's plan
was to keep his men highly mobile,
to take the war to the rear guard of the enemy,
to settle the fight
from their horses with their rifles.
They would find food
and ammunition on the farms
and would constantly change
their position and ride on.

It was fruitless to fight
against overpowering numbers
in the front lines,
where the British were only waiting
to decimate the Boers and conditions
were worsened for the Boers
and to hit the enemy
where they expect it the least,
could do great damage to them
and had the possibility
to win the two countries back again.

But first the citizens had to go home
to rest for a month
and general de Wet was well aware,
that he was going to lose some soldiers,
but only the brave
and the most determined
would then come back to him.

The plan was then accepted
by commandant-general De la Rey
and both presidents Kruger and Steyn
for the Boers to ride out in raids
and not to spare any rear defence.

The whole matter

was a big embarrassment to the British.
The Boer patriots
attacked with surprise and again disappeared
before a big British force could react
and de Wet did become a big head ache to them
and they could not stop, the attacks from the Boers
or their guerrilla warfare tactics.

To cut the Boers supply lines
Kitchener decided
to let his army ride through the farms,
to drive out the women and children
and to put them in concentration camps

with armed soldiers closing down on farms
burning down farms, houses and even towns,
claiming the Boers possessions or selling it
and by force removing women and children.
He also armed the black tribesmen
to attack the farms,
to expel women and children with firearms,
to kill them and to rape
at night and during the day.

Some people believe that Kitchener carefully
chose numerous places
that was hideous,
where people was held in perilous conditions

but it remains a fact
that he did not spend a lot of time
on the planning
and choosing of the camps,
without any feelings for being humane,
or the considering of sicknesses and disasters.

There were fifty concentration camps
that are now being seen as places
of human suffering and sorrow
where about 110000 women
and children were held captured
and where more than 20000 starved

from the pests prevailing
through sickness of almost any kind,
glass that was grinded into the meal,
and glass and fishing hooks
in the salt meat and so on,
as if the British did not
possess humanity at all.

Some of the camps were in marches
or at wet muddy places
at cold windy places,
constructed next to rivers
without hygienic conditions to disrupt lives
and some women had to bath
and wash in pools after rain.

Sometimes people in these camps
had to stay in the open for lengths of time
exposed to sun, rain, hail and wind,
as if it was being planned to kill them
and sometimes they had to beg for clothes.

Food rations was inadequate
and some people starved
from lack of food,
meat from sick animals
were unhygienic cut into pieces.

Only one doctor was appointed
for every camp
with numbers of more than four thousand people,
mostly without hospital facilities
with a lot of complaints
that the medicine was poisoned
and medical treatment was not given to everybody.

IX. The war in the Soutpansberg

General Beyers was sent by the government
as leader to both the Soutpansberg
and Waterberg commandos,

to try and win the war against the British
and it was clear that he knew the art
of using the environment
as camouflage while attacking the British.

When Jacobus Potgieter arrived
in the Northern Transvaal
they had to avoid Pretoria
to get to Warmbaths,
as Pretoria had fallen to the enemy
and for two months
they were harassing the British
and when Paget had withdrawn to Pienaars River,
the Waterberg district was the frontline,
but there were many traitors among the Boers

who daily went to the British,
some were tired of fighting
against the British
and others later came back
on instruction of the British,
to try and convince
some more to surrender.

Jacobus was again chosen
as field coronet of Houtbergbos
and had to go there with immediate effect,
to appose the British.

With a overwhelming big force
Paget went to Pietersburg
that fell to the British on 29 March 1901,
where the British plundered
whatever they could
and they were placing women and children
into concentration camps
and took cattle to Pretoria as a source of food.
They were burning down houses,
destroyed farms,
were even casting salt onto the fields.

The British possession of Pietersburg

drove the Boers into the mountains
with the British in control
of the whole Northern Transvaal,
with Colenbrander and Plummer
driving the war there,
trying to destroy the Boer commando
of general Beyers.

Plummer made his invasion
along the Olifant River
and in that unknown area
befriended the blacks,
giving firearms to them
to attack the women on farms
and with all the Boer traitors
that were acting for the British,
Jacobus Potgieter resigned as field coronet.

When the British at Heanertsburg
started fighting with the Boers,
the Boers saw a cloud
of dust coming along,
that was rising from the direction of Houtbosberg
and Jacobus Potgieter and W van Heerden
went out during the night
to scout on the enemy.

Just where they had seen the cloud of dust,
they arrived during the night at a black village
and sneaked up to the wall of the village
and called a black man over
to get some information from him
while trying to avoid the enemy.

The man told them lies
that only two wagons
belonging to the Boers had passed
and about the direction that the wagons
had gone he kept on being deceitful.

From the tracks Jacobus could see
that it was six wagons of the British,

and probably on the way to their camp,
but unfortunately
he did not give the black man
any further attention
whose village had been instructed
by the British to attack the women
and children on the farms,
to rob and pillage with firearms.

Back at the commando a spy
told them about a British unit approaching
from another direction
and they had to go out scouting
to see what the British was up to,
but could find no signs of their presence
while they were riding along the whole day long.

At the place where the commando had been
a letter had been left:
"Come in the direction of Haenertsburg."
Jacobus and field coronet Marais then decided
to get more information
and hurried to the farm
of Jacobus that was nearby.

On the farm Jacobus's wife Margritha
ran crying up to them and said:

"Where were you the whole day?
The whole territory
has been taken by the British.

The canons were firing the whole day long
and the blacks have stolen all the cattle.
All the people have left! They said that they
would stay at a certain mountain
and we have to meet them there.
The enemy has gone into the mountains
with thousands of blacks
going along with them."

It was already dark

and they went to the nearest neighbour
to try and get more information.

They greeted him: "How are things here? "

The neighbour answered:

"The enemy went into the hills
shortly after the two of you had left.
The commando
went in the direction of Wolkberg.
The long-tom canon
had fired 16 shots. The enemy
was almost at the canon
when the 17th shot was fired. The canon crew
blew the canon into pieces with dynamite.
The blacks took all the cattle and sheep
and all of the clothes and blankets
of the women and children.
Also every thing in the house,
including all the food. Chickens and pigs
have been killed. The women
were pushed about by the blacks."

From there they went to the houses
of other citizens to find some more answers
until two o'clock at night whereupon Marais said:
"Let us go to Wolkberg."

Jacobus answered: "The blacks
are pillaging the women and children
and who knows if they are going to kill them as well.
I will stay here to look for some more citizens,
if you want to go to Wolkberg."

Marais went to Wolkberg where he was
captured by the enemy,
Jacobus found nobody else
while he was riding to his farm
and he had to hide his horse
to be able to escape with it.

Then he sneaked around the house

to see if his family was safe
and all of them were well
and he was aware of the Lord's mercy.

The next morning Jacobus
found two more citizens
and heard from them
about the pillaging done by the blacks,
that had happened to other families

and the blacks did not even
leave a blanket for the children,
or anything to eat
and the people
would not be able to forget these evil events

that for Jacobus spoke
of barbarism and the frailty of man
and in his heart he wished disaster on the British.

Jacobus Potgieter, JM Dames and L Alberts together
made plans to protect their families.
They decided that each man
would stay at his own house
as long as he could
and would fire on anyone coming near
until death to rescue their families.

When the blacks came with rifles
to pillage these citizens,
the Boers opened fire on them,
to stop the attacks

where they were around the houses,
like vultures waiting for the death
of the farmers.

But with shot upon shot
they were warded off,
where these farmers were on guard
sitting and praying
for God to stop the enemy.

They saw the British Calvary riding past
and had decided to wait on the enemy,
in order for the women to ask their protection,
but after three days and nights they were far too tired.

They then did decide to surrender, as they could not anymore
carry on with the blacks that were serving the enemy
and Jacobus Potgieter and L Alberts went to the enemy,
while J Dames stayed behind to guard their families.

Jacobus had decided to trust in God,
in faith to hold on to the salvation of the Lord
and with a heavy heart he went to surrender,
to try and protect his family with this deed.

The enemy was scared when they saw Jacobus
as they were people from
the Cape colony without arms,
that was part of the British force
and acted as drivers for wagons and mules.

They were in the riverbed,
at the long-tom canon
that had been shot into pieces
and were trying to get a piece
of the canon out of the water.

They greeted the drivers
and went to meet the British
at Najensbrook, about a hour from home,
where an officer
were giving orders in Afrikaans.

Jacobus asked: "What is going on?
I expect to meet Englishmen here.
Now I meet Boers as enemies? "

One answers him: "What do you think?
We are many more than you.
Our commando is about 1200 strong
and we are mostly Boers

who are helping the British."

Then Jacobus asks confused: "How can it be,
that you are fighting against your own nation? "

"We are British subjects from
the Cape colony and Natal."

Then Jacobus asks: "Where is your general?
I want to see him."

Then the officer gave orders to a driver:

"Take this man to the general,
the main commander of the laager."

The laager where they were going
was far from there and Jacobus and Alberts
still were carrying their rifles
and met the officer being angry about the events
of the day before and laid their weapons down
and asked the British officer:

"Why does it look as if you
are fighting with black people against us,
how do you let black people
pillage our homes and families? "

Then the officer bursts loose:

"Why did you not surrender
before I had to come here?
You let me come here for no reason! "

Whereupon Jacobus said: "It isn't fair
to fight with the blacks against the whites.
Still more so, to let them attack our women! "

The officer answered unruly:

"I have instructed the black people
not to do such things,
but they do not want to listen."

Whereupon Jacobus answers him:

"I do not believe it! "

The officer then told them
to go and wait on a certain farm for a day or so.
Whereupon Jacobus was still more angry:
"No! I do not have time to sit around.
Give orders to the blacks
to stop pillaging our families."

The officer ordered Jacobus to wait
on his commander who had to come
and Jacobus harassed that commander
with the accusation

about the blacks pillaging
women and children
at which the officer granted his request

but at that time most of the farms
had already been pillaged,
and the women and kids were endangered
and treated very badly by the blacks.

Then the officer said: "I will let you go back.
Bring your families here."
Whereupon Jacobus shook his head and replied:
"The blacks have robbed all the oxen and wagons.
How am I to do it? "

The colonel then gave the blacks instructions
to give the oxen and wagons back
but they did not really care about his commands,
whereupon Jacobus went back to his family
where they were safe but full of sorrow.

The blacks had only returned six oxen
and no wagons
and at the house of L Alberts
there were some more problems,
with one hundred and three people
that had fled there
without clothes, food and blankets
and they were women and children

who had been molested
and pillaged by the blacks.

Jacobus was astonished
as some of these women
had walked 24 miles
and had carried
their small children on their backs.

A woman said: "The blacks pushed me around
against the ground."

Another one: "The blacks stabbed me with a
Assegai (spear) in the breast."

A third one said: "They were hitting me
with rifles against the chest."

Another lady said: "I tried to keep a blanket
for my child,
but the black man grabbed it
and knocked me from my feet
with a rifle."

Some of the blacks
that were loyal workers and maids
did take some things to look after,
when they saw the band of robbers arriving
and stormed with these things into the bushes

and brought the possessions back later
and this humanity goes deep
into a person's heart,
but it was single items
that they were able to take
to rescue,
like a blanket or sometimes a bed.

Some of the blacks acted shamefully,
raping some of those women
and it was what was reported
to Jacobus Johannes Potgieter,

and it is reported here truthfully
and of these things
Jacobus was also a witness

and the enemy had no idea
how he felt about these things
and to protect his family
he went to hand his rifle in.

There were 103 women and children
that Jacobus Potgieter and L Alberts
had to transport with three wagons,
but a lot had to walk
and this trip was dreadful.

That first night
some of the women went to sleep
at Jacobus's house
as he still had some food,
that he shared with them
and his wife was looking
for sheets and blankets
to try and make beds on the ground.

Some women slept inside on the floor,
but others had to sleep outside
and it was really terrible,
to see vulnerable women lying around.

Jacobus went along with the wagons
up to the main road
and took leave of his wife and companions
and rode out to meet the enemy

and the colonel leading them
where he said to the colonel:
"The women and children,
103 of them in total are waiting on you."

From the stories that the women
and children had heard
they were really scared of the British.

Jacobus was riding with the enemy
to lead them to the women and children
and he said to the colonel:
"I will go to the families and tell them
that you are coming,
that they do not have to fear."

The colonel and some of his captains
came along to Kuiperkuil
where some of the women
and children were crying

out of fear for the enemy,
being scared to get hurt
and stayed in a group together.

The British loaded these people
on some more wagons
and turned with them in the road

taking them to Pietersburg
where they lived
in houses for a month long
and then just before dark one late afternoon,
was taken to the concentration camp
as sentenced people.

Some of the food that they got to eat,
(this is the honest truth)
was meat from cattle and sheep
that was contaminated with diseases
and these illnesses
were carried over to these people.

Some of the sick animals
were daily slaughtered there in front of the people
and the meat given to them to eat,
while the British knew about the illnesses
that the animals did possess.

Some of the rations were flour,

coffee and sugar and were given
sparingly to the people.
Some of the cattle had fire-illness,
some with lung-disease
and they got that food to eat
as if the British
had forgotten about these illnesses.

Some of the sheep had measles,
others were infected with heart-water
and this meat was given to the people to eat
as if there was no law in the country

while the British knew about these illnesses
and without food
these people would also have perished
and in this way the British
earned more hatred and caused a lot of sorrow.

Jacobus was digging graves for the dead,
sometimes as many as seventeen per day,
where they loaded as many
as twelve bodies at a time
on a wagon to bury them.

After a time the people refused to eat the meat
as they knew that it made them ill
and were caused their deaths
and they gained the trust of the English doctor

and he did examine the meat and did confirm
that it was terribly infected,
almost like a kind of acknowledgement
whereupon the sheep
were slaughtered and buried.

They then received tinned meat
with grain and sometimes fine pieces of glass
and fishhooks in them
that also droops
the British with inhumanity.

Jacobus took the names
and length and width
of every dead body
and wrote it in his diary
and in a way half estranged,
he took the bodies
after the funeral service to the graves
and covered them with sand.

In that concentration camp Jacobus dug
between sixteen,
maybe seventeen graves on a day
and he was mourning while he witnessed
the death of so many people,
but the mule wagon could only take
ten to twelve coffins at a time
depending on the sizes of the coffins.

The crying and sorrow of this experience
stayed with him and his youngest child
Margritha Jacoba was only five months old
when they went into the concentration camp
being aware of people dying.

In every tent where he looked into,
Jacobus saw sick people infected
with illnesses
that they got from the sick meat.

After only two weeks
in the concentration camp
all of his children became ill.
Many things was terribly wrong
in that concentration camp.
All the people with measles died from it,
even adults who were kept in that camp.

Jacobus felt totally defenceless,
knew that the intentions
of the British was wrong
and the only thing
that he and his wife Margritha could do

was to reconcile them with the will of God
and three times a day they were praying
putting the protection of their children
before the throne of God.

X. Jacobus Potgieter escapes

For a long period of time
Jacobus did not receive any news
from the commando,
but at the insistence of the British
a traitor's wife was sent to the Boers,
to try and convince them to surrender
and she brought news
about the commando's whereabouts.

Immediately Jacobus
started to make plans to escape,
to walk away from the British,
to join the commando once more
and to get the enemy out of his country.

Mostly the lower class Boers joined the British
to kill Afrikaners for 5 shilling a day,
trying to force the Boers to loose the war.
The British even tried
to convince Jacobus to join them,
but he saw it as an evil plan
and was angry about it,
as he was forced unfairly
to surrender, to protect his family

With the passing time Jacobus made friends
with other men
and they were also involved in his escape plan,
at a time where the British were on the look out
for rebellion among the prisoners
Jacobus got thirty citizens
to lead them to freedom.

After many months Jacobus

and his friends got an opportunity
to ride along with the wagons
that was going out of the camp to collect firewood,
but the evening before the escape,
many of his friends became too scared to escape
and most of them decided to stay,
but only seven men
went through with the decision to escape.

They had a careful plan
and took food for four days
and two pairs of clothes along,
that was strong enough to last a year
while they trusted in God to lead them.

Unsure Jacobus greeted his wife and children
and scared that the British could have a suspicion of trouble
they left the crying children in the tent
while he greeted them.

Jacobus was well aware
about the dangers of this concentration camp
how the food, the bad circumstances
impacted on his children,
and asked God to look after them
and to guide the way back to the commando
through the coming dangers.

The seven men were somewhat sultry
when they got onto the wagons,
but in the wood fields they were industrious,
working hard
while the other men and blacks
were turning around them.

The escaping men were:
Jacobus Johannes Potgieter,
AJ van Jaarsveld, CJ Potgieter
(the brother of Jacobus) , SJ de Beer,
JH Venter, C Harmse and W van der Gijft,
who trusted their lives into the hands of God.

At twilight that night
they told the driver of their wagon
that they were going to escape,
were going to walk back to their commando,
but did not tell their plans to him
and they had difficulty in convincing him
to take the wagon back to the British

and from the blacks of the nearest rural village
they traded a blanket for a goat
and made a big fire to fry the meat,
while the other citizens
were still standing around them
and they ate as much as they could,
before they went to hide in the bushes

and the blacks were not aggressive
as long as they were with the British,
but became very hostile
the moment that they were not with the British.

With their clothes and a blanket each,
they left that camp in the wood fields
and without talking,
sneaked in the dark past the blacks
hiding in the bushes.

While working during the day they scouted the area,
finding a route
and slipped away without being noticed.

There was a farm near to them
where they could find hidden rifles and ammunition,
that was buried there and Jacobus during the day
had cut a piece of wood to use as a digging tool,
but they first had to pass a large black village.

They kept to the bushes, trusting in God's help
but when after an hour they arrived on the farm,
a light was burning in the house on the farm

and they were astonished to find people there

and thought that some of the men
who decided not to come along,
had betrayed them to the British
as the owner of the farm
had been captured by the British.

Sagrys de Beer said: "Let's leave the rifles.
We are going to get captured here.
The voices that we hear are the voices of Boers,
but far too many Boers have joined the British
to fight against us.
We cannot trust anybody, or that they
will be on our side."

Fifteen paces from the house
they then discussed the matter,
about either getting the rifles
or leaving the weapons and moving on.

Jacobus who really want the rifles
at first did not want to listen to advice and said:

"Grys, we cannot leave the rifles here,
we have to move over the wall silently
and go and dig the rifles out."

"You will have us caught! Listen to the voices.
They are enemy Boers! "

"Grys, just think about the black towns
that we will have to pass."

"Kotie let us rather walk away while it is still dark.
Let us leave the rifles. Even if we go
over the wall unnoticed,
they will hear us when we start digging
with that piece of wood in your hand.
They will shoot us. If one of us are wounded
we will be very sorry that we did not leave
the guns here.
Kotie, let's go. My maid
has hidden two of my rifles and ammunition

I will go to my farm.
My maid is trustworthy."

"Grys, I will do as you say. Come, let us go."

Thick fog were rising and they were lost,
Could not find the road and wandered along
until they found the road again
and then decided to stay near to it,
but the packs that they were carrying
were becoming heavy
and they were becoming tired.

Sagrys said: "Kotie, we have to sleep here.
Old Albert and Krisjan cannot walk any further.
They are tired. You have to take care
of the weakest man among us."

"You are right, Grys.
We will have to get away from the road
and go down the cliff, to get a sleeping place.
When the British become aware that we have escaped,
they will start following our tracks."

"Kotie, lets turn off here to the left.
The cliff is deep. They will never find us here.
If suddenly they find us, we can run along
the cliff in to the bushes.
If we reach the bushes,
they can bring thousands of men
to try and find us, but will have no success.
I know this region very well."

"It sounds like a great plan,
come on guys lets go down the cliff.
Let's turn here from the road.
Uncle Albert, what do you say?
You as well, Willie. Come on Stoffel,
you guys have to say, what you are thinking.
Krisjan is tired with his cripple foot."

"You are right Koot, " said Albert.

"But I only am following you. You have to lead us."

"Great, let's turn off.

We will stay here until tomorrow after sunset.

From here onwards we will have to go
through the black towns.

Hey guys, it's really steep, so be careful.

Uncle Albert, will you and Krisjan
be able to come down this steep incline? "

"Jacobus, you must go down slowly.

It's dark and we cannot really see properly
and the rocks and stones are somewhat slippery."

"Krisjan, you have to walk carefully
with your cripple foot. Where is Willie? "

"He's here right behind me.

Grys you are going far too quickly,
You and Stoffel."

"Where is Jan Venter? "

"He's, here in front of Sagrys.

Let's sleep here next to these bushes.

It is very silent at this spot
and we will be able to sleep here."

"Guys we have to go down some more
and the lower we go the steeper it will get.

Guys you'll have to stay awake,
or you will have to sleep very lightly.

We will have to run,
if we hear rocks falling above us."

On the afternoon of 20 January 1902
they tried to leave the deep cliff,
but were stopped by blacks
who they heard shouting in the distance
and they hid in thick bushes,
waiting for darkness to come.

They avoided the maid of Sagrys,
too scared to trust her with their lives

and that the black people would try and kill them
or trap them for the British,

but they knew about another place
where a rifle was hidden.

The fog got worse and it started to rain
and thunder bolts flashed down, one after another.

Under some bushes they found cover
but half frozen they had to go on
and walked at a fast pace
to try to get hot, almost into a black village

and the rain was falling at such a rate
that nobody was outside
and they walked on until late at night
when they had to rest
and in the rain they had to sleep
under a bush
as they were very tired.

It became colder than freezing point
and they were in a distressful situation
in which Krisjan Potgieter got unconscious
and they felt as if their plans were coming to nothing.

Jacobus wrapped his jacket around his brother
and they heard doves cooing in the distance
and with sunrise,
a black village was about five hundred paces from them.

"Kotie! We are going to get caught! "
Saggrys whispered fearfully.

"Hey guy, do not talk like this!
You may not get irrisolute.
Get up! Let's go! " Jacobus commanded.

Krisjan's teeth were chattering from the cold
with his hands in his jackets pockets
and Jacobus tried to keep courage,
retaining some hope:

"Hey guys, let's move on.
If we move immediately, we will get hot."

On the mountain there was a forsaken house
of which the roof had fallen in on the one side,
but on the other side there was dry wood
that they were burning and they were putting branch
after branch on the coals to get warm
and to dry their clothes.

At Broederstroom the river was in flood
but at a shallow point they crossed the river.
The rifle that they were looking for
had been dug out by someone else
but they picked green peaches from the orchard
that belonged to a captured Boer
as the bread was rotting
from all the rain
and they were really hungry.

.
They climbed a mountain and got lost in the fog
but at late afternoon they were on a farm
where the owner P Naude was murdered

and there were people around them,
here and there some dogs that were walking about
and they were waiting through the night
until the next evening.

Everywhere there were enemies
who were blocking their way
and they had still far to go
and had to pass
the one black village after the other.

They walked for ten hours
and suddenly heard the sound
of people singing
with a whistle playing
in the middle of the road,
where people were having a party.

The bright moon was hanging yellow
and thirty paces from these people
children suddenly were running
in their direction
and there they were almost caught,

but a dark cloud came before the moon
and they jumped over an earth wall
and fell flat on their stomachs in the grass
and the children came to a standstill
just where they had been.

A fight broke out and the children
were slapping and hitting each other
and they were scared
that the kids were going to step upon them,
as the children were only three paces away
where they were fighting,

but the children moved thirty paces on
and the citizens ran into the cornfield
and then straight

into another black village and they turned away
and walked up to another river,
where Jan Venter went through
to determine the depth
and everybody got safely to the other side.

By about half past eleven
they had reached Wolkberg
and they started to climb it
and the mountain had a steep incline
where they had to move on hands and knees
to get to the top
and at about one o'clock
they were at the summit

and in the dark everything looked spooky
and small below them
and they were really hungry

and walked on to an old gold mine,
that was deserted
but had a well full of clear water
and they prepared coffee
to take away the hunger and to get hot,
before they caught some sleep.

From daybreak they walked on until twelve o'clock
where they had to hide at some more black villages
and they were really hungry and thirsty

when a sullen black man
came along with a rifle in his hands
looking for deer to hunt
and he stood waiting near to them
and they did not want to take
the chance of rushing onto him.

He walked away and some shots were fired
and he carried a small gazelle
to near to them
and threw it down
where the animal was drawing flies

and the black man stood a few paces away
aimed with the rifle
at the dead animal and started firing
but missed by miles
and by sunset he took the gazelle
and left for his village
and the citizens were on the way again.

For two hours they were walking
through great fields of corn
that belonged to the people of Malippo
at Wolkberg, but it was too early for a harvest
and they went past another black village
and the last slices of bread
had already been eaten
and they could not find any food.

The news of their escape

reached the concentration camp
and on 21 January the commandant
gave a order for Margritha Jacoba Potgieter
to come and see him,

but as she was really scared
and did not serve the British she ignored it,
and was put on a train with her 7 kids
without knowing where they were going.

There was a 70-year-old man,
another two women
and a 40-year-old prisoner of war
that was put on that train along with her
and nobody had any trust in the British,
they were travelling on a stinking horse wagon
that was open and it was raining
and her one child got really ill
before the train eventually pulled into Pretoria.

In a torn tent they passed the night
and were wet from the rain,
the child got worse
and they had nothing to use
as remedy for the illness.

The next morning there were 23 people at the station
who were pressed into one train wagon
without anybody wanting to tell them
where they were going
while the rain was pouring down.

They traveled for six days
without food, water or facilities
before they arrived at Durban
where Margritha was taken
to Merebank concentration camp
and she was in deep trouble
and was interrogated
and had to report why Jacobus did escape
and were punished
with the rations being lessened by half

and her children got really thin
and she did not have enough food
to stop their hunger.

The children became seriously ill
and she avoided the medicine
as the prisoners believed
that medicine had been poisoned
and in that prison
Margritha had hidden the children in the washing
as she was scared that they were going to die
if put into the hospital
and in her thought
she was sending the British straight to hell.

XI. Along with general Beyers on commando

On 27 January 1902 the seven citizens
reached the commando
where the other citizens gather around them
giving them food and ripe yellow peaches
and wanted to know everything
about their experiences

There were forty citizens and a few fleeing women
present at the time
and everybody was glad that they were back
and the whole commando went on their
knees in prayer to thank the Lord
for protecting them and for guarding them.

Early the next morning the field coronet said:
"Come on guys, go with the corporal
to the warehouse to get some arms."

The warehouse was under a cliff
sheltered against wind and rain
and the corporal led them there
where there were also bags full of wheat
and to their joy

they could make a selection
out of different kinds of rifles
and each one had chosen
a Mauser that was looking brand new,
got ammunition from another place
and some more blankets were given to them.

General Beyers had left
to go to the Waterberg
where he and his commando
went to fetch horses and supplies
from the British
by capturing it from them
and where he went to free 150 men

from the Pietersburg concentration camp
and they even brought back some cattle,
but some of the men that they had freed,
later deserted
back to the British as traitors.

Half of the commando
about 600 men,
went to the Low Veldt
and they visited Malipspoort

to arm the citizens
that came with general Beyers
from the concentration camp.

The citizens had to walk
as the British had burned the grass fields
and at Houtbosdorp they walked straight
into a British ambush
where they had lost 8 spies,
one citizen was killed
but the rest of the way was open to them.

In the Low Veldt the citizens loaded
maize on the wagons
and on the way back at Malipspoort
they shot their way open through the enemy

who fled away
and then they then had to build a road
across the mountains naming it Beyersnek
and walked with the wagons to the laager.

By grinding the maize they made flour
and most of the citizens were healthy
and were eating maize porridge and meat,
but they did not forget about the enemy.

When the British started to control the economy
some things became scarcer,
if people did not get these things from the British.
This caused some Boers to become joiners
and they joined with the British
and they were betraying the hiding places
of the Boers to the British
and got payment for this treason.

The joiners were the worst of soldiers,
but knew the environment well
and some said:

"Pay me money and I will help you
to catch and shoot the Boers.
I know the customs of the Boers."

Thereafter they were hired for 2 shillings per day,
or 5 shillings for officers who could not wait
to kill their own nation, farther, brother
and to force the Boers to loose the war.

Some of the Boers had buried grain at places
and the commando knew
where these places were
and this helped them to almost always have food.

The commando was impressed
with the bravery of general Beyers,
with him being fair
and to the fact that he gave attention
to almost everything

and acted as everyone's brother.

General Beyers held scripture readings and prayer
every morning and every evening
and regular church services
to try and keep the people's faith in God
and right through the war this was the case,
so that his subordinates followed him
out of free will and had a lot of respect for him.

From Malipspoort the commando went to Spelonken
to threaten Fort Hendriena
and it was quite difficult
to take the fort without canons
while the enemy was firing at them
from the fort's protection

and in the night
the citizens surrounded it,
waiting two hundred paces from it
to cut off water and food
and to stop anyone
from going to the Fort

The enemy had send a freeing corps
that existed mostly out of joiners
and Jacobus Potgieter and some other citizens
rode on horseback to stop the enemy
while some citizens stayed behind.

Under instruction of general Beyers
lieutenant Eybers
and field coronet Fanie Coetzee
took 40 men in a wing
that gathered to stop the enemy
and it happened that the citizens
stormed 50 paces
and started to fire on the enemy
and the battle got really serious
with firing from both sides.

In the fighting a Boer was killed,

four Boers were wounded
but luckily most of the Boers were intact
and of the enemy an officer was shot dead,
lying on the ground, two were captured
as well as two wounded joiners
being Piet Alberts and Jacob Schoeman
and both of them were well known men.

Piet Alberts had been justice of the peace
and his father and brothers
were prisoners of war on St. Helena
and Japie had been on the church board
and his son was in this commando
fighting against him.

The enemy lost the battle and were fleeing
but because it happened on a Sunday,
the Boers did not attack the enemy laager
and wanted to take them on the next day,
but the whole of the enemy laager
fled during that night.

Out of desperation the horses
were chased out of the fort
to safe water and the Boers
captured the horses
and the rations in the fort
got very low while the days were passing

until a strong British force
after ten days suddenly arrived
and the commando was spread out too far
and to the dismay of the Boers
one of their spies were captured

while the other one came to warn them
and in thick fog Jacobus
supported by thirty men stormed on to a wing
whereupon the other enemy wing
from behind them started firing at them

and all that was left for them to do

was to chase right through
the surrounding enemy,
waging their lives for freedom
while the enemy was shooting
as well as they could,
and for man to man
to go straight through them
while bullets whistled past.

Everybody got unscratched out of that firefight,
but the field coronet's horse had thrown him
and they had to rescue him
and Albert van Jaarsveld was astonished
to still be alive
with his hat being shot right off his head
and then the Boers
had to withdraw their siege on that fort

but the field coronet
send Jacobus with fifteen men to scout
and they got lost in the fog
as if they did not know the aria,

whereupon the next day
the enemy send a strong force
to follow the Boers
and in the very long grass
the enemy was suddenly six paces away
on the other side of the river
and the Boers started firing

finding cover in the grass,
a rough firefight broke out,
two Boer officers were captured
and the Boers fled during the dark
and right through the next day
they still were still fleeing before the enemy.

Two days later a British trooper
joined the commando
and he was received with open arms
and fought on with the Boers

until the end of the war.

The wagons were left at the foot of the hill
and the commando was divided
into four groups around Wolkberg
with a section north
of Malipspoort at Beyersnek,
a section south of Malipspoort,
one at the foot of the mountain
and a section at Empatel on Coetzee's farm.

The section at Beyersnek
received a huge bombardment
from British canons
and kept the enemy back
for two days long
before the Boers had to flee
before an overwhelming big force.

The wing where Jacobus were fighting
were surrounded, driven out
with thousands of blacks fighting
along with the enemy
that lead to the British
taking the wagons and cattle
and the whole commando
had to break through
the surrounding British forces.

Jacobus were called upon by general Beyers,
to indicate the most appropriate place
to where the commando could flee,
as he knew that Jacobus
had come through this area
with his escape from the concentration camp

and general Beyers ordered the commando
to leave the wagons and food behind
and Jacobus told them of the cornfields
that belonged to the people of Malippo
through which they had walked
and there by this time

would be a harvest
of thousands of bags of corn to feed them.

On orders of general Beyers
Jacobus lead 130 citizens on foot
while the horsemen rode around the mountain,
had to ride right through the enemy once more

and the men on foot
had to climb Wolkberg Mountain
and late in the afternoon
they reached that corn and wheat fields
where most of the black people fled away,
but some started to fire on the Boers
and at the bodies of those shot dead
the Boers found British Lee-Enfield rifles
and ammunition
and general Beyers was very happy
with the place that Jacobus had chosen
while they walked through fields.

At this place the Boers stayed for a long time
while general Beyers was recuperating
from a wound
but the ammunition of the Boers
were very low
when the British came to them
in two columns
with thousands of black supporters

and Jacobus told the general about a place
where they could try to outwit the British
to where they could flee for a day long
right through the mountains.

At night when the horsemen
of the commando reached them
the fires of the British soldiers were seen
and Jacobus lead them back
to places to take up their positions
that best fitted the plan
that he and the general had made.

In thick fog, the enemy surrounded
the previous positions of the Boers,
but at first light the Boers took up new positions
behind the British,
with citizens on foot at the one side
and the horse commando
further away on the other side
and when the fog cleared up
the Boers were ready for the British
and the Boers opened fire.

The enemy fell back, but the Boer horsemen
drove them out of their hiding places
and the British started to flee
as fast as they could
back to their laager
and great amounts of

rifles, revolvers and ammunition
were captured as well as horses
and what could not be used
was thrown into a dam
and 13 British soldiers were shot dead,
40 were captured and in the bushes
some more British soldiers
were captured and their weapons
were taken from them.

Some of the joiners that were caught
were D Pienaar, C Lees,
M Deventer and C Pienaar
and the commando returned to Malipspoort
where two British messengers
arrived with white flags
high above their heads

with a message from the state secretary
of the Zuid Afrikaanse republic
and they wanted permission
to bring him back to the camp.

The state secretary said:

"Citizens, I have been send by our government
to come and meet the Soutpansberg commando
and to tell you how things are going.

The state president had some negotiations
with the general on the British side,
namely Kitchener.

The British wants to have peace,
but they do not want to return
the country to us. They want
us to hand over the country.

This we have refused.
We said to the supreme commander of the British
that we have no right
to hand over the country.

It belongs to the nation.
Then they gave us free accompaniment
to go by train to the different commandos
to hear the feelings of the nation
and then to choose a delegation
to hold a peace conference
at Vereeniging.
It lies in the nation's hands,
if the nation wants to surrender
the country or wants to fight on."

Like one man they said:
"Fighting on, or independent free! "

General Beyers and magistrate Stoffberg
were chosen to go as representatives
of the Soutpansberg to Vereeniging
and they went with the horse commando

leaving the citizens that were on foot behind,
whereupon a force consisting out of
3000 British soldiers, a lot of joiners,

thousands of blacks under the command
of Colonel Colenbrander came to attack
the Boers in the mountains.

Early on 6 May 1902 Sagrys de Beer
and Jacobus Potgieter went out
to scout the area
to see if they could stop the enemy.

The British surround the whole mountain
cutting off water and food
whereupon the Boers fled west
and found water at two o'clock
during that night much higher up.

It wasn't possible for the enemy
to drive the Boers out
and the Boers had to
break another
time right through the enemy
to try and find food

and it was already three days
without finding any food anywhere
and there were only 68 citizens
and they would have eaten anything,

but the 7 men who went to buy food
were shot by the British,
but the commando escaped
with the British blinded by the cliffs.

The fourth day without food
they were almost powerless
but still they trusted in God
and ordered by
commandant Bierman,
Jacobus with 7 men
went to scout for a place
to break through the enemy at night

and caught men on guard duty sleeping

and had almost shot them,
regarding them as enemy at first

and with their lives
starting to hang in the balance
they could not find any place
to break through,
or a way to get rid of the British.

On 10 May 1902
Jacobus Johannes Potgieter
surrendered along
with the Soutpansberg commando
to the British

as they could not make any plan
not to die from starvation,
had to hand their weapons in
and they were loaded
on the enemy's mule wagons

with British soldiers
guarding the wagons
with rifles and bayonets
and some of them riding
on the wagons
to try and keep the unarmed
almost starving Boers under control
as they were really afraid of the Boers.

In Pietersburg the Boers
were surrounded in a big circle
where they had to sleep
while the soldiers were keeping
rifles the whole time on them
and were staring at them.

The next day they had to stay
for a day long in the prison
and were loaded on a train
where they were refused
food and water by the soldiers

as if sentenced to a hunger death
and when the train
did arrive at Pretoria
the rations were very small.

From Pretoria they were put on a train
to Durban and were treated very badly,
and this treatment by the British
was without honour.

The Boers had to sit on cold steel trucks,
they were not allowed to stand
and only when the train stopped
at a station they were allowed
to go to the toilet
and at night they had to lie down
with their heads on the cold steel floor
and if a head came out
from under a blanket
a British soldier said:

"Lie flat on the floor, or I will shoot you! "
While a firearm was held threatening.

On 24 May 1902
Jacobus was placed in the Umbilo camp
in Durban where he met
some more citizens
with eight hundred men
kept in that camp with ages varying
from 7 to 80 years
and a lot of very old men
and children were not spared,
but his wife and kids
were in the Merebank camp
that was quite near
and on 1 June 1902 the war had ended.

XII. The peace of Vereeniging

The British intensified their efforts

to force the Boers to surrender
while the peace conference
at Vereeniging started
and with a great superiority
in their number of men
tried to kill the Boers,
to draw advantage of the absence
of their leaders
and in the place of general de La Rey
Kemp was commandant-general.

Hamilton attacked Kemp's commando
and Kemp had just escaped and at Roodewal,
led a counter attack against Hamilton
who was prepared for it
and Hamilton waited with 3000 soldiers
on the horse commando galloping in.

Fifty citizens and general Piet Potgieter
of Krugersdorp,
who was a very brave man
had been killed
because of the big force
that had waited for them.

General Beyers was
in conference with Kitchener
who threatened with further
and still worse action, if the Boers
did not surrender unconditionally
and he thought that the Boer forces
were perplexed to accept,
while thousands of blacks
and joiners went along with the British

and on 15 May the final conference started
where the future of a nation
and a country was decided
with general Beyers chosen as chairman

and Hetzog, De Wet and Reitz were upset
with Botha, Smuts, De la Rey

and President Burger
who wanted to unconditionally surrender
on Milner's insistence.

Hetzog, De Wet and Reitz were worried
about the rights and interests
of the Boer farmers and Kitchener
achieved a break-through
by making some concessions
to the fears of Hetzog, De Wet and Reitz
and went to Milner
to convince him
to stop the dispute with the Boers.

All the Boers of the republics had to surrender.
All fighters had to give in their weapons.
Everyone swearing loyalty
to Great Britain would be set free.
Those not swearing loyal to Britain
would be kept in British prisoner of war camps.
The death penalty was abolished.
General amnesty would be in effect.
People would be able to speak
Dutch in the court and schools.
Registered firearms were allowed.
Transvaal and the Orange Free State
would be under military control
Three million pounds were given
for the country's reconstruction.
Reconstruction of the government.
No voting rights for the blacks.
The recognition of the property rights
of the Boer farmers.
No special ground taxes.

After the peace accord had been signed
prisoners of war were allowed
to leave the camps during the day
and Jacobus went to visit his wife
in Merebank concentration camp
and was happy to see his family
after six months and no people

deserved this kind of treatment.

The children were very skinny and wasted
and he could not stop the tears
and the youngest girl was very ill,
Margritha had almost lost hope
with the worries that she had
carried alone for so long

and it took ten months
for that child to again get healthy,
but Jacobus prayed, encouraged them
and they could not leave immediately.

He first had to sign a document stating:
"The bearer, JJ Potgieter
has been released from
prison of war camp Umbilo
on signing that he acknowledge
terms of surrender
and becomes a British subject."

On 24 June 1902 he was set free
and again encouraged his family
and the rations of the family was
60 fish fingers, 48 tins of meat,
15 tins of jam,
2 and a half pounds of coffee
and 6 pounds of sugar
that they had to take along
on their journey home.

After the peace accord
the traitors were a really big pain
in their hearts
with three classes of joiners existing:

The first group of joiners said:

"Give me 5 shilling per day
and I will help to find and kill
the wild Boers

who are still fighting the war.
I know their way of fighting
and I know their fighting positions.
I know where their commando
is at the moment."

The second class of joiners
were very cowardly and did not want
to fight and came to encourage
other Boers to surrender
and told them if they were caught
without surrendering,
they would be sent
to prisoner of war camps.

The third group of joiners
were still worse as they
were keeping order
in the concentration camps
and helped the British to kill
twenty thousand women and children.

The whole day long
they ordered the women to work,
to sweep around tents,
to use a hoe around the tents
and they issued charges.

On the 19th of August
Jacobus arrived at his house
on his farm
and everything was destroyed
and he was astonished.

Doors and windows
had been broken
out by the black people
to use as fire wood.

There was no livestock,
but the blacks living on his farm
was happy to see him

and one came with a cock,
a hen and four chickens
and another one came forward and said:

"Sir, I have some of your sheep.
I will go and count them for you."

There still was 43 sheep and bucks left,
while many other farmers had lost everything.

¶Envoi

What sadness fills my heart
and there lies defeated woman, after defeated woman
small children go into the graves
who till death were true

still as mothers, in faith
trusted that God brings salvation
where mothers, children fit neatly into the earth
the hearts of the living shredded, faces twisted

who cannot believe that this reality
is their own
and these offerings ring out much wider
as if not knowing about the love of God

heathens and not christians are at the gates
putting their hands on every women and child:

These words of Jacobus Johannes Pogieter
stays with me:

"Today, 11 April 1904, I think back again
to those dead people that I have buried
and for whom I had to dig
between 600 and 700 graves.
I remember the painful days,
the days of tears and the days of crying."

"No single hour, even a single hour

of a single day goes by without me hearing
the crying, the hopelessness
and also the prayers of the
loving mothers, brothers and sisters
when the children were carried
to the tent of corpses,
while others with a donkey wagon
was taken to the graves."

"Remind yourself from what these children
were dying in their own country, where they were born.
Was it not from beef with fire-sickness
that British gave to them to eat?
or the heart-water sheeps?
or from lung-sickness in the meat
of cattle that they did eat?
This I say to you, this is the honest truth.
They had to eat what they did receive,
or they would have perished from hunger."

[References:

Corporal: A rank between under-corporal and sergeant. In the second Anglo-Boer war in the commandos responsible for the control of supplies like food, ammunition and rifles.

Field coronet: During the second Anglo-Boer war: Official dealing with the military order in a ward. Officer with the rank equivalent to that of a captain. An important official, in the local government, who was subject to the magistrate and had functions of great meaning in accordance with local, administrative, judicial and police matters. In his ward the field coronet represented the magistrate.

Commandant: Officer with the rank equivalent to that of lieutenant colonel. The rank between major and colonel. Officer in control of a commando during the second Anglo-Boer war.

Chief Commandant: Officer with the rank equal to that of colonel.

General / Fighting general: In the Boer republics – Officer just below the

commandant-general. General in the army controlling the battlefield itself.

Commandant-general: Supreme commander. Persons in this position during the second Anglo-Boer war: Orange Free State Republic: Commandant-general Ferreira, after his death commandant-general Christiaan de Wet. (For one day long president of the Orange Free State Republic at the peace of Vereeniging conference.)

Zuid-Afrikaanse republic (Transvaal) : Commandant-general Koos de La Rey, in his absence at the Vereeniging peace negotiations: general Kemp.

Canon crew: The canon crew where the only standing army in the two Boer republics.

Commando: During the second Anglo-Boer war: A group of armed citizens who moved fast on horses. A section in a military district.

Boer republic Presidents during the second Anglo-Boer war: Zuid-Afrikaanse republic (Transvaal) : President Paul Kruger, in his absence President Burgers. Orange Free State republic: President Steyn, Commandant-general Christiaan de Wet (for one day during the signing of the Vereeniging peace treaty.)

Positions of / in Great Britain during the second Anglo-Boer war:

Queen: Queen Victoria.

Premier of the Cape colony: Cecil John Rhodes, after him 1st Earl Frederick Sleigh Roberts as governor.

Redvers H. Buller: British commander in chief, who was replaced by Lord Roberts

1 st Earl Frederick Sleigh Roberts: Field marshal who becomes the British commander in chief replacing Redvers H. Buller.

1 st Earl Milner: Governor of the Cape colony. British commander.

1 st Earl Horatio Herbert Kitchener: British commander in chief at the end of the Anglo-Boer war. The farms of Boers, even towns were burnt down and destroyed at his command. Women and children were placed in concentration camps and black people were armed to harass women and children on farms at his command.

War fatalities: The British lost about 28000 soldiers, the Boers about 4000 citizens (men) and 20000 women and children (These figures about women and children killed in the concentration camps are very conservative. Some sources have figures of 24000 others of 27000 women and children dying in the concentration camps. One of my own great-grandmothers died in a British concentration camp.)

Destruction: About 30000 farms and houses and partial or total destruction of more than forty towns.

Boers: Afrikaners. South Africans of Dutch decent. The word Boer actually means farmer, as originally the Afrikaner's ancestors had been farmers.]

Poet's Note:

This poem is based on the true events in the life of Jacobus Johannes Potgieter before, during and just after the second Anglo-Boer war as portrayed in "Die JJ Potgieter Manuskrip: Eric Swardt." The conversations of the people in this poem are quotations and the quotation signs thus have got double meaning. I have translated these conversations and have brought some changes about for greater language purity and rhythm in free verse, but have tried not to give up meaning and feeling. This poem is not a translation of the "Die JJ Potgieter Manuskrip: Eric Swardt, " but was written by me based on my Afrikaans rhyming epic poem called: "Deur die oë van 'n veld kornet."

Gert Strydom

Through The Sea Of Life I Sailed To And Thro (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to H. A. Fagan)

Unfathomable the wide ocean lies before me
with the sea mirror-smooth and without wind
and violent storms in which I find me sometimes
where I stand at the wheel of my boat.

Sometimes I cannot find direction, do not understand my purpose,
when it looks as if the stormy weather wants do devour me,
at times when the fog comes I feel totally blind
and I do not know to where my life and everything in it does go
but then Your beacons do again appear above me
where You are setting my life and the circumstances
where even nature does follow Your command
and when I look You do take me past trepidation,
You do jerk my back into balance when my boat does fluctuate
even do help me to repair the broken rigging.

[Reference:"Ek het geswerwe oor die oseaan"(I wandered over the ocean)by H. A. Fagan.]

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Gert Strydom

Through The Thick African Bush

Through the thick African bush
a troop of soldiers patrol
with black painted faces
and webbing with ammunition bags
strapped around their chests
and h-frames, water bottles
and weapons in their hands
and death
as a comrade leaves
its tracks with them.

They do not ask any questions
in a v-formation they move along
they move along
and death takes its toll
of the enemy
and eats like a cancer
on the soul of everyone
that carries its instruments.

Small like ants
they tread tracks
in to Africa
and their buddy gets wings
and grows as far as they go
and bloody and dark and grim
it spreads over the whole continent
and breaks out
everywhere across the earth.

Gert Strydom

Through The Window

I look at the blue sky
stretching out from horizon to horizon
and totally amazing the bright blue
seems to me
and yet a limit is set to it

but as night comes
the darkness stretches out
as if into infinity into space
past the shining lights, of stars,
galaxies and the known universe
into the unknown
and I wonder if anyone
would ever find an end to it?

Gert Strydom

Through The Window The New Moon Peeps

(For Daleen)

I

Through the window the new moon peeps,
many stars glitter blue-white
where they sit glowing in the darkness,
like diamonds at which I look,
when the ginger cat stands in the windowsill,
next to me the moon falls on your face
and it looks as if you are dreaming,
as the lights of a car passes
and I am blessed to have you here,
with your intimate heat next to me,
but it's only a dream in which I dare this
as if a thousand nights will be such
and I am free of my worries,
it's as if everything fades in your presence.

II

It's as if everything fades in your presence
as if the past, times and things do not touch me,
when we are together and small things make you happy
as if nobody else does anymore matter
and with the magic that spring brings
there are new green sprouts rising,
in the garden it's as if the grass suddenly jumps,
I see irises already blooming purple in pots,
I see all the beauty that this spring brings
and all of the flowers that I can get
are far too insignificant
as you are very dear to me
but I do continually long for you,
even when the sun hangs magically in the sky.

III

Even when the sun hangs magically in the sky,
my life feels empty without you,
even if the sky is cobalt blue,
even if the rays of the sun catch me caressingly,
I am still like a child scared of darkness,
while I long to hold your hand, to embrace you,
while I want to know you better and want to trust you
in all the days of spring
and I wonder about your thoughts,
where you are now sitting in an office,
or does life also pass you,
while you drink a cup of tea
in a place with many white papers;
do you have any time to think of me?

IV

Do you have any time to think of me,
I wonder, while I am working in the garden
and I do not immediately notice you
while I am mowing the lawn
and I see a dove gliding over the earth
with no clouds in the deep blue sky,
where it stretches out with brightness above me
and irises and roses are flowering where you sit down.
I kiss you and do it another time
where we are alone in the back garden,
I am caught and you sweep me along
right here in the bright daylight,
and the bright sun falls over us
when I give my self to you.

V

When I give my self to you
and share my deepest secrets,
when you walk deep into my heart
and know me thoroughly
then I tell you about my life

and you learn that love comes from God,
and love has a new much deeper meaning
and I am astounded by your beauty time after time.
You are the summer child, the morning sun,
you are mine before the people and God
of light my only real source
and more precious than any human law
but then I suddenly wake up and want to cling to you;
in this late summer I miss you.

VI

In this late summer I miss you,
the separation of moments comes
in every small thing that I notice
and it reflects your image and your name.
I can hear birds whistling in the trees,
even feel the soft wind caressing my skin,
but you are the source of my heat,
the loveliest song that plays right through my heart
and I wonder if a person loses some humanity
when you trust somebody totally,
when you make deeper bonds,
when you cling to someone else in rapture?
Outside lights beacon lonely;
your voice over the phone makes my heart frolic.

VII

Your voice over the phone makes my heart frolic
when it sounds like that of a young girl,
when your image shines like that of an angel
and I am searching for flowers not just a poppy
but something precious that I want to pick for you,
when you bring me joy
and I want to embrace you for moments
while I wonder how that sensation will last
as the miles is some distance
but the yellow sun shines bright through your words
and suddenly my life feels right

as if radiated from a heavenly source,
our conversation stretches long, goes on and on;
through the window the new moon peeps.

Gert Strydom

Through The Years You Hold Over Me A Power (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to John Keats)

Three decades did away in our time of loving ebb,
in moments feeling like eternity flowed the sand,
in your beauty I am deeply enchanted in your web,
at a time I have even to the pulpit taken your hand.

I see some blessed stars shining for us in the sky,
remember distinctly your eyes, their colour and light,
even a rose's hue is not true in its remarkable dye,
to your face and with you my fancies take flight

and through the years you hold over me a power
where no rose can match your soft lovely sweet lips
where in vain with poems I do try you to shower,
there is nothing that your beauty and our love do eclipse

but you do remain only in my own remembering
that time and again do you back to me bring.

[Reference: "To a Lady seen for a few moments at Vauxhall" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

Throughout My Life I Am Trying To Know God

Throughout my life I am trying to know God
do notice His handiwork in nature,
in the events happening in my life
that could not just be destiny

but my own powerlessness against the darkness,
and the presence of the evil
that strikes continually is almost overwhelming
and the world is full of pain and fear

and here I come to the realization
that I am only mortal and human
while people elevate themselves like gods,
are caught in the spirit of the time, the zeitgeist

and even when my honourable ideals come to nothing
the love of my God remains selfless.

Gert Strydom

Throughout My Life I Have Waited On You

Throughout my life I have waited on you,
Have waited that you would come
With the kind of hope that a person finds in faith
And in my more mature years
I do trust you like a child blindly
And the days turn around
While I arise each morning
To see you again, my darling.

Gert Strydom

Thuhula

(after J. J. e)

From Ndlambe the chieftain, messengers go out
to the captains to gather every impi regiment to bring about
a great war as the chieftain's wife Thulula has been stolen.
"Tsi ha! " The royals, the heroes, the trusted men and everyone do
shout.

The witchdoctor does his rite,
at the river they paint their faces black and white
do the attack on the Ngqika tribe begin,
do burn down huts from kraal to kraal through the day and night

until upon a day the opposing Xhosa armies of blood-relatives do meet.
The Ndlambe tribe roars: "Tsi ha! " The battle cry, do thunder with
their feet
while the whole valley is filled with glittering spears and in raging fury they
charge
with death do the heroes, the royals, the braves and trusted men each other
greet

and the Xhosa nation does kill each other for the honor of Thulula.

[Reference:"The battle of Amalinda" by J. J. e.]

Gert Strydom

Thuhula [2]

(after J. J. e)

From Ndlambe the chieftain, messengers go out
to the captains to gather every impi regiment to bring about
a great war as the chieftain's wife Thulula has been stolen.
"Tsi ha! " The royals, the heroes, the trusted men and everyone do
shout.

The witchdoctor does his rite,
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do the attack on the Ngqika tribe begin,
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while the whole valley is filled with glittering spears and in raging fury they
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with death do the heroes, the royals, the braves and trusted men each other
greet

and the Xhosa nation does kill each other for the honor of Thulula.

[Reference:"The battle of Amalinda" by J. J. e.]

Gert Strydom

Thunder (Cinquain)

Thunder;
blue-white energy
flashing downward sizzling,
frightens everyone of blazing
flashes.

Gert Strydom

Thunder Showers In Winter

Sometimes I wonder about the kind of chance
that in the winter here tonight
just before the daybreak
thunder bolt upon thunder bolt might dance
in their blind white glare
when rain suddenly begins to pour down
from a cloudless sky
while blue-white bolts of thunder do report.

Gert Strydom

Thunder Stroke

Outside the office

suddenly a thunderbolt smashed down blue-white,
splitting a tree with bird nests,
blue-white fiery tongues hissed and danced
when it perfectly cleft it from the top
in into the ground, right up to the roots
with weavers that were chattering and cursing.

Gert Strydom

Thunder Touched (Cavatina Sequence)

There is a place with scorched molten earth
near some hillocks
where blue lightning lashes repeatedly
and there it knocks
anything that it can find with its fire,
where some big rocks
draws it somehow on that much higher ground,
that is cleared from anything around.

The sky was ominous grey and brooding,
intensely black
while static or maybe fear made hairs rise,
we did turn back
while some rain, bird egg size hail drilled down;
under attack
of great blue-white thunder that was falling
with a mighty whipping roaring blue sting.

Just in time we reached some safe cover,
we were drenched
while bolts of blue thunder fell threatening,
in fear clenched
were the fingers of both her tiny hands,
as if wrenched
the muscles of her arms moved in pain
while thunder lashed again and again.

Blue-white blazing light fell on closed lids;
her inner eye
remembered decimating scorching
from some times by,
when medical staff unleashed a bolt
let fury fly,
torching some synapses of her own mind,
experimenting they acted unkind.

Gert Strydom

Thunderbolt

As a child I saw lightning
making blue sparks
on the back porch
and running over the iron rocks
into the old house against the hillock.

I could smell the thunderbolts
and it smacked down, much louder
than a gun
and as a small child
lightning did not scare me
and I walked in the rain
in a thunderstorm.

Until a day
where cattle fell dead around me
and then I got the real significance
of thunder

and now they press a thunderbolt
right into your head
and you are belted down
by people with white coats
who look very clinical,
who look at you from a distance
when they press a lever

who look at your fear and disconcertment
without feeling
and I see that you are still alive
and breathing,
when they push the lever again

and suddenly yesterday is gone
and your brain burnt out by half
and you can remember almost nothing
of your childhood days

and they believe

that you are halfway cured
and there's a hell of a pain
that I see in your eyes.

Gert Strydom

Thundering On (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Thom Gunn)

A far off hum breaks the noon time silence,
rumbling thunder
of a manmade kind draws near, grazing cows
pause in wonder,
swallows, some in wheeling flight,
nesting under
a highway bridge swish about in some fear,
as some oncoming danger they do hear.

Men and women sit astride motorbikes,
with legs touching,
in almost a solemn intimate ritual,
everything,
even their black helmets, leather jackets,
is vibrating
to the essence of acceleration
of being in powerful forward motion.

With each other they are most intimate
and personal
as in unison they drive, they throttle on;
impersonal
beyond black visors, jackets, pants and boots;
emotional
they act, are a sheer force riding robust,
their uniforms are covered with dust.

There is some great joy, a sense of freedom;
the wind and sun
are tugging at the very centre soul,
with unknown fun
as they past in perfect control of speed;
as they are one,
with nature in a sudden kind of bliss
that some view as being utter reckless

Man, woman on roaring machines against

gravitation
becomes something more than mere human
intimation,
they are together travelling to their
destination,
next to the road the cows graze at the fence,
the swallows chirp after the inference.

[Reference: 'On the Move' by Thom Gunn.]

Gert Strydom

Thunderstorm

Layers vapour against the window
while the rain
fall for days long without end
and I see forked lightning
like blue-white tentacles
feeling the earth

and here and there
are a few stars
that gleams through the clouds
as if something
is peering from above to below

and I can hear the breath of it
rattling the windows
while it comes nearer

and I wonder if it is urine
or tears
that falls without end
and nothing out of that heaven
can decent to me

but outside the streetlights
glows citrine yellow
and the slippery wet road
shines like onyx

and suddenly the sky is dark
and somewhere I hear a car
breaking and slipping
and hitting another
with a great bang

and suddenly the monster
is gone
while tears
hisses down softly
from the heaven

and sirens come nearer
and higher up in the street
there are flashing blue and red
and white lights that shine up and down.

Gert Strydom

Thunderstorm (Gogyoshi)

The smell of rain hangs in the air,
blue-white the thunder bashes down
as if something ominous are reaching down
and the dogs under the shed do howl in terror
while a thunderstorm drenches everything.

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Gert Strydom

Thunderstorm [1]

I saw the thunder flashing down
and yet another one again,
heard the rain splattering,
suddenly a torrent splashing
from the dark sky

and most people were overjoyed,
some queer chaps annoyed
to have to hurry unprotected to their cars,
hating to get wet
some would have loved to just sit in the bars,
to have another drink or two
but their wives were waiting

and the rain was falling on those I love
and on those that hate me
as a great token from above
coming fair and free
from the hand
of God almighty.

Gert Strydom

Ti Amo

When all rhetoric is gone,
when all of my words
lose their meaning,
even when my poems are gone
then only the glance
my eyes remain
that says how much I love you

Gert Strydom

Till The Depth Of Your Heart

Till the depth of your heart, spirit and soul
you have been a darling to me,
where your full dimensions are saved in my memories,
when I do read the entire world through your eyes.

Gert Strydom

Till The Shooting Ended

The fine press of binoculars against eye,
speech apparatus against mouth,
bodies camouflaged against the ground
made burning stars
fall from the sky.

Projectiles from G-5 howitzer canons
blasting from more than forty kilometres away
crossed the sky
in parabolas adjusted fine
and smashed enemy tank and armoured car
to pieces.

Flames throwing their tongues
orange-red to the sky,
enemy weapons pierced,
a commander with cigar in his hand bended,
enemy soldiers of whom
intestines rained down in pieces
in a moment where everybody
met the maker
and pools of red blood
and shot-out scrap
was all that marked the place of slaughtering.

Envoi

Till the shooting ended,
men stopped dying,
when too many were killed and pierced
and a war on the backside
of Africa was lost
and even the Russians knew
to forget about any victory
and the Cubans returned to Cuba
and never again Fidel Castro
could try and clench his fist round Africa.

[Reference: The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale where South African Reconnaissance Commandos (Recce's) and artillery gun crews played a major role.]

Gert Strydom

Time

Time locks everything at a time
and with time many things heal
and even pain and sorrow disappear,
but it has no sense
of what was before it
and also about the pattern
into which things fit
when it's finished
and is bound to our planet's
twisting around the sun.

Gert Strydom

Time Came To A Halt

and hanged like the watches of Salvador Dali
while you were part of me,
when two people did become one,
were scouting each other's bodies
and lips and fingers
did flutter and dance like butterflies.

Gert Strydom

Time Finds Wings (A Reply To Edward Thomas)

The day is unwilling to break open,
as slices like a orange,
unwilling to let me bite
into its centre, in to its deep core

and time finds wings,
passing ever passing
without me accomplishing
the things that I set out to do
to which I sometimes set my heart to

and I can hardly tell the distinction
between heaven and hell,
between good and bad
as emotions are on a rollercoaster
under the spell, attraction
of falling in love
where it is judged to be inappropriate

and happiness eludes, escapes me,
as well as beauty,
or what I find beautiful and lovely
and am I now harkening to small petty blessings
and have to be content with little things
as if the things that gives meaning to life
are reserved for someone else

and the sky, the veldt the world
of my own heart yearns for more
besides motion, hue and actions
that responsibilities draw,
I yearn for you, for your love
and the blessing of your tender caress.

[Reference: "The Glory" by Edward Thomas.]

Gert Strydom

Time Held Me

(After Dylan Thomas)

Time held me
while I was still young and green
not yet knowing the man
that I was destined to be.

Time held me
while I was forced into war,
even before by law I could drive a car
and from the military

I though I would never be free
and even in every victory
the tentacles of death
had destruction to the inner core.

Time held me
when I went to study at university
met a girl and fell in love
with someone really pretty

and the summer, the sun
the beach and sea
seemed like a lot of fun
as if my life had only just begun.

Time held me
while she had eyes green as the sea
but I did not then see
that destiny had its chains
clasped around me and from it
I would never be free.

Still time is holding me,
clasping my spirit, my body and soul
and while the winter is setting in
it still sometimes feels
as if life has only just begin.

[Reference: Fern Hill by Dylan Thomas. "Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like the sea." Dylan Thomas."]

Gert Strydom

Time Is Setting Its Mark

As a young man I did not know
how quickly the heydays past
and when the summer sun
rose to its peak
in a blue open sky
I taught that even summer
would forever last
and vigour and prosperity
was the way
that life was meant to be.

With time age started
setting in and with the grey hair on my head,
steel grey days came
as part of the way life goes
and in the early autumn
of my years
my wife is still lovely,
flowers still pretty,
work is very scarce,
the country is in shambles
and time is setting its mark.

Gert Strydom

Time Knows Nothing Except

Time knows nothing except
what lies in moments past.
If I could make these moments last
you may know
why I love you
but mere words
are never enough
to tell you.

No explanations really do explain
why there's winter rain
out of season

and what have made
your heart frozen
while the sun still shines

and what have made
your feelings come back again
and the sun go on its way
to another day

and I cannot tell you
and neither do you know
where our lives
are going to go.

Red roses will flower again
and be given to you
by someone

and if I may
I will still love you
and time will know nothing
except to say
I have told you so.

[Reference: If I could tell you by WH Auden.]

Time Passes Him (English Ballade)

His world falls into disrepair,
as if pulled out of the universe,
his life shatters into fragments
he loses his work, his house

chorus:

time passes him
days become weeks, weeks turn into months,
full of lonely evenings
months change into years.

his wife leaves him for a lover,
both of his cars are stolen,
his brown Labrador passes away from tick-bite fever
his black and white cat gets cat-flue

and nothing turns out well,
but he looks at life level-headed,
daily searches for work
and writes poems one after the other.

His motorbike is smashed
from under him by a four by four
and not really mended properly
while he tries to build a life from shoelaces

and when he walks down the street
the sky is pure blue,
he notices plovers on the rugby field
hears doves in the trees,

faces are unknown to him,
he knows no girl in this new town
and he is speechless,
as some are smiling at him

but he talks to nobody,
is only observing,
every evening he has to take the family devotion

and it's a struggle for him

and mornings when the sun rises,
he digs in the garden,
see weeds and grass sprouting out everywhere
and it's as if everything keeps on declining

and still he persists in hoping,
walking the road to town day after day
as if a miracle could happen suddenly,
as if at a time God can untie his life.

Gert Strydom

Time Passes Too Quickly

I feel winter's first cold fingers touching
and time flash by to quickly
as if the last years are waiting on me
and I button my jacket tighter
and know I really need a proper coat
that can rid me of the cold.

I feel winter's first cold fingers touching
and time passes too quickly
and I wonder where I fit into it all
and everything is different from what it once was
and things have gotten other and new meanings
and I am tired of struggling against life
and I feel my winter's first cold fingers touching me.

Gert Strydom

Time Sneaks Past So Quickly

Time sneaks past so quickly
when you lie next to me
and I would like to have it different.

The dark night throws long shadows
that draws fingers over your cheeks
and the intimate smell
of you and me
is like the scent of rain
that brings new life.

You big breasts are pointed and soft
and I feel every time
that you take a breath
and soft hot air
blows against my cheek
like a confession,
that still catches
the earlier passion.

Somewhere in the late night
your whole body
lies hot against mine
and your auburn hair
tickles my face,
while your soft and warm lips
find mine
and it's blissful
to have you against me once more.

Gert Strydom

Time Will Devour (Cavatina)

At a time your loveliness will be gone,
time will devour
the very way that we exist and are,
even our labour
will be lost in a world that is changing;
while you favour
me in thoughts, let us love in our own bliss,
find something special in every kiss.

Gert Strydom

Times

In spring I long
for the autumn's stretched out afternoons
when leaves fall and fall
almost secretive to the earth.

In summer there are times
when I long for the days of winter rest
and in autumn I do remember the spring
which stretches her flowers out wide
and I really want to smell her fragrances

but I can only come to the conclusion
that life does constantly run into a season
and that a person has got to experience
all of the different seasons and times
with someone that you do love.

Gert Strydom

Tinkerbelle Is Back

Slowly a small white dog
steals up on our yard in the street
with big black outstanding eyes
and she watches scared,
at every thing that she sees
as far as she walks.

There's something familiar to her
and the small pink tongue
that hangs out of her mouth
where she stands dehydrated
against the green palisades,
the emaciated small body
on which the spinal cord
and ribs protrude
and the small tail
that wraps into the stomach
tells their own tale
of neglect
and lovelessness
and of people
that has lost all humanity.

My heart rejoices because Tinkie is back
and Tinkerbelle has escaped from somewhere
and I know that there's a Lord
that answers prayers,
but if I get hold
of the people
that had stolen her
I will loose more than just my head
and it feels as if I can kill them
with my bare hands.

Somewhere nearby
there's a lady that sells cosmetics
and my neighbour says
that her child wanted Tinkie
and ten devils,

turn inside my heart
and the Lord
just has to keep me in check.

The front teeth are missing from kicks
and to see the tongue hanging out grudges me
and the vet is wonderful like always
and says that she will be all right with time
and treats her for everything and more
and after more than eight months,
Tinkie is disarranged
and the other dogs
wants to smell her
and my darling and I are happy
because one of our children
is back and there's again
light and life in her eyes.

Gert Strydom

To A Loved One That Died

Very early when I did rise this morning,
I saw the morning star glisten white
and my thoughts went to you
when the twilight was much whiter
and I tried to catch your smell, the heat in the bed for the last time,
but you were gone
and I was trying to resist death
but your presence lingers and nothing turns out right
and when I get your fragrance I realise that you are bound to me.

Gert Strydom

To A Queen (In Answer To Alfred Lord Tennyson) (Pastiche)

Tempered, complicated – O you that bold
send armies from your office to roam the earth
spoiled by charms, power from birth
your deception has been told since the kings of old.

Victoria, - from your royal face,
from your lips to your brow
snobbishness did flow,
without grace, you treated my people base.

And should your weakness, be reported everywhere,
in gossip and jokes in your fallen empire that declines with time
then let this verse, this rhyme
tell of the worthlessness and how without care,

Then – your soldiers made mistakes,
and in a wild march to scorch the earth, women and children did fall
while you sat enthroned behind a palace-wall
while under trampling boots, canon fire the earth shakes –

Take, Madam, these accusations along,
for from your faults my people was buried in dust,
while Englishmen were heathen they could not trust,
your mindlessness, at a time flowed strong,

And as a ruler spoiling blood
you will have a price to pay in the last day!
May children of my nation's children say:
"She robbed our parents from liberty, property and food."

"Her court was impure, her life unclean;
God unleash your power against every vile purpose,
let Your eternal judgment in its reckoning close
against Victoria's descendants, against the queen; "

"And to the men who at her councils met
who knew when to rape, pillage and take

let You of them a example make,
them who bounded freedom, abusing wider yet"

"By shaping unwanted, unjust decree after decree
which made the innocents blood spill
who exercised their own will
and forever cursed Victoria and they will be."

Gert Strydom

To A Really Lovely Woman

(in answer to Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I am scared of your kiss
and the following bliss
but from me
you need fear nothing of this.

I am scared of causing a commotion
while I do set our relationship in motion
as from this there is no turning back
and to love there is much more than just ecstasy
while I am searching for true devotion.

[Reference: "To-" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

To A South African Pilot Of A Buccaneer Bomber

Having jumped at Cassinga by parachute on a huge enemy stronghold
with B-10 recoilless guns, AA-cannons and RPG's they acted bold
the LMG saved me numerous times from a ferocious enemy
while this killing thing made a boy of eighteen feel very old.

After the battle other paratroopers were flown out
and we waited to be picked up, did talk and walk about
when suddenly Cuban armour did appear.
"Enemy battle-tanks, " a lookout did the warning shout.

To our aid came two mirage fighter-jets with guns blazing
and at some of the armoured cars they were firing
as they had already used their missiles and bombs somewhere else,
but their accuracy was amazing,

yet still the battle-tanks unaffected crunched on
with their cannons firing while out of ammo the Mirages were gone.
Firing with the LMG from the hip I was scared as hell
where my bullets did not have any effect and I was not the only one,
while the anti-tank unit went into action I stood with a light machinegun,
when a Buccaneer bomber suddenly did appear out of the sun.

At Cassinga on that fateful day unaware of what his presence meant,
the pilot of that Buccaneer bomber did death time and again defy,
while the Cuban tanks did roll in I fired at them diffident,
the Cuban anti-aircraft guns fired with vicious intent,
but the pilot kept that enemy, the ones that he could hit, under an eagle eye
did shoot out battle-tanks with rockets dropping from the sky
still did drop down upon them into cannon fire when his last ammunition was
spent
giving us, paratroopers, time to with helicopters be lifted off and away to fly
while we did live moment by moment

and to this day that fateful fight, that pilot's bravery
has in my mind not being matched by anyone
when to rescue us to him became a necessity
where valiant deeds time and again by him was done
to help us escape certain death and captivity
and without orders, on his own, to this battle he had gone

had diverted from his original target with a unknown kind of sincerity.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

To A Very Special Girl

Making love
should come naturally,
should be something of passion,
filled with romance

and there should be stars in your eyes,
while they smoulder with lust,
a sweet kind of serenity gracing your pretty face

with a soft burning candle or two
and some soft music playing
but with you my love

I am like a survivor
from a sunken ship,
clutching at driftwood
while the storm
is still gathering in force

and your petite body entices me
leaving me swept out
on a new beach
with eyes clutched shut
after almost drowning

which I still have to explore
to map it in my mind,
to find all the secret spots
and while the night passes
far too quickly
you are torn from me
by time and circumstance

and I see your eyes
glittering big in the flare
of a cigarette
and your smell
and that of the cigarette
fills my head, my heart

while your skirt unnoticed by you,
hinge up a perfect leg
and the liveness
of your slender body
is etched against the night sky.

Gert Strydom

To Arthur Pendragon

Now many centuries after his death
I know that there had never been a king
that on this earth did breath
who by his valour and nobility had my heart rising

as Arthur of Camelot, Arthur of the round table did
and although his sword Excalibur forever stays hid
through centuries his tales remains as the token of chivalry
and somehow there is truth and a kind of magic to it.

Gert Strydom

To Be A Explorer

No other man
can ever feel,
like I do feel about you

and the things between us
is so special and unique
that nowhere else it is just like this.

If not I would have known,
would have heard somewhere
or someone would have told me

how it is to be an explorer,
would have told precisely how it feels
to have new experiences constantly

with a new coast laying
to starboard and how it is
to experience new adventures all of the time,

to experience the swelling breaking sea
that tears at life and brings changes
and how it is to discover a new unknown continent

and the things that are between you and me
causes me to constantly
want to sail through your waters

to the harbour where I can hide
against the storms,
and I want to spend a lifetime with you

when the sea rushes storm-strong
and the waves are crushing down
and also when the water lays mirror smooth and calm.

Gert Strydom

To Be A While With You

How can anything be more intense,
than the feelings
portrayed in your eyes.

The happy innocence
of your smile,
lingers in my heart for a while.

The cheerfulness of your laughter
rings sweet and brighter,
than the morning light.

The pitch and emotions
of your clear voice,
sings like a rippling brook

To be a while with you,
is like turning a day,
from cloudy dark
to bright blue.

Gert Strydom

To Be Back At Home (Italian Sonnet)

To be back at home
while the lovely spring leads the summer on
when the last traces of the cold winter is gone,
when a brilliant blue is the day's dome

when happily the insects and birds do roam,
when not a single thing is lonesome
to me you are the only one
while the months and years do come

while in a flash the happy times pass
and fruitfulness is everywhere
when love has truly found a dwelling place
while nothing stays just as it was
when times seems to be without a care
then our love is divine, sacred, a Godly grace.

Gert Strydom

To Be Extradited

Here I have to jump like a clown
through the hoop
when my aunt and mother
clap their hands.

Scatter papers with paraffin
out on the lawn
to make the dogs defecate
at another place

leave the animals outside
in the rain
while I am cosy inside

but to rake leaves,
to mow the lawn,
to drive to shops,
to take care of the animals
and to pick up their dung
I do not care about
and any reasonable request

and we are busy
driving to my uncle
who has got Alzheimer's
and I hate
to see him now like this

and we are going to make a visit
to my dad's grave
and I am scared
that the old blue car will break again
and the grave falls in further.

Twenty times a day
we have to worship,
look at religious DVD's
and satellite channels
and I have to keep

my opinion for myself

and I wonder if age
makes you to become
hyper religious

still I am thankful
and walk the road
and my mother
is getting old too quickly
and the hour work keeps hitting
without ever stopping.

Gert Strydom

To Be Free

Where ever I must tread,
whatever happens to me
my hope for freedom is not yet dead
and only God knows how things are going to be

and from the start He has given us the will to be free
and even if all hope and courage is turned to dread
of having a life in dignity
His promises God does not forget.

Gert Strydom

To Be Human

restrains us from the animal instinct,
the cruel, dominating overpowering thing
and unlike the lion, leopard or eagle
that has to destroy to live
we take the difficult route
where sincerity, justice, truth and love reigns
and where we deal out mercy
trying to understand the message
behind the intensity of eyes,
trying to find the way
among the intricacy that life holds
and with values and systems of belief
we care about life and living,
rather than dealing out death and destruction.

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Gert Strydom

To Be In The Veldt

(after Robert Browning)

Oh, to be in the veldt while its spring
to see all the wildflowers rising,
to hear the birds, the bees
as they sweetly sing

with the greenness in every grass and leaf,
the blushing colour of the eve
might be the greatest blessing
a beautiful, very great thing.

[Reference: "Home-thoughts, from Abroad" by Robert Browning.]

Gert Strydom

To Be Living With A Deadly Virus (Sicilian Sonnet)

To be living with a virus seems too much.
Even scientists do struggle to understand
how from animals to people it got out of hand,
where no one has known a time as such

but in all of this still you I want to touch,
now right close up to you I want to stand.
I want to be able to take you by the hand,
personally your feelings I want to judge,

for you I want a much better time than this,
still more all of my life you I want to know
in companionship and intimately in bliss,
with you I want to see the setting sun glow,
where now so terribly I do you deeply miss
but in hardship and death some tears do flow.

Gert Strydom

To Be Missing You Like This Again (Sicilian Sonnet)

I now truly wish it to be next to never
to be missing you like this again
but from a virus the world is full of pain
where our love is something that last forever

Almost incomprehensible seems being together
while the lock-down do in its force remain,
but love lasts even if things seems in vain
and this thing fools even scientists that are clever

How do I wish to be so very near you
while hours turns into days and many weeks
where I miss you in all the things that you do
and for your presence my heart continually seeks
where our feelings and principles remain true
and in loneliness tears run down your cheeks.

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Gert Strydom

To Be Us

You are so much a part of me
that I do not have to remember
where you fit into my life
and are not able to forget
my feelings for you

and as each day passes
the small little things
brings us still closer
with feelings that are true.

Loving comes so easily
like rain falling from the sky
and the you and I
are truly blessed to be us.

Gert Strydom

To Be With You Find A Way I Will (Swinburne Roundel)

(For Daleen, in answer to Anna Akmatova)

The time years ago that you did sent me away,
I tried blocking you out in everything that I do
but inadvertently on my knees for you I did pray.
The time years ago that you

were with me and our relationship through,
you thought: back to you I would find a way,
to stay I would weep and plead to continue.
The time years ago that you

made it clear that it was the end, poetry I did write,
I did not want you to know that missing you I do fear,
as if by words you and your actions I could smite,
made it clear

that on the phone I did not want your voice hear
and it was if every word did you back to me invite,
as if still I was telling you that to me you are dear

and the poems did you and your children very much excite:
as if a demonic spell I would incite and seal with a tear
but a shirt that you kept did you with unseen fangs bite,
made it clear

that you do truly love me still to the bottom of your heart
and on a day you returned to me, did my longing heart fill,
where you offered yourself to again be of me a part,
do truly love me still,

while tears of joy and heartfelt feelings we did that day spill
and now where we had been for far too long form each other apart,
you do truly me in every way as the loveliest woman thrill.

I swear by every kiss and touch, by the sun that does the day start,
by that blessed gift of my shirt, to be with you find a way I will.

I bless you for believing and I know you, even if destiny do us thwart,
do truly love me still.

[Poet's note:"You thought I was that type" by Anna Akmatova.I am
quoting Anna Akmatova's great poem here as I think that not a lot of people do
know it.

"You thought I was that type" by Anna Akmatova

"You though I was that type:
That you could forget me,
And that I'd plead and weep
And throw myself under the hooves of a bay mare,

Or that I'd ask the sorcerers
For some magic potion made from roots and send you a terrible gift:
My precious perfumed handkerchief.

Damn you! I will not grant your cursed soul
Vicarious tears or a single glance.

And I swear to you by the garden of the angels,
I swear by the miracle-working icon,
And by fire and smoke of our nights:
I will never come back to you."]

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Gert Strydom

To Become A Soldier (Didactic)

To be a soldier
get your country to call you up
to a place where you listen and shut-up
to defend those whom you hold dear

or join the military at your own choice
and in basic training (boot camp)
listen to the instructor's voice
even if he looks wicked like a devil or a tramp

follow instructions to the letter
do everything physical
and drill and drill
while you hope that things will become better,

as they probably never will
while they train you day and night
and especially teach you how to kill
while staying out of the enemy's sight,

on instruction run from tree to tree,
in full battle dress
and keep going when others are in distress
even if you have got to wee-wee.

If you are up to it, join a special commando unit
or the parachute brigade
while you show them of what you are made
and then really enjoy it.

Wait until they sent you off to war
while you are a different person than you had been before:
a specialist in creating havoc,
in destruction and bloody gore.

Gert Strydom

To Become Old

(in answer to S. J. Pretorius)

Some people's lives are past
in the time of old age
where they do sit on the porch
and others do plant

flower after flower in the garden,
do admire the beach, the sun and blue sky
at the South Coast,
while others do fear of what lays on the other side,

do tell their families their last wishes,
in the afternoons just after twelve go to lie down
as if they do alone wait on the Judgement Day
without really knowing

how long they are still going to live,
while other do go on adventures,
do travel on boat journeys overseas
and do still strive after bigger things,

while others do regret the lives that they had,
while some in retirement villages do remember
their children and grandchildren,
do trust them to the care of God

but there are others that do not understand life,
who silently do go through life,
in poverty do live in squatter-camps,
or do rest in a huts a in poverty stricken existence

or do live in shacks behind the houses of their children,
do eat dog-pellets where their children drive brand new cars,
do want to forget their current life,
sometimes do avoid contact with other people

and in the winter of life
their courage has forsaken them

and in this season their times are measured out
but still they do forgive others

while on their love they are waiting in vain
and it's as if the grave
does sneak nearer and nearer on each day
and they do yearn for the eternal night

where they do perish without being responsible for it
and daily they do pray to God.

[Reference: "Oud word" (Becoming old) by S. J. Pretorius.]

Gert Strydom

To Believe

To believe that God does really exist and is almighty;
has created the universe, each star, planet
and this old earth

that he is able in his Godliness
and that He Himself has formed man
with His own hands,
has blown life into the first humans,

has walked on this earth
as a human, to save every one,
out of nothing else but selfless love

is an action to unlock the heart
with faith as that of a child,
who is not blinded by the adult world.

Gert Strydom

To Felix

The silence is full of peace
without any bird or animal noises
but not ominous
and it's just as if there are no sounds
not even cars, busses, trains
and lorries that drive somewhere,
not even the wind blowing
as you rest in another world
that does not know about any love or pain,
where light and air is missing
and you could not
finish your last hunting expedition,
will never again
look down from the tree branches
to later climb down for some tea
to show your love with your purring sounds.

Gert Strydom

To Find You Again

(for Annelize)

To find you again,
to again be with you
when the dark night comes

and this though leaves me almost dumbstruck
but in wonder without fear
I still hope and do trust like a child.

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Gert Strydom

To Get Old Is A Kind Of Art

Far too quickly time did catch up with him
and with an aged body he stands bended
with a distant gaze in his bright blue eyes.
Out of a cloud a bright ray comes
when the last shadows of the grey afternoon linger
and he thinks about his own inability,
about a life that has been lived and suddenly he is sad
but for his thoughts there is no language.
For a moment a thunder flash is caught upon his retina,
a drop runs down his cheek
when he thinks about his own transience
and in him the great longing remains
when a couple in love runs past
and in the distance he hears the clear laughter of a child.

Gert Strydom

To God All Things In Life Has Transparency (Sicilian Sonnet)

To God all things in life has transparency
even the deadly Corona virus that do kill,
and He knows what makes people deadly ill
at heart in this way He looks at you and me,

do to the core of all big and small things see,
do notice with what we do our lives daily fill,
do know each person's inner desperate will,
do know longings and each part of decency,

He knows the steps we are going to take,
knows the things that lie close at heart,
He knows what makes our hearts ache,
how we do our days close and start,
do know when we are asleep or awake
as of our lives He is an unseen constant part.

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Gert Strydom

To God's Mysterious Ways (Cavatina)

To God's mysterious ways each day is
a great witness;
while the sun rises ruby red, is white,
it does caress
the earth with its warmth and with its bright rays
as God does bless
with rain at its time, He does envelope
the world in His hand, from beyond our scope.

Gert Strydom

To Have A Girl Like You

I remember you coming
to Pretoria station
to say goodbye
while I caught the train
to a military camp
and four months of war.

The clock on the wall
showed that we were
half an hour early
and I bought you a can of Coke
at the café
before we walked
to the right platform

where the train
departing to Cape Town
had just come in
and I carried the brown duffle bag
and was dressed in my brown uniform
with shining boots and beret
and your big blue eyes
had a life of their own.

It was always first Cape Town,
then De Brug (at Bloemfontein) ,
next Luhatla and after that to war
and by then you knew that route.

There was a sad smile on your face
and you were beautiful
in a classical way and slender
and I gave you a hug
and a goodbye kiss
and when that train left
we both waved.

Other soldiers where also
looking and waving at you

and some to loved ones
and another officer said
that I was lucky
to have a girl like you
and the next goodbye
was at Waterkloof military airbase,
but you wouldn't be in it
and I didn't know it then.

Gert Strydom

To Have The Power To Hurt

(after William Shakespeare)

To have the power to hurt and not to do so
when you yourself receive blow after blow
is a Godly kind of virtue, a grace beyond grace
when in adversity someone does colours show

and sheer wickedness is on a face
as an action done nothing can erase
and to have pity, to jump to conclusions slow
is with normal mortal man not commonplace

and not to act at someone else's expense
holds a divine kind of excellence,
when he or she is running riot over you
and to be fair and great and good in every experience,

to be constantly to the omnipotent Lord true
is something that a God fearing person does do

[Reference: "Sonnet 94 They that have power to hurt and will do none" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

To Have You With Me

Although I am really scared
to get hurt again
there are nothing stopping me
to miss you.

Sometimes you give me heartaches
and other times you inspire me
and just so easily
you really know me

and the facts remain
that I love you more and more
and the being away
cuts both of us to pieces.

During the night you are in my dreams
and with the awakening
it's as if you lie against me
and I will give almost anything
to have you with me.

Gert Strydom

To Have Your Own Wheels

When I was a young man
I drove a blue Suzuki motorbike
and went down Marrion hill
at 180 over a speed trap
and I still remember to this day
how the speed cops could only show signs at me
while I disappeared away from them.

Its years later and a 900 Honda
roars under me
and it's wonderful
to feel the power of the iron horse
under me
and the sun and the wind cherishes me,
but to have my own wheels
is the best of all.

Gert Strydom

To Heinrich

It's been many years since
I brushed the red dust
in the bath from your feet
and saw the sweet tender look
in your eyes
placing me somewhere near to
the Lord God

and since I saw you play
your first Rugby match
and throw and catch
a spinning ball

since you progressed to receive
provincial colours, went to Craven week
and were always playing
in the first team
and everything is now like a dream

and at another person's door
you see fatherhood
since you are not mine anymore
and life isn't always fair
and always just what it seems

and you are set free
into your own reality
finding your own way
while you are out there searching for dignity
and becoming the man that I hope for you to be.

[Reference: Walking away by C Day Lewis.]

Gert Strydom

To Helen(English Sonnet)

(to my wife Daleen: Helena Dorothea, after Edgar Allan Poe)

Sweet Helen, you long to be with me,
while we do not live in the same home
and between us lies no great Nicean Sea
where for years a wanderer does roam,

yet your hyacinth ways and lovely face
are from me away like in times of yore,
where you are in a distinct dwelling place
while I do truly love you forevermore,

where you are in the heartbeat of mine,
how lonely I do see you far-off stand,
yet we are bonded by destiny divine,
at weekends live as if in the holy-land:

like in legend you are sweet and fair,
and amazing love together we share.

[Reference: "To Helen" by Edgar Allan Poe.]

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Gert Strydom

To Her Who Once Loved Me

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

Princess, why did you call me
with longing in your voice,
but when you wanted to be free,
did not leave me another choice?

In some of your writings that to me you address
you speak of passed bliss
there are tears and sheer unhappiness
and it's as if you are yearning for another kiss?

It is now running to years
that I have to live with emptiness
and I am brave beyond any fears
but I am viewing any friendship with a kind of aloofness.

Keep from sending love and promises that have to be made,
if your love like the stars at break of day is soon to fade.

[Reference: "To Emilia Viviani" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

To Know With True Conviction (In Answer To Johannes Prins)

To know with true conviction and to believe
that God does exist, is active
in the things that do happen on earth,
to at times ask advice from Him,
as if He is carrying the cares of the world,
may claim the faith of a child
that blindly trusts
but without Him I am blind and shaking
and I know that all things come to nothing.

[Reference: "glo" (believe) by Johannes Prins.]

Gert Strydom

To Know You

(After Rosa Smit)

To know your soul, spirit and flesh,
in the depths of your eyes, soul and spirit
to take you in intimate sincere and honestly
for the person that you really are,
to surround you in my embrace,
when you do bring yourself as my intimate offering,
when passion and desire becomes a principle
and all that I am do pour out into you
when I do completely make you mine,
and this do touch you in a eternal moment,
then you do bring happiness in the day and darkness
and you are much more than just mine.

[Reference: "Besetting" (Occupation) by Rosa Smit.]

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Gert Strydom

To Laugh

(in answer to Herman de Coninck)

A smile is something that changes the world
and it does turn everything around
where a mere moment becomes something lovely and much more
and there is a kind of cordial beauty caught in a moment
as if suddenly a person does see life more joyful and different.

There is nothing that pulls as much on my temper
as a silly girl's giggling over something that I am saying,
as is she does not know if she has to laugh but do claim some attention
as if everything in the world is turned around madly on its head.

Roaring with laughter pulls everything and everyone
for a moment to a standstill,
as if a kind of unplanned revolution is hidden in it,
where others want to know what is seen as so very funny
and when it is comprehended a moment becomes something
that has got a kind of eternal value

where life in its madness does bring a person to moments,
where you do have to laugh and sometimes want to cry with sorrow.

[Reference:"Over drie soorten lachen" (About three kinds of laughter)by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

To Lay Next To You

To lay next to you
and to know that you do truly love me
when the lights of the stars appear in the dark night
have got great meaning when you do not say anything
and lay silent fingers upon my mouth
while I feel your heart beat,
are inside
and can have no consideration over you
when your eyes gleam like fires,
while we struggle gasping,
are caught in each other
and try to reach over the most distant horizon
while emotions gambol
and are caught in moments of pleasure.

Gert Strydom

To Love

Make us like children
to trust without regret
and be able to love
without having to reflect.

That we can look at each other
and only see that which is beautiful
and all other things fade away
and only you and I,
stay magical to each other.

To be able to love
and to believe like a child
that the when
that may come,
will work out
like things belong.

Give that we can trust unconditionally
and love without considering our selves
and truly say the things to each other
that lies deep in our hearts.

Gert Strydom

To Love You

I love you
with every thing in me
and every day passes
just too quickly
as if we are caught in a dream
that comes to an end at a time.

Just where I look
I see you,
in the faces of other people
and in every woman
that walks past,
there is something of you build in

and maybe I am hard wired
to love you.

Gert Strydom

To Love You [2]

To love you is a dangerous thing
and still I cannot stop it,
I only go much deeper into this loving

I am caught in you without words,
while my heart sings of joy and sorrow
with the hope that the things that lies between us
will bring a new tomorrow, will bring new life

and it overwhelms the mind,
when fire burns between us bright, almost unstoppable.

Gert Strydom

To Love You Above All Other Things

To love you above all other things,
to at night lie spooned,
to know the beauty of your body
is a God given gift that I do not deserve.

Gert Strydom

To Love You Is To Play With Fire (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

To love you intensive, sincerely and intimate
is to dare a chance to burn to ashes,
it's an act of the heart not of the mind,
it is something that I can only say in words,
Where now you do lie so very deep in my words
in life you do take me day after day by the hand,
you want to love me to the other side of life
without knowing what is lying ahead.
With you every day does becomes a new big adventure
and even if you are at times as mysterious as the wind,
you do know my joy, happiness and my heartache and grief,
you are in my daily existence in every second and every hour
and still I have faith and trust in you like a child,
you do adore me to the depth of your heart.

[Reference: "Smoke gets in your eyes" by Joan Hambidge.]

Gert Strydom

To Love You More Sincerely (Free Verse Sonnet)

To love you more sincerely
my thoughts do cling to verse lines
and I write a lovely sentence for you
as if you fit into the silences between the words
but you are deeper and much more intense
than even all of the things that are unsaid,
even when I do write honestly about you as a person
it's as if I do not get the right words,
even when the fires of heaven and hell do burn white
love is something that a person cannot really catch in words.
When you do touch me softly and lead me by the hand
and moments do hang in eternity between us,
when your ruby-red lips are soft and sweet and hot
I know about an indescribable connection

Gert Strydom

To Make Something Beautiful

To make something beautiful, I write word upon word in the evenings
I am thinking here and there
sometimes are lost in my thoughts in a labyrinth,
while I am trying to find the way to the right words,
an answer to the problems of life.

Sometimes the curtains of my study rustle in the wind
and I know my country is full of violence and murder
but to the surroundings I keep myself blind,
to make something beautiful.

I write through the night without being disturbed,
sometimes stare into the darkness of the window facing north
and even when the ink of my pen later on tints my fingers
I am still searching for words like an innocent child
who is lost between varieties of ripe fruits in an orchard,
to make something beautiful.

Gert Strydom

To Me A Mere Man It Is Hard To Comprehend

To me a mere man it is hard to comprehend
how she could be a fountain of tranquillity
in whose eyes the depths of love I can see
but at times to her will she wants me to bend

and do test me as if everything on this does depend,
as if I do not have my own ways and liberty
and yet she wants to be bound and also free,
yet with my life hers I do want to defend

although she is the same spirit still
that does become a raging instrument of war,
that in a mere moment wants to destroy
and yet temperate her will and skill
changes from what it was before
when in life she brings me the greatest joy.

Gert Strydom

To Me Forever You Will Be Very Lovely (Swannet)

To me forever you will be very lovely
as all of your love stays true in my heart,
like a unwritten never painted kind of art
as if not a thing can vanquish your beauty.

Constantly you are visible in my mind
while I remember experiences being sweet,
do think about the times when we did meet
and everywhere I do tokens of you find.

During this lock-down I do miss you,
and it's as if everything is suddenly frozen
in situations that was not by us chosen
and I try to remember the small things you do

To me forever you will be very lovely
as if not a thing can vanquish your beauty.

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Gert Strydom

To Me His Presence Is A Mystery

When havoc and disaster came my way
upon a tranquil sunny summer day
I had blamed God for being absent,
of my accusation He was innocent;
He is present in a world of iniquity
and to me His presence is a mystery.

I looked for God, Him I did not see,
His image, His presence eluded me
but I found His tracks everywhere,
in everything lovely His hand was there;
He is present in a world of iniquity
and to me His presence is a mystery

There was great beauty in a lone thrush
singing all the world to a holy hush,
the pattering rain brought along new birth
while He continually blessed the earth;
He is present in a world of iniquity
and to me His presence is a mystery.

Gert Strydom

To Me In This Time You Have Become Much More Dear (Sicilian Sonnet)

My mind soul and body feels bare
while the world do about a virus worry
and for it's spreading no one is sorry
while in the virus is everywhere

where no one did for this thing prepare
but scientists try to draw to them glory
and this must be a very sad kind of story
where in this deeply I do for you care,

to me in this time you have become dearer
and locked-down lost are most of our liberty
while we do about death everywhere hear
and this way of existence is not living to me
while many people are full of great fear
while we are admit a national emergency

Gert Strydom

To Me My Love, You Never Can Get Old

To me my love, you never can get old,
as I saw you when each one
of us were young and now in forty summers hold,
to the same beauty after many years have gone.

It is as if time stands still
and although I might be deceived
and forever will
as in you I have perceived

something exceptional and the same spark,
the same enchanting
that on me left its mark,
in that far off spring and it is still rising:

if love is put to the test,
for me in you, she answers to the best.

[Reference: Sonnet 104 "To me, fair friend, you never can be old" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are

To me you are the woman
that walks up and down
at the traffic light
and smiles almost shy,
when I look up
and still give a view
of her breasts

To me you are
the hunger and pain,
that I hear in the voices
of children in back streets
where they lose all courage.

To me you are
the crippled gum sniffing children,
that swing walk
with eyes without hope.

To me you are the vagrant,
that struggles along shuffling
and worries about the next
sleeping place and food
and smile without teeth
when he gets a few coins.

To me you are the beggar
who stands unobserved
at a busy traffic light,
while cars are streaming past
where nobody knows or comprehends
his despair.

To me you are the drug dealers
who hang out in clubs
and look whom they can still catch,
with their contaminating
deadly poison.

To me you are the street thug,
that brakes car windows with bricks
and steal the valuables of people
and sell it at only a Rand or two.

To me you are the criminal
that steals cars in the streets
and are happy
with the despair,
that he is dealing out unscrupulous.

In reality you are the big city
that gives and takes,
where people live like termites
past each other
and rowed in,
as if others do not exist

To rather stay far away from it all
and to get rest and peace there
at times wants to take predominance,
but I love you
like a husband does his wife.

In you is where
some people still build dreams
and wish and live
and have an own place.

In you I see children
giving bread to birds
and people,
giving money to car guards.

In you are places
where people are making a living
and really help each other
and still I believe,
that in places in you
there are more good than evil.

To Me You Are Awesome And Cool (Villanelle)

(For Daleen)

Reared to virtue in life's sternest school
deep in your heart loving-kindness lie,
in your mind pure principles do you rule,

while destiny have humanity in its whirlpool
and a deadly virus causes far too many to die.
Reared to virtue in life's sternest school

you view yourself as God's own tool,
do help while day after day does pass by.
In your mind pure principles do you rule

and to me you are awesome and cool,
where to love you to the depth of my heart I try.
Reared to virtue in life's sternest school,

to some your actions may be miniscule
but like an angel on unseen wings you do fly,
in your mind pure principles do you rule,

To eternity I will be your lovesick fool
while daily we do live, laugh and cry.
Reared to virtue in life's sternest school,
in your mind pure principles do you rule.

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Gert Strydom

To Me You Are Great, Sincere And True (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

Love, if you know how lovely you are in my sight
how at times I do long and yearn for you in the night
with what great adoration I do look upon you
how to me you are great, sincere and true
how great and wonderful and absolutely right
I do feel when I am in your pleasant company
that you are much more than the world to me
when in your sunny eyes I glance the burning light,
how at times I do long and yearn for you in the night.

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Gert Strydom

To Me You Are Really Quite Fair (Hymnal Octave)

To me you are really quite fair,
beautiful to the eye,
and I love your soft stings of hair
that is blonde without dye,
the kind of clothes that you do wear
and that you do stand high;
nothing does your spirit impair
as life passes us by.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are The Breath

To me you are the breath
that I take almost endlessly
before the time of approaching death
is near to me

and every moment I treasure
your presence that is more than wealth
to me, in its sheer pleasure
and even your health

brings good fortune to anybody
that shares your life
and thus you are a prize, but everybody
in this foul age is full of strive:

I decay each and every day,
since you have gone away.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are The Most Beautiful Woman

How can I catch in a single poem
the scenery that I see in your eyes,
the light that radiates in them,
the starry look that they radiate?
To me you are the most beautiful woman
and even if I could fold my arms
a thousand times around you,
words cannot really hold you.
How do a person describe
a heart that is open for the world
and wants to stop the pain
of all of humans?
Still I thank God
that you do love me.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are The Most Precious And Beautiful Women

To me you are the most precious and beautiful of women
someone that believes in me
while life comes daily with a new kind of omen
and although our love is how it ought to be

still I want to cherish you, and I want to do
the things that will make you happy
as all of my feelings are true
and you are someone really great to me.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are The Person (Sonnet)

To me you are the person
that comes once in a lifetime;
there is a new fire burning in me
in my early years of age,
like a teenager I want to cover you with kisses,
your humanity catches me offside
and now that the years are drawing their lines,
I move nearer to the other side
but there are days that keep lingering
as if there is something more in being together,
constantly my life is getting some serenity
and even with my biggest enemy I have sympathy
while with you I am infatuated
and want to reconnoitre new horizons of love.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Are The Sparkle

To me you are the sparkle when the morning comes,
the innocence that is hidden in every young child,
your love, your presence comes
like a butterfly's fluttering flight.

As if we know each other a thousand years,
you fit perfect and wonderful into my life.

Gert Strydom

To Me You Do Remain (Rubiyat Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

To me you do remain a mystery
and yet the perfect woman to me,
the one I understand and do not,
in whose eyes I do myself see,

the one whom to touch I do long
whose name to me is like a song,
in touching it does ask for more
and this love cannot be wrong

as though decades you do remain
as the one that brings joy and pain
as the one whom I do always love
and in my mind your image I do retain

to drown in you in my mind, body and soul
as you do complete me and make me whole.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

To Me You Seemed More Beautiful Than Any Other Girl

(after Gert Vlok Nel)

On a campus in Summerset West you did look at me
and to me you seemed more beautiful than any other girl
with the sun shining out of your eyes
and I brought you roses, about a thousand times,
tried to write poems to you
and you were in my blood, my head and body.
I did later hear
that you had lost your head on a doctor
with a child coming from that love
and stupidly I thought maybe we could start all over.

but things changed and we did separate
and forever you wanted me out of your life
until a day where your world did fall apart,
when your new husband thought that you were mad
when you did drink some pills
and on the telephone you did sound very sad.
I did later hear
that you had lost your head on a doctor
with a child coming from that love
and stupidly I thought maybe we could start all over.

You told me that you were never untrue,
your glance did fit with you beautiful words,
your body was covered by a flowery sun-dress
and at Sun City it was only you and me
and I remembered the days in the apartment in Bellville
how we did cling shivering to each other in the bedroom.
I did later hear
that you had lost your head on a doctor
with a child coming from that love
and stupidly I thought maybe we could start all over.

But on that day we did nothing
and we did not even kiss each other

and when you did smile my heart did go wild
but in your life there were more than just the two of us
and still my heart was broken.

I did later hear
that you had lost your head on a doctor
with a child coming from that love
and stupidly I thought maybe we could start all over
but with the things of women I was rather silly.

[Reference; "Beautiful in Beaufort-Wes" by Gert Vlok Nel.]

Gert Strydom

To Me You Were Simply Lovely

To me you were simply lovely
while your breasts were well proportioned
the world seems simple and we were free
and not a single further thing is to be mentioned.

Gert Strydom

To Me Your Name Is Almost Holy (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

To me your name is almost holy
as if it has a very deep meaning,
are deeper than the decades that did pass without you,
deeper than the time when we were together
where days and nights between things did get meaning
and the depth of that, which is between us,
of that which could come and be
I want to explore with you and make it still deeper
as without you too much of my life has already passed
and I do know that love is much more
than only a bodily pleasurable thing
where you had trod very deep tracks into my soul and spirit
but I want to discover you anew again
and on all levels learn to love and know you thoroughly.

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Gert Strydom

To Minette

With your lovely face
and bright blue eyes
at any time you could disrupt my life

and a single word made me believe in your love
and your soft lips, the blush on your cheek
and bright blue eyes

really caught me
and the sound of your voice
and your soft lips, the blush on your cheek

grasped my heart
and your soft hand folding around mine
and the sound of your voice

leaves me now only with mourning
and the remembering of how wonderful you were
and your soft hand folding around mine

has been extinguished by destiny, changed to ash.
With your lovely face
and the remembering of how wonderful you were
at any time you could disrupt my life.

Gert Strydom

To Minette (Novelinee)

Far too quickly in you life lost its bliss,
while with time your bright memories does fade,
forgotten is your last lingering kiss
as you have left into a world of shade.
Fragile your smile brought heaven for a day,
too short its brightest angel had been mine
but all joy was at a time swept away
as your heartbeat became a solid line
and from then my life did only decline.

Gert Strydom

To Mother

As years before
my mother nursed me
and this is extraordinary
at the age of forty six
and she prepared meals,
washed my clothes
and did the ironing
and in the garden we toiled together

and in this spring I pray for rainy weather
while new plants, new flowers
and new vegetables are coming to life.

While I write some poetry,
motorcycle to the Internet café
to look for work, to publish some poems
and then again come home
we have tea for two
and although I would like to be
settled down, with a great job once more
a girl who truly loves me, maybe a whole family
I wouldn't have it any other way
and day-by-day she keeps encouraging
and to me is
the most beautiful flower of this spring.

[Written 1 September 2009.]

Gert Strydom

To Much For Me

At times
my work, the church
and to drive in a car
becomes to much for me.

a Girl at work
wants to run away
as far,
as God gave land;
but the water is off
and I just want
to find a toilet.

Gert Strydom

To My Enchanting Wife (Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Anne Bradstreet)

If ever a man knew with every feeling and sense
that he was adored, trusted, respected sincerely
then that is the very way that you do love me
without expecting but honesty as recompense.

If ever experiences have been past intense
while interaction came by selfless liberty
and a woman made a man to be very happy
then such love is immeasurable immense

and that is the way that with you my love is.
If ever a woman was to pure principles true
but knew her husband to his very heart
with magic in every kiss and pure bliss,
then that is the aspects that I find in you
where of me you are the very best part.

[Reference:"To my dear and loving husband" by Anne Bradstreet.]

Gert Strydom

To My First Love (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Ernest Dowson)

It felt like yesterday but was many years ago,
you loved me still;
your smile, your lips, your sighs and promises
did my heart fill;
shattered roses, carnations and lilies
with tears did spill,
while all my many promises were true,
in my way I have been faithful to you.

I have kissed other sweet lips in passion,
meant you no ill
after you had left for another lover;
in tender skill
I tried to exorcise your enchantment;
forever will
probably have feelings that are not due,
in my way I have been faithful to you.

To me your love was as fickle as the wind,
our youth is gone
and somehow still I wish you happiness,
now quite alone
love has left you for all the other men,
I have someone
young and lovely that came out of the blue,
in my way I have been faithful to you.

[Reference: "Cynara" by Ernest Dowson.]

Gert Strydom

To My Lost One (Villanelle)

If you come from a unknown place
from where I am, as if thrown
into my life and we again meet face-to-face

it may be by God's grace
and we may leave the paths well trodden and known.
If you come from a unknown place

wherever it may be, carrying just one suitcase
I will be happy to meet you, if you come alone
into my life and we again meet face-to-face

and if you want to, we can disappear without a trace
be on our own, without anyone.
If you come from a unknown place

and walk into my embrace,
my lost one, come without a chaperone
into my life and we again meet face-to-face

our pasts will be erased
and all unhappiness will be gone,
if you come from a unknown place
into my life and we again meet face-to-face.

Gert Strydom

To My Moslem Friends

If truly great is the love
of God and man,
why do people
kill themselves
and murder others
with suicide bombs?

Why do they believe
that killing the innocent,
will take them straight
to paradise
and a string of virgins?

Rather most religions teaches
that sinners go
straight to hell,
or did somebody forget
to tell them this?

Do they really think
that there's glory in killing
and that this monstrous deed
is a kind of virtue?

Somehow when religion
turns to hate,
God is lost from the equation.

Gert Strydom

To My Mother

Daily she marches at her own pace
and it's sometimes like running the marathon
to prepare food, set the table,
caring, even washing clothes
and hanging them up

and in spite of her own good
she's always willing to help,
even if it really costs her,
struggling on against the rising tide,
she's a safe haven where I hide
against the storm of life

and with every passing year
her end draws closer
and at sometimes it seems far too near
but every day we live on,
keep on aiming for the next one
and I love her and hold her dear
as if the time we have got
will never be gone.

Gert Strydom

To My Mother On Her Birthday

Mother, I am tired to come with empty hands to you
and it worries me that life passes so quickly
but to me you are always available
and sometimes my life is in disorder.
and I keep knocking at your door
and it is with an open heart that you are giving every thing
as never your love does end
when like a mere child you wipe off my tears.
I do not know how to say thank you for a life-time
and its only empty words that I am laying at you feet
but like you I do not know any other woman
and maybe I will always cling
to love that is honourable and sincere
and keeps guiding me to God in a world of darkness.

Gert Strydom

To My Mother On Her Birthday [2]

He had to comprehend every great and good thing
that to our lives mothers do bring
when God invented mothers
and even if my life is full of thorns and twisting

still with sincerity from my heart the song of my mother I will sing
as in this world with all its great thrills and things that are happening
there is nowhere someone as great, as full of love and as kind
as my mother who are always praying

for me and my brother
and for many others
and I do not have the words to express
the sheer beauty of this kind of loveliness

and mother where it's your birthday today
this is like no other day
as you are special
in the most beautiful kind of way

and throughout my life it has been like this
where you do aim to bring great happiness.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

To My Wife (English Sonnet)

Sincere, sweet, bright, lovely and very true
with a will that does not easily bend
as my love the great creator has made you,
to accompany me towards the world's end.

With energy, valour as blazing fire,
as a companion against evil to death
with a strong spirit that never does tire,
that brings some happiness with every breath

you are my teacher, comrade and dear wife
who brings a kind of peace, some tranquility,
who travels with me in a world of strive
with a natural beauty and some serenity

that constantly brings a new kind of hope,
as your love stretches wide in its great scope.

Gert Strydom

To No One I Can Her Compare (Roundel Prime)

She is gay and very lively but lovely is she
and so fine and shiny and smooth is her hair
while in her own ways she does really care
and I do thank God that she does love me

but all of her days she does walk in modesty,

She is gay and very lively bur lovely is she
and so fine and shiny and smooth is her hair

while her personality brings a kind or tranquillity
where she is my fortress in times of despair
and to no other woman I can her compare.
She is gay and very lively bur lovely is she
and so fine and shiny and smooth is her hair.

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Gert Strydom

To Pen You Down

I do not know how
to pen you down
in this few characters on paper
and to try and draw you here and now

with golden eyes cutting through me
by them selves
and lie like suns on the horizon,

with a faith in the Lord
that is straight like pink hollyhocks
or an exclamation sign

and a heart that is softer
than a human
should have

and I do not know
how to burn your image in here,

you with your halo
which only a holy one could have.

Gert Strydom

To Pray (Free Verse Sonnet)

a person does not need icons
of saints, prophets and apostles,
or burning candles or figures
or even a big old cathedral
to go to the Lord God in prayer.
In any place and in any situation
the omnipotent Lord God
and His mighty angels
are right here where we are.
He does notice everything,
even the intentions
that we secretly
do hide or carry in the heart
and constantly is providing for our good.

Gert Strydom

To See You Again

(from Abelard to Heloise)

I can never forget
your words of love, my darling
and those words
do stay constantly with me

and sometimes I dream that you are in my arms,
that you lay spooned against me
but all that I now have got left of you
are your precious letters

and although I am lonely,
sometimes feel extradited
It's your love
that carries me through the lonely nights
and there is nothing more that I ask from life

than to see you again.

Gert Strydom

To Silence

At a hospital bed there are people praying
while they sit on hard benches like those that are harassed
and a pleasant little girl lies unconscious and soundless,
with her face behind a white mask of pain.

There are drops flowing into an intravenous apparatus, drop upon drop,
a monitor measuring her heartbeat constantly
and this picture I cannot forget,
as I see her frolicking past in my thoughts

with blue eyes that laugh full of joy,
like a ray of sun on each new morning,
as a picture of energy
and now she has gone to silence as if death is waiting.

Gert Strydom

To Sing About Your Sheer Beauty (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I wish I could only a moment of your precious time take,
look at your soulful eyes see the dimple on your cheek
where just your face does emotions in my heart awake
and sometimes I feel strong or in your presence weak

where I do not want this magic contact to be ending
where constantly you bring great joy to my heart
as our love to me is a very precious kind of thing
where your true feelings your eyes do lively impart

and it's special when our meetings do occur
I notice the constant swelling of your bosom
as every breath do again and again recur
you remind me of the loveliest blossom

and in words I cannot my feelings express
to sing about your sheer beauty and loveliness.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

To Some People Our Love Is A Mystery

To some people our love is a mystery,
far too suddenly to them our love came
but to you and me it took a life-time;
from the first meeting we were not the same.

Gert Strydom

To Someone That I Loved

I. The odours of jasmine

The odours of jasmine, gardenia
and lavender sneaks in
through the room's window
and it smells like a perfumery

while rays upon rays march over the bed
climbing over your arms, body and legs
while we lie stretched out
close to each other,

ignoring the sounds from the street,
where cars rush by,
the barks of the dogs
yelping at passing strangers,

only when you wake up,
I draw the curtains shut
as we feel the coldness of twilight
and join in body and soul.

II. On the porch we watch the setting sun

On the porch we watch the setting sun,
while sweet St. Anna wine
sparkles in our glasses
and there's an intimacy,
a type of tranquillity

in the experience of early evening
while lights shine yellow and white in the distance,
the bottom of the clouds is almost ruby-red,
the black are already darkening some clouds,
while other remains snowy-white

the darkness catches us
with a full yellow moon
and like naughty children

we sneak into our house,
we sneak into our own bedroom

while joy foams like champagne
we are very intimately together
melting into one body
and while your hand later
still caress my back like a butterfly

barely touching here and there
I realise that you are the best part of me,
with your soft sweet lips
barely touching my cheek,
your hot breath against my body.

III. While the night is being born

While the night is being born,
the darkness sneaks into our house,
sneaks into our bedroom,
a sudden breeze begins blowing

far off against the horizon
near to the Magaliesberg mountains
blue-white streaks of thunder
flashes like canon fire

while we can smell
the scent of rain, of wet earth
on the breeze that is blowing stronger,
tossing the small potato trees to and thro

your face is full of terror
in the light of a lightning bolt
falling just outside of the window
and your eyes look big and white

while I cuddle you close to me
and your arms enfold, wrap around me drawing
me still closer and suddenly
the night is chilly

while big drops of rain pound down,
splashing until the rain pours like a torrent
and we find comfort in each other
melting with passion into one another.

IV. The alarm clock wakes me

The alarm clock wakes me
while it's still twilight
and with the falling rain
the early morning is still dark
as if the night is lingering.

Outside the large jacaranda trees
wave in the storm wind
dropping purple-blue flowers
like a shower of confetti
and the street gleams

while cars drive past splashing
water in a spray
and we have to get ready
for the new day
and quite lazily you stretch out,

drawing me back to bed,
drawing me close to you,
drawing me into your warmth
while our lips, bodies and limbs
intertwine to become one.

V. We agree to meet for lunch

We agree to meet for lunch
in a restaurant just off church street
on a autumn day
on the twentieth of May

and you are smiling,
lifting a glass of red champagne,
when so near that we can feel the wind of it
a tremendous explosion erupts shattering,

shattering the innocent people in Church Street
with deadly sharp pieces of glass and concrete
and I pull you down to the ground
as we take cover behind the small table

where we were eating,
the air is suddenly full
with the sound of people
screaming in pain and terror

and as we rush out,
going into Church Street
and there's blood and guts everywhere
with terrified, screaming, mutilated
and wounded people

where ever we look
and you cry in relieve of escape,
in sheer terror and shock
and the world has gone amok.

Gert Strydom

To Spring (In Reply To John Keats)

When the last impact of winter disappears,
the sun starts to glow bright in its longing,
cold days are dissipated by sunshine
you arrive in your pretty enchantment
with joyful countenance,
in a dashing conquering,
causing everything to sprout new
skipping along like a young child capering,
then you spread you bridal gown out wide
run jolly and overjoyed
so that insects, birds unite with you rejoicing.

Everybody are swept away by your jauntiness
when blossoms are snow white, golden yellow, blushing pink on branches
insects, birds, the wind, the weather are in love with you, are your followers
as if everything in your presence have great joy,
I hear your voice in every whispering
while you hop along, spread your hair and are flaunting
as a girl, slender and pure bringing arms full of love
full of life, full of passion and still young,
you sing the whole day long
drunk with love
stretching your arms out to me, circling out wider.

For you, everybody sings a paeon
the wind, birds and insects sing glad
as if you sweep the feet out from under everything
from the big enchantment, that everything living gets from you
as if your rule will never pass,
suddenly all living things are exuberantly free
and you are so innocent, so without suspicion,
but for me you stay a love child
blinding with your beauty
and even the first rain worships you
seeks pampering from you.

[Reference: To Autumn by John Keats.]

To Stop That Goodbye

There is a girl in Cape Town
who at a time I met
and entranced
a bit later we wed

and only God does comprehend
what made us part
and brought every thing to a end
and froze her heart
with polar snow
and still I do not know,

for she could smile
like a angel
and it was like
the sun rising
and we had a glorious summer

and all of my tomorrows
and yesterdays
I would have lived with her

but youth and passion
had its own way
and there was nothing
that I could do or say
to stop that goodbye.

Gert Strydom

To Summer (In Reply To John Keats)

Season of bright hued skies and great fruitfulness
intimate lover of the raging sun
forever baring fruit in great supply to bless,
from the very beginning your beauty was spun
to supply in sheer kindness
by the Eternal One
as the greatest in beauty, in sheer shimmering
and forever more
a follower of the dainty spring
with sweetness, splendour and fragrance at your core
as spring has gracefully waved you in.

Even children wander stricken through your orchards
in reverence to taste, to smell and your sheer beauty
following the greatest mother, holding you in the highest regards,
but I see thee as utterly witty and past lovely, very pretty
the mature bride that is ever blossoming, ever fruitful
and ravishing, you wade through life, really fair,
always gentle, never reproachful
with the sky, the sun, the wind in your hair
and you make you palace among bed upon bed of flowers
as a immortal queen bedecked in lovely green
fulfilling your duties in the passing hours.

The songs, the joys of blossoming,
are sung in your presence, with thunder and rain
are spent, are swept away, are withering
while you bring forth without pain
and all the elements sing of your great glory
and never like that of spring
with even insects, birds in accessory
your praises sing, with voices that ring
while you rule supreme over your territory
while you feed and heed every living thing
and at your passing, you remain the sweetest memory.

[Reference: To Autumn by John Keats.]

To Sylvia Plath

You had awoken with a burning flame
trying to keep a small universe in your hands
while you turned your eyes to the almighty Father

with words that are unquenchable on paper
you thought about pain, exhaustion.
You had awoken with a burning flame,

to people that did not regard your words
you wanted to give life with all its blemishes,
while you turned your eyes to the almighty Father

until you could not go on anymore
when your courage, your life force started to diminish.
You had awoken with a burning flame,

where you tried to set the fire ablaze again
with nothing further to hold on to
while you turned your eyes to the almighty Father,

you turned your hands to your own life
and it was gone, had vaporise like dew;
you had awoken with a burning flame
while you turned your eyes to the almighty Father.

Gert Strydom

To Teachers In The New South Africa (Free Verse Sonnet)

To fit beautifully into the new political order
and to base outcome on education
you will systematically indoctrinate
Fascistic dogma to children:
that the community is more important than the individual,
that all things rather do belong to the community
and scale down competition and own ingenuity and skill
as if no individuality belongs anywhere,
you will come with a new kind of twisted distorted history
from which the absolute truth is missing,
will hang the mistakes of deceased predecessors around a whole nation
and will hide the truth of Jesus Christ from the children,
you will make bloody-red correction marks on thousands of answering-sheets
and the report of my bright-eyed-child will in revolt start to burn.

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Gert Strydom

To Tell You About My Love (Roundel Prime)

To tell you about my love I am not afraid,
where my lover and wife I want you to be,
as in only you the loveliest woman I do see,
with simple words I come without a serenade

and I will love you in times of peace and hate
but as a knight I have no kind of panoply.
To tell you about my love I am not afraid,
where my lover and wife I want you to be,

and although I have no wealth to be of aid
I will love you all of my life into eternity
and let you live a life that is open and free,
protect you with my life in any savage raid.
To tell you about my love I am not afraid,
where my lover and wife I want you to be.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

To The Beauty

In the change of day and night,
the change of seasons
we see the beauty of Your great light
falling on man for Your just and hallowed reasons.

We witness Your presence in all living things
around us in the majesty of every thing material,
but more so in the sense and sensibility that rings
from love, hope, joy and feelings that are immaterial

and as a writer of poetry I gave my word
to let my words focus on You and in that to be true,
although at times my rhymes cut like a sword
lashing out to where it is due

as Your majesty is displayed in everything
and even these specs called man You find interesting.

[Reference: Hymn to Intellectual Beauty by Percy Bysshe Shelley; Aan die skoonheid (To the beauty) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

To The Border

When I got in at the train door
there were tears glittering in your eyes
and through the open window
we kissed again,
your hands clenched mine,
your image was burnt into my soul
and how you waved
while we pulled away around a corner,

but when projectiles exploded in other armoured cars,
the canon of the Ratel hit with deadly force,
I smelled my own sweat and fear
and I could only see how death looks
and I looked into the abyss.

I were another person without a soul
and you disappeared out of my thoughts
into the naught
and you were wiped out
as if you were in another world,
in another life
and still I stayed
loving you
and the best part of me
was still with you.

[Reference: Na die front by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

To The Crew Of A Shot Out Ratel Armoured Car Of 61 Mechanised Bn Grp

What chance for escape is left where you are caught
by enemy landmine upon landmine,
from the incoming projectile's crying whine
when boys, some only eighteen years old are shattered
in the flash when a armoured car becomes scrap,
even when your bravery shines bright,
what chance for escape is left?

How little remains after that thundering thud
from what can be seen as a life
when through the law service was forced down
upon young men, whose lives were caught up by death,
what chance for escape is left?

Gert Strydom

To The Crew Of A Shot-Out Ratel Of 61 Mechanised Bn Grp (Rondine)

What escape remains when you are trapped
by enemy landmine after landmine,
from the incoming shell's wailing whine;
when boys, some just children are snapped,
in the flash when a armoured car is scrapped,
even if your bravery does holy shine;
what escape remains?

What little remains when thunder-clapped
of what someone could as a life define
when by law military service did confine
young men, whose lives death had overlapped;
what escape remains?

Gert Strydom

To The Crossing Point

Is there somewhere where everything comes together,
where all roads and place join,
where adults gather like children,
when man can find God,
although we wander constantly as if blind,
on a place that serves as a prison,
where earth at times devours everything,
still we search for deliverance from darkness,
on our way to Rome, the Acropolis,
to Jerusalem where we find a cross.

Gert Strydom

To The Enemy 47th Fapla / Cuban Brigade (Fay Slimm Form / Decanelle)

In the veldt they put Cuban soldiers to rest
simply as found
with hillocks unfamiliar under a foreign sky
at each mound,
all kinds of strange animals, birds and pest
came looking around,
after the guns, the earth and grass did cry
in a weeping sound
with lions, hyenas, jackals on a kopje crest,
on stony ground.

Gert Strydom

To The Evening Primrose

There's a flower that blooms snow white,
that only unfolds its petals at night
as if its been charmed by the magical moon
while it hides its face in the daylight.

Its beauty is only known
in times of darkness, when it comes to its own.

You remind me of it,
while I only get glimpses, see you bit by bit
while you do display great loveliness,
display a secret air, when you daily retreat.

But tonight there are stars in the sky,
while in the garden I catch your eye.

Gert Strydom

To The Nile (Refrain Stanza)

(after Roy Campbell)

From time immortal your waters do to your delta flow
while life and living you do to the desert land bestow
where at dusk to roost the sacred ibis do descend
while for fish mere humans do on your water depend
and to some holy the sun does red on the water glow,
while singing rusty pumps do shrill out their refrain,
where vast lies the desert with its burning sand inane,
their selenologues the jackals and hyenas do still know,
while life and living you do to the desert land bestow.

[Reference: "Vespers on the Nile" by Roy Campbell.]

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Gert Strydom

To The Summer Sun (Collins Sestets)

Her sheer loveliness is incomparable,
her close presence is so very able
to outstrip the pain, darkness of the soul,
daily she brings great joy, she makes me whole
and her impact is totally sublime,
as if she goes pass the bonds of time.

Her voice is extremely musical
bringing joy at times that is critical
as she enters with a shadowed footfall
draws shapes and are present on the wall
and her impact is totally sublime,
as if she goes pass the bonds of time.

She comes like the notes of a lost song
with a kind of beauty that brings no wrong,
making birds and insects utter their joy
while only great goodness she does employ
and her impact is totally sublime,
as if she goes pass the bonds of time.

Gert Strydom

To Think Of God Who Is Omniscient (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

To think that God who is omniscient and has got knowledge of everything,
who is from eternity to eternity does not comprehend His existence,
is a stream of thought that is infected with human incompetence
where we that as mortals do decline,
do want to formulate Him and from what He does come,
as if He has to come from something to astonish us with,
where His science is above our capacity, ability and comprehension
where even the most brilliant men are truly stupid
when they are measured against God, His thoughts and science,
or do we now see ourselves as gods that can have contempt of Him,
where constantly he does perform miracles outside of our science,
when He does things by His power when to us it seems far too late,
just as we cannot bring the spark of life to a scientific formula
and this existing thing does not jump into the hands of man.

[Reference: "IV Onverstaanbaar is die gedagte: 'n wese"
(incomprehensible in thought: a being)by M. M. Walters.]

Gert Strydom

To Time (Rubaiyat Sonnet)

Without human control it moves on
and soon a day, a night, a week is gone
while no human science can make it pause;
or has capacity to turn time to stone.

By its own accord it ebbs and it flows,
if by divine providence it goes
through the ages of man into aeons
moving through times of happiness and woes.

Yet there may come a final end to it
when in the Master's hand its passing fit,
when with Godly power He deems it to stop
and seconds going forward bit by bit

will in earthly dimension be no more,
when the planet turns to be like before.

Gert Strydom

To True Heroes

Under heavy fire from the enemy
into the landmine field they went,
two men went into that deadly place

to extract a lost tank,
and in they went again
to bring back
a wounded man.

Sometimes officers lead the way
scorning death in facing the enemy
and true heroes were they both.

Gert Strydom

To Truly Love Someone Is Maybe Very Brave (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Where you wander distant under the same sun
through your long hair blows the evening breeze
while in my heart you are the only loving one
and for you I would have sailed the seven seas

even if in a storm the small vessel did rock,
even if I did not know what was up ahead,
even if brutal waves on it did smash and knock,
even if the sails were ripped to only thread,

and to truly love someone is maybe very brave
but I am only a poet writing simple words down
where my life jerks up and down on destiny's wave,
in the tempest I still want you to be my very own

and maybe our story is like that of Heloise very old
but like a drowning person onto our love I do hold.

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Gert Strydom

To Write A Poem (Sonnet)

Silently, silently thoughts do sneak in into my lines
with a word sometimes a verse-line that does begin
as everything is singing their own praises and about a own existence
where you can fabricate nothing but can only write the absolute truth
with beauty, the abyss and the dark-cut that do stand as a kind of rapture
as if writing does exist in all things that are, that had been and which is coming
are exploding like pods that are shooting out seed
by themselves do carry messages that curtail and admonish people
as if it is spying on all of life in what it really is,
do give a safe harbour and a fortress to the oppressed,
do take hold of diacritical text to accentuate and to de-emphasise
over the fertility of a wide area,
as if words are rites that do destine things for the near future,
that sometimes does talk with a soft or very loud voice.

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Gert Strydom

To Write Poetry

(after Gail Dendy)

In front of me lies another blank white page
and a poem urges me to write it down,
to write exactly like life is,
to write and tell the absolute truth,

to avoid politics and to spell out oppression,
to tell about the things that comes from the abyss,
about hurt, pain, death and evil things,
also to sing about bliss and happiness,

to sing about nature and the beauty of it,
to rejoice about love and the one that is dear to me,
in the way that I see to give people a glance
to warn about coming events

and where evil is I am not politically correct,
but do expose things like they really are,
write about my experiences in the bush / border war
about businessmen defrauding their employees

but at the back of my mind nibbles the opposition
that argues about the forms of poems that I do write in,
are the millions of eyes of people
that does not want to know about the harsh things

and I am urged to write about God,
about my own life and my place in the world,
yet my words do expose my private life, and me
turns the government's regime against me,

brings its agents to my doorstep
and to be free from the thoughts that do come
means to write them down,
to bleed my soul out with words on paper.

[Reference: "To write or Not to write" by Gail Dendy.]

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Gert Strydom

To You (Persian Quatrain)

Tatters of colour do cling to you almost whimsy
I do notice your hair, your eyes that gleam happily
I know your dearest perfume's odour
and when the world wants to devour me you do love me.

Gert Strydom

To You I Am Attached

To you I am attached
and our love is never only common,
it becomes something that never does lapse,
it expels the great longing

and sometimes its intensity scares me
when continually you look more beautiful.
To you I am attached
and our love is never only common,

it's much deeper than any other yearning,
when you look at me with sunshine glances
you do look really glamorous
and to me you are of critical importance;
to you I am attached
and our love is never only common.

Gert Strydom

To You I Give (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

To you I give blood-red poppies
that carries my love before they do wither
and a pretty flower is in each cup
but just like you they are timid, coy and pretty
and later you will have to throw the lot away
but still the message that each one carry do remain
and lilies noble and whiter than milk
will maybe also at a time lie scattered
where I do believe that you are beautiful, sincere and noble
that passion and holy things comes in you to be fulfilled
that I can share a whole life with you from soul to soul,
for you my feelings are known and no secret
and to me you are far more precious than any flower
for my existence you are entirely essential.

Gert Strydom

To You My Unborn Child

To you my unborn child
I will learn the songs
and read the poems
that tells about the honour of this nation,
I will teach you a national anthem that is trampled,
songs of praise to the omnipotent God
and tell about a people over whom God holds His hand

and if later you want to emigrate
to another land
and live under another flag
and have an antipathy to being an Afrikaner
then you will by your Afrikaner ethos know
about people that had been true
to their country and to God
and there will be no renunciation in you.

Gert Strydom

To You There's An Amazing Kind Of Grace (Novelinee)

To you there's an amazing kind of grace,
as your eyes shines radiant, words they do tell
as the hot sunshine falls across your face,
you are happy, are being loved well,
suddenly you look up and smile at me
are brightening a very lovely day,
you shake your silky hair, let them go free
in strings of colour, in lovely disarray
and I love you, I wonder if I may...

Gert Strydom

To You Who Always Are In My Thoughts (English Sonnet)

If our sweet love could not be compared,
if it could not by anything be quenched,
to love you so then I tried, I dared
without expecting to be recompensed,

maybe at the start I was much too bold,
believing absurdly in sincerity
and I told you clearly what my heart hold
but now I need more than just charity

that with each other our intimate dealings
will be mature, be bound by the same spell,
that there will be magic in your feelings
not only kissing and wishing me well:

for far too many years you have been free.
If you honestly love me, then tell me.

Gert Strydom

To You Who I Do Really Know (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

To you who after years I do know intimate and thoroughly
I come with my ideals and also all of my dreams,
right through the chilliest whirlpools of life
I come to once again win your heart,
as if we can scout a new future together
and with me you are happy and content,
in your heart I again find a place to live,
and in all of life I want to pamper you.
You are like the red pits of a ripe pomegranate,
the soft flesh and juice of a summer-fig,
the red-cheek-peach of which the syrup runs,
you are the one that do talk about everything to me,
you are the woman above all other women
and with you the future is beautiful and open.

[Reference:"Tweede huwelik" (Second marriage)by D. J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

To You Whom I Love More Than Myself (Sonnet Redoublé)

I

You to whom my feelings are obvious,
may God guide you
(even if I am being presumptuous)
through every day, keeping you true,

in everything grant all that's good,
make you sure
in every day, temper every mood
great and pure

and may He be in everything
that you put your hand to,
giving His greatest blessing,
may you be excelling in all that you do;

once I saw you jolly and free,
I saw you long-legged wading into the sea

II

I saw you long-legged wading into the sea
the epitome of youthfulness,
with no frivolity
and you were deadly serious without meekness

entering as if approaching a holy living thing
leaving the shallows you were going in deep
and it was if you were searching for something,
something from the deep beyond that you could keep

and not going to plunder, but were hunting for a holy relic
something with great wonder,
not to hang around your neck like a charm or some garlic
not made by man, or from the elements like thunder:

I watched you searching for something beyond man's affairs,
from our lounge chairs.

III

From our lounge chairs
across from the fireplace
there was passion on your face
and it was sweet sincerity without putting on airs

where we were living out our lives, our own affairs
with depth and sweetness in every embrace
with love and true grace
in the presence of the One from upstairs

and the firelight sparkled in your hair
while outside it sieved down rain
with a crimson glare and you thought we were being stalked,
with something reflecting against the windowpane
and on the other side something was there;
we went out and we walked.

IV

We went out and we walked
along the lane from oak tree to oak tree
and holding hands we talked
and as far as we could see

the lane ran right into town,
on the little knoll, were only you and I
and we walked down,
were in love and free and above us the sky

and that spring
you had blossoms in your hair,
everything was flowering
and you were past beautiful fair

we were looking at some freshly painted art,
at the restaurant where we greeted to part

V

At the restaurant we greeted to part
and there was something weird, something touching
as again to you, I had lost my heart
and it was totally amazing

and I am still trying to think
what had happened with our goodbyes?
At what had happened with our last drink?
With your burning, aching-bright sea green eyes.

Still love slumbers on and you have been gone
for more than twenty years
as the true one
and I have cried so many tears

when you broke my heart,
you were my first sweetheart.

VI

You were my first sweetheart
astonishing beautiful and gay,
I had feelings that we would never part
that we had something that could not pass away,

while we walked up into the hill
on a small track meandering,
you following out of love and freewill
and a gentle breeze was whispering

through the trees in the wood
and the forest had a great smell
and life was great, far better than good
and everything was far better than well

while you loved me gaily,
there was sweet serenity.

VII

There was sweet serenity,
at a rock ledge
the feeling of being totally free
and we were almost right on the edge

and passion flared up between you and me.
When I found a disa, a wild orchid,
you were utterly pretty
and the flower's beauty was quite vivid

being deeply blue hued
and I gave the flower to you and we were together
your eyes glimmered true
and that moment could have lasted forever,

we waited until late saw a white dove;
there was a golden moon in the sky, my love.

VIII

There was a golden moon in the sky, my love
and the wind was blowing again
with sparkling stars in the sky above
and later there might have been some rain.

We are far apart, my love,
with more than a thousand miles in between
but in my heart's alcove
like you another has never been.

I do not know how the night looks, my love,
in the place that you call home
if you also hear the cooing of a dove,
as tonight we are both alone

and somehow my heart is full of pain,
I am wondering if I could do it all again?

IX

I am wondering if I could do it all again
visit you like I did then,

motorbike to you in the rain,
bringing you flowers from a glen?

Through other relationships
that has brought an own meaning
my life have gone with rises and dips
like it did from the very beginning.

Now it's somewhat strange
to know you and not to know you at all
and our lives are different as if rearranged,
in things big and small

but we can make it up in many ways,
even if we are absent for days.

X

Even if we are absent for days,
for weeks or months without end
and your loving rays
that folds over me becomes spend,

even if destiny twist our lives
or even a demon's rage
is all that nature gives
and destruction be our wage

then still in faith, truth and trust
our love can conquer time and space,
past this world of stone and dust,
past the abilities of the human race

with feelings finding a way to pave,
taking a honeymoon, being brave.

XI

Taking a honeymoon, being brave
driving somewhere up through the hills,
while for each other we still crave

experiencing new things and many thrills

might turn things between us back
to what it was supposed to be
if to our lives we find a new track
where you share your life with me.

Time have swept past much too fast
while between us remain great memories
and I know we cannot relive the past,
turn back time, which feels almost like centuries

and maybe your feelings are somewhat wavering,
what's in the remembering?

XII

What's in the remembering,
about the first passionate kiss,
about the first time in bliss,
about every single thing

that we were doing
about feelings that we could not dismiss,
that the university tried to make their business
looking eye to eye in the wooing,

but then we were aflame
with something much more
than passion something with sincerity
that hit to the heart, went to the centre core
made us explore the intricacies of love,
but at a time I thought you did not like me.

XIII

But at a time I thought you did not like me
while you looked at me in a strange way
and I was more in love than it suited me to say,
to myself I promised to let you be

when at your car we met and you set your long hair free
and I wanted to walk out of your life and away
on that particular day
but sparks in your eyes I did see

and I realised how much I had misread you
before your lips met mine
when I was totally charmed
and the bliss was remarkable and true,
while lips were touching with something divine,
never was I so overwhelmed.

XIV

Never was I so overwhelmed
with love so sincere, so complete
and my eyes, body, heart confirmed
my feelings when we did meet

and your face did glow
as if you had experienced the same thing
and then I did not know
if it was a curse or a blessing

and when I lost you the sheer pain
of how much I missed you, wanted to kiss you
made me think that I would not love again,
turned my whole world to being blue

but here we are again the two of us,
you to whom my feelings are obvious.

XV

You to whom my feelings are obvious,
I saw you long-legged wading into the sea,
from our lounge chairs
we went out and we walked.

At the restaurant we greeted to part,

you were my first sweetheart,
there was sweet serenity,
there was a golden moon in the sky, my love.

I am wondering if I could do it all again,
even if we are absent for days,
taking a honeymoon, being brave,
what's in the remembering?

But at a time I thought you did not like me,
never was I so overwhelmed.

Gert Strydom

To You Whose Name Is Noble

(in answer to Vernie Plaatjies)

Past the blue sky, moon and stars
I long for you
when the morning breaks
when the night spreads out her cloak

you are still far too distant
(even when you are right here with me)
as if life, destiny are in control
and as if I am extradited to seasons

as if even love, the act of making love,
the beautiful deep adventure
that binds us both together
may be devoured by the schizophrenia,
the madness of our existence
and as if everything with time falls apart, are set to decay

but still with every breaking day
when the sky folds her dull blue cloak around us
I do cling on to that which is between us
to the hope, the knowledge
that love is a stable thing
coming out of the hand of the omnipotent Lord

and just where you are
you do know how I feel about you,
how full of deep meaning
my words are.

[Reference: "Gedig vir S" (Poem for S) by Vernie Plaatjies]

Gert Strydom

Today

Today you spent
your day with me
and life was great and we were happy.

Some shops caught your eye
and there wasn't any parking
at the fruit and veg,
but your beautiful smile
and the look in your eye
truly blessed me.

Today I heard you say
that you love me
and I knew that every word
came from your heart
and I want to be in every memory
and help you to dream
of what life really can be.

Gert Strydom

Today An Angel Did Decend Next To Me

Today an angel did decend next to me,
she took love out of her heart for me
it was in all small things that she did and said
and I would want it no different
when at times my life do fail
and even when my own plans lie in wrecks
love does continually radiate from her face.

Gert Strydom

Today I Am From Iraq

The monument to the ruler is pulled down,
trampled under foreign feet
and today you will meet me in the street
and today I am a Muslim, from Iraq
although my blood
is that of a different nation.

Once a child, a man in the street
who had been a soldier,
forced into the army of the fatherland.

Here my house had been bombed
into ruins, shattered like pieces of glass
and where my life once was,
my farm, my business
everything is now looted, busted or broken
as a token of the foreign invasion
and humiliation.

[Reference: Babi Yar by Yevgeny Yevtushenko.]

Gert Strydom

Today I Am Sixteen Again

A statue stands at the gate
of the school,
marking a place of distinction
where children get the highest grades
in the country
play rugby, cricket
and golf at international level.

Today I am sixteen again
and have to go home
as the school has been closed
because of intimidation
by union thugs, from a union
to which the teachers here
do not belong.

Five minibus taxis's stopped
in the school yard
and black adults got out,
threw bricks through windows,
set the rugby, hockey and soccer fields alight
by splashing gasoline
and the police do not intervene.

The principal is scared
about our safety
and although the teachers here
are not on strike,
school has been cancelled
and the country is going to the ground,
falling to pieces
while a union is striking.

Gert Strydom

Today I Find Myself

Today I find myself
in a situation with a woman
who displays great hate
that phantoms unpredictable
and I cannot understand
and maybe brotherly love
and selfless deeds
and gentleness
in the face of rage,
will slowly let
the insanity of mindless madness
ebb away.

Gert Strydom

Today I Lay You Off

Your eyes that look through me
will not anymore
look into the depths of me.

Your smile folding soft
around the corners of your mouth,
the way in which you throw
your hair back,
your own walk
with which you walk in
and everything about you
that are own to you
I now swear off

and lock the safe
of my heart
and throw away the keys
at a place
where you cannot find it again.

Gert Strydom

Today I Lie My Yesterdays In A Bottle

Today I lie my yesterdays in a bottle
from which I can shake memories
as it fits me

and there are things catching moments,
letters of lost love
from which the perfume still comes,
photographs of other times
when the world was a better place,
military badges and pins of a war
which the country now wants to forget

¶Envoi

and I wonder how you leave behind your life
piece by piece like this
when you know that everything in a way
still has meaning.

Gert Strydom

Today I Missed You

Today I missed you more
than I thought possible
and the missing
wasn't of your body
and not being able
to make love to you.

I missed your company,
the way that you sometimes frown
at the bright light falling on your face,
the way that you throw your head back
to get the hair from your face,
the way that you blow
smoke out after
sucking a cigarette
and still something lingered with me
as if in a way you were here.

Gert Strydom

Today I Saw A Man

Today I saw a man,
probably a grandpa,
standing with a short shirt and pants
in the sun
while life passes him.

Somehow things went terribly wrong
and he was almost stripped naked
and burnt red
and while we talked
he left a deep impression
on me.

Other Afrikaners avoided him
like the plague
too scared
to also get something of his misery
or even to share
a rand or two with him.

¶Envoi

There were already clouds
hanging heavy and black
in the sky
and around the corner
where he sleeps at night
there was nowhere
to really find some shelter
against the cold, whether and wind
and for a moment
his pain blinded me
and I asked myself
why life devours some people
without cause
while robbers drive in expensive cars
and sometimes live in palaces
and still he witnessed
that the Lord is great
and still cares

but things were getting dismal.

[Reference: The South African monetary currency is the rand.]

Gert Strydom

Today I Saw An Old Man

who is dear to me
and whose thoughts
age tried to wipe out
and he looked at me
trying to comprehend.

There was still
some intelligence in his eyes
and finally when he realized
who I am
his heart reached out
and his hand was still warm.

My heart could have broken
a thousand times
while I saw the damage
that Alzheimer's had done,
but there was a smile
on his face
before we left
and his mind
wasn't totally gone

and I saw the struggle in him
against forgetting
trying to reach beyond
what life would let him
and still trying
to be himself
and heard him pray
believing that God still helps.

Gert Strydom

Today I Saw Seagulls

Today I saw seagulls,
six hundred kilometre from the sea,
hunting like tamed ravens or tamed crows

in the parking area of the shopping centre,
flying screeching, on a strong wind
looking for food.

Some were hovering over rubbish bins,
wondering about the contents in them,
some dive-bombed children

who were eating grilled chips
and from the air
menacing grabbed packets
right out of their hands

reminding me about people
who thrive on rubbish dumps,
who live from collecting
from dustbins,
set out for the garbage men

and in a country
that is going to hell,
that is falling apart, turning into the third world
even nature adjusts to it.

Gert Strydom

Today I Stood At My Father's Grave In The Rain

Today I stood at my father's grave
in the rain,
took a few photographs
and still it was difficult
and strange to say goodbye
and like always
I would have wanted it different.

From my childhood days
I cannot let animals
and people go
and the loss wrings through me.

He's is already buried for forty three years
and still I miss him
and cannot get answers to reason why
destiny knocks some people down
and let other be.

Gert Strydom

Today I Walked Deep Into The Unspoilt Veldt (Italian Sonnet)

Early today I walked deep into the unspoilt veldt
while grass and bushes and flowers still had dew,
where in this summer everything seems anew
and right there the loveliest wild lily I had smelt,

five cupped pink-white flowers the stem stoically held,
it was the first that on summer its fragrance threw,
where graceful among some thorny bushes it grew,
amazed that the night's hail did it not to bits pelt

that sweet wild flower did me of you remind,
in my heart and mind you did fit the picture well,
in sheer beauty so much of you it reminded me,
among the thistles and thorn-bushes it seemed kind,
as if no refined cultivated flower could it excel
and there growing very vividly wild I left it to be.

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Gert Strydom

Today I Want To Pray

to love you much more,
that each new day
be much better than the one before

and are begging that God will be
constantly with you
that our love will last eternally
and that it always will be true

that I will love you as a man,
to the very best that I can

Gert Strydom

Today I Went To A Church

On a day I went to a strange church
where a band plays with drums and guitars,
people stood with their hands streched out against the walls
wanted to share your spirit right there with me.

On a day I went to a church
where a godly messenger
did embrace me tightly
but that man is a total stranger to me.

On a day I went to another church
where a man with a black cassock
looked like a bat
preached that you are dead, not that you did rise again.

I'Envoi

Today I went to a church
where people do have your true light
(that is written in your holy word)
and still they are accessory

to treading each other into the ground,
to painting one another black,
to draw out the whip and lash out drawing blood;
omnipotent God, my loving Lord, why?

Gert Strydom

Today Is Autumn, Winter And Summer

Today is autumn, winter
and summer
pressed into one day.

The wind tosses leaves
all over the lawn
and brushes against
the windows with it.

Big raindrops fall
from a grey sky
and the cold
grabs at the thin
summer clothes
and the earth
oozes water
of day after day out.

Suddenly the sun
shines again and it gets hotter
and still hotter
while the blue comes through
as if nature cannot really decide
what season it is.

Both cats are out
as if on patrol
after the rain,
combing the grass
for insects
and then climbing trees
trying to hunt
in search of prey.

Gert Strydom

Today My Heart Is Full Of Joy

Today my heart is full of joy
and while being mature I again feel like a boy
with all of the splendours of the world at his feet
as my darling, my beloved, is with me
and between us there is a kind of sincerity.
Although other women at time I do meet
they do me at times annoy
and I see clearly through each scheme and every ploy
as they do mean nothing and from them I am free
and do always long to be
with the one whom I do adore.

Gert Strydom

Today My Heart Rejoices

like a bird in full song
with its throat throbbing
and it's almost the beginning of spring
and as the day goes along
everywhere there are joyful voices

and it's the time that my love and I
celebrate our wedding day
and I pray that our love do remain
throughout our lives in happiness and pain
and that everything that I do or say
just brings more happiness as times goes by.

Gert Strydom

Today People Are Not Interested

Today people are not interested
in a creator God
and an angel that does protect with a flaming sword
while they are tied to the depths of evolution.

Even Jesus Christ to whom the Old Testament does point,
of whom the New Testament is full,
His death and the cross does not matter
according to some historic doctrines
and so called knowledge.

Still many people do believe that demonic powers do exist
while others wait on the Cosmic Christ (Satan) to appear
as if he is the saviour of the world
and in secret they go ahead with their works
while they do try to get rid of the Christ of the bible.

From the time of Simon Magus
agnostic doctrines come
and today theosophical people propagate their outlook
with views of blasphemy.

There are people that lecture at theological seminaries
at universities
almost like at sewers of blasphemy
do teach curates about a god outside of the bible

and still they do profess that they are Christians
while they do remove Jesus Christ as God out of the bible
with they break their bond and relationship
that strays away from Him.

Gert Strydom

Today The Doves, Weavers And Sparrows Are Silent (Couplets)

It's so hot that it under the sun it feels as if I do melt
while thunder comes in the afternoon and full of flowers is the veldt,

in pastel-colours cosmos appear everywhere on the ground,
a light breeze blows through the trees while birds are around

but today the doves, weavers and sparrows are silent
while vapour from the tar rises and that it's normal I do pretend,

even at the neighbours that are always jolly in the street
a deadly knowledge lingers that this virus do every person meet,

that this tiny unseen deadly thing comes to you and me
and my darling, today I pray to the Lord God with every person to be,

that a wonderful time will come and that the Lord will act in grace,
that again we will be together and be able to embrace,

that life will return to how we do really know it
that I will be able to pamper you and our darling-grandchildren bit by bit

but much more that we will always remember in what we say and do:
that God is past the bitter end still omnipotent and true.

Gert Strydom

Today The Eastern Horizon Is Yellow Gold

Today the eastern horizon is yellow gold
and buildings are framed
like pieces of a puzzle
against the sky
in the way that they fit into Pretoria.

a Few doves pass above
and it looks as if the Jacaranda's
are already getting life
, and I see the first green leaves appear,
but some are still stripped
like skeletons against the air.

There's a white taxi
that drives reckless
and cuts in in front of us,
to stop a hundred meters further
in the middle of the road
to pick up someone.

The sun becomes a white-hot ball
and too bright to look at
while it climbs higher in the air
and the morning gets direction.

Gert Strydom

Today There Are People

Today there are people
who with Gnostic heresy as history,
with what they see as science
wants to make Jesus Christ's salvation,
His death on the cross into nothingness

and so they try to strip God from Jesus,
making Him just a mere man,
they disregard the Holy Bible as only myth,
try to throw Christian teachings into the abyss
while they try to experience spiritual bliss.

Slowly but surely they are opening the way
for the teachings of theosophy, spiritualism
and new age into the Christian church,
are preparing the way for the cosmic christ,
pantheistic beliefs and the age-old lie
of man being like God,
reincarnating and being endless.

Gert Strydom

Today You Are A Part Of Me

(for Annelize, in answer to Stephan Bouwer)

Today you are a part of my great healing
where former loves have already caved in
as you do resound in my heart & soul & spirit
where I do try like a camera in my memory bank

to catch your own sunny-wide-smile for a moment
as if timeless it can later hang in my thoughts

as if every glance & nod & wink can leave me breathless,
as if the sound & tone of your voice will never leave my thoughts
I do become by your mere presence short breathed
as if the beauty of your countenance

brings a kind of magic to my life,
as if you do jump right into my thoughts

& your slender legs & and breast do entice me,
I cannot stop you from coming into my thoughts,
the way that you do throw your hair back,
the features of your eyes & around your mouth is angelic lovely

& that you do truly love me & I do really count for you,
you & your friends & nobody have got to tell me

as you are the same from far & middle-distance & near & up close to me
& your humanity & character & intellect & attitude do remain
right through years just the same as if nobody can stand in your shoes
& your lips do remain always gleaming & soft & supple as if they want to receive
kisses

and I cannot lock you out of my life
& I want to include you in everything, with which I am involved,

to know you in all of my joy & in my heartache,
do want to give you a key for my car & my house & my heart,
together with you dream the magic dreams & build a happy & good life
& I do only trust you with my deepest thoughts & secrets.

[Reference:"Vandag sweer ek jou af" (Today I swear you off)by
Stephan Bouwer.]

Gert Strydom

Today You Are Beautiful

Today you are beautiful,
more pretty than on any other day
and if you want to find fault with these words
then you do not see how I see you laugh.

Today you are lovely to me,
more noble than any flower
and on such a day I thank God
that you do surprise and astonish me at times.

Gert Strydom

Today's World Is Filled

Today's world is filled
with sadness and hunger
and some are poor
and without any food
and some are deadly sick
and dying from Aids.

Today's world is filled
with gladness and overwhelming riches
and some have cars and houses
and live like kings
and wait for the opportunities
that life brings.

Somewhere the rich and the poor meet
and I pray
that somehow some sanity
change the way,
that destiny play its game
and that everyone
will be a brother
and a sister and a son
to each other.

Gert Strydom

Toddlers

When it comes to playing in the dirt
you will find children everywhere in the sand,
but at bathing time every toddler is in rebellion.
When it comes to playing in the dirt
children build astonishing roads and dams
and with soldiers they want to free each other.
When it comes to playing in the dirt
you will find children everywhere in the sand.

Gert Strydom

Together Time To Spent (Balassi Stanza)

Through the woods we both went,
together time to spent,
as we walked in the hills
we saw the deep blue sea
were somehow quite happy
your hair was like daffodils
had a bright yellow glow
such bliss I did not know,
forgot about all the ills.

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Gert Strydom

Together We Both Do Belong (Hymnal Octave)

Together we both do belong
like the sun and the sky,
and like the sweetest kind of song
through all its notes does fly
through this great life we move along,
with true love you and I
grow near and cannot go wrong
as time passes us by.

Gert Strydom

Together With You

Together with you I have experienced
sunny and rainy days,
have lived through many summers, springs

and autumns but now it's the winter of my life

where stripped bare like a skeleton
my branches are in a slumber
still reaching up for the sky

as if another summer with its hot sun will come again

and during this chilly winter rain
that is falling out of season
it's as if it is whispering things,

about the hereafter that will come,

as if it has tidings
and to die on an icy night like this
with no regrets of how life was

would be something simple and tranquil

but then there is much more to life than only this
and I do remember the hours of passion and bliss,
the spring with the flowers awakening

even before my own leaves

but the sad wind does cry through my branches
as if it is howling about previous summer-days
that now is forever lost

in a place from where there is no kind of return

and I want to love you even past the limitations of death,
to be with you in the great everywhere hereafter
but now I do not know if one loses this bond

and with you again throughout eternity I want to be

and only the memories do remain:
in some sunny days full of joy and happiness
and others full of rain, pain and unhappiness

and in the portals of oblivion these memories at a time will be lost

while the darkness do remain
as if there were no happy days and any light,
as if everything do disappear

into the shades of the night

and my flowers and leaves are withering,
my trunk is dried-out
and I wonder will our love will be alive

in a place where perfection does envelop everything?

Gert Strydom

Together With You 2

Together with you I do want to walk under illustrious stars,
do want to look at you, kiss you and take your hand full of trust and hope
as if holy beautiful rare days are waiting on us
and I want to see you truly happy and hear you laugh with joy,
over any kind of thing have cheerful discussions with you
where I do yearn for a life with you.

Gert Strydom

Tonight

Tonight phosphorescence
is present over your body
while we walk in shorts
under a golden moon

and it is as if every firefly
is focusing
its tiny beam of light upon you
and your blouse glimmers
almost see-through
and there's dozens of little lights
glittering in your hair
as if they are also flying there

and the sparkle in your eyes
outshines the stars
and your tender lips
are sweet beneath mine
and it feels as if I am dreaming
that a girl so divinely lovely is mine.

Gert Strydom

Tonight (Villanelle)

(for Annelize)

Tonight the bright yellow moon hangs solitary
in the grey twilight before the fall of night
and this night feels magic and extraordinary

where the things I wish that I said seems arbitrary,
where it does hang like a big searchlight.
Tonight the bright yellow moon hangs solitary,

I think back to the time with you, become stationary,
while much higher the moon turns to silver-white
and this night feels magic and extraordinary

while I remember you and it's only imaginary
but in my mind beautiful you come into my sight.
Tonight the bright yellow moon hangs solitary

but it's as if you smile and are right here with me
where I tell you the unspoken things without fright
and this night feels magic and extraordinary

where you are far away and yet it is as it used to be
while I express the depth of my love and it feels right,
tonight the bright yellow moon hangs solitary
and this night feels magic and extraordinary.

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Gert Strydom

Tonight For The First Time (Cavatina)

Tonight for the first time we will walk talking
in the moonlight,
will wander among the yellow creeper-rose
and out of sight
you and I will be very close in search
of the first sight
of the evening star, our magic sign,
it will be dark when I ask you to be mine.

Gert Strydom

Tonight I Did Think Of You

Tonight I did think of you
and outside the stars were faint,
a streetlight did shine lonely
and the smell of rain was on the dust,
in the distance a thunderbolt did roar
and suddenly it was
as if I did sink away in thoughts of us

but when you did come out of the bathroom
all other things were gone and it was only you and I,
your naked beauty did enthrall me
when in that moment nothing else could stay with me
and now you are turning around and around in the bed
as if you cannot come to rest
until you are lying right up against me.

Gert Strydom

Tonight I Try To Remember

Tonight I try to remember
how it tastes to kiss you
and the sensation
when tongues braid around each other
and the soft caress and heat
of lips upon lips.

Tonight I do miss you
but yet you are here in my heart and you fragrance
is caught in my thoughts
and I try to forget how much I do long for you.

Gert Strydom

Tonight Stars Do Twinkle (English Sonnet)

Tonight stars do twinkle with their glowing light
while the wonders from God's hand do shine
and some are dim and some are white and bright
as they display a power Godly and divine

and from the moment they did begin
every night they do find their way
as Godly beacons to a world of sin
until the very break of day

while constantly they do glow
and in the darkness do appear
as if some hidden purpose they do know,
as if to them constantly Godly power is near

as they are shining always sparkling
and to onlookers some wonder and joy they do bring

Gert Strydom

Tonight The Sea Is Tranquil

Tonight the sea is tranquil
and in the distance
the lights of the lighthouse flashes
and is gone
and the nearby Warf is still
while near the horizon a ship moves on
and cars move high up on the hill.

Far away over the sea
there are places
where I have never been
and continents and countries
that I have never seen

and at their set rhythm and time
the waves rushes in
and thunder on the big rocks
as they have from the begin
and yet like a grain of sand
I remain in God's almighty hand.

Gert Strydom

Tonight The Silence Caries Its Soft Message (Cavatina)

between us both
the moon is distant looking white and old,
the pitch black cloth
of many ages tells the stories of love,
we have sworn troth
to each other and you are know to me
as if this night long has been meant to be.

Gert Strydom

Tonight The Sky Is Cloudless And Clear

Tonight the sky is cloudless and clear,
the stars shine bright and Christmas is near
and on a night like this the Savior was born
and although some people know pain and fear
the world is waiting upon a bright new morn,
upon a dawn when God will come
to take His own people home
and in the distance I hear a truck shifting gear,
a car breaking and blowing its horn
and people act headstrong and stubborn,
as if the tread of this world is worn
and I wait upon the Son of man and God
to bring a end to death and iniquity
and wonder how long it will still be?

Gert Strydom

Tonight Through My Dreams In My Sleep(Free Verse Sonnet)

In my dreams I understood our love,
when forthright you gave your hand to me,
you walked constantly together with me
and there was something definitive about every step
and now that the morning comes here so suddenly
nothing has changed in the scope of it,
I am still speechless with you and with life,
where you are to me far past just beautiful and ingenious
and I know that the two of us both day and night
still do belong together like twins,
that with you in my life I can do anything
and with you my morning and my day does continue
where I see you in all women around me
and I do wonder if I do deserve such love?

Gert Strydom

Tonight When You Did Come Lie Down Next To Me

Tonight when you did come lie down next to me
it was if I did smell the fragrance of wild field flowers,
in the darkness I could differentiate your perfection,
and you were the most beautiful flower
while your eyes did gleam emerald-green,
and I could feel your heart beating,
while it had been a enchanting evening
while the rays of the moon fell over your face
and beamed as if you were holy,
while we both did know of our passion,
did know of the deep bond
that our love does bring and you did lie comfortable
against me and I did touch your soft skin
while we shared the intimate hours of the night.

Gert Strydom

Tonight Your Eyes Sparkle (Cavatina)

Tonight your eyes sparkle like constellations
of yellow stars,
while a strange kind of magic is around.
Away from wars
of domestic mangling, calling duties,
not a thing mars
this perfect night as you smile in delight,
while you are lovely and kiss you I might.

Gert Strydom

Too Many Times

Too many times we want to know
from what love is woven of,
as there is something special
when our hearts and faces glow
but unknowingly we do at times remove
our trust from each other
and even from God
and the in desperation do trod
while the effects of love we do not feel
but as a principle forever it is real.

Gert Strydom

Too Many Times (Tritina)

Too many times back to war I have went,
have seen civilian men become soldiers
to face destruction, injury and death,

where they had lost all hope, to the death
did not anymore care when out they went
had become machines called soldiers

had hated, feared duty as soldiers
to be dealing out much havoc and death
had felt if all life away from them went,

but out they went as soldiers to face death.

Gert Strydom

Too Painful I Am Surprised

It's as if every human being now stand handed over
and too painful I am surprised and amazed,
while secretly a virus carries on,

do interfere with man's existence
and as mere flue it's deadly disguised.
It's as if every human being now stand handed over

and in all of this I cannot understand Your will,
where about Ann I come to You, my Lord,
while secretly a virus carries on

and too painful day after day now goes on,
where I know that she did not deserve this death.
It's as if every human being now stand handed over,

where no real protection exists against this thing
and Your own children across the world do perish,
while secretly a virus carries on,

mankind have to give up close relatives
and I pray again please turn around every life.
It's as if every human being now stand handed over,
while secretly a virus carries on.

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Gert Strydom

Too Quickly (Cavatina)

Too quickly you are gone like a wilting
small daffodil
that will never again rise up in spring,
that on a hill
faded quite slowly in its sheer beauty,
that never will
come to life again, as its life is spent,
far too quickly from me away you went.

Gert Strydom

Too Severally I Miss You

This morning I miss you while bright red the sun is rising,
some of the white, red and yellow rosebuds have opened,
this morning's beauty and birdsong leaves me speechless
and I do imagine that you are walking around in the garden

but with the virus nothing will come from this daydream
and in the omnipotence of God I still have got trust and hope
but this winter has been terrible and almost everything is bare.
This morning I miss you while bright red the sun is rising,

and this terrible virus is disguised just like flue.
I phone to from the depth of my heart talk to you
and with the things of love I do remain very stupid.
Some of the white, red and yellow rosebuds have opened,

I tell you about an exceptional sunrise and ask how your day is going
and from the depth of my heart I want to visit you today,
you are excited and your voice sound full of joy and sweet like syrup.
This morning's beauty and birdsong leaves me speechless

but upside down the virus turns everything in life.
Outside a redbreast is dipping its head in a bowl of water,
there are purple, yellow and white irises that are already flowering
and I do imagine that you are walking around in the garden

but it's in vain and the dogs bark on the neighbour's property,
I am alone and I smell your fragrance from the pillowcase
and I pray for humanity, for you and me.
find on the bedroom's floor from your skirt a pretty button,
this morning I miss you.

Gert Strydom

Too Sparsely The Light Falls

Too sparsely the light falls through the window on that day,
in splashes here and there, with the park invisible,
with light fading away and suddenly the dark night comes
with stars shining blue-white.

Away into the naught the light of an aeroplane flashes,
when the night bends far over the horizon
and it feels as if God Himself is here,
stretching Him out over the earthly events.

Gert Strydom

Too Unbiased I Am

Too unbiased I am when death does come
when so suddenly it does penetrate,
do ravage the one that I do love

The mere absence,
the loosing of the final breath from her body
is something that continually lingers with me

and sometimes I do wonder why
a person does come to this earth?

Gert Strydom

Totally Alone On Clifton's Beach

Late at night while darkness was everywhere
the horn of a ship bellowed far away
in a sad sound that hanged on the waves

and now in the early morning we walk
totally alone on Clifton's beach,
find here and there beautiful shells,

see waves curl and break,
hear some seagulls screeching
while water splashes foaming over our feet

where like children we draw our names in hearts
on the wet sand and we notice
the ocean were it stretches into endlessness,

when the streaming water
washes away every sign of our presence,
as we splash and go laughing, teasing much deeper

and under the hot sun that hangs on a cobalt sky
we are lingering for long moments,
are caught in our own world

and I wonder how to make this moment last forever
as it's almost matchless
when our lips do find each others

and you embrace me with your hair
blown wildly by the wind,
while the sun blinds us.

Gert Strydom

Totally Lost

I

With someone new to adore,
you are constantly
haunting me
as if at times you can penetrate through death
but sometimes I know that I am fabricating it
and for years you are out of my life
but sometimes I cannot get you out of my thoughts
before you jump into my heart again
as if you are not peaceful
on the other side
and in my sorrow and in life's coldness
I am stranded here
and you find no kind of relief
in the late night's big silence.

II

In the late night's big silence
my thoughts are at times with you,
while the big separation brings a chill
while I keep clinging to memories.
You are much too far from me
and your whole humanity
cannot stay here,
and it appears at times when I read your old letters,
when you are like a flower to me
that could grow in the earth of my soul
but death has divided us
and untimely you were pruned away in your prime
and still your absence cuts through me like a raw cry,
sometimes it's much better not to know about you.

III

Sometimes it's much better not to know about you,
to totally wipe out that which was between us
to forget the memories and passion

as if nothing had been
to cause your presence to eternally fade away,
to let each memory slowly pine away,
to stop me from daring in my dreams
to search for you to appear
and I am in a world where yours are divided from mine,
where I have got to keep to the here and now,
where I have to know that we are in separate places
and I am aware of this reality
that destiny cruelly rips lives apart with her claws;
my whole world was where you went

IV

My whole world was where you went
and in you I found my rest and joy
while you were with me as my darling
but life had devoured it far too suddenly
while my existence was anchored to you,
while our things was limitless deep
and we both were trusting on God
while now alone I search for answers,
where without you I see a new tomorrow,
while suddenly pain cuts unexpectedly through me
and I in despair try to cling
to the little that remain of you
and forever we are separate from each other,
you are buried in your coffin and I know sorrow.

V

You are buried in your coffin and I know sorrow
and no stranger asks about you or walks past,
there are people dressed in black
everywhere in the church around me
and everyone is disenchanted
where they are mourning
and it's as if nothing can break through the darkness
that appears about you a pretty girl, already a woman
and suddenly the minister starts talking at the front,
the sexton walks to the back and asks: 'who is lying here? '
his voice resounds through the whole church

and he gets no answer.
The service passes much too quickly;
I feel like I can fight against God.

VI

I feel like I can fight against God,
I cannot really know,
why some people lead longer lives
and for others life is measured out into darkness,
still less I know for what I am searching,
something stays just out of my reach
as if it is involved with the things that are happening
and just when I look it's already gone,
it's just beyond the bright blue
as if I am living with an incomplete purpose
where I am almost seeing it, it's almost in my thoughts
but I cannot see or feel it
and I know that something terrible is wrong,
where everything eventually becomes chaos.

VII

Where everything eventually becomes chaos,
where the whole world are waiting on disintegration,
I wonder what makes me languish
for new life, for the rain that pours down?
What lets me hope that very soon
a glorious age, a glorious day will appear
on the other side of the dark night
while everything around me with time collapses?
Now I hope to have someone else again,
that your life and hours of pain disappear
and again I want to begin with someone anew,
while I stay trusting that the answers lie in the hands of God,
while I believe that the sun will shine on me again
with someone new to adore.

Gert Strydom

Tower Block

It rises into the sky,
covered in glittering scales
somewhat ominous and hideous
shining and black,
build to withstand an earthquake
with intersections pale white
it rises almost to cloud height

and within you will find almost a whole city,
with pretty shops,
witty people in offices,
people that work and play and live and stay
using the elevator highway

and safe and secure,
they go nowhere else
and do not worry about anything, anywhere
somewhat like a huge ants nest
where people stay until their final rest

and they are cursed and blest,
with lives maintained,
determined and ordained by big machines
that constantly calculate, entertain
and people remain as if detained
to its environment from birth to their decline
when they disappear as if they never were existing.

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Gert Strydom

Tower Blocks

In ancient times
men tried to build us,
on a plain in Shinar
using burnt bricks
and bitumen for mortar,
but they build in vain.

Like a flower on its stalk
we rise into the sky,
shaped to withstand
weather, wind, storm
and even earthquakes.

We wear glass, concrete
and lightning up high
and stars shine at night
on our skin
and humans live
and work within.

Gert Strydom

Tracks (In Answer To A.G. Visser)

Lord, as a child I looked
at the tracks of the Voortrekker wagons
that was cut into rock banks

where they trekked over the hillocks
near to Heidelberg
in the once inhospitable region

on their journey to freedom
away from the undesired
British rule

and those tracks that are cut in, stays with me
and also the costly price that was paid
to have a own place
that the British wanted to deny us from

and now again we are oppressed,
with another hand that has the whip,
we are stooping under impoverishment,
we are trodden upon

¶Envoi

and I pray that You almighty God
preserve us; hold Your hand over us
even over every human law

tread tracks with us,
walk every day everywhere with us
and that we will get Your Godly help

for this whole country
and that we will only trust in You
as the urge to be free
is rendered by You Yourself.

[Reference: Vry! (Free!) by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Tractor

At twilight the fluorescent lights in the shed do flicker on
and the huge working beast being Massey Ferguson red,
the tractor gives a cough
while the icy August winter wind howls past it,
red-brown dust is blown up in a huge cloud,
pours down all over it making its steel icy-cold
where solitary it stands
as if all the other green John Deere tractors
and implements by own volition
went missing but for the trailer that is hooked to it,
it coughs again in white clouds of smoke
when the starter is pressed.

I check the battery and it's loaded and fine
while my fingers feel numb.
I do open the engine cover
and the wind jerks at my clothes
while I glance into the depths of perfect machinery
that although being years old looks brand new.
In the brighter light,
starlings and some swallows flutter in their flight
while the wind twirls and are whipping trees to and fro
rushes towards the fields to the west.
Everything seems perfectly fit for work
and I do smell some diesoline
as if I have flooded it.

I close the engine cover
with a loud bang;
do get back into the seat
and my dog a Cocker Spaniel
jumps up to sit at my feet,
again it coughs as if it's mocking me
but the sound has changed
as if the fuel and spark
is reaching deeper into the steel monstrosity.

I know that the commercial quick-start can is empty,
are afraid that the battery by now is close to running low

when the Cocker Spaniel jumps down to the ground
starts whining affectionately
when my darling wife comes into the shed
with some hot coffee
and I do jump down to greet her with a kiss
while in moments together we both drink some of the hot liquid
while we do watch the fiery sun rising in the east.

Solitary it still stands
and I do kick at one of big back black wheels
climb up into the seat
and press the starter once again
it coughs again but do roar into life
as a thundering magnificent beast
that has woken in its lair
and this is going to be a beautiful sunny day
I do reckon when the wind does die down.

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Gert Strydom

Train Ride

On the rail tracks
trains past one after the other
at speed
and there are crowds
standing on the platform
and people pressing past each other
to get aboard.

I watch the confusion
and on the train
people loose their senses
and they press to seats
right through each other.

A man dressed in a black suit
tries to convert everybody around him
and stand and preach in the aisle,
with the holy book
that he opens at places.

What he is saying
passes me faster
than the scenery at the windows
and I see people unable to forget,
how the city devour their souls
and the man evidently preaches regularly.

Opposite me a man reads the Pretoria News
and a young woman
wants to know the time
while she bends forward
and I am able to see the crevice
between her breasts
and she winks
while the train picks up speed.

"Boy let they just invade my house
and then some shots will ring, "
an obese man says

who wipes sweat
with a handkerchief from his shining face
and gives biltong
to the people around him.

To the front there's someone screaming
in a foreign language
and I wonder if someone
is falling from the train
or rather being thrown off,
while the unconcerned conductor
takes the ticket puncher from his pocket.

Gert Strydom

Transience (Tetractys)

A

red rose

blooms today

with cups open,

tomorrow it will waste away, wither.

Gert Strydom

Transient

Why does life,
does love sometimes feel
like a transient thing
as if in living everything
passes far too quickly?

Today we meet, in a few days
we have a conversation,
which leads to more conversations,
a dining out in a restaurant

falling in love over romantic candles,
becoming aware of how attractive / pretty
the other party in reality is,

making love / becoming engaged
and the relationship turning into
more serious intentions
and finally we wed

and after a child or two
they grow up
and leave the roost
going on their own way
and the job draws to its end
we loose some friends
and the loved one becomes ill,
or dies suddenly,

or sometimes worse
just after becoming a fiancé, fiancée
or husband or wife
life takes its leave.

Gert Strydom

Translation (Free Verse Sonnet)

If I do not know to write the beauty to you
where I know you in the beating of my heart and on the tips of my fingers,
when constantly I reconnoitre new experiences with you,
then you are a part of my thoughts and words.
When my lips find you and drive you to frenzy,
when I want to pamper you in all wonderful things,
even in the silences on the paper from my pen,
when the moments do rub your spirit and soul out
then you do become substance and real to me.
How can I tell you about the depth of my love
when mere words do constantly loose their impact?
God does pour you out in spirit and soul as a blessing
and yet love between us is no secret:
we do experience it daily over and over again.

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Gert Strydom

Translation 2

How will I bring my love to you
my angel, my big-eyed woman,
when words do all of the time loose their ability?

Now that I do know you in the touch of my fingers
I know intimate and sincerely the Braille of your body,
on the walls of my soul parts of you are etched in,

where my hands do interpret every emotion and need,
do massage the pain out of your back into spider raising hairs
and shivers do creep down your neck and thigh.

When you braid like curlers of lie spooned against me
and do surround me in the depth of the darkness,
while I smell your breath when it passes my cheek

then moments for both of us come to a standstill
when your artery and heart do pulse and beat beneath me
where I do keep on translating the codes,

while doves do sing their songs of love
and the moon enchants the lively night,
and I am enthralled with your moods.

Only to you cards do carry meaning,
do I find beauty in flowers,
do love songs on the radio sound sincere

when dreams do become reality,
when your lips do taste like peppermint,
while your eyes do open your soul and spirit to me

and when words do lack it is the inter-text that says everything.

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Gert Strydom

Travelling Into Your Humanity

(in answer to ee cummings, in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

In every gesture there is something that does include me,
in your glance a secrecy of which I am a part
where you want me to touch you,
do drag me to something very close to the heart,
to somewhere where I have not been with you yet
and you are known like the first flower to spring
where your eyes do uncover everything between us,
where I am lost in their depths
at places where I have not accompanied you.

Where you now come to me
it's like in the spring after the last snow,
your arms are opened are stretched out to me
as if I am part of you and part of everything.
Everything in this place and time do include you and me,
I am caught in your fragility and in the texture of your eyes,
where green-brown they measure the depth of mine
acknowledging how unfathomable and eternal love is.
When the glance in your eyes are deeper and wider than any flower,
where constantly your footprint into my heart to walk along,
you do constantly fold open where you do keep to promises
while the rain does bring deeper love and life to the whole world.

[References: "Somewhere I have never travelled" by ee cummings.
"iewers het ek nooit gereis nie daardie groene verte" (somewhere I
never travelled into that green distance) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Travelling Into Your Humanity 2

(in answer to ee cummings, in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

In every gesture there is something that does include me,
in your glance a secrecy of which I am a part
where you want me to touch you,
do drag me to something very close to the heart,
to somewhere where I have not been with you yet
and you are known like the first flower to spring
where your eyes do uncover everything between us,
where I am lost in their depths
at places where I have not accompanied you.

Where you now come to me
it's like in the spring after the last snow,
your arms are opened are stretched out to me
as if I am part of you and part of everything.
Everything in this place and time do include you and me,
I am caught in your fragility and in the texture of your eyes,
where green-brown they measure the depth of mine
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never travelled into that green distance) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Travel-Plan (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

It's as if constantly we do have a new travel-plan
where they do prohibit me access to you:
undesired stranger is stamped continually
when inhumanity in love I do resist
and when on your insistence I find new direction,
then you do change everything and so suddenly against me,
that words and deeds do constantly resound
when they do drive pass me and it cuts through me.
Children are sabotaging our love.
Outside butterflies flutter when we try again.
No person wants to keep going to and thro:
I do consider to terminating all journeys
and if forever I do hijack you away from them
it could make the situation much better.

[Reference:"Love is more beautiful, the second time around" by Joan Hambidge.]

Gert Strydom

Treatment At The Far East Rand State Hospital In Springs South Africa

On Sunday the 4th of September 2016 my mother,
a lady of eighty-three
who are a pensioner
was taken by ambulance
from a car accident
involving three vehicles
to the Far East Rand Hospital
at the border of Springs and Brakpan
in South Africa
where she arrived at nine o'clock
in the morning.

On arrival a black nursing sister
said to some other patients in casualties:
"you, and you and you
go through for treatment."

My mother said very politely:
"what about me? "
At which that sister mimicked her with:
'what about me? "

The security officer told me to leave casualties
and I took it for granted that the nursing personnel
would assist my mother
who was in a wheel chair
and unable to walk by herself,
but this did never happen.

My mother had broken
her right leg in the accident,
both of her knees and her chest had been hurt,
she was forced to wait
for seven hours before a doctor
did see her.

She could not by herself go to the toilet,

I took her by a wheelchair
and I had to help her on and off
the white toilet
of which the seat was missing
of which there were only two toilets
available for the thousands of patients
and it was in a ghastly condition.

The nursing staff
of whom most are black
did not do any examination of my mother
and we were forced to wait
until after seven hours
I went to the black doctor
and asked him if he could not help her?

He was very polite,
asked her about where she was hurt,
said to her and to me:

"without vital signs I have got a unclear picture"
and he made it clear that the vital signs,
namely blood pressure, temperature, and heartbeat
have still to be taken by the nursing personnel.

My mother was worried about having hurt
her knees, breast, and right ankle
which the paramedic personnel
of the ambulance did bandaged
at the accident.

My mother told him
that she had a blackout
at the accident
and to include this fact in his report
but he was in a great hurry
and did not listen to her.

The doctor told us to get the vital signs taken
by the nursing personnel at Tri-Age
as it was their duty
and not his to do this.

To our delight the doctor
did write an order for her to be x-rayed
and did sent us off to the x-ray department.
We waited for another hour
before my mother was x-rayed.

The lady at the X-ray department
was very busy and very thoughtful
and when we finally had the x-rays
we had been at the hospital for eight hours.

The Tri-Age nurses were not in their office
and a row of patients were waiting on them,
when I got hold of one of them
it was clear that they were not
going to take the vital signs.

The other nurses in casualties
did not want to take the vital signs either.

We went to wait at the doctor's office
and he was busy with life and death
casualty work
and at six o'clock in the evening
he did return to his office

took a look at the X-rays
and I told him that the nursing personnel
do not want to take the vital signs.
The black doctor did examine the X-rays,
assessed that my mother's right leg
had been broken
just above the ankle
and he then send us to the
orthopaedic T2 section
in the casualties to get a back-slab
which I did understand to be some plaster of Paris.

As the doctor had again been called
to assist at a emergency situation
and just pointed me into the direction

of the orthopaedic T2 section,
I asked the nursing sister there
if they were doing back-slabs
she rudely told me that they were
but that we have got to
take our place in the row.

It had been just before six-thirty at night
and my mother who was very tired by now
politely asked the nursing sister
if she could return the following day
for the plaster of Paris,
at which the sister did ignore her.
She asked the sister again
at which the sister snapped,
said that she was busy with documentation
and is not the ward matron.

At seven o'clock
the nursing personnel at
the orthopaedic T2 section
told me to leave casualties
as they were doing the documentation,
I reasoned that they were giving over
to the night nursing personnel.

At half-past seven at night
I did return to where my mother was waiting.
One of the nursing personnel,
a black male nurse
had removed her wheel chair
and she sat on a blue bench
but was not able to move about.
Only the black doctor that had helped us
was at the orthopaedic T2 section
and I asked him
what had happened to the nursing personnel?

The doctor told me that the nurses was gearing up,
and that he by himself could do nothing
without the right equipment.

I had great difficulty to find another wheel chair
and finally found one
of which the backside had been broken
and at eight o'clock at night
the nursing personnel was still gearing up
and not present in the orthopaedic T2 section.

At half past eight a single nurse came to the
orthopaedic T2 section and start cleaning
away the bandages and other materials
left behind by the day personnel,
and my cousin got the nurse
to take her vital signs.

There were still eight people
waiting in line before us
and six of them were willing
to let my mother be treated before them
but the nurse was not willing to do so
even a young black man with a serious head wound
continually asked the nurse to treat my mother.

Some more serious casualties came in and were treated,
we waited while they did helped some of the black people
who were waiting in the row.

I went to talk to the doctor in the ward next to ours
who had been a European
and he told me that he was only doing
internal medicine
and he could not be of any help to us.

Two babies were treated while we still waited
and they both did cry without end,
one of them received stitches
and my mother said to me:

"Do these people feel nothing for people suffering with pain? "
At this time it was half-past eleven at night.
I asked her not to express her opinion
as we have already waited fourteen and a half hours
and I am sure that this is because the nursing personnel

are acting in a racist way.

The single nurse who had been treating the people
did leave her post and there was nobody treating anyone
at the orthopaedic T2 section.

For fourteen and a half hours me and my mother
had been praying every now and then
that the Lord would help us
and now we were praying
that someone would give her
the plaster of Paris,
so that we would be able
to leave the hospital.

A white male sister did overhear our Afrikaans conversation
and walked away to the ward next to ours.

Immediately a black nurse came from the other ward,
walked right up to us, wheeled my mother
into the treatment area, took the file from me,
started to administer the plaster of Paris
and we followed her
to where she gave us medicine for pain
which was only Panado,
a very weak painkiller
and we left the Far East Rand Hospital
at twelve o'clock at night
after being there for fifteen hours.

Gert Strydom

Treatment At The Springs Government Dental Clinic

From half past five we wait in a row
on the 12th of May 2016,
on the way to work some cars do pass
and I am at the Springs dental clinic
to get a chance to be treated.

At half past eight the clinic does open
and its as everybody does hurry
to the counter where you have got to wait
on a white sister
and she is rude and it's a baptism of fire

just to be able to see a dentist
and I rather want a black sister to serve me
and the dentist does not come,
she is on honeymoon
and if another is coming is a maybe.

At nine thirty a dentist does arrive
with a cloth around her head,
It's clear that she is a Muslim
and I do watch her dark-brown eyes

see no indication of any compassion,
a sister does nod with her head
and I know that it's meant for me
and I walk into the dentistry
do sit down on a black chair

and I am injected
while the dentist is deciding on a treatment,
she takes a massive pair of pliers
and I see that some pain is coming
and I need to leave

but the wisdom tooth does pain
and I want the pain to stop
and she does move the teeth
until sweat does break out on her forehead.

The dentist does complain
that the x-ray machine does not work
and she is limited to her experience,
the white sister complains when I do move my tongue
and the Indian doctor is strong

and she breaks two wisdom teeth in their sockets
while the white sister does run around
and around the black chair,
now I have got twice as much pain
and she struggles with a sharp prong
and are downhearted.

It's Thursday and I must return on Monday,
I get Panado for the pain and I am astonished,
on Monday another doctor does prod with a prong
and writes in a letter to a hospital
that I had arrived with broken teeth at the clinic

and after a lot of pain and a prayer
I am treated free of charge
by a white dentist at Medicross
and he comes to my aid.

Gert Strydom

Trees Bend In The Breeze

Trees bend in the breeze,
the dead branch creaks under the force
that is moving it,
the eyes of the owl zoom in
searching for a prey

the sun fades, gets dimmer and dimmer
while it drops over the horizon
as the darkness creeps, creeps slowly in

and the moon raises silver
white in a star filled night
where a dazzling show
like on a Christmas tree appears
and hangs bright
with little twinkling lights

and the owl hoots, giving to some
its death call, to others a caring presence
and sleep sneaks into bodies, eyes and minds
and on this Christmas day the world is at peace.

Gert Strydom

Trench Charge

Firing from his hip he was running,
with the light machinegun kicking
dressed in a brown army uniform
running towards a trench
while bullets whistled, swished past him
with some kicking up dust around him
and like a machine functioning
at perfect speed and timing
he lobbed a grenade
somewhat like a cricket ball
but with a deadly sting
into the trench
before dropping behind a small stone wall
waiting for the explosive cracking sound
giving instructions with hand signs
to the troops that followed him

and when it came
he let of a few bursts
with the light machinegun
on its folded out stand
before half-terrified, filled with adrenaline
he started running again
with his troops following him,
shooting from the hip
and at the enemy trench
jumps straight in
spraying soldiers dressed in olive green
with flaming hot bullets,
smelling the fumes of cordite,
mixed with sand and death
with every breath burning
in his chest and throat
without time to really think,
just to comprehend
and to react, noting dust flying
from the wall next to his head
were passing enemy bullets were slamming.

Trijn Ras (Née Catharina Ustinx)

From Denmark came the redheaded beauty
that did draw the attention of many men in the Cape
and I would have loved to meet her
as a really brave woman is remembered.
My ancestral grandmother was known for her personality,
her charm, her courtesy and decisiveness.

She was lovely, burnished by the sun and red-blond,
was busy from sunrise, did kill a lion by herself
and a rich baron tried to woo her,
alone on horseback she journeyed
for three days to Cape Town,
was known for her hospitability
her charm, her courtesy and decisiveness.

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Gert Strydom

Truly The Child Is Not Dead

(with apology to Ingrid Bernard Odendaal)

I

Truly the child is not dead,
the child hits the mother from who it drinks,
clench fists where the child lives in a shack
around them there is rubbish and seepage from the sewer
and the child walks with a swollen stomach,
is constantly hungry and at times homeless,
screams wild: "Africa! "

II

Truly the child is not dead,
where penises with AIDS do tear the child
and believe that like this they will get healed from the illness,
where the child lays streched out in a sewerage ditch
and the voice of the child goes to the heavens
as the child still wants to live,
screams wild: "Africa! "

III

The child does rob its father
and the child throws rocks at him,
the child arrives with busses and minibus taxis at schools
to cause amok right there,
do go to political gatherings,
are tired of eructation without a outcome,
the child does scream at universities and do burn cars,
does assault anyone that wants to attend classes,
event those that want to get education and are paying for themselves
that in groups together stands and prays,
screams wild: "Africa! "

IV

The child is corrupt and incapable at work,
do claim that others that want to earn a living must strike,
burn down buildings to rubble.
The child is angry with its ancestors that emigrated
from eMbo at the great lake to South Africa,

that they did not as pioneers erect infrastructure,
that they did not start farming commercially,
that they did not think of erecting mines and factories,
that they did not bring forth technology,
but only wanted to rob and kill,
screams wild: "Africa! "

V

Silently the child looks at the bureaucrats,
who take care that their pockets are filled,
does notices all departments of the State
that worse than third worldly does fall apart,
how awkward and ignorant everything is controlled,
but for the tax where the money still does roll in
and know that there never was days of innocence for the child,

VII

but the child does study in a foreign country,
returns to Africa
to take it into possession
and does not want to know or honour any ancestor,
(as for the child they do not exist) ,
screams wild: "Africa! "

[References: "Die kind" (The child) by Ingrid Jonker. "Die kind is
steeds nie dood nie" (Still the child is not dead) by Bernard Odendaal.]

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Gert Strydom

Turmoil Is Coming From Far Off (A Reply To William Butler Yeats)

The Spiritus Mundi is hell bent
to take with force and not to earn
and blood letting is loosened everywhere:

A soapstone bird that is
coming alive troubles me
while it soars into the sky
turning around and around
forming a tornado
funnelling down to the ground
the centre grows strong
gaining power
sucking everything in
bringing devastation and mere anarchy
causing things to fall apart
ripping to pieces
shattering everything
with the dark funnel dropping again.

The country is in chaos
and destruction is close at hand
while the roots of trouble are rushing in
from all over Africa
and criminals walk the land.

Surely some divine intervention
is now close at hand
occurring just before the Second Coming
while men lack conviction
and turmoil is coming from far off,

but the beast is awake
taking in possession just what it wants
stealing, murdering and raping
and nightmare follows where it goes
leaving destruction, poverty, famine,
starvation, war and utter confusion

as if man is going back in time
to the iron age.

[References: Spiritus Mundi = The general spirit prevailing. The Second Coming
by William Butler Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

Turn Off The Lights (Than-Bauk)

Turn off the lights,
let dark nights bring
us sights of love.

Gert Strydom

Twenty First Century Science (Italian Sonnet)

"There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
we know her woof, her texture; she is given,
in the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings"- John Keats

Science will make many fables and stories die,
will turn Christian religion into mere mythology,
will trample belief into the ground without apology
and with its cold calculating and discerning eye

will search for it's kind of answers low and high
but will not the essence of hope, trust and love see,
will seek and predetermine how things ought to be,
to make mortal man like a god it will constantly try,

as if everything in life is in its catalogue, is just there,
it will not reckon the science lying outside of its reach.
By calculations, theories and measurement of rule and line
it will reckon boldly without any kind of compassion or care
and the philosophy of its reasoning it will coldly teach,
will in disrespect try to touch the very face of the divine.

[Reference: "Lamia" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

Twenty Years Have Flown (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

More than twenty years have flown
and it's only as yesterday
that you were my very own
where as students we did kiss and play

and still the treasure of your best days
has stayed as a pure remedy to me
that even the gazes of other men sing to your praise,
telling of your sheer beauty

and until very old age
your looks, your charm seems endless
as if years do no damage
and in our forties life feels boundless:

with your children moulded to your impression
and you are outshining them in every dimension.

Gert Strydom

Twilight

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Twilight, twilight
what are you bringing?
I wonder
while the rays of the sun do circle out wider.

There is a new excitement in me
as today is open and I feel free
as if life does hold new promises and possibilities
and maybe it's the day that you will come.

[Reference: "Rooidag" (Dawn) by N.P. Van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Twilight (Sijo)

Brightly hot the sun shines down on some lovely summer days
while the golden moon smiles romantically during long nights,
where are we with dawn or dusk when twilight divides the two?

Gert Strydom

Two Bakkakiris (Bush-Shrikes) (Free Verse Sonnet)

A nest the two bakkakiris did make
in the pepper tree at the garage.
There was grass and leaves and things in their house
and when autumn came and the days got colder
they did protect the nest full of their offspring
as if I or the cat by mistake
would claim their chicks.
Away were the days that the male did entertain the female
like a peacock did court and flutter-fly and sing
as the relationship did come to something more
where from early to late he went in search of food for his family,
everything that he found worthy he brought to each of them
but still she was very important to him
and time and again he did fly in twittering with a worm.

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Gert Strydom

Two Blind People

I saw them getting
in front of the line for the bus,
a blind couple
stopping just at the edge of the road
and no faithful Labrador was leading them.

The husband was leading his wife
with a confidence
which was lacking with her
as if somehow
he had developed
a sense of knowing,
where they were going.

Tapping on with his cane
like a insects feelers
and in a way
sensing distance, direction
and objects.

It was a bitter cold winter day
and both were clad
in black zipped leather jackets,
wore dark glasses
and chatted like other people do
while they were walking past
and I smiled at them in greeting
and somehow she smiled back at me
as if she was aware of my presence
and maybe she had a sixth sense
which comprehends more than sight.

Gert Strydom

Two Bunches Of Red Roses

I saw her drying out
two bunches of dark red roses
that I had given
to her,
which she hanged up high
in our bedroom.

She left some thorns
on the green stems
and the colour of the flowers
changed and become darker
and almost black.

The cups lost most
of their lovely fragrance,
but kept some
and became hard and dry
and brittle
and the leaves edges
lost their perfect shape.

With time the love
between us withered away
when she strayed to another
and respect and trust
was nowhere to be found
and I realised that love needs
to be a living thing.

Gert Strydom

Two Cities (Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after D. J. Opperman)

Defenceless I do light a fire again
between me and you and I on the other side of the world
do into the distance send electronic letters
as signs of my soul, spirit, heart and mind
where years do lie like the kilometres between us
and yet my heart waits upon every answer and it does beat with excitement,
if you could just truly know how much I do love you
that which has been will start anew between us
but a great distance lies
between me and your hand,
between eyes, mouths and lips
and you, I are just persons
that wants to find true happiness, tranquillity, joy and bliss from each other
and my love is sincere with the hope and trust of a child.

[Reference: "Twee stede" (Two cities) by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Two Doves Made Their Own Nest

Two doves made their own nest
and with time cooed in love to each other
but one on a day disappeared
and never again came to watch its loved one,
even when the branches creaked in the winter wind
nobody gave any crumbs of bread to the remaining dove,
only the bright stars were always guarding
over a small nest above an old wooden floor.

Gert Strydom

Two Guys On The Bus

Two guys talk on the bus
and are convinced that fifty rand for four,
very expensive
and plan a day
to take their collected change
with backpacks to the bank
and I wonder
if with bank charges
they will earn any interest
at the bank.

Gert Strydom

Two Ibises

Sounding their horns harshly
two ibises rise from the lawn,
rise from their snail pecking
with hard big wings

slapping against the rainy air,
but neck on neck
keeping to straight formation
stretching out lifting into the wind

again they shriek at the barking dog
before swinging in flight
to a new direction.

Gert Strydom

Two Lovers Met Secretly In The Spring (Collins Sestets)

(after George Eliot)

Two lovers met secretly in the spring,
their wooing were much more than a mere fling,
a lovely bride into the church stepped,
in joy her mother, friends and sisters wept;
there is nothing that is greater than love,
if true, nothing can its impact remove.

Two parents held a small child in their arms
protecting it, each other from all harms,
sweet was the family's close company
the time together spent in serenity;
there is nothing that is greater than love,
if true, nothing can its impact remove.

Two adults followed a own career
but to each other and to God kept near,
but at a time came death, one's life was spent,
was still lingering although evanescent;
there is nothing that is greater than love,
if true, nothing can its impact remove.

[Reference: "Two Lovers" by George Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

Two Old Men Smoke Their Pipes

The neighbour sits on the porch of his house
puffing away at a pipe
on Rembrandt van Rijn tobacco
and there's a small cloud around him
in the early twilight
and he is thought struck
probably dreaming of the time
in his great grandfather's day
when old Uncle Paul Kruger
had been just under God
and lions had roamed
where his house now is standing
and a man could ride off a farm
and apart from the wild animals,
the invading Englishmen
nobody meant any harm.

Right against an old dilapidated building
near a buss stop
an old black man puffs
at a old black wooden pipe
drawing deep on BB-tobacco
with dreams in his old weary eyes
thinking back on the time
that he was herding his father's cattle,
about the lovely Thandize swimming naked
in the stream
about a time long before that
when the mighty Zulu nation
send the British army reeling at Insandanho
and the Zulu king Shaka
was mightier than a god.

Gert Strydom

Two People Separate

Two people separate where one
says that she's met another man
and suddenly everything that we had is gone

and missing you my life is empty
while I am forced to move on
with your face in every other woman's face that I see

but even worse my job is done, my contract ended
and according to the company
it could no longer be extended

and I am living in a country where the colour of skin
in times of affirmative action
becomes the deciding thing

to have a job or to be jobless,
where to find a permanent job is almost impossible
and the companies that contract temporary cares less.

Gert Strydom

Two People She Had Been To Me

Two people she had been to me
the only full of love who were true and laughed with me,
who every time that she looked at me, every time
brought my depths to fiery passion and free

gave her love to me and you
the other one who waited
to wound, who yearned for catastrophe
and got joy from my pain

who broke the glass of every mirror
till I could only wonder
who it was that was with me?
and if it's you or her and rather leave

me without the two playing a game of doubles
making my life joyous, hurting me into the depths of hell.

[Reference: Dubbelspel (Doubles) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Two Sides To Everything (Cavatina)

(after Judith Rodriguez)

Some devious fiends hold to the statement
that there's two sides
to everything and to each viewpoint.
Some horror hides
in oppression in this very principle,
forcing to abide
as a true view sheer inhumanity,
anti-Semites killed millions gladly,

said they were only doing their duty,
and then to blame
they left a whole nation while they had fled,
in the great name
of patriotism, for the fatherland,
they brought great shame
and while they just meant extremely well,
they sent innocents straight to fiery hell.

[Reference: "How Come the Truck-loads?" by Judith Rodriguez.]

Gert Strydom

Two Toddlers At The Lake (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Two toddlers stand at the playing-ground at the lake
the whole world is turned upside down for them in it
with geese going up and down
and it's innocently that they do study each other.
The swings fly into the sky
and the loop the loop has started turning
but hand in hand they do walk together,
is happy without any pretence,
the water does hold for moments them with wonder
as on it does reflect almost anything
and how it does swell up and down and the sun that shines on it,
how it circle out with the small stones that they do throw in.
"I like your eyes they are blue, " he says.
"I do like you, " she says and smiles.

[Reference:"Twee kleuters in die Vondelpark" (Two children in the play-park)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Two Toddlers In The Municipal Park

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Naked next to each other
two black toddlers are left

with a wormed small maleness
and a exposed female groove
and with wiggling legs they walk on

to where the canal of a dilapidated stream meanders
and where at time ducks or swans may have been,
there now are only empty concrete furrows,

as if a dark power holds the park, the town, the country,
the whole continent in its gigantic claws
and everything is declining,
is being broken down into pieces on a gigantic rubbish pile

and they look at a blue headed lizard
that lies and baking in the sun
and stare inquisitive at a few rock-lizards
that crawl one after the other from their trenches,
like soldiers with coordinated movements

and when a snake appears suddenly,
they look at it in wonder
when it strikes at both the lizards
before it devours them

and she - the small girl- grabs tightly onto the boy's hand
to draw him still nearer to the vermin
that perceives them both and rocks hissing back
and looks at the two with deadly seriousness
and with desperate power the boy jerks her back,
away from the thing that he perceives as danger

before they both burst out in tears
and run back with wiggling legs
to the shadow of a tree

where mom and dad lies stretched out on a blanket
next to two empty brandy bottles
that gleams in the bright sunlight

and beyond the stonewall of the park
an expensive German car passes,
are followed by two pickup trucks
and a horde of minibus taxis
are parked next to the municipal park,
with music blaring deafening
and a group of teenagers climb out of one

and he wants to walk into that direction
as a member of the collective wildness
but she is caught by his strange small snake
that rocks to and fro with each step that he takes

and when the teenagers become aware of the children
it appears as if they have far too much interest in them
and maybe it's the last day of danger,
or maybe some captured childhood days

and they may be molested
somewhere next to the road,
be disfigured, cut up,
for witchdoctor medicinal use
and thrown out of a taxi-buss

or it may only be amusing
to see two stark naked children.

The snake returns well-fed
to the hole from where it comes,
and the two toddlers are astonished
by one of the teenagers
who hides beyond a mask.

[Reference: "Twee kleuters in die vondelpark" (Two children in the
wander park) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

Two Towers Lie As Rubble

Two towers lie as rubble:
the television news proclaims it,
aircraft has flown into them
broken obtuse, collapsed.

There are smoke, flames and dust
and somewhere something exploding.

Twisted, scorched steel
is pointed against the earth, cut off
where building was near to the heavens
there are only rubble, pieces of concrete and ash.

Defenceless people have been killed without reason,
as if the human race has lost its sanity,
shattered, crushed, burnt
made from sand to sand.

Gert Strydom

Two Weddings And No Funeral

The first time I wed
it was in Parrow church
since it was bigger
than the one in Belville.

The church was packed
and I waited
while the golden metallic Mercedes
drove a couple of times
around the church.

My heart skipped a beat
when you entered
dressed in white
and to this day
your beauty still baffles me.

I was at my nerves edge
and so were you,
but we did fine
and I received you
from you dad

and my brother
gave me the ring
with it's seven diamonds
to me a special thing
for which I sold my motorbike.

We said our words,
kissed and cameras
caught every thing.

The reception was at the Cape Sun
and I remember struggling
to get the garter belt off
and you blushed
when my hands found
your right leg.

Every thing went very well
and that evening
was our only honeymoon
since furniture and rent
had taken the money
that I possessed.

The wedding with my second wife
was at Winterton
near the Drakensberg mountains
and early that morning
we drove through from Pretoria
with my white Elantra
and we decided to run off
and wed totally alone.

Outside the parsonage
you walked up and down
in that dusty street,
until I caught up
and gave you a good kiss
which settled your nerves.

At the parsonage the minister
talked to us
before he wedded us in the church
with his wife
playing the organ
and we both were dressed
in leather jackets,
not kids anymore
and past the time
for having a show.

Your eyes glittered with joy
and we drove off for lunch
at the Drakensberg Sun
and we kissed and kissed
as if every thing was new and pure
and we had some champagne
and a great meal.

That honeymoon we spent
at Alpine Heath
and that snowy winter
we were real close
and together explored
the Drakensberg mountain peaks
and all the waterfalls
and then you did love me.

Both these weddings
came to a end,
the first girl
fell in love
with my so called friend
and divorced me.

The second girl
ran away with a lover
when we had to move
out of a sold house
and I divorced her

and still as far
as love goes
my way isn't clear
and sometimes
I hold a girl dear.

Gert Strydom

Two Worlds Apart (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after W. E. G. Louw, after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

High above an aeroplane flies past
that does cut the room's window in two
with a great distance between here and there
that does get our lives into different places
and you and my worlds are from each other apart
with right here I and there above you
who are looking at each other
with you going away to Cape Town and in Springs
and our two worlds do fall apart
without any kind of pain or sorrow
because our lives do work like this
although you do love me and you are in my heart
and it's a hell of a thing to woo over a distance
and longing does already lie at the surface in me.

[References: "Voël" (Bird) by W. E. G. Louw. "Die byteltjie" (The small chisel) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

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Gert Strydom

Ultimate Rescue Did Come From Hands Like These

Ultimate rescue did come from hands like these,
not precisely equal to my own, maybe a little bit bigger
or even just smaller
but the hands of a carpenter were spliced
over a cross, before hammer blows
send cruel nails right through
and men were mocking Him, not really realizing
that they were tempting the Holy Trinity

and now we trust our lives into the hands of others
in trains, in cars, busses, or on aeroplanes
even in the buildings where we work and dwell
knowing that our journey will be safe,
that nothing will fall on us
and yet we fail to see the ultimate sacrifice
that the Son of God made for us.

Gert Strydom

Umbrella Thorn Bush Memory

(Written to A on 3 April 1988, after Ingrid Jonker)

The umbrella thorn bush memory
cannot bring you back to me
where pain now lays between us
and you have been erased out of my thoughts.
I search for tracks in the dust roads of forgetting
over which the winds of straying do blow and I do not know
if you have loved me at all,
there is nothing against which I can measure your sincerity.
From Cape Town and Gordon's Bay I did flee
back to a life in the Transvaal,
to a world without a sea or you
and now after everything has been trampled down nothing can over-bridge this.
Although sadness echoes in the feelings that had been
I have realised that you were laughing at my loss,
everywhere I see treachery and do know that my love was one-sided
and your behaviour still does astonish me.

[References: "Bitterbessie dagbreek" (Bitter-berry daybreak) by Ingrid Jonker.]

Gert Strydom

Umgababa

Now I see
two people walking on the beach,
touching each other
with hands intertwined
gurgling and giggling
like two smitten teenagers,
kissing on a dune
and right there
in mid afternoon
swayed by lust and non existing morals
breaking chaste tradition
on the second dune
as if they are the only ones there
and blessed by the sun.

[Reference: Umgababa by Dikobe wa Mogale.]

Gert Strydom

Unbearable Things (Fay Slimm Form / Decanelle)

Unavoidably unbearable things sneak
into a poem
by themselves, things that cause havoc
starts to roam,
at times, but against them we are weak,
they start to foam
like the waves of the sea, they cause amok,
cover like a dome,
being fertile for the words that we speak
much as loam.

Gert Strydom

Undeclared War Breaks Out And Now A Winter Of Despair

Undeclared war breaks out and now a winter of despair
with enemies in great numbers everywhere
with grey clouds blowing in from Cuba, Russia
and thundering the bear growls,

but we have seen some beasts before
our ancestors have fought against a superpower
to a bitter end
and although much fewer of us take
to the battle field than them

with mainly armoured cars against tanks
the inhuman slaughter is of them
and although blood flows for sprouting seed
death claims its toll for life to proceed
and spring is coming with all its speed,

but no victory is ever sweet
and killing leaves its marks indeed,
but all other means would have been in vain
although war leaves its marks of pain

and I would rather have seen
a better life for all of us,
as friends have drank coffee
and smoked a cigar
somewhere in a Cuban café
but reality has no place
for dreamers like me
and liberty at times charges a price.

[Reference: "The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF

Mirage shot down.” Jannie Geldenhuys.1994: At the front. P240. Johanthan Ball Publishers.]

Gert Strydom

Under A African Sky

The sun burns furious
and the harsh reality,
of a live in the semi desert
of the Kalahari
is set in my mind.

There are some bushes
growing in this arid land,
with red sand
stretching as far
as the eye can see,
but they are riddled
with large white thorns.

A Group of bushmen trackers
are gathered round a fire
and are drinking tea,
near to the huts
where they live.

It's time to go and we set out
into the bush,
with two trackers
running in the lead.

One is carrying my R5 rifle
and we follow
in a fighting formation,
with armoured fighting vehicles
and armoured cars.

The LMG becomes heavy
in my hands
and sweat are running
down my cheeks.

Every hour or so
the trackers are changed
and we keep following the tracks,

for hours without end
and then reality is frozen.

Rpg-7 rockets whistle past
and the sound of enemy
AK-47 rifles and mortars,
are almost everywhere.

We return fire at dark dots
and every moving thing
becomes prostrate
and the dead enemy are gathered
and I feel like puking;
and some troops are smoking
and it's just another day
under a African sky.

[LMG=> Light Machine Gun]

Gert Strydom

Under A Bridge At Midnight

Under a bridge at midnight
next to a park
where the dirty Apies river flow
cannabis cigarettes glowed
in broken bottlenecks.

Next to the dark brown water
sheltered by the bridge
drugged out children
followed the dragon
unto its flaming breath.

Music from a guitar
rose into the clouded night
and the most beautiful songs
of pleasure and pain
mingled with the pouring rain.

Gert Strydom

Under A Bush Hat

Under a bush hat
high up in a big tree
with my pack on my back
and strapped to a branch,
with a rifle in my hands
sleep crept up on me
really casually.

a Branch breaking at the bottom
brought me quickly back to reality
and I was astounded
to see a company of black men
armed with enemy weapons
passing without looking up.

Later it turned out to be
friendly forces,
being were they should not have been
but we could have drawn
friendly fire
and suffered casualties
and somehow a higher power
kept elite soldiers from detecting us.

Gert Strydom

Under A Merciless Sun

Under a sun that burns merciless hot,
the wild wind and unrestrained weather
the farmer kneels humble before God
ploughs his fields, takes seed in both his hands
see the twirling wind from a distance,
then prays again sincerely to the Lord,
before he plants the seeds, ask for blessings
when his tractor pulls red dust from the field.

Big drops pour down for days without an end,
time and again the farmer thanks his God,
with a fresh smell coming from the wet earth
overnight all of the wild grass is green,
it's dripping wet as far as he can see;
the farmer lives connected to God.

Gert Strydom

Under Fire At Home

At times your were extremely happy
and impulsive, sometimes morose,
withdrawn or suicidal
trying to hide from the world
or sometimes even aggressive.

Your Manic-Depressive Psychosis
needed a scapegoat
to whip, to burn with molten plastic,
to cut and stab with a knife
and to shoot at with a gun.

You told me
that you had cheated me
with another man
while I was busy
with the computer
and smashed your heels down
on some software
breaking compact disks and started
kicking at the SCSI drives
of the computer.

I got really angry and told you
that in my eyes
you were nothing more
than an unpaid whore.

You didn't say anything at this
and walked to the bedroom
and I went to the bathroom
to brush my teeth
and get ready for bed.

I have never been closer to death
than when you (my now ex-wife)
with my 9 mm pistol
fired right through
the bathroom door.

Five shots rang out
and the magazine
had nine more
and the bullets were hollow point
and nickel-tipped mixed
and automatically I kept score.

It's another thing
to be fired upon
by the enemy in war,
but when your wife
go totally nuts
and bullets fly
just past your head
and one brushes your arm
things are out of control.

I didn't have time
to lock the bathroom door
and took cover
next to the bath
on the floor

and you opened that door
pushed the pistol
against my head
and said that you
would shoot me dead
and I could smell
the burnt gunpowder
but your youngest child
tried to cover me
with his small body.

I should have left you then
and there,
have called the cops,
have had you classified as mad
but love sometimes
doesn't ask for intelligence
and outreaches problems

on its own.

Gert Strydom

Under Sights

A terrorist was on top of
the tall white water tower
of the military camp
poisoning the drinking water,
or so we thought.

I was on guard as a roaming picket
and the radio cracked
and told me
to get the enemy
on top of the water tower
under sights.

Just more than a section
of other troops on guard
gathered with me
and we spread out
and circled the tower
and hit cover where we could.

For a moment the dark figure
look ominous where he stood
next to the steel ladder
in the darkness of that moonless night.

We were ready to shoot
and were instructed to wait,
just before a spotlight
almost made him jump
over the edge.

There was no terrorist
that looked down at us,
just a military cook
trying to take his own life.

One troop said
"lets help him
and get it over with"

and I could almost
feel him pull the trigger
but like steel my voice said
"stand down"
and a military psychiatrist
got him calm
while troops climbed the tower
and lowered him on a rope
and I wonder to this day
what left that soldier
totally out of hope?

Gert Strydom

Under The Bright Moon On The Dust Road

Under the bright moon on the dust road
I see him walking dressed up to the nines
with a bush of daisies in his hand
and he walks to where a light is burning in the distance.

He does wonder if he is going to find her there
and if she does remember him
while he presses the flowers against his chest
and he walks along while his feet do again find the familiar road
with a song in his heart and around him the cold evening wind blows.

When he notices her it feels as if his heart is beating in his throat
but nothing can stop him

and what he says comes effortless from his heart.

Gert Strydom

Under The Hillock At The Voortrekker Monument

(after William Butler Yeats)

I do swear that when my ancestors came
to South Africa as pioneers,
they trekked throughout this land
to explore it and to find a place
to make a life under a African sun

and I swear that those horsemen
were almost saddle born,
where marksmen with a keen knowledge
of the veldt, of how nature does function,
that the women were almost superhuman
although the sun burnt their white complexions,
when they crossed the mountains,
the rivers and made a place to live
in the wild untamed land that this country
had been at a time

and I know that cities and towns and farms
were established, industries, mines and factories
and even the network
of roads and rails
that does link every place
as if their lives still lives on into immortality
even if the names given to cities and towns,
to the roads are changed
to wipe out the contribution that they brought

and when I go to the kopje
where the marble Voortrekker monument
rises above Pretoria
and scene out their battles,
the hardship of just making an existence
as human beings, as a nation, as a people

here is essence of what I am saying:

thousands of innocent people that preceded me have died
in battles with the natives who murdered some of them,
in war against the British government and its army,
as women and children in British concentration camps
and I have been called up to military to go to war
just to be able to make a life,
have experienced the hardships that war does bring,
have seen the natives setting each other alight
with car tires and petrol
have been affirmed out of work,
although I have got a university degree
and a hell of a lot of experience
by a self centered self righteous black regime
that is corrupt to the highest level of governance

but when people do call to each other to war,
do even pray for it,
do pray that war will come against
those who do sit in government offices shuffling papers
without a clue of how to work properly,
who is destroying this country bit by bit

then I do know that there is madness to it,
that it is far better to have this kind of peace
even if robberies, rape and pillage
does not stop
even if every white person
or Colored or Indian person
is at the mercy
of people whose ancestors in the distant past
did come from the great African lakes
from a place they call eMbo
in a great roving expedition
under Nguni and Dlamini

and like my forefathers
I do bend my knee to God,
do pay my tithes and offerings
with the little that I do earn
and are hospitable to others,
do help those that are in greater need
than I am

while I wait for deliverance to come
from the omnipotent Lord God
who does set governments in place
and who brings them to destruction at a time
while I do trust that His year of jubilee
is drawing near.

[Reference: "Under Ben Bulbin" by William Butler Yeats.]

Gert Strydom

Under The Jolly Roger (Roundel)

In days of old they sailed on every sea
while they acted merciless, brave and bold
even drew their guns on the Royal navy.
In days of old

whether the sun shone or it was quite cold
they acted of civilization's values free,
sent their captives down to the deep hold

or let them walk the plank in merry glee,
while some did constantly curse and scold,
lived lives in iniquity that was to them heavenly,
in days of old.

Gert Strydom

Under The Sea

In a world where horse-mackerel
catch the light in mother-of-pearl colours,
where sea roses are laced into the depths,
where beautiful coral alive are reaching,
where a codfish has sometimes
got to accelerate to survive
time and again I can be in wonder.

Gert Strydom

Under Your Spell

Passers by will strain their necks
on the beach
and like fools
stop and stare at your beauty

and maybe you will wear
a one-piece swimsuit
or a tiny bikini

and it would be black,
or bright blue or red
and maybe white.

Men will stay men
be dressed in swimming trunks
and some will wear only jocks

and all of us will have lumps,
some with ruffled hair and freckles
like men do

and I will parade you proudly,
receive a smile and kiss,
rub lotion on your brown body
and we will lie in the sun

and later will bath in the swell,
swim with the waves
in the cold Atlantic
and I will be under your spell
and you might love me still.

Gert Strydom

Unfortunately From Experience I Do Know

Unfortunately from experience I do know
that sometimes nothing can be worse
than the sheer pain that love brings
and even if I do not want it so
that at times love is like a curse
that stings and stings

and even where we were in bliss
welded to each other as one
where we had known true happiness
at a time everything of it is gone

and even if we love each other with sincerity
while it feels as if this thrill
far outreaches anything, that it is full of adaptability,
is more intense than any other will

you are not the first
and probably will not be the last
to tenderly love, to quench the thirst
and at a time this relationship may pass.

Gert Strydom

Unfortunately Times Change

Unfortunately times change
and sometimes not for better
but for worse.

At state intitutions
you wait for hours
in one queue after the other

while highly incapable people
work at African time
where tomorrow is another day

and do not exactly know
how to solve problems
and call on superiors
one after the other

and it happened to me
that I had to collect
a tax clearance certificate

and after waiting
needlessly in three wrong queues
my temper was rising

and when I got
to the right location
a big notice on the wall said
that the taxman
honours your privacy
and do not give out
any information
to other people

and without a word
or any resistance
or any demand
to proof that I may act
on her behalf.

my girlfriend's documents
was printed out
and handed to me.

Gert Strydom

Union (Free Verse Sonnet)

In me to my mother tongue and country there is a bond
and the Capital City that is full of jacaranda trees
but deeper than this it's in you that I am lost,
you know me in my humanity and also every secret.
In my faith, hope and trust the Lord God does remain
and the decrees of each small and great command
where He walks in advance and sets every day
but with you I am intimately infatuated as a mere human being.
From my blood to my family I am related closely
and this bloodline stays true in all of my life,
where it's more attached to persons than mere friends
but to me you are greater and more than anyone,
where everything that we are and together do become
is something on which God pours His blessings out.

Gert Strydom

Unknowing We May Be Living In A War Zone

To the front in the road
blue Metro traffic cop lights flash,
a roadblock is set up and pistols
are aimed at the occupants of a car
in the bright daylight
and bombs are removed from the criminals
which the PCF-community guard report
was meant for the blowing up of teller machines.

An armoured car parks at a bank
where four guards with machineguns
and two with money canisters jump out
and one of them commands me to halt
when on the sidewalk I want to pass
and all of them become very angry
when I do not take notice of their antics
and screaming.

At times I do hear jets bursting through the sound barrier,
see the snow-white lines against the bright blue sky
when I hang the washing
and wait upon the winter sun to bake everything dry.

Right through the night my dogs bark
at a police helicopter
that swishes up and down
our well to do suburb

and it hits me when we drive into the garage at home
that unknowing we may be living in a war zone

but it is safe where we live
behind steel palisades, barred windows
and steel gates
with a emergency button to press
for the ADT-security's armed response
that arrives within five minutes.

[Reference: PCF = Police Community Forum.]

Gert Strydom

Unmarked Is The Route

Unmarked is the route
that I have got to take to your heart,
without really knowing
about where to go

and only your own eyes, your voice, your body
stays the chart that indicates the direction
and sometimes I am really struggling
to find any signs in them

when I wonder about your deepest thoughts
that secretly is locked away from me,
when I wonder how much you love me,
as now almost a lifetime,
another world lies in-between.

Gert Strydom

Unmask Me

Although for the world,
for all the people that I meet
I carry a mask that protects me
to Your eye there is nothing that is covering

and every thought, every deed
lies open to Your scrutiny
and I beg for Your mercy,
for Your selfless love

that You brake down any wall
that divides us, that You're light
may find even the darkest places,
where I have been hiding.

Gert Strydom

Unpredictable

At daybreak you lie cosily,
spread your arms open over me
when your eyes flicker against the bright light,
are only looking through slits
with your blonde popcorn-locks spread over the pillow.

Cat-foot I sneak out of the bedroom and see you peep
where I want to go to the kitchen to prepare some tea,
usually you are cheerful in your morning moods
and I struggle to read your awake / sleeping condition,
hear you making womanly snoring noises,
notice that you stir and in your sleep you seem full of blissful-joy
and you are never really angry or abashed.

Last night's intimacy
still lies fresh in my memory,
outside the dogs howl-bark for attention,
the sparrows do twitter-sing and the doves coo
but innocent like a child you are stretched out
where I look upon you for mere moments.

In the kitchen the kettle sings its song of joy,
in the distance the thunder falls white-blue,
the grey-chilly-clouds comes near
like the unpredictable weather in Springs does
when a lightning-bolt falls right next to the backdoor,
burn fulgurites in the grandchildren's sandpit
and I know to truly love
is much more than just to like a person
when I smell the rain coming down on the sand.

With a tray full of biscuits and rusks and tea
I want to surprise you in the bedroom
where you are waiting on me,
large plump tears stream down your cheeks
and you look at me with the same intimacy
as earlier in the night
and I cannot decide if you are crying,
or are laughing from mere happiness

and see how well your nightclothes do fit.

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Gert Strydom

Until Far Past Three

Until far past three
you were awake with me
while a single candle threw its light
on a magical star-struck night.

We were reading some erotic poetry
and you looked innocent, smiled with serenity,
while the wind sang a soft overture
and our loving was sweet and pure.

Gert Strydom

Until The End Of It

One day I will have
my death of her
and let her fade away
out of my heart
and we will part.

Even if she still
is part of me
I'll bury every feeling
letting it slip into iniquity
and maiming myself
until what's left
is only me.

Even if it be her
that makes me breathe,
that gives colour
to every leave,

even if it guts me
near to death
I'll get rid of her
and my solitude
will be bliss

and there will be no one
to break my heart,
no one to tear me apart,
no one to love
and life will just
be the here and now
until the end of it.

Gert Strydom

Until You Came Along (Cavatina)

Sweet smelling like peaches or oranges
like a girl's breath,
I have forgotten how nice women could be,
lived in death
with a longing hidden for someone true
far underneath,
until you came along, looked at me
with a kind of serene tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

Untouchable

At times in the evenings I chat with you
where you are untouchable far away
when in thoughts I make images
but out of life you are missing painfully.
It's only a type of dream world that I build
wherein just as then you look lovely,
where I can hold you tightly, can look at you,
to tell the truth you are always out of reach,
its memories that I do look at.

Gert Strydom

Up On Helderberg Hill In A Vast Pine Forest

Up on Helderberg hill in a vast pine forest,
the wind gently rushes through the trees,
the scent of pine is everywhere about me,
while far beneath at the Strand beach

waves are forever braking against the shore,
a far off church bell rings somewhat solitary,
as the twilight falls all over us with silver,
with a magical garment that covers everything

and you look lovely, somewhat like a toy doll
with stars twinkling with twilight in your eyes,
in you my desire flames forever, rivers flow deep
while you send it where and when you will

aim glances, smiles and touching soft lips
while you are drawing all of my arrows,
silences have a own painful meaning
but our embraces, kisses and touch do anchor

in something much darker and deeper
than the coming of this approaching night,
while you kiss me breathless like the wind
that is dying, draw me tenderly in to the grass.

Gert Strydom

Upon Impossibility (Sicilian Sonnet)

(in answer to Andrew Marvell)

Jealous fate and life does see emotion,
do obstacles between two people drive
and that is the way of unpredictable life,
which is still and also rages like the ocean.

People think it just another commotion,
do at their opinions of others daily arrive,
while for the self they constantly strive
and about principles they have no notion.

You came to me in a time of despair,
some people see it as impossibility,
that a person can find a thing so rare,
that true love could ever here be
but I truly know that you do care
and I know that do truly love me.

[Reference: "The definition of love" by Andrew Marvell.]

Gert Strydom

Upon The Mighty Name Of The Lord I Do Call (Strambotto Siciliano)

Upon the mighty name of the Lord I do call,
I call on Him who created everything,
and as a mere man at times I do feel small
but I am guarded by an angelic being
and my God sees every tear that do fall,
only to His grace I at times want to sing;
I call His name who loved me first of all
to guide me in each new day that is coming.

Gert Strydom

Upon This Earth

I

Upon this earth's war torn tormented sphere,
I a mere mortal sinful man You do hold dear
when villains do surround me with vicious plans
right at my sight in mortal danger you are here.

II

Even in times of torment pain and loss
when others do away their faith toss
You do remain my one faithful friend
who through all dangers walks with me across,

III

even when on earth I serve an ungrateful boss
and earthly sin do shine with a kind of sheen and gloss
You do expose the real honest truth
just as in love you did bear that terrible cross.

IV

In your heart there never is any fear
and You are forever to me very near
even in death from you I cannot hide
and daily you make my way open and clear.

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Gert Strydom

Usama Bin Laden

Hated by a great part of humanity
and blessed by maybe more
and his desperate deeds
that pulled people out of live,
a super country couldn't stop.

Miserable to his soul
that a super power used him and his people
as pawns in a power struggle
and later left them like rubbish on a dump,
he made that power
pay a sacrifice for her deeds.

True to his religion
and steadfast to what he believe,
nobody and nothing
could stop him in his decisions
and ultimate mission.

What looked to others
like insanity,
he achieved
and struck unexpected
out of a wide blue sky.

Thousands of bombs
rain down from the air
and nobody can stop
the anger of a perplexed super power,
where her soldiers
with overpowering force and weaponry
kill their enemy and the innocent
and sow havoc in Arabic countries.

Even Saddam Hussein
had to pay a price,
but huge wealth and almost
unstoppable intelligence sources
Cannot find Usama,

while the raging dragon
destroys blindly.

If you look at his character
as a person
and take Bin Laden out of the war,
he has integrity and grace
and he stays dedicated
to his god and people
and are willing to sacrifice everything
to get a sort of justice.

For some Adolf Hitler was great
and Stalin a hero
and still it can change nothing
to the impact,
of their and Bin Ladin's deeds
as mass killers
that nobody can make undone.

Like many before him,
he's one man's terrorist
and another's freedom fighter
and the things that his followers do
puts blood on his hands
and their deeds shout
to the highest heavens.

I wonder what the warnings
that he gives to his enemy
really mean and if again,
death bells
will toll in that Western land?

Maybe New York, Los Angeles,
San Francisco, Boston
or Washington
will burn like candles
in the sky
and it will let Nagasaki and Hiroshima
look like a child's game.

It's just sorry
that the innocent pay the highest price,
while politicians, the bosses of the CIA
and people that control
the lives of others,
stays untouched
and others gets the punishment for it
and Usama still remains free.

Gert Strydom

Uvongo Beach

At a time faith, the promise of a new tomorrow,
in its devotion, kindness and essence
as a day with joy, totally without sorrow
the tranquillity of your presence

was tossed at me, as the waves on this shore
as if forevermore I would cherish your loving
with a jubilation a continuous encompassing roar
like the withdrawing, rushing, pushing and sucking

waters of this vast sea
but now we are like the sea and sky
with you not any more grounded in me,
that meets but do not really touch as days go by

both knowing what we had and coloured to the same hue
but separated by life and death, as destiny demands it due.

[Note: Uvongo beach was destroyed, washed in a flood into the ocean.]

Gert Strydom

Vagrant

Hobbling along, I see him coming on,
he brushes his jeans off making it neat
and then he turns right around to face me
where he is looking somewhat tattered,

he stands without any words as if dumb
but his words lie in every glance,
suddenly I see the whole of humanity
whose glances do not quarter for anything

bringing the hurt, the pain that oppression brings,
telling how men that can work are jobless,
how this evil still circles out wider,
treading some people down without pity,
how it pierces the Afrikaner nation,
as a type of evil occurrence.

Gert Strydom

Vain Are The Words And Deeds That Are Mine (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Vain are the words and deeds that are mine
when they are not inline with Thine
and in this life when things go really bad,
when little by little my faith does decline

You are the omnipresent Deity
that does daily dwell with me,
who with selfless love brings me back
to answers that I did not see

and although it feels as if I am on my own
You do never leave me alone
and when all people do me forsake
You are still my friend, the only one

and although I daily struggle to survive
You do continually bring sense to my life.

Gert Strydom

Vain Are The Words And Deeds That Are Mine (Rubiyat Sonnet) (4)

Vain are the words and deeds that are mine
when they are not inline with Thine
and in this life when things go really bad,
when little by little my faith does decline

You are the omnipresent Deity
that does daily dwell with me,
who with selfless love brings me back
to answers that I did not see

and although it feels as if I am on my own
You do never leave me alone
and when all people do me forsake
You are still my friend, the only one

and although I daily struggle to survive
You do continually bring sense to my life.

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Gert Strydom

Vain Are The Words And Deeds That Are Mine (Rubiyat Sonnet) (3)

Vain are the words and deeds that are mine
when they are not inline with Thine
and in this life when things go really bad,
when little by little my faith does decline

You are the omnipresent Deity
that does daily dwell with me,
who with selfless love brings me back
to answers that I did not see

and although it feels as if I am on my own
You do never leave me alone
and when all people do me forsake
You are still my friend, the only one

and although I daily struggle to survive
You do continually bring sense to my life.

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Vain Are The Words And Deeds That Are Mine (Rubiyat Sonnet) 2

Vain are the words and deeds that are mine
when they are not inline with Thine
and in this life when things go really bad,
when little by little my faith does decline

You are the omnipresent Deity
that does daily dwell with me,
who with selfless love brings me back
to answers that I did not see

and although it feels as if I am on my own
You do never leave me alone
and when all people do me forsake
You are still my friend, the only one

and although I daily struggle to survive
You do continually bring sense to my life.

Gert Strydom

Van Der Decken

Sometimes just before a breaking storm
standing at the old wooden tiller of your ship
far away from the Cape shore

you sail forever more,
smitten to ride the waves eternally
even with a windless pail stormy sky

driving your ancient ship across the sea
with it creaking, with sails trembling
with the woodwork ages long needing repair

right out of the forming fog
you appear with a fist clenched above your head
still cursing the creator God

as a token to all men,
even witnessed by a king,
by naval ships at war
you Van der Decken, sail on forever more.

Gert Strydom

Van Der Decken (Cavatina)

Quite romantic an ancient ship passes
during twilight
with the setting sun ropes, cords, sails thrum;
the coming night
rushes in with a myriad of stars
and out of sight
a man stand with a fist high against the wind,
to eternity rest he will not find.

Gert Strydom

Van Der Decken [iii] (Villanelle)

Just before a huge gale in the dim twilight
people do notice your ancient ship sailing past in the last part of day
while the breakers do rage in that coming night

where as an apparition some people are of you in great fright,
and do mind their children off the beach where they do play.
Just before a huge gale in the dim twilight

you do look in dismay at the evening star shining bright,
in vain time and again try to reach the milk-white bay
while the breakers do rage in that coming night,

in great anger see albatrosses in their landward flight
but from that harbour constantly you are kept away.
Just before a huge gale in the dim twilight

you are so near that the southern shore is in sight
but the yardage creak, the blocks rattle with the coming spray,
while the breakers do rage in that coming night

where in anger you again lift your fist at the mast's top height
sometimes do curse God or for mercy do beg and pray
just before a huge gale in the dim twilight
while the breakers do rage in that coming night.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Vastly The Veldt, The Bush Stretches Out About Me (Idyll) (In Answer To Sir Philip Sidney)

I

Vastly the veldt, the bush stretches out about me
where nature is left to its own existence,
where all kinds of game roam free
and here is nothing to bother with an insistence

and the weary traveller on this earth
can find a new kind of longing, a new kind of hope,
like a kind of refreshing new birth
while thoughts go past the normal human scope

where a person wonders about the creator of things
while serenity is displayed where ever you look,
bees and birds continually sing about happy tidings
and nowhere one can get this experience in a book

that comes as some kind of divine blessing,
you have got to realise that there is more to life and living.

II

You have got to realise that there is more to life and living
that every word and deed leaves a mark, a own impact,
comes as benevolence or a kind of attack,
that there's more to life that taking and giving

that nature's innocence and violence draws and sting
and our actions on to it we can never take back,
even our wanderings on a natural track
leaves its mark on mere existing

that somehow nature needs to be left unspoilt
while we live in a kind of ruling arrogance,
this deadly paradise has its own kind of dazzling
while we effect change, like gods live rich and spoilt
while we hide beyond a cloak of ignorance,

seldom do we realise the beauty of the coming spring.

III

Seldom do we realise the beauty of the coming spring
and yet on a farm I have met a rural girl
who brings another feeling to existing, something touching,
while in the veldt sometimes dust clouds whirl

the strange solitariness feels as if it's alive
and she has taken me to her hidden places,
the places dear to a sweetheart or wife
where violets grow wild, wildflowers have different faces

and the sun shines friendly in a blue hued sky,
where you can feel the great tranquillity,
see birds in their coloured swarms fly
and realise that here is some strange kind of unity

a kind of unspoilt idyllic life
that exists happily without any kind of strive.

Gert Strydom

Verse Of Perfect Propriety (Sonnet)

When I was young
I was forced to shoot and kill,
to live through a war and its deadly thrills
and haphazardly my life then went along

and I could have been a buccaneer,
a mercenary, or maybe a robber of banks,
I was forced to shoot at enemy battle tanks,
to live at times in constant fear.

I love to bungi jump, to parachute,
to drive my motorbike with the throttle down
to have a gorgeous girlfriend in town
and sometime the urge for action is acute,

to go out and ruffle some hair with the old crew,
but I am writing this verse as older gentlemen do.

Gert Strydom

Verses (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Johannes Prins)

Like mere young children my verses do follow me
and some do sometimes want to go astray,
that I have got to get them somewhere again
and so I do pass thousands of poems,
where each one does remain important to me,
everything is my own although I do translate my own verses,
see how some do become remarkable
where I do only get words from God,
where others do wander reckless through my writings
and I write each kind of form that I do come upon,
also free verse poems over which people do argue with me,
where some people do plunder the beautiful and strip everything off,
as if my poems do not deserve an own life,
or the voice that does come deep and direct from my heart.

[Reference: "Verse" (Verses) by Johannes Prins.]

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Gert Strydom

Very Deep In The Dark Moonlit Night

Very deep in the dark moonlit night
I still hear the sound of doves
where the whole night they coo, whisper and laugh;
I see the yellow moon glowing as a sickle
where it hangs high above the horizon,
there are thunderbolts lashing thundering,
in blinding flashes of blue-white light
with the doves scattering scared over the roof
when the storm walks nearer through the tree branches.

Gert Strydom

Very Young The Summer Sun Rises

Very young the summer sun rises,
changes the air from grey to blue
when flaming it licks over the horizon
and vivaciousness and hope waits in the new day
as if change will be coming just now
before it appears radiating at noon
and so we walked hand in hand
right through the whole day,
knew the glory of selfless love
as if it's the first day of a new beginning.

Gert Strydom

Violets

In the kitchen's window
your potted violets are flowering again,
they are feathering with miniature florets
on the luxurious green leaves,

some are the colour of amethyst,
others are bluer in their purple
and others more of a purple-pink,
while some are almost like ink

and like you they are both beautiful and distinct.

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Gert Strydom

Virginia Woolf

For years she did cling
to the knowledge
that someone does truly love her
and silently and faithful she did live

until heartache did cut through her,
while continually she was caught in misconception,
did long to return to London
and at times it did feel

as if the river would take her back,
would take her away from the grey world
of her monotonous existence
until her words became paltry to her,

and everything became too much,
the end did hold more meaning

and eventually they did find her
in the river
washed over like in the arms
of a loved one
that where embracing her.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Vision

Unfortunately visions are sometimes false
and still Michael stands against Lucifer
and like everyone knows
everything is measured up
in the battle between light and darkness

and still Gabriel is the envoy of God,
while Lucifer remains the dragon, the snake,
the angel that had fallen to the other side,
the one who wants to drag the whole world along with him.

Let people believe falsely
that Lucifer is the light bearer
and the redeemer of the world
and that he brings knowledge
and that people will become gods.

Let the son of the dawn believe
that he can resist any fire,
that he can win against an omnipotent God
and let people unknowingly
pray to the sun and moon
while my God sits in judgement
and will be bringing a fire
that even devours demons.

Still His love is unlimited
and stretches out wider than His whole universe
while forever His words remain true,
as my God is the only true light
that brings brightness
in a world that is apostate and dark.

Gert Strydom

Visionary Nicolaas Pieter Johannes Van Rensburg

Some people
view visionary Van Rensburg similar
to Nostradamus,
but most do not even know
about this remarkable, humble
and religious man.

During the second Anglo-Boer war
he was to the Boers
a true prophet from God
and both commandant-generals Christiaan De Wet
and Koos De La Rey as well as president Steyn
consulted him for advice.

They were generals
who humiliated the British
time and time again
with daring tactics
and who were never captured.

His mother taught him
about the Bible
from being small
and as a child
while he herded sheep,
he took the Bible along.

He made more than seven hundred
predictions of which
some he could interpret correctly
and the meaning of others
was beyond him.

His warnings to Boer commandos
came true literary
and he predicted
Boer farmsteads burning
and women and children
being killed.

Long in advance
he predicted the First World War,
the flue epidemic
and even went to Lichtenburg
to warn general De La Rey
of his impending death.

Some writers believe
that the events in Zimbabwe,
the fall of European governments,
and the war between Islam
and the United States
have being predicted by him.

Even Koeberg nuclear power station
blowing up near Cape Town,
which he predicted
may be impending,
if the current maintenance of it
where faulty workmanship
lead to a turbine blowing,
is considered.

Neither can his predictions
of a South African civil war
or a coming worldwide war
be taken lightly.

Gert Strydom

Visit To A Swimming Pool

We swim a few times
across the water
where people float
and enjoy at the deepest place
the well-being that the pool
brings magically,
before we wrap our arms around each other
and recoil in the water up and down
and a few rascals
splashes us totally wet.

While we drink ginger ale
lying on our towels,
there's a mom with two daughters
that pours some orange Fanta for them
and they throw blocks of ice
into the top of her swimsuit.

She shudders from the cold
and give small yells and say
half amused
"wait you are causing
my tits to hang out"
and the girls run laughing
circles around her
until one steps on a bee
and the yells
gets a new intensity.

Gert Strydom

Visit To The Botanical Gardens

Do you still remember my darling
how magically blue the sky was,
the bright green grass
where we disappeared in the exotic garden
between little paths that wind
up the hillock
and the shade at the stream
and how bright and hot
the sun shined on that day.

There were people and children
that climbed everywhere
and jumped exuberant
into the stream
and the sun made spots
through the thick tree branches,
but the biggest magic
were in your lips
that touched mine
the first time.

In the distance a string orchestra
gave a heavenly sound
to the light wind
and on our blanket
it was only the two of us
that drank cool drink
and looked at the setting sun
and suddenly
the idea of the two of us together
looked wonderful.

Gert Strydom

Voices Talking In His Head

Our host a painter
who ran a travel agency
to make a living
said that my normal voice
was much too loud
and that he could hear voices
talking in his head.

One of his paintings
was of stars
in the night sky
that looked to me
somewhat like the constellation
at Orion,
but he saw faces there
and when I looked carefully
there were faces
hidden among the bright lights.

He was searching
for deeper meaning
and his painting
was like something
that I had seen
by a schizophrenic painter
in my psychology book
where a park and houses
depicted a gigantic face
with gnawing teeth.

More weird to me
was the dressed shop mannequin
that sat in a chair
which he addressed in speech
every now and then
as if it was a person
that was there.

Volleys Of Shots Rang Out As We Stormed

Volleys of shots rang out as we stormed,
the trenches that were meandering formed,
in the distance snipers were firing from a wall
into the cover of the nearest ditch we did fall.

A trooper next to me suddenly smiled
and everywhere around us was death's smell,
the winter sun was very weak but mild
while our ears sang from a mortar shell.

In succession into the trench we did leap,
I fired from the hip from the point of entry,
the light machinegun did chattering sweep
in a enemy camp in a bordering country

where as soldiers we had parachuted in
and a passing bullet burnt my arm's skin.

Gert Strydom

Vulture Calls

Who killed all of these
these carcasses of elephants,
buffalo and almost every wild gazelle
vulture calls to its mates

and descending, in a dark swarm
of feathers and wings
the pecking begins.

In the distance man drives off
with his implements of war
with military trucks laden with loot,
Who killed all of these
these carcasses of elephants,
buffalo and almost every wild gazelle
vulture calls to its mates

and descending, in a dark swarm
of feathers and wings
the pecking begins.

In the distance man drives off
with his implements of war
with military trucks laden with loot,

with ivory, meat, skins stacked
without a care
to the consequences of his deeds
and happily vulture feeds.

with ivory, meat, skins stacked
without a care
to the consequences of his deeds
and happily vulture feeds.

Gert Strydom

Vultures

In a big group dots appear out of the naught
where they turn round and round in the blue
with wings here and there flashing blade bright;
they decent dangerous, explicit,
like dirty washing rags fluttering and screeching
giving each other dirty looks, inciting the whole time,
they hang in the tops of green thorn trees,
with naked heads and necks stretched out,
with yellow-gold eyes spread open while they are spying,
before they flutter to the ground, not scared anymore
hobbling along, ripping a carcass apart,
screeching when hyenas want to offer resistance
they threaten with grotesque wings, claws clapping
milling angry around hyenas that tread around scared.

Gert Strydom

Waiting On The Barbarians (A Reply To C.P. Cavafy)

Called up for armed military service
hundreds of thousands white boys
are forced into a war
of whom I am but a single one

and with all battles won and even the war,
with the enemy forces shattered,
thousands of Cubans killed,
almost a hundred enemy tanks shot out,
hundreds of enemy armoured cars destroyed,
even the soviets admitting that no victory
against us is possible

the man with the bold polished head
doesn't surrender, doesn't even sell out,
no, he gives the whole country away
and gets a Nobel Prize for it

he opens the prison doors for the leaders
of bomb planting killers
to walk to freedom
and we and the world expect the barbarians
who used burning tires as necklaces
to appear
and out steps a man, dignified
and also receives a Nobel Prize
for his charity

and now years later the damage is done
with affirmative action
and nobody that is white who still has a job
realizes the impact of it,
that it is just another kind of racial discrimination
and slowly but surely in the long run
every white person is forced to into poverty

and the bold man sees himself
as a hero,
is viewed as a type of messiah by some

and the utmost traitor by others

and I wonder where the barbarians are
who torched living people?

Since they did not come but for one
who was the leader of our own ranks
whose actions are forcing everyone
slowly but surely into the gutter

and now the present government
wants to implement a law
to take away freedom of speech
to quench, to censor, to scrap all poems all stories,
all news articles like this.

[Reference: Waiting on the Barbarians by C.P. Cavafy.]

Gert Strydom

Waiting On The Leader

(in answer to Tatamkulu Africa)

At the airport a crowd waits,
waits on their Leader to land
and they stand grouped together
softly talking, their voices in a background hum
but they fill the lounge, past capacity
are plunged into the parking area
and I have a plane to catch,
have to walk right through them

and the police are only onlookers,
watching but not aiding
in finding a passage through
and there two-way radios
talk much louder than the crowd

and suddenly they sing in full voice
and my ears ring
from the combustion of voices
and clapping hands
and they dance everywhere
almost like a rioting crowd
and while I squeeze through
someone steals my cellular phone
and the police are not bothered
by my well being

and just as I am rid of the crowd
their Leader comes through the door
and walks right up to me
asking in Afrikaans,
why I am looking so disgusted
to see him, why the awful frown
and I tell him about the missing phone
and he says:

"my man, this is Africa"
and I answer him:

"Yes man, this is Africa
where people steal and kill"
and it startles him.

["Waiting for Lazarus" by Tatamkulu Africa.]

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Gert Strydom

Waiting Still On A New Dawn

I cannot stop my love for you
that flows out endlessly
like waves out of my control
and even when stormy winds scream

my heart stays true
like breakers swishing continuously
I stay in love with you, who keep my life sunny
only interested in that which lies between us

and if I hit myself shattering,
life breaks me foaming over rough rocks
you are like the sun always there and I cannot relinquish you
and I am still waiting on a new dawn:

a place where sun and sea meets,
where you greet me as your sweetheart.

Gert Strydom

Waitresses

At a restaurant there are young girls
playing waitress
and with firm breasts
and long legs
sticking out of
short dresses,
trying to catch
anyone's eye

They stand and talk together
near to entrances
and bend low over tables,
while they serve orders
in a way that men can see
their womanly curves better.

I wonder where
all their young girl innocence went,
while one stand at my table
with big eyes
and smiles as if
the sun sparkles in her teeth
and she looks shameless
inviting at me

Gert Strydom

Walking Home From Town

The sulphur sky stretched from horizon
to horizon above me
without a cloud to be seen
or a speck of a single bird,

just the blazing white-hot sun
frying down in the breathless hot air
while we walked from town,
being without a car

and your iris coloured purple blouse
and denim blue mini skirt
more than suited you
and you looked cool as ice

while the sun was squelching me
and little streams of sweat
was running down my face,
my chest and arms.

Gert Strydom

Walking On The Riverbank

Weavers fly to and thro
going over the river
with there nests hanging
in the willow trees
where the leaves becomes alive
in the slight breeze

and with silver crystal spray
an African red-knobbed coot
flies up screaming from the riverbed
disturbed by my squelching tread

and crowned plovers are more agitated
while I walked along the riverbank
As if I am placing my feet on holy ground.

Gert Strydom

Walking The River

You looked into the eye
of that white hot sun
and found something there
that spoke to your soul,
in your heart and mind
you heard a voice
and thought about the Creator
of the river, sun and sky
and left your car
at the river's edge
and into the water you went.

That big black great loving dog
was with you
and it was just river and sun
and you walked on
into the water
over boulders, stumbling
over rocks
barefoot and naked
walked through pools
and felt like Eve
and for a time were free
from the burdens of life.

At first your hound
splashed out in front
but later like a shadow
was bound to you,
protecting, guarding
and caring
with wide open brown eyes,
sharp white fangs
and it didn't understand
where you were going
but loved you more
than to bother about that
or food or heat.

At times it barked
and sometimes it growled,
but nobody dared to get near
and while the shadows draw out
you walked on
right into the night
looking up at the bright stars
and followed the full moon
rising up big and yellow
in that dark sky.

Envoi

You heard that river's song
and just walked on
catching the splashing
and the murmur
over shelves of rock
into some ponds
and somehow during the next day
people found you
who had commonsense
and was sensible
and they helped you
and took care of your dog
and your feet were pierced,
had some blisters
and there were scratches
on your legs
and still the river flows
on to somewhere
and now you are back here.

Gert Strydom

Walled Up

In the sixteenth century
Phillip II sent the duke of Alba
to Flanders to destroy the Protestants
who were reading the Bible
in their own language.

A Bible was found hidden
in the house of the major of Bruges
and one after another the whole family
was questioned, but they did not know
how the Bible came to be in their house.

Lastly the young maid, the girl Wrunken
was questioned and she stated
frankly that she reads from it.
"No, she only own it, " said the major
trying to protect her.

Wrunken believed in telling the truth
saying that not only it belongs to her,
but that she reads from it and it is more precious
to her than anything on earth.

She was sentenced to die by suffocation
and a hole was hit into the city wall
where she was put into in chains
and her captors tried to convince her
to stop believing in the Bible and reading it
saying: "So young and beautiful and then
having to die."

Wrunken replied: "My saviour died for me
and I will give my life for Him."
They walled her in, cementing her off,
because she wanted to read
the word of God
and did not want to stop doing it.

[Reference: "Jesus Freaks" by dc Talk and The voice of the martyrs,

Bethany House Publishers.1999. Pg.42.]

Gert Strydom

Walls

(In answer to W.E.G. Louw)

We did receive this country as property
that we did rather live in
as to conquer with a flint lock rifle
and we came to the open wide veldt,

did erect walls
to hold out the enemy, the predator
and the baboon,
did create cultivated fields,

even at places
where crops do not really belong,
out of our own crops of maize, wheat
and cattle did live, did map down a piece of land,

until Ratel armoured cars, Olifant main battle tanks
and Mirage fighter planes
did have to stop the enemy that were surrounding us,
where we did won battle upon battle and did destroy the Cubans
and a bald headed man did bring about great calamity,

where his brothers cannot anymore eat a piece of own bread,
where he did create beggars out of the Afrikaner nation,
did forget of the right of existence of his own brothers
and all walls do decay
and foreigners from right over Africa do stream in.

[Reference: "Mure" (Walls) by W.E.G. Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Walls [2]

From far off in space
the wall of China can be seen
and man erects walls
to keep enemies out,
to keep citizens in
and likes the dividing
as if some perpetual evil
is driving him that has power
and shatters the lives of people
by keeping them separate and apart

but the most important wall
is the one guarding the soul, the heart
and beyond masks we sneak and hide
sometimes let people in to our thoughts,
expressing our feelings
or we simply shut them out.

At times the look in your eyes
is meaningless
as if shatters have been drawn,
as walls have been erected
and then they do not need
eyelids to close them,
as the windows to the soul
is shut as if nothing can get in
and at other times I see stars shining,
as if a wide new horizon
build on foundations of trusting
is stretching out to your heart.

Gert Strydom

Wanting To Know If I Am All Right?

I dream about a helicopter
that is whining chattering
while I am shooting clattering
with the machinegun in the door

and in the dark night
I see tracers drawing lines
to down below
and see the enemy run
in the silver light
cast by the moon

and in the distance
a bolt of lightning falls
just past a place
where a torch hangs in the air
like a small sun

and it's as if a rocket propelled grenade
zooms in from below,
brushes past
exploding behind us somewhere

and when I awake
I am still twitching next to you
and you touch me comforting
and want to know if I am all right?

Gert Strydom

War

It's bad to experience war,
to see your fellow man die
and I heard even the blue sky
cry in anguish,
while the survivors
clench on to their meagre belongings.

It's terrible to kill or be killed
and my heart knocked in pain
while blood fell like rain
and the wounded and dead,
were lying everywhere
and I saw children weep.

It's horrible to see innocent civilians
shattered, broken, wounded
and living in the killing fields
and my soul was torn apart,
while the earth shook in sorrow
and for a eternity
words of peace wasn't spoken
and the savage killing raged on.

Gert Strydom

War And Peace (In Answer To Virgil And C. Day Lewis)

Impartially the hand of Odin
came down
in rage and thunder
among mere men,

blazing agony on either side of them,
on a war torn front
without retreat envisioned,
but the pressing feeding of the guns
with men as the fodder

and politicians could not bother
about the mounting casualties, the agonies
of men wounded, dying and killed

and reporting back the black ravens
Huginn and Muninn
brought terrible tidings
at the court of Valhalla,
of the pointless fury of men
on one another

and in Valhalla
memory and thought brought empathy
in the hearts of all gods,
to the extent that they had great pity
for the pointlessness and savagery of war

and before long they wished for peace,
but man would have nothing of it
until the last soldier was slaughtered.

[References: Virgil, Aeneid X, translated by C. Day Lewis. "According to Norse / Anglo-Saxon / German mythology Odin / Odhinn / Woden / Wodan / Woutan is the king of all the gods and the god of war who holds court in Valhalla, where all brave warriors go after death in battle. His two black ravens Huginn (thought) and Muninn (memory) flies daily to gather tidings of world wide events."]

Gert Strydom

War Poet

They who do not themselves fight the battle,
who err as mere humans
has got the power to call up boys
with innocent noble ideals
and dreams
to change their lives radically,
in their humanity, in their existence
and to change from alive and well
to dead and wounded

and then every white young man was forced
to go to jail
or to conceded to duty for the country
and to defend the place of unrighteousness
against something much worse, something more evil and grievous

and what poet has got the ability
to show the way
to the instigators of war?

In our human haste we only see
small parts of the much bigger whole,
not how every thing, every facet
of struggle of life playing off here fits into it

and to me a pen is given
to write only what I experience,
how I meet with it
and even at times I am far too near to the battle
am blinded, blinded by national pride
and self conceit, to look further than my own existence

and moral values,
that which are actually right and noble,
are only determined by God
who with great justice sit on His throne.

In my war poems, experiences
of noble young men are expressed

who were forced to stand,
had to kill others to stay alive,
without any other choice

who revealed heroism
but was not compensated for it,
who was true and faithful to their task,
although they did not view it as noble
respectable or good
and some even gave their lives
as sacrifices, for all the people of their country.

[References: The hand that signed the paper by Dylan Thomas, Where are the War Poets? by C. Day Lewis, War Poet by Sidney Keyes, On Being Asked for a War Poem by W.B. Yeats en War Poet by Donald Bain.]

Gert Strydom

Warasa

Today I heard
somebody say
"warasa"
and I thought
noisy in what way?

At times
people shout
to talk over distances
as if there is no way
to walk up to
each other.

On other occasions
silence speaks louder
than any words can.

[Warasa=> you are making a noise.]

Gert Strydom

Warriors Of The Civil Service

To where blankets hang during the afternoons
on the balconies of flats
to catch the last afternoon sun
a whole impi does return at nightfall

from where they daily sit in offices
behind desks,
of the new civil service the top product
with pens that scribble, scratch and screech on papers

and they make as if they are very busy,
do send citizens continually round and about
with there attention focused on the clock on the wall
and at five a clock they rush out in a throng,

together with each other in a ancient war dance
and before the sun sets they sing at the nearest bar
united in a wide semicircle
that makes the horns of the bull

while they manoeuvre and play,
do bet money on soccer teams
and just for pure fun
do shake dice and throw them out to roll.

Gert Strydom

Water

There was a fountain
that flows out in the hillocks
where cold fresh water
sprayed up bubbling and pure.

No borehole water that tastes like mud
or that which streams metallic out of a pipe
and still less the city's
purified liquid
in which the chemicals are still drifting white,

could smell and taste
like water which comes out of the heart
of the earth
and washed pure by thousands of rocks
splashing clean and clear into a glass.

Gert Strydom

Water (Acrostic)

Water is my favourite drink,
At times the best thing to quench a thirst
That comes to me suddenly,
Even though it's abundantly available
Refined, pure specimens are sold in shops.

Gert Strydom

Water (Oriko)

Wherever I look
At the large lake stretching out
This morning, I see -
Essentially the liquid
Responsible for survival.

Gert Strydom

Watering Flowers (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

Under my hands a keyboard snugly lies,
outside water spray against the window,
my mother waters the garden bed below
with a look of sheer wonder in her eyes;
in a breeze hollyhocks are waving
while some other flower buds are opening
and while writing some more poetry time flies.

Gert Strydom

We Are Confined

We are confined and locked in
behind the bars
that the body makes

in the framework
covered by the skin
that at first
stretches supple over everything

and with time
we learn to know the self and to understand
while years past too swiftly
and slowly our bodies get more crooked.

Gert Strydom

We Are Constantly Searching

We are constantly searching
for our individuality,
running away from the world we know
and are searching for acceptance

in a hostile and demanding place
and in all of this we are alone
while we go deeper
into the unknown

and still we have a happy home,
a place where parents, family
and sometimes friends belong,
a place that with a special someone
we can make our own.

Gert Strydom

We Are Like Two Flowers (Rubliw)

We are
like two flowers
growing wild among rocks
and the wind and sun come and go,
the wet rain falls and lightning does flash down,
all the seasons of life does pass
and although I do care
days do run on
and on

Gert Strydom

We Are Separate And Yet I Love You

We are separate and yet I love you,
in my mind I see your face
at the breaking of day
as if you are constantly with me.

I love you in the flowering of spring,
even in the stripped deadness of winter
you still have my heart rushing
and maybe I am longing for you in vain,

maybe the thoughts of you bring only pain,
but still I love you at twilight
even when the darkness sets in
the stars look through your eyes.

Even in time's clockwork stream
you come to every dream
and my love for you
is never through.

Gert Strydom

We Ate At A Exclusive Restaurant

We ate at an exclusive restaurant
where Chinese lanterns hang in the air
and there were filigree ornaments everywhere
that caught the eye
some flowers stood in black pots
and we drank sweet green tea
and you were in love with me
and the food were different
but very tasty
and outside the moon was rising
and filled the night
with her silver light.

Gert Strydom

We Couldn't Find Spinach Anywhere

We couldn't find spinach anywhere,
not at the Fruit and Veg
or other green grocers
or even at chain stores
like Pick-a-Pay, Checkers,
Shoprite and Woolworths.

"It must be out of season, "
I told my darling
who had returned the green beans
and so we didn't have
any green vegetables
and joking I told her
that we will get scurvy.

Passing a traffic light
in the inner city
she saw a hawker
selling vegetables
with packets and packets of spinach.

She told me to stop
and I parked next
to the road
across from him,
but before I could get out
of the car
he was already there
with a selection
of vegetables
at great prices.

That night my darling
prepared her special dish
with chicken, spinach
and feta cheese
fried in a great sauce
and served it with a bottle
of St. Anna wine

and my thoughts went to
the little smiling hawker
who made our day.

Gert Strydom

We Did Bind Always, Eternity And This Life To Now (Italian Sonnet)

(in answer to Philip Larkin)

Marriage and your love was a Godly sign
and you in my life is more than just grace,
life together is more than a trysting-place,
your sincere true love is something divine.

Your lips, heart, soul and spirit meet mine,
nothing in heaven and earth can this erase.
I know every aspect of your body and face,
with inner light you glow, like a saint shine.

On a yesterday years ago we swore to a vow
where all of this was sincere and not just talk,
where with you, a vivid angel that is wingless,
I did bind always, eternity and this life to now,
for a binding kiss you did into my arms walk,
while thrice we asked God to this union bless.

[Poet's note:"Is it for now or for always" by Philip Larkin.
As I view this poem to be very important I am quoting Philip Larkin's poem right
here:

"Is it for now or for always" by Philip Larkin

"Is it for now or for always,
The world hangs on a stalk?
Is it a trick or a trysting-place,
The woods we have found to walk?

Is it a mirage or a miracle,
Your lips that lift at mine:
And the suns like a juggler's
Juggling-balls,
Are they a sham or a sign?

"Shine out, my sudden angel, "

Break fear with breast and brow,
I take you now and for always,
For always is always now."]

Gert Strydom

We Did Linger In Each Others Company (Cavatina)

We did linger in each others company
for long moments,
I could bring smiles to the faces of others,
but my comments
did not do a thing to your lovely face,
even events
of happy times were only slipping past you
and I wondered about what to do?

In the strangeness behind you pretty eyes
I want to dwell,
to explore the world that's inside your head,
I do know well
that there are things that are hidden, that we
do not just tell,
the things in our lives, even if just small,
help us to rise high and to slip and fall.

Gert Strydom

We Did Not Own This Country (In Answer To Mathews Phosa)

We did not own this country
the Lord gave it to our ancestors
and when they stepped ashore here,
hordes came from eMbo out of the north
and the country also did not belong to them.

Let you see us as intruders,
you yourself are intruders,
a multitude of people out of the tribes
of Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi en Pondo
came from the big lakes under leadership
of chief Dklamini and later chief Nguni.

Our ancestors made a sacred covenant with God
to be able to survive
and still this relationship is held high
as forever God remains the same

and the people that now governs
do not represent me, are proclaiming laws
that are oppressing my Afrikaner people and me,
making me a third rate citizen

and I did not surrender this country
even less have left it
or have neglected any civil duties
and I am waiting on the salvation
coming out of the hand
of the almighty God.

[References: "Bulala Bathakathi" and "ons het ons land verlaat" (we left the country / land) by Mathews Phosa. (The poet Mathews Phosa is the premier of the Orange Free State province)]

Gert Strydom

We Didn't Find Him

We didn't find him,
he found us
on a grey rainy
winter afternoon
just before the sun
was setting.

I opened the refrigerator
taking out some milk for tea
for the two of us
and there he was on deck
next to the patio
on the other side
of the large sliding window
greeting with a voice
sounding more like a sheep
than that of a cat.

His green eyes stared at me
and probably the carton of milk
and his black coat shone
like onyx from the rain.

It was clear that he was
miserable, wet, cold
and very hungry
and thinned out
as if his people
had abandoned him
and I took a towel,
talked to him
and picked him up
and carried him in
while rubbing him dry

and he ate as much
as the Persian eats
in three days
and from then

I was like a god to him
and had a follower
who adored me endlessly,
but you never really liked him
although at times
you stroked him
on his head and back.

Gert Strydom

We Do Live As Children Of Light

We do live as children of light,
hold happy parties in the night,
with a compatible lovely one,
we find wonders under the sun.

Far too quickly our lives go out
we do not know what it's about
but sometimes there is nothing won,
we find wonders under the sun.

In life someone is our treasure
with whom we share pain and pleasure
and life has both trouble and some fun,
we find wonders under the sun.

Gert Strydom

We Do Live In A World

We do live in a world where almost everything
do strike at, hunt and prey upon something else,
to satisfy a inherent hunger,
then do consummate with each other,
to constantly procreate more of the same species,
in a cruel urge for survival.

A diversity of creatures teem on earth
and are bound by seasons are caught in cycles
while the earth continually in orbit
does rush through the universe

but yet man is unique and different,
formed in the very image of the Lord God
as a being with values and a point of view
that is hard-wired in him
to make a better place of his world,
to love to the essence
of what love really is
and to know about the essence of existence
that the Lord in His own time
will demand accountability
of all thoughts, dreams, words and deeds,
that a better greater place
called paradise
lies just a bit further in the perspective.

Gert Strydom

We Do Live Our Lives (Italian Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

We do live our lives so very discreet
yet my heart is filled with thoughts of you
and my feelings are sincere and true
with the memories of when we do meet

where you are decisive and very sweet,
do understand me, all the things that I do,
while in life the same things we do pursue
and at times I lay my feelings at your feet

yet a thousand miles we do live apart
where daily I do you really deeply miss
while different lives we both do live
and you are in my soul and in my heart
while a very strange kind of life is this
where only the best to you I want to give.

Gert Strydom

We Do Not Know What God Really Is

the makeup of exactly what He is,
the composition of God
where He exists outside the scope,
the science,
the realm and time of man

as we do want to judge the structure
the being of God
which is beyond us and is unfathomable
in fully human terms

where after his coming to this rebelling
sinful realm as a mere human
(to be the saviour of the world)
He is fully God and fully man
and this is beyond the comprehension of most men,

that as a human he could be at one place
and as God with his omnipresence be everywhere
that as a human he can have limited power
but as God He is omnipotent

that as a human He could have limited knowledge
but as God he is omniscient,
where God does even know
our innermost thoughts,
have got comprehension
of our inner secret feelings,
of the way that we really are
which is hidden to other people.

God is seen as a myth where He does exist
and to us are in our terms He is a mystery
where we cannot comprehend that God
is timeless and do exist forever,
do for this reason not have an origin
or an eternal end

but then just a bit further on from all of this

people cannot comprehend that a Godly being
could only speak and that His comprehension of things
that did not exist could bring to reality
from nothing not only something
but complicated things that do on each other depend.

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Gert Strydom

We Do Not Know What God Really Is (1)

the makeup of exactly what He is,
the composition of God
where He exists outside the scope,
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the realm and time of man

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Gert Strydom

We Enter In (Rondelet)

We enter in
a place that is unknown to us
we enter in
a big world that is full of sin
where we learn to love and to trust,
sometimes pleasure and some disgust
we enter in.

Gert Strydom

We Fell In Love With The Land

We fell in love with the land
when it became ours
going to explore
the plains, the deserts and mountains

and shook
Holland and England from us,
like a dog does
when its fur gets wet from water

and our reality is here and now
and even though at times things are grey
as if the new government want to gorge us down,
we can regard no other place as our own

we have lost our hearts here
there's no other land that charms us as much,
no other horizon that is so own to us
of which we hear the heartbeat in our own.

[Reference: The Gift Outright by Robert Frost.]

Gert Strydom

We Fit Into Each Other

We fit into each other
and it is pure passion,
perfect like light on glass
with bodies, hands
and feelings touching deeper.

There's JC Le Roux champagne in a glass
and the red sparkles like fire
burning deep in your eyes
while you shake your head
spreading your hair over your shoulders.

Later you lipstick
is on the edge of a glass,
while I pour some more champagne for you
and the smoke of your cigarette
spirals up into the air

and I see your perfect body
before you draw me nearer to you
and I feel your soft skin
with nipples pointing into my chest
with your breath soft against my cheek.

In your sleep your turn against me,
lying with an arm stretched over my body
and it's as if your lips are muttering words
while your face looks pure and chaste
like that of a small girl.

The next day I find
a brown hair-clip in my bed,
on the pillow there's a mark of red lipstick
and my sheets smell of you.

Gert Strydom

We Found A New Religion

We had our own suite
at Alpine Heath
in one of the villas
of that great hotel
on our honeymoon

and it was only
you and me
and the big bed
in the room upstairs.

We didn't even watch
DSTV, although we could
and we loved
every moment there.

At times we ate in the hotel
and I had fresh trout
and you loved roasted chicken

or made our own dinner
and had lots of champagne
and some white wine

and slices of bread and cheese
for our own communion
or holy union.

That winter had icy snow
(a first for you)
and what shelter did we find
in each other's arms.

Sometimes we walked
up to the waterfall
jumping from rock to rock
where you swam naked
in the stream

and we began to dream
and started our own religion,
a new fundamentalist faith
believing in each other
and the magic
of bodies joining together.

We secluded our selves
and being remote
from everyone
played in the light and darkness
deep into the night.

Revival of body, spirit and soul
brought us to our knees in passion
and I believed in your love
experienced something
close to the divine
while you were truly mine.

Gert Strydom

We Had To Fight A War For What Is Right (Villanelle)

We had to fight in a war for what is right,
as children we were called to be brave men,
did bring deliverance in that dark night,

at a time when our fancies could take flight,
had to act like great heroes against each omen.
We had to fight in a war for what is right,

were forced to learn discipline and might;
for two years we were gone from all women,
did bring deliverance in that dark night,

we bended to orders when the sun was bright,
was humiliated, trained, used when
we had to fight in a war for what is right,

as we acted selfless in our great fright
to survive, like machines, were trained then
did bring deliverance in that dark night,

while politicians talked from their height
for a whole country boys carried the burden;
we had to fight in a war for what is right,
did bring deliverance in that dark night.

Gert Strydom

We Have Just Arrived

We have just arrived
at the old big house
near to the cemetery
on the grounds of the private school.

The neighbours two houses down
have peacocks that spread their tail feathers
during the day and look pretty
and at night they scream oo-ha! Oo-ha!

Sometimes dad drives to the school
with his black car with the fins,
sometimes he walks with the dirt road
that meanders red-brown past the hillocks

and in the afternoons he does correcting of papers,
read poems at times early in the evening
he tells about Marco Polo and his journey
and causes me to want to explore the wide world

and then one day every thing is different,
dad has got to leave for the hospital,
and never comes back home
we have to leave the house
and move away to another one.

Gert Strydom

We Have Rooted

(for Annelize)

You are rooted into my heart
and I have grown into you
so that we are now both part of each other
where for decades we do know each other thoroughly
but still moments do come
that I do make new discoveries with you
where you do bring me to new horizons
in the thing that man calls love.

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Gert Strydom

We In This World

(in answer to Ernst van Heerden)

Life does break with waves
that with destiny does hit against me
and in this tide I do search aimlessly
to find meaning, to understand it.

Now I do know that every Afrikaner man is like me
in this determined time,
ravaged and downtrodden by destiny
in the dark coherence.

That Christianity, origin and culture do bind us
to a bright honourable intent
to find certainty and salvation
before the dark nemesis do wash over us

where for our set destiny
we claim rescue and accountability from God.

[Reference: "Hart en wêreld" (Heart and the world) by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

We Know Violets Are Blue (Cavatina)

We know violets are blue, roses are red,
carnations too
some hollyhocks are pink and indistinct
I do love you,
unlike flowers words sometimes do fail me,
with feelings true
yet something reaches out to your centre-core
changing us more and more as we adore.

Gert Strydom

We Live In A World

Today we live in a world
where truth, honour,
and integrity is trampled on.

When leaders lie
and bend the truth
to soot their own ambitions
and passions,
when men disregard
other men and misuse them
as tools or stepping stones
or parts to the big machine,
or cannon feed in a festering war
and wealth and power
and self-indulgence
becomes the ultimate good,
there's something terribly wrong
with society and the world we live in.

In time men become like gods
in there own eyes
and they view the Holy One
as equal to themselves
and bent on self-glory
and chasing His own pleasure
for selfish reasons,
where with the Almighty
truth, honour, integrity
and the Divine goodness
of His self sacrificing love
remains forever more.

Gert Strydom

We Live, Work And Play (Roundelay)

In life people play their own kind of games
call each other dear or some hurting names
and the world to its very final end
is in a way that no one can ever mend.

We live, work and sometimes joyfully play
right through the year each and every day
and secretively our own lives do bend,
is in a way that no one can ever mend.

Still we want to be honest and quite true
in all the small things that we daily do
but self centred are the time we do spend;
is in a way that no one can ever mend.

Gert Strydom

We Look At The Stars (Free Verse Sonnet)

We look at the stars in the darkness
where systems blue-white coil into each other,
it's hot where your hand is in mine
and in the distance a gong rings,
an owl calls to its mate and doves coo,
cars drive in the street up and down
when the moon peeps only as a small line,
while a couple together jogs past,
you ask what is written in the stars,
I have got no capability to read the signs,
the message in your eyes I can comprehend
and do love you without any kind of fear.
I tell you that we are looking at God's road map,
the direction-indicators of the angels that do serve Him.

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Gert Strydom

We Love Each Other Without Pretence (Wreathed Octave)

We love each other without pretence,
in each sense there is a kind of longing
in every awakening a kind of insistence,
in each experience a new kind of thing
that does bring great joy to our love
as if God above is daily with us
and we do trust without any reprove
that our love does move in the way it must.

Gert Strydom

We Met After Twenty Years

We met after twenty years
and it was a hot sunny day
and although you had changed,
you looked still as lovely as before.

You wanted more than friendship,
but our love was gone
and nowhere could it be found
and nothing could repair
the fracture between us.

I found you and our love
was forever lost
and no smile, or touch,
or kiss, or promise
could ever mend it again.

Some other pretty girl
became part of me
and her love and loyalty,
which she gives unquestionably
still stays with me.

Gert Strydom

We Met In A Restaurant In Pretoria

We met in a restaurant in Pretoria,
maybe it was more a kind of coffeehouse
with the strong scent of roasted coffee
Spanish or maybe South American pasta dishes

and music in a strange language
probably Portuguese or Spanish
of which the words did carry some meaning
and the customers were cosmopolitan,

you suddenly stopped short,
looking for lingering moments at me
as if you know me from somewhere,
coming abruptly to sit at my table

you wanted to read the words that I was writing,
they were magical to you
and rather full of grief
and you smiled, full of confidence,
totally without fear.

Gert Strydom

We Sat Near The Steps (Cavatina)

We sat near the steps of the porch with your hand
touching my own
your eyes sparkled like those of a wildcat;
I have not known
a glance as sweet as a lingering kiss,
saw a small frown
creasing your brow against the bright hot sun
while just being with you were the greatest fun.

Gert Strydom

We Sit On A Balcony

We sit on a balcony
and look at the harbour, the beach
and the small town
where fishermen make their life
out of the sea,
where a few boats bob up and down

and some gulls flap against the strong wind
that makes white horses of the waves
and on you towel you are busy
to get mahogany brown

and when the sun draws level
we walk to a restaurant
that is close to the beach
to enjoy dishes of roasted fish
and some soft drinks.

Gert Strydom

We Sleep Together

We sleep together
with your stomach and breasts
touching my back,
later stomach to stomach
with your arms wrapped
around my body

and in the morning
you enjoy a plate with fried eggs,
toast and tea in bed
and bright-eyed reserve
some sweet kisses for me.

Gert Strydom

We Speak About Troubling Things

We speak about troubling things,
the joys of life,
things that make us happy,
things that sometimes bother us
and while we zoom in on problems,
on cheerful things
we sometimes draw up fences
and even when we pass those
there's one more and another
beyond that,
but when we completely trust each other
all the fences are down
and we find something in our humanity
that is known as love.

Gert Strydom

We Stand On A Rock

We stand on a rock at the sea's edge
and the surf rushes in with spray,
while we have a certain knowledge
about our love on this brilliant day

and such perfection I have never seen
in any other day that had been
while there's sheer loveliness in your smile
and the sea stretches out to a distant isle.

Gert Strydom

We Stood At The Sea On A Winter Day

We stood at the sea on a winter day,
the waves were grey
as if made from steel
and rain was sifting from the sky
with bleak clouds covering the sun
as if it would not shine for months to come

and I felt almost lifeless
when your eyes avoided mine
roving away to the distant bay

and somehow I had lost the thing
that brought the magic to us
and the spark in the touch,
your voice and eye was gone
and my legs felt like lead.

We stood at the sea on a winter day
and the sun was cursed away,
our love was dead
and I learnt how easy love could deceive
and the pain shaped me
into someone else.

Gert Strydom

We Strive In All (Cavatina)

We strive in all what we do and we are
somehow for truth,
for something to outlast our humanity,
our dwindling youth
in a world that is in constant decay
but each untruth
in our humanity is buried deep
while in life we yearn, learn, laugh, play and weep.

Gert Strydom

We Think That Life Is

what we do make of it
but then destiny does come along and changes everything
and sometimes we have to adjust immediately
to face the things that life does bring
but bit-by-bit we do slowly adjust to it.

People do think that the choices that me make
do set the way where our lives are going
but this is just a small bit of the real picture
as other people higher up in the food chain
can advance others lower down
or destroy those that they see as rising

but they do not want others to be aware
of the mistakes that they do make
while they do not really forgive others that do err
and some do trample over others
or sleep their way up to the top
or do gossip and slander
to give other people a reputation,
the ones that do compete with them
or act toady to get somewhere

and all of these things
have got to do with integrity
and the lack of it.

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Gert Strydom

We Understood That Living Was Precious

The night had no light
and the enemy used it as camouflage,
in the dark invading, creeping nearer.

The moon had a presence
that appeared regularly and disappeared
when its work was done
just like the enemy.

The sun had the type of energy
that scientific men designed into weapons
to annihilate every thing living
and that mad men
would use when they choose to

and you and I mere soldiers,
had nothing more to loose
as our deaths had already been planned,
calculated
and we only waited for the final trigger
to be pulled

but then on every morning
with a clear sky,
life was exceedingly good
and we knew,
understood that living was precious.

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Gert Strydom

We Wait For Something

We wait for something
on the other side of tomorrow,
as if something special
is waiting on us in the new morning,
as if it is destined to be
the greatest day of all days

and yet today holds its promises,
holds the joys and delights
that at times is happening
and sometimes also the suffering and pain
that does shape us for the future

and sometimes being alive and truly living
is present in only one unforgettable moment in time.

Gert Strydom

We Wait Upon A New Tomorrow

We wait upon a new tomorrow
where life is different
and are astounded with each new morning
that the experience of the day
just stays the same

and sometimes I wonder how the days would be
without hope, promises and wishes
and we are bound to the whirlpool of destiny
and of time
as only humans
and in today all of the things do lie

that makes every new tomorrow a reality.

Gert Strydom

We Walk In The Moonlight

We walk in the moonlight
to buy cake meal and cinnamon
past rows and rows of houses of which the lights wink
with the veldt stripped open into the distance

and you tell me about your childhood days,
about a house on a farm now demolished,
about an inheritance that was not yours
and the old yard may be up for sale.

Stars shine like torches against the sky,
your eyes gleam secretively
with the beauty of a innocent child,
our feelings are suddenly intense and intimate.

Gert Strydom

We Walked Into Distant Mirage

Somewhere on a unfrequented beach
you and I alone left tracks
and walked into the distant mirage
to find a new tomorrow for us.

Our fingers twined through each others
and your shadow
became part of mine
as if from the beginning
we were meant to be one in love.

From then on
there was no pulling away for us
and like two antelope
we were always side-by-side
and just sometimes
the one leading the other.

Between islands we found a place
with a chalet
where the water makes a lagoon,
a small narrow beach touches the ocean
and a waterfall rushed down a brown black cliff.

Bees turned like swishing angels
around and around
wild fruit, berries and flowers
and we built a bonfire
and with the dwindling sun
still held each other's hands.

There were sparks
drawing long lines in the dark
and I threw dark red
JC Le Roux champagne
for you in a long glass
which we touched
like bells and your eyes
sparkled like fireflies

and we invited the stars
and a golden moon as friends
and threw all our worries
and all the things
of the old world away.

Gert Strydom

We Walked On The Beach

We walked on the beach
my shadow and I.
Rocks protruded
out of the sand
and a big ship passed by.

The tide was high
and the angry sea crashed
and slapped spray
upon the rocks.

a Strong wind scratched
me with buckets full of sand
and I wondered what had happened
to a perfect day at the beach,
but later the wind died down.

a Single gull surfed the air
and suddenly it wasn't there
and only the green sea,
the white-hot sun,
surf crashing on the beach
and I remained.

Gert Strydom

We Walked On The Beach (Free Verse Sonnet)

We walked on the beach
the breakers did foaming lap in and out,
around us the stormy wind did sough
but suddenly everything was silent and open
while we were talking to God
when a swarm of seagulls did screeching traverse the sky,
still waves did break and roar swirling over the rocks,
a wave splashed over you, did dip you under the water,
but the wet beach did become holy ground
and big-eyed you were far past beautiful
between us there was silence as if words had no need,
some more water poured over you,
that day and moment was wonderful to me,
into my deepest memory is it is burnt.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

We Watched A Crimson Sky

My sweetheart and I
watched a crimson sky
with the setting sun

and part of it was cobalt blue,
the clouds puffed white
and her laughter is still with me,

the smell of the perfume
of jasmine flowers was on the night air,
the colour of her eyes, their perfect hue,

and I knew then
just as now
she is special
and this love has got eternity to it.

Gert Strydom

We Were Ignorant, Loved Each Other (Cavatina)

We were ignorant, loved each other,
as we were young
and just lived for the very moment,
we did belong
to people with a new view to living,
we felt quite strong
about liberty and serenity
and our love was gentle and it came free.

Gert Strydom

We Were On Patrol In The Desert

We were on patrol in the desert,
drove through a part of the Namib
with a brown armoured car
at a place where there were firm ground

and camped for the night,
seeing the trip as a type of joy ride
and during the day the sun was utterly hot
but the night was black and icy cold

and we counted bright stars
that looked shot-gunned into the sky
and the Bushmen trackers
sat round a fire where they prepared tea

reminding me of the British army
but we were continents away
in another country, fighting a enemy
that did not bother them.

Gert Strydom

We Were Walking Very Close Together

We were walking very close together
that day we caught some rainy weather
while we shared your big black umbrella
with our bodies touching each other.

Gert Strydom

We Will Not Escape From This Hell

We will not escape from this hell
of the coming war, my patriotic brothers,
even if we pray for peace
in a country where there is obliteration.

We who in suits, jackets and ties
do not even put our lips to whiskey and brandy,
who level-headed keep to our obligations
will smell the vinegar of death and taste it.

We will not stay in this promised land
where others rob and take our possessions
if we do not ask for God's protection,
ask that He Himself wage the struggle.

In our best clothes we will be put to death
we will be chopped into pieces, be burnt alive
with a crowd (who despise God) waiting
with murder in their hearts to rape

our daughters and wives
and they will leave us naked
to lie stripped in the sun
and we will not escape from this hell

if we do not ask for God's protection,
ask that He Himself wage the struggle,
the oppression
will circle out wider and wider.

Gert Strydom

We Wonder

We wonder where sin and the act of it does begin
and if it affects us from without or from within
but at its core it does centre on the self and I
and as time does go by
it brings broken relationships
and grows to acts that do defy and lie
and yet God's true love did conquer it
when in the shoes of a human the Son of God did fit
but if sin is left unguarded it grows bit by tiny bit
and does corrode peace and joy
and in the end does destroy.

Gert Strydom

We'll Go To The Mountain, You And I

We'll go to the mountain
that overlooks the sea
climb up one of its peaks
and from high
where it almost
touches the clouds
on Helderberg Mountain view
the dark blue sea,
see trees lined in rows.

I'll spread a blanket
from where you'll face
into the breeze
which will play
with your auburn hair
and maybe we'll catch
some wild doves in the trees
up there
and see them frolic and
count the houses
along the golden shore
and wait for some time
and then some more.

We'll have a picnic
and eat some roasted chicken
and potato salad
if you want,
and drink some fresh water
from a mountain spring
and have some apple pie
if we brought some along
and later have some champagne
and you'll be mine
and I will be yours
and when we are done
we will go home again
while we watch the beach,
the ocean and the sky

and down we'll walk
just you and I.

Gert Strydom

Weavers And People

(for R)

I saw a red weaver
constructing its nest,
building it with knotted grass
up high on a branch
and its mate came
to inspect it
was not happy and pulled it to pieces,
again the finch started from scratch
and its mate came
to inspect it
and made a great noise to rejoice
at the sheer beauty of it.

Each and every house that I picked to rent,
did not agree with you
and for one or other reason
you liked to pick a living place
which was suitable for us.

The house in Muckleneuk ridge,
was far too expensive,
but on your knees you begged me
to take it
and I waved my next new car goodbye
to stop you're crying
and as places go
that house was really something
and you were really glad to live there.

Gert Strydom

Weekend Away

The weekend we will go
past Gordonsbay
to Rooiels

and when the morning sun
just shows its head
and appear like a round ball

we will pick up circular green shells
on the beach
and stand alone
next to the mighty ocean

and you will put your fingers
right through one
and turn it round and around

and on the rocks
we will drink
cups of Mega coffee

while the tide goes out
and waves hit spitting
over the brown rocks.

When the sun is up
we will drive to Gordonsbay
to get a take away meal
somewhere there

and you will look
at the forsaken phantom house
and I will tell you
stories of lost love

and people finding each other
even after being dead
and at the Strand
we will rollick

and throw Frisbee
and will try and sent
your kite up
and that weekend
will last a lifetime

where we rent a room
at a guesthouse
next to the sea.

Gert Strydom

Weekend Pass

Now, my weekend is empty
as if you have escaped from it
or maybe you have deserted

to do your own thing
or perhaps you are away on pass
and have taken to the road

and still I am waiting
for you to report back.

Gert Strydom

Weekly Calendar (Sonnet)

On Sundays a person can sleep a little later
and when you do awake the morning is baked out
but Mondays do start early
when the loving wife does prepare food to take along.
On Tuesdays some reports in the newspapers do bother
and the boss is in a mood to visit.
On Wednesdays the pastor is concerned about attendance
at the prayer meeting and the whole house is cleaned for his visit.
On Thursdays it is as if the women at work do gather
around photographs of the people that they do love
and on Fridays the weekend is around the corner
and some people want to start it quite early
but on Saturdays the neighbour is already awake at half past five
with a great din that only does end in the late afternoon.

Gert Strydom

Weekly Calendar (Sonnet) 1

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Gert Strydom

Were I Do Love And Miss You Without End (Villanelle)

Flowers and poems to you I have sent,
everything I could think of I have tried,
that you are here at a time I did pretend

where I do love and miss you without end
and at times you laughed and sometimes cried.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,

At times gifts to you I did present
and at times your tears I have dried,
that you are here at a time I did pretend

but most of all I prayed for the virus to end
while from it many people have died.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,

where in this time we do on God depend
and never to you about a thing I have lied,
that you are here at a time I did pretend,

locked-down too little time with you I have spend
and your happiness and sorrow I have spied.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,
that you are here at a time I did pretend.

Gert Strydom

Were Winter Fires Swept

Were winter fires swept, burnt the veldt to ashes
and left it blacker than the night
green grass, bright early wild flowers
are sprouting after the first showers
poised on long stems
in colours of white, purple and pink.

Gert Strydom

West Park

If you visit the cemetery in West Park
and are finished with your meditation
and have laid your wreathes
and although you have nothing
to do further,
it rewards you
to walk around in the death acre.

Usually you'll find overwhelming silence,
but at times there's a breeze
blowing through the popular trees
and it sounds if they
and whispering to each other
and there are doves
listening in the branches.

All around you there are granite stones
in different shapes and forms,
but usually black
and some graves are older,
worse for wear,
but tragedy and the end
of human existence
are expressed everywhere.

Some texts
you cannot read anymore,
but still the message is blindly known
that people here
go to the hereafter
and a person is forced
to make reconciliation
with the end.

Gert Strydom

Westdene Disaster

When the last double school bus
did leave for Melville in a cloud of smoke
while the children were happy
as it was almost holiday

the bus did loose the road,
did fly with a bow through the air
before it landed in Westdene dam
with water splashing up on both sides

where immediately it did sink,
two windows are broken
with children struggling bulging out
but forty-two are trapped fatally

without any choice become part of the lake
and the laughter of moments before,
dreams, ideals, their humanity
are taken from them

while the deadly cold water
do fold around them,
when they view the fright, the incomprehension and struggle
the faces of each other
as awkwardly the driver did make a terrible mistake.

Gert Strydom

Western Cape

I said perhaps somewhere in the Western Cape
meant a province with a big peninsula,
a place where we did once meet,
which is bounded by both the Indian
and the Atlantic oceans

where sunny summer days stretch much longer,
up to eight o'clock, where people really have a life,
where the blue sea reaches far over the horizon,
where the sea, sun and the blue sky
have got a own kind of sheer magic

but on that white beach the sea rushed in,
my words were blown by the wind
and they were totally out of reach
as away you just walked on
and everything between us was lost and gone.

Gert Strydom

What A Big Friend I Have In Fw

When I loose my job, my possessions and wife
FW is charmed by his new spouse,
while my whole country is given away
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

When affirmative action brings me to disaster
the government treats me as if I deserve it,
as if this country does not care for its own children
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

The borders are now open for the whole of Africa
while millions of people just walk in for citizenship;
his smile is gone, but he is never embarrassed
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

My years forced into the army is forgotten
and with his pension he does not worry about a day;
even military victories is now wiped from the table
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

I am now totally free from my possessions,
free from two cars and do not have to drive again;
in secret dark plans are made
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

I see that age is now taking its toll on him,
from the end of life nobody can escape;
to hell my best wishes will be with him
and what a big friend I have got in FW.

Gert Strydom

What A Big Joke

What a big joke
the new defence force has become,
where three thousand soldiers
strike and run riot
and it's people
who chooses to be soldiers.

If Jan Smuts ruled
they would have been dead
as he let them
load a gun
for Jopie Fourie
and to me it's nothing less
than revolt
for which people in the past
could pay the ultimate penalty.

I almost laughed myself apart
when medical troops
were brought to justice
for whoring
and I wondered
what was now happening
at the once great 1 Mil?

What kind of army has no discipline
and in what defence force
troops and junior officers
tell generals
how to do their thing
and the President
is challenged
to take instructions?

In my time you were bound by law
to go without any choice
to the defence force
and if you did not go there,
the military police

quickly came to fetch you
at home.

In my defence force
nonsense was taken out of you
from the start
and the authority of higher ranks was supreme
and we exercised with a pole and tyre
and received
the best training there.

.
For two years we
had to do national service
against a pauper's pay
and it felt at a time
as if the camps
would never end.

a Soldier pointed his finger
at a lieutenant
and received thirty days
in the detention barracks
for it.

It was a defence force
that showed its fist
to Swapo, Fapla,
the Cubans and Russians
and the best soldiers
knew their duty.

Against what foe
will this new army be able to stand
if there's no discipline
and like in a asylum people run amok
and I wonder
what omen
is hitting the new South Africa
where patriotism
lies at the backdoor
and every soldier thinks
that he's a general

and like all things
in this once great country,
this army is more than pathetic
against what it once was.

[Reference: 1 Mil=> One military hospital.]

Gert Strydom

What A Big Misunderstanding

What a big misunderstanding
that I got into on my own
(and I wanted to reconcile with you)
when I knocked in vain

with you not being home
and you appeared with someone else out of the dark.
What a big misunderstanding
that I got into on my own

(some will probably call me stupid)
and I wanted to curse,
even wanted to assault that bloke
when I saw you kissing him,
what a big misunderstanding
that I got into on my own

Gert Strydom

What A Strange Dream I Had Last Night

What a strange dream I had last night
with you embracing me
as your darling
and there were magic in your dark brown eyes,

your hair were longer
than you had worn it before
and not in locks
but really pretty
and you were again beautiful
past pretty
and this time
really in love with me

and the place was just as strange
out of our childhood days
and you parking your car
at that place over the Easter weekend,
so as if it just cannot happen

but weirder were our feelings
for each other
and that you were really happy
to find me there
and moreover really in love with me.

Gert Strydom

What An Impact In Our Lives (Couplets)

What an impact in our lives has destiny,
where in this time you are away from me,

where we are to a virus infection consigned,
if the authorities do not the infected in time find

and some people still live at their ease,
while to deaths other lack sympathies

but in this God's entire mercy do the earth fill,
His grace and salvation is everywhere busy still,

the trees are coloured and full of autumn leaves,
everywhere a person true beauty perceives

but in the here and now so much I do miss you
and all the little things that you say and do,

the way that you do sometimes at me look
your tranquillity and on life your outlook

even each of your perfect shortcomings
and about you a thousand and one things.

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Gert Strydom

What Any Nature Lover Knows (Cavatina) (In Answer To Archibald Macleish)

Water rushes on; brown, green or silver
as it breaks stone,
it carries particles as sand along
till it is gone,
filling everything that it covers,
has a loud tone
that thunders ominous where it does fall
but it allures, draws both people big and small.

[Reference: 'What Any Lover Learns' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

What Are These Humble Words Worth? (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(after Percy Bysshe Shelley)

I

At a time my tears flowed like a river
but never did our love completely sever
and for years I thought of you at the blue ocean,
recalled our times with sweet and great emotion
but thought you would be with me never,
yet knew a love like ours is something divine
and now again I want to call you mine,
where you are lovelier than ever
but never did our love completely sever,

II

and all pain has long ago been forgiven,
where to me you remain a blessing from high heaven,
where you are the loveliest woman on earth
but what are these humble words worth
if not a single kiss to me is freely given?
Still you do dwell near to the sea,
do bring tranquillity and you are all of life to me,
you do straighten my way when it's uneven,
where to me you remain a blessing from high heaven.

[Reference: "Love's Philosophy" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

What Can I Bring To You (Triolet)

What can I bring to you
in a world where everything is dark?
What can I give to you that are true,
what can I bring to you,
if everything is broken in whatever I do;
do you find something more in my eyes, in each remark?
What can I bring to you
in a world where everything is dark?

Gert Strydom

What Can I Say More To You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I can never forget you
while I do know about our love
and the extend the depth and how intense it is,
although daily step for step I do walk in my sorrow
and although everything that love does present
is mixed with heartache and sorrow
my heart does continually sing to you
out of its own a song of praise
and I am not clever with love
but do know that constantly you do climb back into my heart,
as we are deeply related to each other
where your eyes do constantly gleam like the sun
and what can I say more to you
as that openly you do lie in my heart.

Gert Strydom

What Can I Tell You?

What can I tell you
about what happened
after your death?

Of how many times
I have dreamt about you
and our happy times together

that after some years
I haven't found a perfect match
like you,

but then every person is different
in several ways
and I had loved again
and lost her and my heart was broken
and are still looking
for the right girl.

Gert Strydom

What Did I Know?

Even on weekends my mother got up
to prepare breakfast,
as she did every day,
lunch and dinner too

making certain that we got up
in time for church,
were dressed in our best clothes,
with shining shoes.

The big old white house was a haven,
a place where we loved to be
and she baked cookies, made ginger beer
during the summer holidays

and everything came so naturally
as if life was destined to be like this
and what did I know
about the harsh sacrifices
that love demands,
the austerity with which she had to live

to send us to a private school,
to buy birthday gifts
like bicycles, watches
and whatever she deemed fit.

Gert Strydom

What Does It Help?

What does it help to ask
every priest, pastor, elder and deacon
to pray to God,
when God hears the prayer
of anyone that comes to Him?

Or do people think
that God is blind and deaf
or do demand one or other gesture
or act
before He does hear?

Gert Strydom

What Does The New World Hold?

What does the modern new world
hold for us?

Smoke and polluted air to breathe,
the ozone layer burning away
and meadows turning
into to desert and useless dust?

What does the modern new world
hold for us?

Flying gun ships, war planes
and tanks
killing people that believe differently
in far off foreign lands?

What does the modern new world
hold for us?

Gert Strydom

What Dreams Are Left To Dream? (In Answer To Mathews Phosa)

Everywhere where a person looks for work
the indication BEE only is proclaimed,
as if the claws of the monster
of affirmative action
continually goes wider and wider

and it's not only
at state departments
but even in the private sector
that you get this onslaught of racism.

Without work, you are impoverished
even if you have whatever kind of degree
or experience,
in the end it means absolutely nothing
when you loose everything
and cannot pay your accounts.

Where will you get money for a cool drink or tea,
or to buy something at the nearest café
and what dreams are left to dream,
but for liberation
from this hellish oppression

[References: Only by Matthews Phosa. BEE is Black economic empowerment.
(The poet Mathews Phosa is the premier of the Orange Free State province)]

Gert Strydom

What Extraordinary Circumstance Brought Me? (Enclosed Triplet)

What type of circumstance brought me
in my own birth
to a planet that is not of death free,

to a world that constantly is in decay
here to this earth
where but a single sun brightens the day;

I could have served at the feet of God,
in joy, in mirth;
where I now in destruction's footsteps trod?

I ask these questions in true sincerity
when hope I girth,
what type of circumstance brought me?

Gert Strydom

What Fanciful Lives We Lead

What fanciful lives we lead:
being soldier, accountant, father and husband
and yet at night kneel at our beds
like small children
in trust to a creator God

always comprehending that we are nothing
but mere men.

Gert Strydom

What God Do They Serve?

There are people that say
that those that are sick,
wretched and poor
live outside the will of God
and that their sins
brings them there.

What about a two-year-old child
that die in terrible pain
from cancer,
the upright person
that gives his life for others
and do they also
go straight to the place of destruction?

What god does just look after the rich,
the healthy, clever people
and those that are born
with the golden spoon
and live in palaces
and do not concern themselves with others?

¶Envoi

Great Lord, I just wonder
what god do they serve
when mine see
the two pennies of a poor woman,
is the great king of the universe
and in a manger
as a human
saw first light,
visited the whore
and tax collector
and paid the price
for the sins of ungrateful impudent people
and still said:

"Father forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing."

Gert Strydom

What Greatness Did We Experience?

(after John Donne)

What greatness did we experience,
what joys did we know
when we were raised in great convenience,
until the sparks of love between us did glow?

If ever sheer loveliness I did see
it was on that great summer's day
when you first smiled at me,
when every thought to you did stray.

Like explorers we had discovered a new continent,
an unknown hemisphere where none had ever been
and we may have seemed impertinent,
about each other overly keen

when we were in love and wandered eye in eye
like Adam and Eve under God's cobalt-blue sky.

[Reference: "The Good-morrow" by John Donne.]

Gert Strydom

What Happened To The Lovely Woman

What happened to the lovely woman
that every night
I wanted to hold against me
and where is she now

and is there still wind
blowing through her long autumn hair
on the porch
and are her fingers still busy

paging through poetry books
and do her soft sent still hang
on the evening wind
fresh like spring rain

at times it feels as if you fade away
and our love wants to take
another course
and maybe it was only a dream,
but from it
I never want to wake
and every moment it becomes more real

and I know that it's not past
when you bring me a cup of coffee
and we look at doves
and other birds,
that prettily coos and sings
while they pick up seed
and I feel your hot hand
pressing mine full of love
and I know where you are
and how happy
this dreamer really is.

Gert Strydom

What Have I Got To Do?

What have I got to do to get the lightning
that crackles between you and me
here on paper?

Just as I try to catch
the part that bind us
my words become skew, or oblique or something.

It is as if I just cannot let it last
as if it flashes somewhere else
when I try to reach for it

as if far too quickly it strikes and perishes
never lasting long enough
and still I know
that there's something between you and me,

something that people call love, some passion
but between us it's much more
and something that you cannot really ward off
that crackles by itself.

Gert Strydom

What Hope For Man When His Time Is Spend

(in answer to Sally-Ann Murray)

What hope for man when his time is spend,
when life nears its end?

Life has rushed by
and now the journey is almost done,

but the big waves still rush,
as the race of life is still on
and although not yet near to despair,
but in disrepair but not beyond loving care,

shattered the boat rides the streaming sea
heaving up and down, still sailing right into the storm
with the tiller man peering
at a cloud filled sky, praying that his course is true

with no time to contemplate,
but only to react to face the sea,
to try and weather the storm
until the storm breaks and spent he reaches endless tranquillity.

[Reference: pearless: A Sonnet Penned by One of His Spurned Sisters by Sally-Ann Murray.]

Gert Strydom

What I Know About My Dad Is Only A Few Things

What I know about my dad is only a few things,
eyes that radiates in seriousness,
he was sometimes strict but it was measured by love,
he was a god fearing man, but an Afrikaner
into the depths of his soul
and a teacher of history and Afrikaans

I remember his voice
reading the poems that he prepared
for post graduate studies in literature,
which made me get gooseflesh
from enjoyment

and so 'early autumn, '
'the headless horseman'
'Maria' and 'I will go to my father'
and many other poems
became to lie deep in my heart.

Gert Strydom

What Is Left [2]

What is left
when she doesn't love you anymore
and you loose her
to somebody else?

What do you have left
when time determines a day
that she is out of your life?

Where does the lost end
when you
have to start again
and what still makes sense?

Gert Strydom

What Is Love?

How do I know
that she truly loves me
and that I am more
than just a friend?

How do you measure feelings,
things that show signs of care
and give pain and pleasure?

What is love,
how do you comprehend
beauty, passion and bliss
if principle is not part of it?

Gert Strydom

What Kind Of Power Did Flow Out Of You?

What kind of power did flow out of You
when mere speech did change into solid matter,
when light and gasses did suddenly appear,
when water did start to exist and spread
and the fruitful soil and minerals did only start to exist
when many living plants organisms, animals,
birds, fishes and man got an own life?

It's the kind of science that no man can understand,
that makes energy and things come from nothing
and do exist in intricate systems and forms
that is designed masterly
to function together as a whole
that had resulted from Your words
as everything that are and has been
and that which we still will find.

Gert Strydom

What Lies On The Other Side Of A Dark Moon

My darling says
look how bright is the moon
and the gold
appears on the other side,
of the window pane
where it hangs in a round ball
in the dark night.

It's as if the stars
tonight are fading away
and every thing in the heaven,
disappears before the bright moon.

We lie on a three quarters bed
and I wonder how many kisses
are still destined for me
and her soft body,
are touching mine
while my hand
glide over her soft round curves.

Her breath tickles my neck
while the night folds around us
and when she disappears into sleep
I am still busy
watching the magical moon
and I wonder what lies on the other side
of a dark moon
and if the sky,
will then have more stars in it,
but the star
that shines the brightest to me
is still in my arms
when the moon disappears
in the early morning.

Gert Strydom

What Lurks Beneath Civility

Is there an animal
that hides in every heart
and waits for a chance
to materialise?

Is homo homini lupus
etched into every soul
and does every human
wait for an opportunity,
to hunt and destroy
and to gain
from its fellow man.

Is this the way
until the One appears,
who will break the spears
and dwell in hearts?

[References=>Homo homini Iupus=> Man is a Wolf to Man=> men prey upon other men. 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them' (Isaiah 11: 6) .]

Gert Strydom

What Made You See Your Father Becoming Part Of Me?

I have never being drunk,
is one of those men
that can drink beer, cider
and whiskey
while the legs of others fold
and still hold my own
comprehensibly
without changing my personality.

In the operating theatre I have
to get a second shot
to make me go unconscious
to give the doctors
a chance to do their work.

What made you see
your father becoming part of me,
what made you doubt
my integrity?

Was it in my poetry
that you found similar words appear
as the lines that he wrote?

Was it because I didn't cry
when our relations came to an end
and was too shocked and stunned

or my believe that life goes on,
and that you are not the only one
in this great big world,

or talking privately in a different room
on my phone on my birthday
when you came to visit me,

or were you just made that way

never really to trust,
always to check up

even if it is to invade
the privacy of some one else?

Gert Strydom

What More Can I Say?(Villanelle)

(For Daleen)

I do love you and what more can I say
as you are of my sincere feelings aware?
While destiny does to its will with us play

you do to me the ultimate woman portray,
where with my heart and soul I do care.
I do love you and what more can I say

while locked-down from you I am away
and humanity for a deadly thing has to beware
while destiny does to its will with us play,

where I am truly missing you on every day
and no one did for a time as this prepare.
I do love you and what more can I say

and past death I will love you if I may.
I want everything with you to share.
While destiny does to its will with us play

and we do apart from each other stay,
I love you even if a virus does humanity scare.
I do love you and what more can I say,
while destiny does to its will with us play?

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What Value Can I Bring To You?

What value can I bring to you,
I that have nothing?
What can I find to penetrate as something true,
through the darkness around me?
When I see the heaven
shining in your glance
when you smile tenderly
with stars dancing in your eyes?
What can I find in this darkness
that is around me
that is honest, free of evil,
to show you the world
in the way that I do look at it,
as something genuinely actual that is without dishonesty?

Gert Strydom

What Will Others Know?

What will others know
how it is to loose animals
that are like children
and with the passing time
I tread in my sorrow

my days and times are measured out
by destiny
that without any affection
brings dark things
in the bright daylight into being

that brings me to the realization
that all people and all living things
are extradited
to at a place and time come to an end.

Gert Strydom

What You Make Of Your Life

however events do touch you
you do still come through the throng
to places that your heart long to go

but still after loss
only a frustrating wish remains
when destiny falls with fatality
and we do remain fragile and brittle,

as beings that sometimes do search and find
and at other times we are only blinded.

Gert Strydom

Whatever Is Set By My Fate (Common Measure Octave)

not a thing can remove
you from all of my thoughts, your face
does there constantly rove
and in my heart there is no hate,
only for you deep love,
as you have a pure kind of grace
that does me always move.

Gert Strydom

Whatever The Future Might Bring (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Whatever the future to us might bring
I still do believe I have got something,
something of you do remain in my heart
and about love it does constantly sing,

where without you my life remains empty
but still in my thoughts our times I do see,
where in all of this there is great bliss
as if you do remain right here with me

but yet by acts of destiny life goes on
and without you my heart turns to a stone
while with you each day is carefree and alive
and to me you are the only lovely one

while lingering stays each passionate kiss
and I do look out for days full of you like this.

Gert Strydom

Wheel

Destiny treads the metaphoric wheel
and its twisting track reels right across
all things here in my small office,
over the words that inspire my poems,

my whole set of mind is disturbed,
thoughts are lost somewhere far away.
Destiny treads the metaphoric wheel
and its twisting track reels right across

the being of my life and my soul
as if it wants to derail right here
or cannot grant any mercy for which I beg,
not even at times when I kneel before God.
Destiny treads the metaphoric wheel
and its twisting track reels right across...

Gert Strydom

When A Enemy Mig Fell Like A Burning Dot

It's a dot coming
with a falling bomb,
from high out of the blue
and I am astonished

but how plainly painful I see a iron bird fall,
hitting the earth with a thundering bang.

It's an enemy from across the ocean
that smashes into the earth,
like a falling star
in a burning kind of hell

about the last flight of a dark haired man
there is not a lot more to tell:

than an enemy pilot wounded deadly;
hyenas and jackals scratch around
where he lies in the veldt
in an unknown grave in the ground.

Gert Strydom

When A Procession Marches By

When a procession marches by
with shrilling trumpets, horns
and drums with a muttering beat
and cheer to an unknown god
repeating its name
time and time again
until it resounds in my ear,
I have no fear
and my spirit is clear,
my eye is set
on the sky
to watch if the coming
of Christ draws near.

Gert Strydom

When A Summer Day Begins

When a summer day begins,
with the faint dusty look
early in the morning,
that indicates a lovely hot sunny day

when in Cape Town you can smell,
can taste the salt in the air
and there is glassiness
where the ocean stretches out to the horizon.

Suddenly, maybe at times to you unaware,
your body remembers the joys of the beach,
the coolness, the power of the splashing waves
and something then draws you back to the sea.

Maybe it's a kind of lingering memory,
of a day filled with fun,
a day previously spent under the summer sun,
when you were happy and free.

Gert Strydom

When A Swarm Of Doves

When a swarm of doves do descend against the light-rosy evening
you are lost in this beautiful world,
then the last bright rays splash down,
while together we do experience the story of our love.

When the dark-blue comes so suddenly
we are astounded with all of the stars in the night,
the moon hangs golden-yellow romantic
and when your lips do find mine our emotions are not disguised.

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Gert Strydom

When Again We Do Meet (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

When again as lovers we do meet
I will take you to go adventuring
and we will be true, not be indiscreet,
as that is for others their kind of thing

but I will love you again and anew
as you are my heart's delight
and my feelings for you are true
be it in the day or in the night,

together we will laugh and play,
I will be near wherever we do go
and our loneliness will be away
while you I will truly know

to my heart's utter and deepest content
and I will love you without any end.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When Age

(for Annelize)

When age
leaves its marks on my life,
implacable come with the foiling of my body
there is still loveliness in your face,

I still want to love you in my later years,
like on this bright summer afternoon,
knowing you much deeper than every word and sentence,
crying and laughing along with you

and with my arising and going to sleep
have you as my companion,
still be moments in rapture
when your small hand lies softly in mine

and in the searching of my life, desire you like a child,
sharing my times of greatness and my weakness with you.

Gert Strydom

When Age Comes

When age comes
claims its toll with small pipes
that are attached the mouth and nose,
with thin legs and knees
covered by a blanket,
with eyes staring as if captured
then to still be living becomes a burden.

Gert Strydom

When Age Does Peg Its Territory Off

When age does peg its territory off
and does emphasize or colour life,
does even set how incidents do happen
then at times a person cannot win against the onslaught

when destiny does settle its account with you
and does throw about your whole life randomly.
When age does peg its territory off
and does emphasize or colour life,

it is as if you do not know your self anymore,
are not even aware of the smell of the flowers,
while your world is torn apart bit by bit
when you try to write your last thoughts down
when age does peg its territory off.
and does emphasize or colour life.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When All Around Me The Breakers Toss And Turn (Cavatina)

When all around me the breakers toss and turn,
as the tempest,
the surging swell threatens to wreck my life,
there is no rest
while I am heading to the distant shore
and life at best
is but a fleeting passing kind of thing
that is at times painful and amazing.

Gert Strydom

When All Of Life Comes Together As Genuine And True

(after Robert Browning, for my wife Daleen)

All other things, people that I do know
have got no value when we fuse together,
even the times when we are apart
when there is a greater distance between us
have got no kind of significance in this moment
when we enter life, enter into the core of ecstasy,
when we are one with you around me
and then kisses are solemn
as if nothing else can be something more than this,
when all of life comes together as genuine and true
with our souls, our senses and feelings in a single moment
when we meet each other each to each
in the union between you and me;
in bliss, and we are enraptured
and life is on that moment eternally great and good.

Gert Strydom

When All Of Life Is Condensed As True (Italian Sonnet)

(after Robert Browning)

All other times things, people coming before
has no consequence when we merge intimately,
as when we are apart, act separately
between us the depth is just so much more

as we enter life's, ecstasy's central core
while we are one and you are around me
kisses are sublime, time lingers eternally
as if nothing can be anything more

when all of life is condensed as true
with soul and sense in a single moment,
when each to each together we do meet
in the connection between me and you
in bliss, rapture, in perfect enchantment
and life that moment is eternally sweet.

[Reference: "Now" by Robert Browning]

Gert Strydom

When All Others Are Gone

They that abstain from hurting
when others lash out
with words and deeds that sting
that do not bring about

pain, when tempted to do so,
who refrain, unmoved when circumstance
demands action and is slow
in judgement and remembrance;

they are true in their brotherhood
as stewards and disciples of the Lord
and their graces are sometimes misunderstood
but sincerity is etched into every deed and word:

and these people stand alone,
true to their core, when all others are gone.

Gert Strydom

When All Previous Loves Are Lost

When all previous loves are lost
and I hesitate about the sense of my existence,
I become aware about the fatality of life

while time passes me too quickly
and in the darkness I am alone
and I hesitate about the sense of my existence

and at times it feels as if I am the only one
on this planet, as if the loss of intimacy
folds night after night around me and in the darkness I am alone,

the night gets a own reality, my own actuality
as if only I am isolated
on this planet, as if the loss of intimacy

lets me wonder over being human and about God,
without being able to embrace anybody
as if only I am isolated

still holding stunned to hope.
When all previous loves are lost
without being able to embrace anybody
I become aware about the fatality of life.

Gert Strydom

When Aloofness Crackle In Silence

When aloofness crackle in the silence
as if you are alone on this earth
and only have the stars, sun and moon
as your companions,

standing alone in the seasons of life,
with golden acorn leaves falling at your feet,
when the year starts to turn
with winter sneaking in silently
and later overwhelming,

always a new spring comes
with buds appearing astoundingly,
there is again the heat of summer
when that season comes to its fullness.

Gert Strydom

When As A Child

When as a child you asked about the right road to take,
asked why everyone have got to carry a cross
I had to show you that we are His followers,
had to taught you to trust and not to complain
and only in His words I could find the right direction
while the lights of this world were blinding you
and already enemies were present,
forces working together to destroy humanity
but still you wanted to see a star, see a sign
and I wanted you to follow Him out of free will
and you took your own way,
did later realise that we do not deserve His love
and stripped from your self-conceit you did realise
that the Lord walks in advance to straighten things.

Gert Strydom

When As Absolute Truth Love Is Present (Refrain Stanza)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Marriage is much more than just a contract that does bind,
it covers everything, is in the body, spirit and mind
and when as absolute truth love is present,
it becomes eternal and is not just evanescent,
constantly you do signs of it find
and it turns life around, as it's acquiescent,
where people do act and talk in a way that is decent,
it makes the character and soul to be kind,
it covers everything, is in the body, spirit and mind

[Reference:"Kodeks" (Codex)by Daniel Hugo.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When At A Time We Looked Big Eyed At Each Other

When at a time we looked big eyed at each other,
when you looked to me
like the most beautiful of all women,
when there was still innocence between us

then those glance made big impressions
and I was caught in you
who flutter to me like a butterfly
and nights long I dreamt with rapture,

each touch was filled
with a own fire
and every minute, each hour
with you

did contain many promises
and the world was in a way
still open and free
and I could get kisses from you

and we visited the Spur so many times
that the people there
knew us well
and it was before

we did explore
each other's bodies
when for the first time
we did win each other's love.

Now I do wonder about the kind of magic
that only comes out of the hand of God
which people do call love
and like a love struck child

words do curl upside down,
when I do not really know
what to say to you
but that I want to love you much more

Gert Strydom

When At Night (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

When at night tired I get into my lonely bed
of you I think where you do not this suspect
while back to the past I do journey in my head
view from our last meet each and every aspect

while my thoughts travel to where you do abide
as you are really special and wonderful to me
and this is no dream as my eyes are open wide
in a sweet pilgrimage you do I in my mind see

where this I imagery is in picture perfect sight
where you are present in my mind in full view
and like a big cloak falls over my the dark night
while in this way of thought everything is new

where memories now plays in the mind
and constantly in my thoughts I do you happy find.

[Reference: Sonnet 27 Weary with toil I haste me to my bed" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

When At Night I Am Asleep

When at night I am asleep
it's as if God stands at His working bench
when dreams about the things of life
do constantly go through my mind

and when the morning does come
I am astonished about how beautiful
the new day does look
and sometimes some old events

do come back,
drawing my life into balance.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When At Night You Lie Cosily Spooned Against Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Marié Bomerus)

When at night you lie cosily spooned against me,
when I feel and softly hear your heartbeat
then there are words that you whisper
and another intimate intense night starts,

in such moments memories are made:

you do beat as part of me inside my blood,
when your lips do burn fiery and soft on mine,
you body do glow with an inner heat,
this experience goes beyond body, soul and the mind

where I know that God's angels do protect us

and when I turn around your arms do surround me,
I do feel your sweet breath soft over my cheek,
while light and shadows slide past on the walls,
and the moon hangs yellow-gold in the night-sky.

[Reference:"Wanneer jy sydelings snags" (When on your side at night)by Marié Bomerus.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When At The Beginning Of Time

When at the beginning of time
He determined the dimensions of the world,
my Lord God did already know
that I would fail Him much later as a sinner,
that it would cost His own life
to redeem me
and such great love I cannot forget
as His handiwork is written on each rock, hillock and bush
measured out right over the entire world
and impatiently I wait on Him to come and fetch me.

Gert Strydom

When Butterflies

When butterflies gambol blue-purple during Easter
everywhere in the vineyards
and bees do pollinate, read signs in nature,
and for the last time dew shines on the leaves

while the last bit of summer sun hangs hot
then I think of the sacrifice that You bring
and still the birds do sing their songs
while Your crucifixion becomes a reality to me.

Gert Strydom

When Christmas Comes

When Christmas comes, while the flowers
here are blooming during summer,
I am astounded by the things
in the windows of the shops

and I am at times wondering
if everybody realizes what gift
You gave to the wide world,
with your coming as a insignificant human being

and I see people wishing each other well,
wishing a prosperous new year
and wonder if anybody still believes
in the salvation that You do bring,

if your crucifixion and the affliction of it
really pervades to humanity?

Gert Strydom

When Christmas Comes (Ballade)

(after A. G. Visser)

everyone in our country is happy for a day or two,
a blissful friendliness and goodwill does reign,
as if the mercy and love of God does spread everywhere
while in each shop people do waste money

Chorus:

but nowadays the Child of Bethlehem is forgotten
as if His words and deeds do carry no impact in the world,
there are people that do not know anything about Him
where almost everything in the world just is asking for mercy,

everyone does forget the trifle things that do drive emotions high
envy, jealousy, gossip and viciousness do disappear
as if we do suddenly live like true Christians
and everything do seem so beautiful, so good people so very sincere

but where people do sit in churches with goodwill
the rich and poor is still divided in classes
but in this time seemingly there is no difference
as if everyone wants to be dedicated to the Prince of Peace

l'Envoi

but learned professors do make as if He does not exist,
as if the dogs did eat Him after the crucifixion
as if into darkness we have got to go into this big old world
where they do not truly know the saviour or know about Him.

[Reference: "As kersfees kom" (When Christmas comes) by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

When Darkness Abounds With Me

When darkness
abounds with me
and your thunderstorm
falls out of the bright blue sky

I know that you do not
have a clue
about what love really is
or comprehend anything
about my feelings for you

and I am extradited
and totally alone
and my heart is broken
in a way that just you
can pierce my humanity
and I may have lost you forever.

Gert Strydom

When Darkness Comes

A jackal is howling at the moon
while the eyes of some small animals gleam in the dark,
the wind moans around the corners of the house
and at times outside its just dark night
with long shadows falling on the wall,
and in a room only a single light is on
while an old man moans half-dazed
as he is busy enduring the pain of approaching death.
His face is white-pale and sweating,
time passes far too slowly, drags on hour after hour,
and portraits of some family patriots
peer into my eyes as if they do know some deep secrets
and I wonder where life is going
when the world changes, when time does move on.

Gert Strydom

When Darkness Stretched Out Through The Universe

When darkness and nothing but a void
stretched out through the universe
God created stars, planets
and this place called earth

and man He created in his own image
as a conscious being, with choices to make,
a life to live and his own actions to take
but men vainly followed a deceitful being

started own undertakings to conquer one another,
to live only for pleasure, disregarding one another
falling into darkness
erecting idols from dead material things

and a time came where the wicked
were so oppressing other men,
and men were challenging God
with water falling from the sky

flowing up from the depths of the earth
He wiped the earth clear
but for the few, that knew Him
who tried to turn away from sin.

Gert Strydom

When Dawn Suddenly Comes Red

you lie next to me as if you are lost.
When the sun sets the afternoon on fire
I know how deeply I do miss you.
When dusk touches the horizon
I see you coming home,
while the evening for moments become silver-white
and then I am astounded by our joy
while we both see the evening star as it flowers blue.

Gert Strydom

When Daylight Comes

When daylight comes the clouds draw open
while the night takes all of her shining stuff,
the rays of the sun walk through the heaven,
stars shatter to pieces beyond the blue
and when the moon gleams golden after the twilight,
become much bigger as if it gets nearer
and climbs with a bow over the horizon
then the night clothes herself in her satin black cloak again,
while stars appears like white falling pieces of hail.

Gert Strydom

When Daylight Comes (Crystalline)

(for Annelize)

At daylight she runs into my arms
the world lies open without harm.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When Days Are Somewhat Torn

to bits and pieces
during this spring,
when the first fruit
are still green on the branches

then I do know
that a lovely summer
is waiting on us
and each new day

is filled with the smells
that comes from the orchard,
filled with the round fruits
that with time does become ripe

and there is a piece of Eden
right here among us.

Gert Strydom

When Days Flee Before The Sun

When days flee before the sun
while new ones do appear
the calendar flutters
as if blown in the wind,
and continually our time is devoured
before the running feet of time
until we found true love somewhere.

Gert Strydom

When Days Get Long

I

When summer days get extremely long
the sky becomes a much deeper hue,
a myriad of birds fill the cobalt blue,
constantly singing their gorgeous song

it is as if everything do belong
to the coming spring, are singing true
like some beautiful birds and insects do,
while colourful swarming in their great throng

over the gentle meadow and the valley
filling the tranquil grey evening sky
softly singing a sweet kind of medley
while in jubilation they still do fly
over fields of hay and fields of barley,
sunny day after sunny day pass by.

II

Sunny day after sunny day pass by
with almost a kind of smothering heat
the fields, the open veldt and dirt road lie
far too hot to tread with just bare feet.

Everything shimmers, the poplars that rear
like huge fingers pointing to the sun,
massive broad oak trees of many years
and grass and flowers where life has just begun

glitters in a new emerald green sheen,
the wind rustles things touching one by one
as if finding things where there had not been,
between huge black boulders rocks and stone

the sun blazes on every day the same,
I see the sun making wings of hot flame.

III

I see the sun making wings of hot flame
on the few white clouds in dazzling colours
and in the west there are some small wild game
drinking water while the evening hours

brings the white and blue stars out dazzling clear
with night predators in the pitch black sky
and some more wild game are drawing near,
I hear the hyenas laughing, wild dogs cry,

the growls of lions, the howling of jackals,
I get the smells of the earth and the bush,
I hear some leopards growling, their calls
that are where they are lying in ambush,

at night the predators are hunting prey,
making a living in the dying day.

IV

Making a living in the dying day
swarms of birds fly calling with flapping wings
poplars, cedars and many trees do sway
while the twilight is grey, full of life, brings

as if by some magic, all at play
flying leaves, bats insects and flying things
with a few that lonesome away stray,
most are flying to nests in trees that swings

and eventually places of rest receives
the many small things that are fluttering,
the wind settles among the moving leaves,
the numerous evening birds start to sing

until the full moon shines its silver rays,
when night fades slowly as on other days.

V

When night fades slowly as on other days,
man is still bound by nature and destiny
to the world in which he works and plays
as it probably will be to eternity.

The yellow sun, the cobalt blue heaven
is like it has been from its very birth
with its joyous bright splendour even
like any other day upon this earth

but a time will come when man will be free
from all death and all kinds of destruction
from heartache, the sorrows that he see
with a new amazing introduction

to a place that's holy, pure and bright;
now suddenly it is silver twilight.

VI

Now suddenly it is silver twilight
and the sheer darkness of night flees away
before the coming new breaking day
with the blazing sheer redness of sunlight

constantly reflecting against the bright
unclouded sky open in its solid grey
with the red blossoming as if its to stay
and in the veldt guinea fowl flees in fright

while a small jackal laughs out its delight
and the few milling dark clouds do stray
before a strong wind as if in spite
and through bushes and grass rocking it plays
churning up eddies before going out of sight
while the hot sun rises with its golden rays.

VII

While the hot sun rises with its golden rays,
you come from a country where rivers meander
where the rain sieves down for many days
where some beautiful wild birds do wander

in lush overgrown tranquil water-meadows,
far away from the busy big city,
filled with thick green living hedgerows
where many bright wild flowers are pretty

but I still do wonder what you will see
in a land where vicious savage beasts
have no civility and do roam free
where the natives have very weird feasts,

where the flaming sun does spare no one,
when summer days get extremely long.

Gert Strydom

When Death's Fingers Do Me Touch

When death's fingers do me touch
do not let a preacher come
to pray for me.

I will walk alone with my God
who stands free from men
to meet Him face to face.

Do not let a doctor come
to take away the pain
or give a strain of tears

let me be to experience
the blazing sun setting in the west,
to see the moon rising in the night sky

let I live life and follow the course
that destiny design
and still make your love mine.

Gert Strydom

When Death's Fingers Do Me Touch [2]

When death's fingers do me touch
do not let a preacher come
to pray for me.

I will walk alone with my God
who stands free from men
to meet Him face to face.

Do not let a doctor come
to take away the pain
or give the strain of tears

let me be to experience
the blazing sun setting in the west,
to see the moon rising in the night sky

let I live life and follow the course
that destiny designs
and still make your love mine.

Gert Strydom

When December Month Does Come (Eclogue)

When December month does come

I want to go to the rural districts, back to home
and you do ask me what I want to do right there
when I can go to parties in the city, be anywhere,
while the townsfolk go to the shining sea
do party where the lights do shine are happy full of glee?
Do you think that rural life does capture a person
and at the farm the work does go endlessly on?

While we walk from pen to pen do notice cows and some sheep
and the thunder does roll far off on the distant hillocks I do breathe deep,
do catch the smell of the farmyard; hear in the distance a farmhand shout
and under the shade of the old oak tree I want to stretch myself out,
do want to see the green cornfields, hear the guinea fowl call.

The veldt is full of wonders some great and others small
and I want to talk about the days that are gone
about how out here God still is the supreme One
and I want to hear the calls of birds, the buzzing of bees
see the smallest flower and pick fruit from the medlar trees,
I want to experience tranquillity
find a deep emotion of belonging to a place that is free,
a place where everything still is plain.

and deep in the veldt for long moments I want to remain,
want to wiggle my toes in the hot red sand just for fun
and late in the afternoon watch the setting sun.

[Poet's note: December is high summer in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth.]

Gert Strydom

When Dusk Creeps Through The Windows

When dusk creeps through the windows
with the big old oak tree etched against the sky,
the eastern horizon gleams outside,

the morning star hangs is a beacon that bridges the night,
while the golden moon fades away
with the big old oak tree etched against the sky

the night is driven away, chased
by the sun rising burning
while the golden moon fades away,

the morning is fresh like an unfolding flower
while the birds, the insects, the animals are woken
by the sun rising burning

with blinding white light, stretching out its rays
and I am getting awake
while the birds, the insects, the animals are woken

and the day has already belted its gleaming chord.
When dusk creeps through the windows
and I am getting awake
the eastern horizon gleams outside.

Gert Strydom

When Early In The Morning I Went Outside

When early in the morning I went outside
I was amazed
that the summer sun
still comes joyful in the auburn autumn
there was a soft bright brilliance
to each flower
and our love was strange and still unknown,
when it turned me away from my own way.

Gert Strydom

When Early In The Morning You Do Take My Breath Away (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

When early in the morning you do take my breath away,
do sneak deeper into my heart with your bright laughter,
when the plovers outside do twitter and then scream,
when the sun looks at us, and at the world with its red eye
it's as if everything does fold open before your lovely smile
and your walking away and coming back reminds me of a lion
that silently does sneak up on the tired antelope
and there far away in the long grass stand still
but last night's rain makes the flowers jump
when you do stretch out and cosily against me find your resting place
do look at me with antelope-eyes from which the sun radiates
when the birds twitter and sing songs of praises to God
and there is something more and greater than love between you and me
when in you I pour my life out and am lost.

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Gert Strydom

When Early In The Morning You Smile

When early in the morning you smile at me
there are parts of eternity that shatters
in into my life,

and I see a new day beginning
with I share in part with you,
when moments linger for a long time

as if a wonderful day
stretches into eternity
and sometimes I do wonder

why my life was for so long
empty of you?

Gert Strydom

When Eden Faded Away Into Memory

When Eden faded away into memory,
the big beautiful trees,
the lovely grass
and pets all
came to a end.

Adam cast his eyes
up to the blue sky
and rain lashed down
and lightning roared.

He swam through a river
and suddenly piranhas nibbled at him.
lions, tigers and wolves
appeared as if out of nowhere
and roared and howled
and attacked scratching and biting.

Poisonous snakes
crawled hissing from rocks
and plants and grass.

Yet, Eve was just as lovely
as the first time,
that he laid eyes on her.
At times she cried
and sometimes she sang
and he went to discover,
what a wonderful place
the world was with her on his side.

Gert Strydom

When Eight Policemen Flocked Around Me

When eight policemen flocked around me
stood firm against me and tried to take me
power came from You
when the lot of them grimly

stared at me, as if this isn't also my fatherland
and in my own country I do not anymore feel at home,
but I was aware of Your saving hand
with their intimidation and rumbling voices

even their mockery and hands on me
was already ruined
as they are only insignificant humans
and because I was without guilt

the lot of them had to let me go
and when thousands rise against me, they will also perish through You.

[References: Police intimidation by Gert Strydom. Deut 28: 7 and Psalm 91: 5-8.]

Gert Strydom

When Every Thing Is Only White Before My Eyes

(after Cornelius van der Merwe)

When there are no more words
to fill the pages,
when no more words do come out of my pen,

when there are no more words
no magic images, no pictures,
no thoughts, no lines
that does draw deeper meaning with them

then I will still raise my eyes to You
even if only unknown hieroglyphics
do remain in my writing,

when every thing is only white before my eyes,
I will trust in You
that You do still have thoughts for me.

[Reference: "Witsig" (White sight) by Cornelius van der Merwe.]

Gert Strydom

When Every Word Falls Like A Hammer Blow

When every word falls like a hammer blow
when meaningless things suddenly gets value,
when at times it feels as if you want to avoid me,
when we struggle to trust each other

like a drowning person I want to cling to you,
at times I want to free myself from pain.
When every word falls like a hammer blow
when meaningless things suddenly gets value,

I want to hold on to our love
and when you are in my arms again I want to know
that you love me past all kinds of things
and even if at times we laugh, cry or bungle things,
when every word falls like a hammer blow.

Gert Strydom

When Everything Jerked To A Halt

(for my grandmother Baby Strydom / Elizabeth Filda Strydom)

As a student I was busy in a calculus mathematics class,
when the lecturer informed me about an immediate visit to the rector.

At that extension campus of a American university
there were strange principles about how near a man could come to a girl:
a meter and a half they did decide for you
and with a beautiful girlfriend that kind of thing left me in trouble.

The secretary immediately let me enter the rector's office,
he understood the impact of the death of a grandmother.
He was a good god-fearing kind of man and did pray for me,
while I sat on a chair in his office.

My grandmother Baby, was the most loving person that I knew
and in a way she kept spoiling me.
My whole world suddenly jerked to a halt:
about the minibus to Cape Town airport I just have a vague impression.

It was if suddenly the stars did fall from the sky,
without a dad my grandmother was an extension of him.
Time suddenly did not to me matter
and the shock of her illness and death just became worse.

At the airport in Johannesburg my mother waited on me,
she did travel all the way from Estcourt (in Natal) and her voice was soft
but in silence we drove in her car to Brakpan
and I was too shocked to cry while pain was cutting still deeper into me.

My grandmother did not deserve a cruel cancer-death
and every other grandchild did see her a last time.
At the hospital my uncle (with my name and surname) tried to drive my mother
away
and that I was not told in time, his behaviour did impress on me.

My grandmother gave her blessings to each other grandchild
and I wonder what she would have said to me if such a thing were possible.
Her funeral is like a terrible dream that just do pass me,

where with too much pain without tears I stood at her grave.

At a loss by aeroplane I returned to the university and my girl friend
and there is nobody in that family that now acts as a bridge.

Gert Strydom

When Fantasy Is Totally Gone (In Answer To Mandi Engelbrecht)

Many memories still remain with me
of your white house with the wooden windows,
where irises bloom purple in the garden,
with a bottle of St. Anna on the porch,

the fireplace burning cheerfully in winter,
the stars that glitter silver-blue above us,
the branches of the avocado tree slamming
when the wind blows strong up on the mountain,

your deep glance that desires in silence,
the way that you sometimes happily smile
when being together comes to perfection,
when your red lips are soft, hot and hungry,

when we both build a castle brick for brick,
are together in all our future dreams;
where you sing joyfully, paint and write poems,
where every caress is pure and holy,

where there is no goodbye and just hello,
where all the fragile feelings become real,
where morning glories grow exuberant
and we somewhat innocent believe in love

l'Envoi

but this world is full of a own reality,
as a place of cruel hard actuality;
where destiny continually hits on its own,
where I constantly stand totally alone

where dreams flutter away like butterflies,
where morning glories becomes just a weed,
where many thousands of poems come from me,
where in the sounds of silence I bleed.

When Feelings Unfold Like A Pocket Knife (Cavatina)

they can be sharp
and cut deeply without a second thought,
the soul can warp
at mere words that are said indifferent,
or like a harp
the sounds of love and speech can be quite true,
can bring happiness in all that they do.

Gert Strydom

When First She Came Into My Sight

(after William Wordsworth)

It was at the beginning of the night
when first she came into my sight
and at the moment when we met
her car's lights were shining bright,

her hair was in the twilight golden fair
and the wind did bring chilliness to the air
while her eyes like golden stars did shine
as if to them there had never been a care.

and somehow I was lost and in love
when with a brilliant smile she did my heart move
and I was dumbstruck by this apparition, angel, and woman
with a depth of emotion that nothing can remove

and the expression of her face
did at a nearer view bring her greater grace
while she acted with adult spirit and liberty
and she was a beauty and not commonplace

and she acted with strength and goodwill
did talk with knowledge and did act with skill
and was gay, thoughtful and bright
and with great love my heart did fill.

[Reference: "She was phantom of delight" by William Wordsworth.]

Gert Strydom

When First We Faced

When at first we met your face glowed
with much more than only excited gratitude
and maybe the first signs of love showed
in the way you acted in your sweet attitude

but when you talked to me on that moonlit night
it was somewhat strange but totally different
in the yellow glare of a car's bright headlight
but the decades of separate lives spent

was present as well as what we had lost
but yet there was a rare kind of intimacy
that comes without any kind of cost
while in the depths of your inch-opened eyes I did see

other loves, the hunger and hardship of a widowed wife
while with neat little steps you walked right into my life.

Gert Strydom

When From A Cloudless Sky

When from a cloudless sky
lightning does suddenly fall
it sounds like canon shots being fired
and I wonder what unearthly
is going on in the world?

When the sun does shine bright
and the rain does pour down
then I do wonder
to where has the cloud disappeared
and from where is the rain coming?

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Gert Strydom

When From Me She Is Out Of Sight

When from me she is out of sight
in my innermost mind
her eyes do burn bright
and I do constantly find

some thoughts of her, of her great grace,
as if in the depths of my soul she does glow,
as if each expression of her face
I do intimately know

and yet at times it seems that I do know her not,
that knowing her breaks my heart and takes a lot
but still the emotions of her eyes
in my inner thoughts never dies.

Gert Strydom

When Game Do Drink At A Pan Of Water

When game do drink at a pan of water
totally at ease
as if there is peacefulness
a person will think

that the veldt does know nothing about fear
but still their ears are pricked up
and just when they become aware of danger
they do run away lightning quick

to the nearest safety
escaping calamity
and when things in life
sneak up on us like a leopard

coming suddenly with overwhelming danger
are we then astounded, or are we ready to act upon it?

Gert Strydom

When God Himself Came To The Earth

on the earth (His created property)
a primitive stable was His place of birth
and no great palace waited on Him.

When on this earth He could be king,
when man was aware of His Godliness
from His works and deeds,
wanted to crown Him and others arrested Him
He had to suffer in pain and fear.

When the burden of sin was totally overwhelming
man did nail Him to a cross
where He did know no condemning words,
when in great love He fitted into the shoes of man.

Gert Strydom

When God Reveals Great Glory

When God reveals great glory
I see it in His works
and He does not harbour any danger,
His great love is not bordered off
and religion is not only found in a church,
the whole of nature and the flowers witness about Him,
by His own words man is strengthened
when you come tired, weak and ill to Him,
His own love stays true and real,
you have only got to accept Him.

Gert Strydom

When Happiness Pounces Upon Me

When happiness pounces upon me
hitting her nails into me
as if she can only stay
for a little while
and when her passion is gone
almost immediately she leaves

but misfortune stays with me
and I wrestle while she wants to suffocate me
to come out of her pinching claws
and wonder why this fat old lady
constantly is busy with me
as if she wants to sit me flat into the earth.

[Reference: Das Glück ist eine leichte Dirne by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

When He Hanged Crucified

When the one who was truth,
whose commands
created light and everything
hanged crucified
selfless He asked God
to forgive them
who was crucifying Him innocently
and as darkness befall Him
He cried: "My God, my God,
why have you forsaken me? "
and He the Son of God died
for the sins of the world.

Gert Strydom

When He Hanged On That Cross

eternity was caught in a moment
but His only fear was the separation
between Him and His Father and He longed
to be in heaven again;
a place without suffering or fear,
to see the glance of His Father
and that yearning was in His spirit.
When He took the burden of man upon Himself,
when His innocent blood did flow
He could call down a multitude of angels
but He did know
that in love He was accomplishing the ultimate sacrifice
when He brought back man into balance.

Gert Strydom

When He Walked Into His Cell

(after Eugène Terreblancé)

When he walked into his cell
with the light falling through a small window,
with the jail door slamming close behind him,
the hammer of the judge was still sounding in his ears,

he did not realize that God was waiting there on him,
while his whole world was shattered into pieces
and as the darkness of the first night was cutting through him,
he came to a confession

that he had changed and somehow had forgotten about God,
but still God was near to him
and in the raw stench of tobacco and sweat,
a new realization came to him

that the light of God was still shining over him,
that his own pain and longing disappears in the presence of God.

[Reference: Hy Hou Wag (He Is Guarding) by Eugène Terreblancé.]

Gert Strydom

When He Walked Into The Temple

When He walked into the temple
with His whip slashing like rifle shots
He did drive away the deceitful moneychangers
and they were men who treaded on others to make a profit.
The usury laws that did protect against similar exploitation
have been scrapped and interest of 150% is charged
and I do know of a church president (a moderator)
that saves money at such a place as a silent partner
and he is a man that calls a beautiful woman that greets him
a whore and a slut as to the way that she is dressed,
does piously stroke through the hair of children,
in secret do insult, slander and damn other people
and I wonder about the God of love, who wrote on the sand,
who did drive usurers out of the temple?

Gert Strydom

When Her Face Is Everywhere

(for Daleen)

When her face is everywhere
and I cannot get her out of my head
still less out of my heart
and I lie alone in my bed

first on my back and then on my side
and the sleep does escape me
where we are apart from each other
by another misunderstanding
and her children that do come between us
and I feel worse than being dead,

hear the sound of the roof cooling down,
a dove that does coo and another bird,
the dogs of the neighbours that whine
that does howl until deep into the night
does keep me awake,

eventually the utter tiredness does take over
and I do become a part of the darkness,
do drift away to another world
where everything is fair, great and good

and in reality
I will wake-up after a few hours
go shower, shave and dress,
will read the early morning newspaper,
and it will be just another day
that I do spend without her.

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Gert Strydom

When I Admire You (Rubliw)

Without
comprehension
you are when I admire
your beauty when you do makeup
but a small bit of a smile do linger
that does reflect your deep feelings
and the sun is setting
and the moment
is past.

Gert Strydom

When I Behold The White And Dark Thunder Clouds (Sonnet)

When I behold the white and dark thunderclouds
then at times I do wonder what they do contain
if large rains will be coming
and if I am seeing the coming of crackling hail
but when the strong stormy winds do blow them away
then I am more deeply worried
as the earth is dry and without water
and later I am lost in prayer with God.
When the rain falls and the sun does shine and it glistens
then sometimes drops do fall out of the naught from the blue
and suddenly clouds do appear and they are white,
more noble than any other thing that I do see
and the fresh smell rises in my nose where it falls
as a blessing from the omnipotent God of the universe.

Gert Strydom

When I Call Your Heart My Home (English Sonnet)

If what we have does surpass life and death,
if nothing could the essence of its presence remove,
if you are part of me and present in every breath,
then eternally it may stay as our own true love,

when not the smell of a flower or honey are as sweet,
when no other I can ever anywhere find
in the street or wherever I another meet
then you do fill my body, soul and mind.

When your commitment goes further than the body's bliss,
as daily with kindness and forgiving our relationship does resume
then there is a kind of magic in every kiss,
then there is something special that last past even doom

as daily new life and strength does come
when I call your heart my home.

Gert Strydom

When I Can Call You My Very Own (English Sonnet)

When I can call you my very own
may this feeling and principle last eternally
and to the world our love be known
with only happiness for you and me.

When we both know the depths of bliss
let it be constantly sweet
with something more in each single kiss
and may we each morning each other greet

as if we will forever remain
in love, in companionship, in joy
even in days of sorrow and pain,
as if nothing can destroy

our sincere feelings which are true,
and may I forever remain loving you.

Gert Strydom

When I Catch Your Glance

When I catch your glance
when two trains came to a halt
with windows together
I see for a moment
how you stare at me
so as if recognition
catches us for a moment.

Gert Strydom

When I Close My Eyes (Cavatina)

When I close my eyes you are right next to me,
but you are gone
when I awake and for some long moments
I am alone;
daily your sweet company brings me joy,
you are the one
whose absence brings the greatest kind of pain
but in my thoughts you constantly remain.

Gert Strydom

When I Come Home (Persian Quatrain)

When I come home I am on sacred ground,
I am dumbfounded with how I do the garden found
where everywhere I see your lovely handiwork
and in weekends my life and days do turn around.

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Gert Strydom

When I Did Loose My Heart To You

When I did loose my heart to you,
you did bring a change to my life
and to other people it was but insignificant
but every day it made me glad

and when I did hear your cheerful voice
my heart sang with joy.

When I did loose my heart to you,
you did bring a change to my life

and still you are enchanting me continually,
you are involved in everything that I do
and for you I want to help where I can
as my life do overflow with love for you.

When I did loose my heart to you,
you did bring a change to my life.

Gert Strydom

When I Did Meet You (Sestina)

It was on a cold winter day
that I had met you and that night
in a dream your image were leading the way
to somewhere where there was a bright light
and like children together we did play
and did frolic and laugh and dance to our delight.

It was in my own soul a delight
to visit you on the very next day
to be sure of my feelings in the broad day light
as my heart did follow its own way
and was longing from the previous night
and I wondered if to you it was only another game to play?

But to triumph in the game of life I had to play,
even if sometimes in playing there was no kind of delight
while time passed too quickly between night and day
and I found my self during dusk's fading light;
saw the evening star finding its way
on a lovely moon filled night.

Fireflies did gleam from dusk to dark night
while an orchestra did over the radio play
while we watched each other in a kind of delight
were away from the inquisitive eyes watching during the day
and it was very romantic in the starry light
while in the garden to the front gate we did find the way.

I was in a kind of trance almost asleep along the way
and back to my house watched the shadows of the night
and in my mind was nothing but this day,
nothing but memories of a first kiss and its delight,
memories of how your fingers did in mine play
and to me another motorist flashed a light.

In my heart burnt a secret new light
and you had taken me from my well trodden way.
I thought of only you right through the night,
though of the games that all humans with each other play

and my thoughts of you had no pain and only delight
while you were in every breath until the brake of day.

I still love you from that day and you are my bright shining light
the one that leads me through the night along my heart's way
and still we do kiss and play and have in bliss a kind of delight.

Gert Strydom

When I Did Search For The Meaning Of The Word Love

When I did search for the meaning of the word love
I could nowhere find an inclusive perfect definition
and yet I do know that it's something that binds two persons,
that it's something that is a kind of blessing or a curse
and the deeper I did investigate it the more I became aware
that it is something with the power to destroy
and disillusioned like a mere child I did realise
that each person is a character in God's script
and when I did look deep in your eyes
I did see something moving in your heart
but even though sincere and fond a person can be
and even if those emotions did look like love
I did realise that love is decision of the will
without the impact of disillusionment or fear.

Gert Strydom

When I Die

When Michael or Gabriel
comes for me
do not write
RIP on my grave
or leave a rousing poem
and just let me be me.

When I die let me lie,
in a humble
piece of earth.

When I rise I will see
the Creator
with my own eyes
and this earth,
will only be
like a bed to me.

Gert Strydom

When I Do Awake Without You

(in answer to Helena Enslin, after Johann Johl)

Destiny separates us at times, my love,
this weekend we are away from each other
as if continents and the seven seas lies between us
and when I do awake in the morning,
the barbet and weavers sing their love-songs
the bed is empty next to me,
it feels as if only my shadow falls in this life
and still the sun hangs hotter up high,

I remember your breath in my neck,
eternal moments between life and death,
when more than a thousand times you did hold me in awe,
while other people surly went on with their lives
in a country where almost everything is going to waste
where through all things you are with me.

I wish you could through my eyes look at the world,
in the dark daybreak hear the doves coo,
could feel my love truly throb
deep in the beating of your heart
but the church-bell rings in the distance
where continually it counts off the time
while the morning-star hangs silver-white
and maybe this longing tells how deep love is,

when I do awake without you and the morning enraptures me,
the sun's orange-red colour fills the whole horizon.

[References: "As ek opstaan in die môre" ("When I rise in the morning")by Helena Enslin, "Tweepas" (Two-paced)by Johann Johl.

I quote Helena Enslin's poem "When I rise in the morning" here:

"When I rise in the morning
I see life in your smile.
You are my joy, my peace,

and my reason for existence.
When I rise in the morning
I want to talk to you,
do want to find the beauty of life,
for moments lost in your glance.
When I rise in the morning
and the red-rose day does brake
I want to stretch the hours out
when the blue of your eyes do catch mine.
But this morning my bed is empty,
my heart is without a song,
sadness comes without words when the red-day morning breaks
when I arise without you."]

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Gert Strydom

When I Do Comprehend (Sonnet)

When I do comprehend
the painful and humiliating cross
that brings to sin and suffering an end
then any other great thing is at a loss

and when a love so deep and divine
does become my very own
and Your selfless life becomes mine
then there is more grace than that which I have known

and then I do understand that although You did say:
"Father forgive them for they know not what they do, "
You did also forgive the ones that knew on that day
and your mercy and love goes through

any barrier that life and destiny can bring
and that knowing You is amazing.

Gert Strydom

When I Do Consider How My Time Is Spent (Sonnet)

When I do consider how my time is spent,
where my emotions and deeds from You I cannot hide
while Your love and goodwill does go far and wide,
in work for others without pay at times I am bent
and whatever I do, You are always present
but at times it feels as if you do me chide
while what I am and am about cannot be denied
and humbly I ask that You do my thoughts of doubt prevent
as Your love, Your goodwill and presence I do constantly need
and but foul and deplorable are my efforts at best
where I am following in a sinful mortal state
trying in my devotions to catch some speed
but each day rushes past without a moment of rest
while almost intolerable people do on me wait.

Gert Strydom

When I Do Find No Place Of Peace (Sonnet)

When I do find no place of peace
then Lord, You are a place of rest to me
and in the depth of pain and disease
You do from all evil set me free

and in the depth of all my woe
when it feels as if I am dead,
when my hope and strength is low
You do still clear the way ahead,

even when it seems as if my world is destroyed,
when it seems that all that matter is gone,
that life is an endless bottomless void
then You do still lead on

and when my heart is broken and full of fear
You still do control my life's tormented sphere.

Gert Strydom

When I Do Linger Moments Near To You (Rondel Prime)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Next to me in your sleep you lie silently
before the clock do its wake-up call ring,
and when the red-glow does the morning bring
you do become a part of my memory.

It's as if God peels the sun to shine free,
as later it's an intense white kind of thing.
Next to me in your sleep you lie silently
before the clock do its wake-up call ring

where you are more than lovely to me,
while the birds do their songs of love sing
and then it feels as if our love is everlasting
as if nothing better in this life is meant to be,
next to me in your sleep you lie silently,
before the clock do its wake-up call ring...

[Reference: "Rondeel" (Rondel) by Daniel Hugo.]

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Gert Strydom

When I Do Think Of You

When you were in my thoughts tonight
my heart could have jumped around with joy
or with the remembering
I could have drowned in a sea of tears
but between us there is more than just tears and sorrow
and now I want to think of you
with all of the longing and passion
that lies between a man and a woman.

Gert Strydom

When I Drive Through Laingsburg

When I drive through Laingsburg
I wonder why people build houses
in a water-basin,
but who expects
a big cloudburst
with rain pouring down
in the middle of the Karoo?

The word murder now jumps
out of the names of residential areas
and insurers talk about a act of God

as if Laingsburg
is like Sodom and Gomorra
where God let out His judgement

when a flood swept building, houses
and squatter's shacks
away with its waters
and caused people to drown

and if I would think similar
only the righteous stayed alive,
but it's nonsense
as a disaster stays a disaster
and here nobody
preached for conversion

and our incompetence
to grasp it
far too easily lies the guilt
on Him from who all good things comes.

[Reference: Laingsburg 25 January 1981.]

Gert Strydom

When I Feel You Soft And Hot Under Me

When I feel you soft and hot under me
and I loose myself in you
and we are long part of each other
and your cries and the look in your eyes
touches the depths of my humanness.

We are caught at a place
were minute's turns into eternity
and on the rim of a wave,
that just becomes bigger and more intense
while it hangs trembling
as if it's never going to break.

The world about us goes on with its own way
and later the wind is cool on me
and your head lies on my chest
and your hair tickles my face,
while you fingers string through mine
and life feels wonderful and right.

Gert Strydom

When I First Saw You (Cavatina)

When I first saw you something happened,
in a long glance
our eyes met and the old world decayed,
our hearts did dance,
nights full of perfume, spice was on the wind,
some sweet romance
suddenly was between us, like red wine
your lips shined while you looked divine.

Gert Strydom

When I Found The Words

When I found the words,
that turned into poems
I was instructed to follow a career
that could earn a living,

something away from literature
or even journalism,
that would not come to defy
my relationship with God.

I was taught the languages
of mathematics and accounting
but the words were hunting
for a way of expression,

being stored up for years
even while my then wife,
saw my poetry
as just sentimental rubbish

and now that I am hammering out
the words, the meanings and sounds
I am again haunted by an elitist clique
for whom the position of the self

has become much higher
that the power of words,
who comprehends any able wordsmith
as a threatening menace

as they have to hammer away
at one verse for weeks and months,
rewriting it up to sixty times
to make a poem from it.

Gert Strydom

When I Gave Myself Body, Soul And Spirit

When I gave myself body, soul and spirit
I knew that there may be some pain,
I was caught like a child somewhat perplexed
but at that moment it was without any fear.
In you I have lost myself completely,
I wanted to find a soul-mate,
I could hear love beating in your heart,
I was in love and blinded from the world,
I believed in love like a child.

Gert Strydom

When I Get Images Of Earlier Heroes

When I get images of earlier heroes
who armoured and armed to the teeth
tried to keep to their duty

but were led astray by licentious women
who loosened their skirts,
were led astray while cupid's
were roaring with laughter
it lets me think about you and me

and it reminds me strongly
and I wonder who now sheathes his lance
in to your sheathe
(or are their knights now standing in a row)

and I am broken by destiny
that takes me to other places
and there are others now fighting my struggle,
are riding the flame of your passion
and everything is broken between us
and maybe a nymph will have charity on me.

[Reference: In Gemäldegaleriien by Heinrich Heine.]

Gert Strydom

When I Go To The Mountains (In Answer To Bonaventure Hinwood)

When I go to the mountains,
witnessing Your wonderful creative power
in nature
it is clear that You keep Your hand
over all things

as if You are there more present
than at other places,
as if You cherish the whole wide world
like the Garden of Eden
caressing every little thing
against Your chest.

If I have got to believe Your word,
a time will come
when Christians like in times of old
have to flee from persecution
where the mountains will become
their sanctuary,
where a whole army
will not be able to get them out

and it lets me think about how the Waldenses
in days of old had to suffer
while they only wanted to read Your word
in Bibles in their own language
and was trapped in caves and burnt to ashes
by soldiers of an overwhelming religious force.

[Reference: Vlug na die berge (Flee to the mountains) by Bonaventure Hinwood.]

Gert Strydom

When I Hear Your Voice (Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

When I hear your voice my heart does gallop,
it beats stormy as if it's something that I cannot stop
but how do you say with this how much you do want to love someone,
where like a child in my stomach and throat there is a knob,
where our love blows like a wild wind
as if it's searching for places that only it can find
where the disquiet, the storm and urge, of our youth does vanish
and you do make me lame; leave me like a boy in love shaking
where we do live very far from each other
there are times, months and years missing
(almost like Abelard and Heloise)
every point of contact does bear great meaning.
How I do long sometimes for your company,
that the things that do stand between us must change and disappear.

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When I Hear Your Voice (Triolet)

When I hear your voice my heart beats faster
and all of my loneliness and longing is gone,
almost shy I can hardly any words master.
When I hear your voice my heart beats faster,
while you now are with me in this viral-disaster
and the dogs happily howl and cry on the lawn.
When I hear your voice my heart beats faster
and all of my loneliness and longing is gone.

Gert Strydom

When I Heard The Learned Professor

When I heard the learned professor
lecturing in mathematics,
talking about parabolas,
about calculating some interesting things
like division approaching zero
and the limit applying to it
I saw you, your breasts
and my thoughts were led astray
trying to calculate the circumference,
the curves and shape of your breasts
and I was truly blessed
when you blushed and smiled back at me
and I thought about your perfect body,
a thing that only the creator God
had the ability to calculate and to construct.

Gert Strydom

When I Hold You Tight

When I hold you tight
then I feel the depth of your trust
and I am aware of your heartbeat
as if every moment holds something deeper.

Gert Strydom

When I Hold You Tightly Against Me

There is companionship and trust between us
when I embrace you tightly against me,
I am aware of your heartbeat
and it's as if that moment holds something deeper

Gert Strydom

When I Laid Bare Everything That I Am

When I laid bare everything that I am
it was totally unconditional
that I told the secrets of my own humanity,
and everything that I am was freely

revealed to you and now I fear
that everything else goes from my thoughts
as if you are the only one
that touches my days, nights and years

and in your love I am totally lost
as daily it takes on new forms
and I know that you are destined for me,
wherever my days want to go

and from the beginning to the end
you fit perfectly into my life.

Gert Strydom

When I Long During The Dark Night

When I long during the dark night,
with the stars shining bright above me
it's without the earth's viciousness,
it's as if Your love hangs in those lights

and there is no fear, no pain,
only the sparks of Your fire that burns,
it's as if all my problems disappear suddenly
under the peaceful care of Your fatherly hand.

Gert Strydom

When I Look At The World Around Me

Pink, red and purple geraniums
that flower in the garden,
cannot grow without sunlight
and water.

Still, every different flower
has an own colour, a different odour
and the texture of flower cups
and the time that buds last
are different.

When I look at the world around me,
I know how a part
of You're great omnipotence looks
and I see flowers dazzling everywhere,
to pay homage to You
from who

every thing comes
and every plant and flower
leaves me dumbstruck with beauty.

In all things, Your love is unlimited
and the greatness of Your works
tells me that I'm also part
of Your making
and that all things fit somewhere
in Your universe.

Gert Strydom

When I Look At The World Around Me [2]

then its clear that a God does exist,
that there is an upper power and wisdom
that even does not miss the smallest living thing,

that does place star systems and planets in their orbits,
that causes the darkness to yield before the sun,
that determines structure and organs to be exact,
to work along in a living unit
a God who has given feelings,
wisdom and a conscience to man

and then people say that no creator does exist,
that he that does believe in the Bible
does squander life on a mere myth,
that evolution comes as a solid basis

but I will rather believe in an omnipotent God
than to live in a world of darkness
in which experiences does just happen,
and to be extradited to the will of destiny.

Gert Strydom

When I Look At You

When I look at you,
see your smiling face,
your beauty and your grace
in photograph upon photograph

reason tells me that you are only pretty,
but my heart sings another song;
one that captures laughter,
that catches the sparkle of the eye,

that looks romantically at a starry night,
that catches some serenity
at the gleaming firelight
and it becomes a thing

that goes to my centre core,
bringing both joy and pain
and the realization
that you make love real to me.

Gert Strydom

When I Look Deep In Your Green-Brown Eyes

after Vincent Oliphant)

When I look deep in your green-brown eyes
I see that the world looks different:
it's as if all other things become insignificant
and I pour my body, soul and spirit into you,
while you let me deviate from my own plans.
The world shakes as if suddenly it wants to waver,
even the sun is something that sparkles different
and with you with me in my life it's brilliant,
I see that the world looks different,

[Reference: "Huiwering" (Hesitation) by Vincent Oliphant.]

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Gert Strydom

When I Look Upon A World

When I look upon a world
with shattered people,
see small children living in poverty
with heartache written on many faces

in different places
as if the words have left them
in the asking,
as if they have been abandoned

as if all words have been lost
and will never again be heard
in the paying of a terrible cost
and nothing will bring light to the darkness

the thought comes to me
that somehow I can still pray for them,
that past man's inequity
God is still able to comprehend and see
and his love that shines through
is filled with compassion and mercy.

[Reference: Ash-Wednesday: V. "If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent" by T. S. Eliot.]

Gert Strydom

When I Love My Worlds Starts To Stagger

When I love my worlds starts to stagger,
when your depths enclose me shuddering
then I want to go deeper, do not want to escape,
when I love my worlds starts to stagger

when your depths enclose me shuddering
all other things suddenly want to fade,
when I suddenly dare to enter a new universe,
when your depths enclose me shuddering

all other things suddenly want to fade,
I do not worry about persons drowning,
if meteorites fall upon the earth,
all other things suddenly want to fade,

I do not worry about persons drowning,
when I love my worlds starts to stagger
I find myself in another outside world
I do not worry about persons drowning,

when I love my worlds starts to stagger
when your depths enclose me shuddering
then I want to go deeper, do not want to escape,
when I love my worlds starts to stagger.

Gert Strydom

When I Met You

I was thunder struck,
found something in the ambience
radiating from your presence
and somehow you knew,
could read my mind
without really trying
and your company
is filled with energy
and a sweet serenity
reaching out to me.

Gert Strydom

When I Miss You Continually

When I miss you continually, are longing through the nights,
then it's as if you are near with your soft cheek
and I think about how you bath, pray, are busy with poems
but there is some grief in the song of the doves

that continually sounds up out of the stripped tree
when outside stars shine blue-white in rows;
our love, your humanity keeps surrounding me
and I am constantly thinking and thinking about you.

Gert Strydom

When I Notice How Your Own Flowers Grow (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

When I notice how your own flowers grow
do wither and wilt after just a mere moment
then from sweet lovely nature I deem to know
that to how life in this world is it does comment

but yet in your garden you do have happy hours
while life does pass in its own selfsame mighty way
where you do gaze upon the exquisite lovely flowers
but do know at a season and time they do all decay

while constantly for each other our feelings do increase
where age does also come with its last season and night
and our span of life does at its set time slowly decrease
yet days are full of tears, some fears, happiness and delight

and for all humankind this unfortunate to life is true
while I find you beautiful, charming and do love you

(Reference:"Sonnet 15 When I consider every thing that grows" by William Shakespeare.)

Gert Strydom

When I Notice You In Deep Sleep (Common Measure Octave)

When I notice you in deep sleep
you have a fragile look
while shining are the brightest stars,
and mumbling is the brook
while outside the night-sky does weep;
in love you did me hook,
shadows are thrown by passing cars,
like a tale in a book.

Gert Strydom

When I Once Knew

When I once knew
a girl sitting next to me in the pew
(as my girlfriend and later my wife)
I thought that life was great
and I saw her smile
every now and then
and in a while she sang
sweet as a bird

but destiny and life separated us
and the years rolled on
where we live a thousand miles apart
and when we met again
we were still the same,
but different and more mature
and then maybe sure
about were our different careers
were leading us

¶Envoi
and now with our prime devoured
by the passing years
and time still running on
much I have learned
and maybe too little I know
of the heart of a woman
who still loves me
while we live apart.

[Reference: Quid Hic Agis by Thomas Hardy.]

Gert Strydom

When I Opened The Door (List)

When I opened the door
I found:

four police cars (with flashing lights)
one police car (of which the siren was screaming)
nine policemen (at the garden gate) ,
ten of the neighbours (that were watching) ,
two dogs (that were roaring protecting)
three lightning bolts (that followed shortly after each other)
some rain pouring down (that was wetting everything)
one policeman (that was shouting)

and the reason for all of this:
you had laid a false charge.

Gert Strydom

When I Perish

When I perish
from this world
of pleasure and pain
and joy and sadness,
I'll want it all again.

If I enter eternity
I'll long to be,
back on the earth with you.

Let other people long
for a place of peace
and streets of gold,
but I will be happy and content
to have spent
a life with you.

Gert Strydom

When I Saw You, The World Felt Untouched

When I saw you, the world felt untouched,
as if you were the first woman
and to you I wanted to give my whole life
wanted to bring a new meaning to yours

while I am astounded by you
and without you
everything precious is missing,
and without you I feel totally lost.

You tell me about your dreams,
about the wild flowers
that only bloom in the hills
while I am falling deeper in love with you

and we suddenly drive high up into a mountain pass
where it's an experience
to together find a wild orchid,
in a place untouched by man.

Gert Strydom

When I See Stars Twinkling In Your Eyes

when you want to lie as a puzzle with me
I will even abandon fame and fortune
if you want me at your side

but your whispered words
at times fly past me.

Gert Strydom

When I See The Wings Of The Darkness Falling

When I see the wings of the darkness falling
with the last shadow flapping down,
while the light flees before the darkness of night
I want to feel you glance on me for moments

with you let the cool evening breeze wash over me,
experience the sunshine of your laughter,
know your love and each word,
every deed is only meant for me.

Gert Strydom

When I See Them Running Out

(after Ernst van Heerden)

When I see them running out
out of a shopping centre into the street
I do wonder about what is happening
and why are they running,
what is chasing them?

They run on the sidewalk,
bumping into other pedestrians,
do run right through the pretty housewives,
to whose dresses toddlers do cling
and a few cut over the street

where with screaming tyres cars break,
the drivers do yell at them in anger
and hoot without end,
but the flight does continue
and some more people do become a part of it,

policemen that were chatting to each other,
stand somewhat astonished as some more people
do come out of the shopping centre
and do flee as if their very lives
are in danger

and when I walk into the shopping mall
everything there is tranquil and silent,
there is nowhere a bomb
that might explode,
it is almost deserted.

[Reference: "Uittog" (Exodus) by Ernst van Heerden.]

Gert Strydom

When I See You Smile In Tranquillity (Septilla / Spanish Septet)

there comes a great kind of joy to me
when our eyes meet for a time again
there is a kind of charming romance,
with a new message in every glance,
with emotions of both joy and pain
and between us a sweet serenity.

Gert Strydom

When I See Your Sign And Your Name In The Stars (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where this hour in its great amazement
brings something holy and honourable to our love
between you and me there is no separation
while constantly my heart sings songs of praise to you,
when moments become eternal and immortal
the mystery and unknown do find familiarity,
while we pour out ourselves as living beings into each other,
when passion does blind that moment for us,
when I see your sign and your name in the stars,
when the universe knows of God's love and about ours,
where I am not worthy of your sincere love,
cannot forget the times and days with you
then you do fill up my life and my days,
while I do live as a mere human on earth.

Gert Strydom

When I Sometimes Stand On My Knees

When I am lost on the twisting roads,
do not know how to get out of a situation,
and are cornered somewhere
then You do still determine the way out.

When I sometimes stand on my knees
do wonder about the meaning to life
while the darkness is sneaking nearer
then I do feel Your omnipotent hand protecting me.

Gert Strydom

When I Stand At The End Of Our Love

I

When I stand at the end of our love
that disappears as if the flame
of destiny determines our feelings
then you trample my humanity to its depths.
When that which we see as holy does go lost
it makes my wonder,
if we can find a place somewhere
without any suspicion
where things are peaceful and clear
where we both are stripped from others,
where you wait faithful
with every word and deed a small witness
that our feelings did not change
in the glittering night full of stars.

II

In the glittering night full of stars
I saw you for moments
held you tightly
with passion that could not wait,
you were mine through a summer day
as if you eternally true
would only keep to me
your eyes shone pretty like the stars
but now you are not there anymore
to reach for me,
and our time is past and forever finished,
the song of our lost love has finally been sung
and in the evenings I see your eyes gaze,
in the evenings the memories flare up.

III

In the evenings the memories flare up
with shining eyes full of deep meaning,
that which was between us was no secret

and the light of it circled out to others
but another came into our lives
making that which was pure and noble
trampled, lost and full of woe,
twisted away from all beauty,
broken to many pieces
and with painful suspicion and prayer
I wanted to spare our love from destruction,
I wanted our relationship to be restored,
wanted to rescue the beauty in its fullness;
I had to accept your free will.

IV

I had to accept your free will
and the feelings that we had
was suddenly broken and finished,
even the way we did live
but now I know that love does sometimes fail,
even when it's seen as being eternal,
a person has sometimes got to experience pain
and heartache that falls like a lightning bolt
while that which was between us did perish
and I had to go on another way
that shines up to the highest heavens,
which God Himself sets out for me
and the break-up was your decision;
I wonder from where our love did come?

V

I wonder from where our love did come,
the feelings that once was between us
about the glittering eyes that met each other,
the beauty that almost was something Godly?
Somewhere that fire was distinguished,
was scorched, burnt to ashes,
you were infected by love for someone else
while you did leave me pain
and I wonder how your blushing cheeks,
the glittering fire in your eyes
could so easily catch me,

could bewitch me,
when your heart could despise me,
while that which was between us now fades.

VI

While that which was between us now fades.
to only broken memories,
into my lost ponderings
the branches of our spring is now sawn off
and the beauty did perish like it did please you,
with heartache that goes to the depths of the soul
and sometimes it feels as if this sadness goes wider,
as if these feelings go to other horizons
and the pain is like a falling drop
that in water circles out wider
and later the surface is without a crease
as it goes into oblivion
but memories do tell
you did once love me passionately.

VII

You did once love me passionately
with love in your eyes,
fire and electricity in every touch,
with the glory of rainbows
and now there is just scorn in your gaze
while I am a stranger,
while you are lost in the traps of life
and now you are wild like an animal
that preys and mangles and set selfish claims,
like a cat from hell that slyly steals upon me,
as if my love and tenderness does not count
as you sneak nearer with anger and destruction
but still life goes on at its time
when I stand at the end of our love

Gert Strydom

When I Stand With My Little Knowledge

When I stand with my little knowledge
in my own sentiment
before God who was and is
with my own empty arguments
then I see His love and power
in every lightning bolt that bashes down,
and the glory of His creation is reflected
in the beauty of flowers,
and the knowledge that He is the creator of all things.

Gert Strydom

When I Stopped At Home One Day

Early in the morning
I gave the children food
and a goodbye kiss
to my still sleeping wife.

At times I dropped them
at school
and turned with the road
to the highway
to get to work

and when I stopped at home one day
there were no children
that came running out,
no wife knocking
at the outside door

and all the dogs were suddenly silent
and life took
its own course
and every thing
had passed just too quickly.

Gert Strydom

When I Tell You That I Do Not Deserve You

(in answer to Louis Esterhuizen)

When I tell you that I do not deserve you
I do see you as an angel in times of darkness
where you do bring love and care to my life,
when you let my heart sings with hope and joy,
where you know me and every deep mystery,
comprehend me, do assist when others do me forsake,
and at all times you do really matter to me
but much more than this comes to significance,
I do see you as an angel in times of darkness.

[Reference: "dat jy soms na haar kan draai en sê" (that you sometimes can turn to her and say) by Louis Esterhuizen.]

Gert Strydom

When I Tell You That I Do Not Deserve You 2

(for Daleen, in answer to Louis Esterhuizen)

When I tell you that I do not deserve you
I do see you as an angel in times of darkness
where you do bring love and care to my life,
when you let my heart sings with hope and joy,
where you know me and every deep mystery,
comprehend me, do assist when others do me forsake,
and at all times you do really matter to me
but much more than this comes to significance,
I do see you as an angel in times of darkness.

[Reference: "dat jy soms na haar kan draai en sê" (that you sometimes can turn to her and say) by Louis Esterhuizen.]

Gert Strydom

When I Think (English Sonnet)

(in answer to John Keats)

When I think that forgotten and dead I might be
before I have written the poems in my brain,
there comes a great kind of sadness to me
where to you too few great love poems remain

and constantly I do see you dear lovely face,
do think about our lives and about our romance
and the doomed thoughts away I want to chase,
constantly ticks the clock of destiny and chance

where I write words down hour after hour
but I am scared not to be with you once more,
do sing to you and of you in poetry's power
of love as a eternal thing where I do you adore,

yet still far too many thought I do constantly think,
while I am as a poet almost at destiny's brink.

[Reference: "When I have fear" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

When I Visit Schools For Prize Giving (Limerick)

When I visit schools for prize giving
I think about students striving
to do their utter best,
to excel with merit as the only test,
but toadyism is involved in every thing.

[Reference: written for Megan Van Wyk.]

Gert Strydom

When I Walk Around In The Lovely Garden

and discover places as if it's an adventure,
when I sit in the shadow of a tree,
when I observe new flowers

as if it's the first time
that I behold the beauty of them
then I wonder about how glorious
Eden must have been

where animals without fear dog tame came nearer
and I wonder if there had been a kind of Godly glory
in every living thing and in every flower?

Gert Strydom

When I Walk Around In The Lovely Garden [1]

and discover places as if it's an adventure,
when I sit in the shadow of a tree,
when I observe new flowers

as if it's the first time
that I behold the beauty of them
then I wonder about how glorious
Eden must have been

where animals without fear dog tame came nearer
and I wonder if there had been a kind of Godly glory
in every living thing and in every flower?

Gert Strydom

When I Walk Om Margate's Beach

When I walk om Margate's beach
something is caught,
in the sound of the breaking waves
and it echoes there forever more.

The beach is wiped clear
by the rushing waters
of the high tide,
but somehow footprints
walk the beach
as if they were just set there.

In the pleasant summer
golden bodies spreads
right around me
and the waves,
are filled with children
splashing and laughing
at the joy of living.

Gert Strydom

When I Walk Through The Halls Of A Hospital

When I walk through the halls
of a hospital
and the floors do gleam around me,
while the smell of disinfectant
and medicine hangs in the air

while everywhere I see downhearted faces,
and some of the nurses are smiling
then I am aware
of the will to live

and how fatal
human existence
really is.

Gert Strydom

When I Was A Boy And The World Was Young (Pushkin Sonnet)

When I was a boy and the world was young
in my boyhood with immature fancies
still long before you did come along
there were no girlfriends or enemies,

the government send me off to war
to fight enemies I did not deplore
and when you were there with another;
to fight for him, for you and even her,

although everything I was giving
there was some men that I could not save,
without a question I had to be brave
but did my best at my task to stay living

and there they died for someone else's tranquillity,
while the horrors of war is still with and in me.

Gert Strydom

When I Was A Child

When I was a child
I saw fireflies,
fly passing secretly at night.

The world was full of wonderful things
and there were trees
with bird nests and eggs
of white and pink and blue
and with spots on them.

I could shoot a true shot with my kettie
and the blue fishing rod
took carp, blue kurper, yellowfish
and catfish from streams.

Doves or fish fillets
from glowing wood embers,
tasted delicious
and the world was a great place.

At the marsh plovers jumped up and down
and like wounded birds, as if with a broken wing
tried to entice you away from their nests

Aloe and protea bushes were all over the kopjes
and prickly pear, wild peach, mispil and stamvrugte
were everywhere on the ridges.

The world of a child faded away with time.
But when I went back as a adult;
a highway runs right through the hillocks
and there are houses where there was marsh
and the streams are full of rubbish and litter
and I see how progress has destroyed nature.

Gert Strydom

When I Was A Child[2]

When I was a child
every day was filled with laughter
and even the dogs
and cats talked to me.

The trees were huge
and threw big shadows
while the bright yellow sun
went to rest
and corn fields and orchards
with peaches, apricots and pears
stretched as far
as I could see

The cool breeze whispered
as it blew through the popular trees
and something rippled
in the big dam
that lay like a lake
in front of me
after the good summer rain.

The swollen river was angry
and I could hear its cussing stream
from far away
while it rushed over rocks
at places where it did not flow before.

Once the world was a bigger place
and I loved the world
and it loved me.

Gert Strydom

When I Was A Teenager

When I was a teenager
I typed my first story
and poems
on a old Rexel typing machine,
that had belonged to my dad

and I had a room
in a garden flat
outside of the house
where my step father
would come to the door
and tell me to stop
wasting my time.

He never read or heard
a single line
and told me
to stop the immature nonsense
and on what he based
his opinion
to this very day
I do not know.

When my first manuscript
was almost published
it came to him
like a shock
and to this day

I wonder if he convinced my mother
to keep that letter from me then.

[Reference: "Daddy please do mercy take and I will no more verses make."
Words by Isaac Watts.]

Gert Strydom

When I Was Boy And Life Was Young (Ghazal)

There was a strange kind of living time
a kind of experiencing joy time

when I was boy and the world was still young,
when you for me you had lost your meeting time

all of joy, our sweet love was away flung,
as to our love it was the end of time

but never in shame was my head low hung,
and for friendship I could always find time

but of your friends I did not count among,
with years we did not notice passing time

while you did not know where you do belong
we were ready for the effect of time

but still life was like a great kind of song
and now for us, for life there is no time.

Gert Strydom

When I Was Ten

When I was ten
I knew the difference
between boys and men,

that somebody is always bigger,
stronger, faster and sometimes
has more common sense

and for a few Rands
I bought a cricket ball, a bat
and poles, and some chocolates
for my mother

roses and some beans
from the nursery
for my own garden
and planted them into holes

and life was great
and if I knew you then
I would offer you an ice cream,
and a cool drink or two

but now that we are adults
and I see love in your eyes
red roses will probably do.

Gert Strydom

When I Was Young, I Were Caught

When I was young, I were caught
by your dark brown hair, your deep dark eyes
and I were smitten by your smile and the dimple in your cheek,

I believed in your beauty and nobility,
I was like a brother, but more than in love
by your dark brown hair, your deep dark eyes

and you were the most beautiful of all women to me
with a beauty coming from somewhere deep.
I was like a brother, but more than in love

and whatever you did you were pure like a flower
and I knew that you were wonderful
with a beauty coming from somewhere deep

and sometimes I longed for you.
When I was young, I were caught
and I knew that you were wonderful
and I was smitten by your smile and the dimple in your cheek.

Gert Strydom

When I Was Young, I Were Caught [2]

When I was young, I were caught
by your dark brown hair, your deep dark eyes
and I were smitten by your smile and the dimple in your cheek,

I believed in your beauty and nobility,
I was like a brother, but more than in love
by your dark brown hair, your deep dark eyes

and you were the most beautiful of all women to me
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and whatever you did you were pure like a flower
and I knew that you were wonderful
with a beauty coming from somewhere deep

and sometimes I longed for you.
When I was young, I were caught
and I knew that you were wonderful
and I was smitten by your smile and the dimple in your cheek.

Gert Strydom

When I Will Have You With Me Again

When we talk on the cell phone
I drag out conversations
drawing them out long
as if like this
I can keep you with me.

How much I miss you
and about my love
by now
I haven't got to tell
more than you already know

and still I wonder
when I will have you
with me again?

Gert Strydom

When I Write In Hundreds Of Poems [5]

(in answer to Herman de Coninck)

When I write in hundreds of poems about you and our love,
it's as if you do not really understand the impact of my words

and when click-clack you walk along the corridor
you do want me to follow on your heels,

when you do lie across the bed
you want me to be close to you,

your words that you do love me sincerely
asks that I do acknowledge that I do love you above everything

and like this you want me to get involved with everything of you,
as if love is much more than any words.

[Reference:"Poëzie" (Poetry)by Herman de Coninck.

Poet's note: ON FACEBOOK THERE IS NO FREEDOM OF SPEECH:

I just want to thank Facebook for banning me until Thursday 7 December 2018
12h22 on this day Monday 03 December 2018 while I have been publishing this
poem, which is a love poem to my wife.]

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Gert Strydom

When Icarus Did Fall

When Icarus did fall
his wings were scorched,
when Icarus did fall
a bolt of lightning did strike him
in the sea near to a island,
to help him there were nobody
when Icarus did fall

Gert Strydom

When In History, Stories And Poems I Read (Sonnet Corona)

(after William Shakespeare)

I

When in history, stories and poems I read
about the greatest, the most fair persons
with the remarkable lives they did lead,
of knights guarding ladies for some reasons

then in you my lovely darling princess,
I see in everything, even your brow
more beauty than pens of old did express
and in the lovely looks that are yours now

is such exceeding glorious, awesome grace,
that all declarations prefigure you
up to this very moment in time and space,
are just substitutes trying to hold true,

to you the world is waiting as if ready,
arise - walk into my arms, my lady.

II

Arise - walk into my arms, my lady,
rise up my beloved true companion
the hot bright summer sun is already
falling with a love filled emotion

on the pure white leaves of the lilies,
the finches are already twittering
the wind is passing quick like young fillies
and outside the entire world is stirring.

Rise up my sweetest white lovely rose
and awake to the blessed bright morning,

arise from you tranquil kind of repose
and experience the greatness of spring,

of everything that's good, great and living,
hear the joyous songs, the alluring feeling.

III

Hear the joyous songs, the alluring feeling,
from what is held as a true loveliness,
others have just some features been stealing;
your looks, grace, personality do not digress.

Not doom or the evil works of destiny
can control each and every coming thing,
can totally control either you or me,
or the pure fountain from where all things spring.

Neither is my love for you controlled by
events, people or situations that impact on it
as I have many kinds of choices that lie
in my two hands, that changes bit by bit.

In all kinds of things I want to be true,
may my lines only express love to you.

IV

May my lines only express love to you,
tell no lies and not lack in sincerity
and whatever I now say and I do
become deeper and carry more integrity.

As constantly my love grows intense
and with time it becomes much clearer
that at no one else's pain or expense,
that you are now becoming much dearer

than that what you used to be to me
and although I thought that no other love

could ever be more sincere and free
more intense, or could still more improve,

our love is better than only moments ago
while it still have hours, days and years to grow.

V

While it still have hours, days and years to grow
to our love, may these words be our monument,
may it in sincerity forever glow
may it stay, when everything else is spent.

These words are left by me as did others
but all of my sincere feelings for you
must not contain anything that bothers
as they are full of integrity and true

and we might only be like the moth and flame
attracted to light and differences
but the feelings still do remain the same,
which I do profane as does the consequences

and still I am just trying to stay true,
even in rout I keep honouring you.

□

VI

Even in rout I keep honouring you,
I who have nothing, but sincerity,
I must be able to find something true,
in the extreme darkness that surrounds me.

When I see the lights of heaven glancing
through your lovely clear sun filled eyes,
when you are smiling so all-embracing
I am not bothered by any cloudy skies.

When I was but still extremely young,

I walked through the veldt many a mile,
the loveliest sight did to the sky belong
while I was lost in its hot sunshine smile,

I was seeing the world through childlike eyes,
when I was sincere, stripped from lies.

VII

When I was sincere, stripped from lies;
I was wondering what to find in darkness
that is just as clear as the bright blue skies,
that is honourable, free from wickedness?

When most of my days are quickly rushing past
will you then as now, still truly love me,
in old age, when any day can be my last?
Will you still be happy, laugh joyously,

be here to keep me with sweet company
when I am broken by destiny in contrast
to the young man that I used to be,
when all of the good things in life do pass?

Will I then still feel your body's true heat,
when in history, stories and poems I read?

Gert Strydom

When In Rapture And In Bliss

When in rapture and in bliss we do feel
that life is more
that being bound to the mere human body,
that in each kiss
things are different than they had been before;
then we realize
that in that moment somebody else truly do exist,
then we act selfless
to be perfectly part of the one that we do love.

Gert Strydom

When In The Dark You Stopped At The Back Door

When in the dark
you stopped at the back door,
you were already
a day late.

In your eyes
I am suddenly a stranger
and it's an unknown thing,
to see indifference there
as if I am not handsome
and do nothing to your heart.

A mirror could have told
me the same
and have shown tired red eyes
(from crying)
and that deep frowns
running along my forehead

and then I wondered
what do you want
as I am already packing
and there are boxes
standing everywhere

and maybe now
it's just meaningless
that I tried to make
my life around you,

but I know
that the journey ahead
are almost without end
when you walk into the house

and I do not have words
to say to you
and I wonder
what did I hope for?

Gert Strydom

When In The Morning The Winter Walks With Dragging Feet

when a blanket of frost covers the earth
then you and I still lie cosily
and tight against each other
as if something pampering is in our company
as if our bodies at times do resist the cold.

Gert Strydom

When In Winter Summer Is Dead (Cyhydedd Fer Sonnet)

When in winter summer is truly dead,
when the all flowers and leaves are shed
still I hear the dove's lovely coo and sing
as if they are whispering about spring.
Even when the cold winter winds sweep in
the ripe to the remaining plants death bring,
when birds to a distant summer have fled
to follow them your wings you do not spread.
There must be a kind of greatness, something
in romantically together living
there are icy and stripped days ahead,
promising a summer sun rising red
lies always somewhere in the near beyond,
like a dropp falling, falling in a pond.

Gert Strydom

When Intimacy Is Past

When intimacy, the body's bliss
is past, as is the last kiss
while you against me fulfilled sleep
some feelings linger and others remain very deep.

There is something more than to touch, to see,
something more than mere intimacy
something that comes unseen
that changes us from what we have been.

A kind of determination, call it principle,
a thing surer than the mere human will,
a kind of devotion that stays true
in everything that we do.

It has a kind of nobleness that in our lives does fit,
if it is not love, then I do not really know it.

Gert Strydom

When It Rains

When the rain comes
with lightning pouring down,
I can see flashes coming nearer from far.

The dogs get scared
by the thundering noise
and shiver with every bang
that the lightning bolts strike,
but the ginger cat's eyes
glow as if alight.

No rain can keep him in
and like a ghost he prowls away,
appearing here and there
and in the pouring whet climbs trees
to pounce on unexpected birds.

Gert Strydom

When It Starts To Rain Miserable At The Sea

then the holidaymakers want to go home
and then everyone turns
on the sea and beach their back

and suddenly everybody is unhappy
that bad weather does also exist at the sea
and many are angry and moody
when they do return to where they live.

Gert Strydom

When Kasparov Made His Chess Moves

When Kasparov made his chess moves
and Deep Blue did react upon them, did become involved,
without any emotion did mathematically calculate
exactly what the moves of that brilliant human being did mean,

in its tinned-brain it did come to an own conclusion
and out of thousands of deductions did astonish with its own moves
and yet no machine could, even the most powerful,
recognize its own faults by itself,

or understand that at times there is a premonition, a fine feeling,
that leads to greater meaning.

The game was lost four times to two times against the human,
Chung-Jen Tan did reprogram that computer

and with me the fear does remain that tinned-brains with knowledge
at a time will decide emotionless over the destiny of some people.

Gert Strydom

When Language Is Ripped From My Lips

When language is ripped from my lips,
when words
are losing their meaning
and cannot roar anymore

like the gathering storm clouds
filled with thunder,
when a cup of coffee or tea
says much more
to restore peace and tranquillity

than the fabric of words
and a tear, can be wiped away
by an embrace
in a kind of selfless grace,
then I wonder at the magic of love.

Gert Strydom

When Language Is Ripped From My Lips [1]

When language is ripped from my lips,
when words
are losing their meaning
and cannot roar anymore

like the gathering storm clouds
filled with thunder,
when a cup of coffee or tea
says much more
to restore peace and tranquillity

than the fabric of words
and a tear, can be wiped away
by an embrace
in a kind of selfless grace,
then I wonder at the magic of love.

Gert Strydom

When Late At Night She Lays In My Arms

When late at night she lays in my arms
then her breath blows against my face
and her hair is in a curly bush,
spread satin soft upon my chest
and I can feel every breath that she takes
while her eyes gleam like those of a cat
where in I am lost time and again.

Gert Strydom

When Late At Night She Lays In My Arms Then Her Breath Blows Against My Face And Her Hair Is In A Curly Bush, Spread Satin Soft Upon My Chest And I Can Feel Every Breath That She T

When late at night she lays in my arms
then her breath blows against my face
and her hair is in a curly bush,
spread satin soft upon my chest
and I can feel every breath that she takes
while her eyes gleam like those of a cat
where in I am lost time and again.

Gert Strydom

When Leaves Fall In Autumn

When leaves fall in autumn, lying all over the place
with the smell of decline penetrating,
in colours of yellow, brown and gold
nature is caught in a circle

in which life and death is present,
the dead leaves becomes the fertilizer
for new life sprouting from seeds
when the earth again brings forth life

and continuously this cycle proceeds
until trees are full of flowers, later full of fruit.

Gert Strydom

When Leaves In August

When leaves in August
start to fall and dance,
with the wind swishing past
they are twisting, whirling and turning
while the icy cold sneaks in,
then you know that winter
seriously is causing havoc.

Gert Strydom

When Life Does Bend Me Down (Persian Quatrain)

When life does bend me down
and everyone does at me frown
I want to rejoice about Your great love,
even when I am completely on my own.

Gert Strydom

When Life Keeps Folding In On You

When life keeps folding in on you
and half scared off you look at the whole world
where without understanding it's hostile against you
and like a hungry fox you do keep at a distance
with a kind of unrest burning in you
as if every hand and tooth
wants to devour you
while you leave bloody tracks in the sand
and you do hear your own small cries
when you become unemployed
just before your days of old age
and aliens gather like vultures around you
and against this kind of madness
you are totally mute.

Gert Strydom

When Life Quivers In The Evening Air

(after Ena Murray)

When life quivers in the evening air
when the voices of antelope, jackals and hyena
cuts through the evening
and the roar of a male lion
resounds like thunder from beyond the nearest hillock,
then I notice you with the eyes of a gazelle
where you look at the wilderness around us
and I know how afraid you have suddenly become
when the bonfire flares up with sudden flames
and the heartbeat of that which is life
and the waiting, lingering, sneaking death
are almost tangible
as if it wants to cling to you,
while life and death are woven into each other.

Gert Strydom

When Life Turns Completely Upside Down

When life turns completely upside down,
with rain falling from a cloudless
bright blue sky,
careless you will throw your hair
over your shoulder
and we will drive miles from any town,
climb a small hillock
and sit on a huge boulder,

watch the sun smoulder
as if is going to set the world ablaze
while it is going down
and without a trace
we will disappear
as the darkness comes near.

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Gert Strydom

When Lightning Bolts Do Fall On My Day Upon Day (Sonnet)

When lightning bolts do fall on me day upon day
in the darkness does night after night explode around me
then your sheltering do stay my comfort, Mother,
and it's the cares of years that you do carry.
I still want to tell you mother
of how deep my love for you do go
but do find it difficult to find the right words
to say the right things
and now that old age is claiming its toll
while the years with affliction and pain does come
I can still only praise you, mother,
and I know a life in which your love does exist
and thank you is poor for what you are to me
for the thing that true love is, the deep silent meaning.

Gert Strydom

When Lightning Strikes Out

When lightning strikes out,
disappears far over the horizon,
when lightning strikes out
flaming suddenly blue-white to below,
when the sun disappears behind clouds
big drops do appear;
when lightning strikes out.

Gert Strydom

When Living Turns To Hour-To-Hour

When living turns to hour-to-hour,
sometimes to minute-to-minute dimensions
and even while shooting
you talk to God as if He is right there
and you know that you are living
on shared time

when finding shelter taking cover
while bullets, mortar bombs and rockets
whizzes over your head
and in war you have to kill a man or two
while some of your own comrades lie dead

there is someone breathing, also living
a lot like you, who sees the blue sky,
feels the sun, smells the grass, the veldt
and then you start to love every other man

as a brother, even if his skin,
his culture is different
and know that they are humans too
but never can afford to stop acting savagely
as death lingers waiting even on brave men.

Gert Strydom

When Love And Faithfulness Do Come Unwavering

When love and faithfulness
do come unwavering,
when you can trust in it
as if it is your own property

then it is something unknown in this age
that does appear in precious rarity
where people do love each other and scream from passion,
where emotions and deeds do not lead to pain.

I have yearned for that mystic connection
that can bring everything together at a time
and then suddenly on a day I did meet you,
did see in your eyes the most beautiful woman

and it does not become a great simplification
that love does go to the in and outside.

Gert Strydom

When Love Between Us Do Come To A Plenitude

When love between us do come to plenitude
then time and again you astonish me
when the night does stretch out long between us,
while we are with each other until sunrise,

when we do know the depth of each other's wishes and desires,
without words do for moments reconnoitre new horizons
and we are indissoluble part of each other
and yet I do wonder
if victorious our love can win death?

Will we know in the eternity
about the things that do bind us, without forgetting
that God Himself is the lightning between us
and wherever we do go, we stay a part of His decree?

Gert Strydom

When Love Comes Into Your Life (Triolet)

When love comes into your life
then it's something with an own kind of beauty
and love at times even brings peace to strive.
When love comes into your life
there is something great in having a wife
and you are astounded by her and do feel free
When love comes into your life
there are times of sadness and times when you are happy.

Gert Strydom

When Love Destroys With Pain

Maybe I have lost the mysterious connection
somewhere in my own humanity,
that which can bring everything together.
Maybe I have lost the mysterious connection
that love circle to the inside,
had renounced it when my darling betrayed me,
maybe I have lost the mysterious connection
somewhere in my own humanity.

Gert Strydom

When Love Dies

When love dies
and its hunger
fades away
and what remains
is second best
to what it was before
and love is only kindness,
what shall we do?

Will we try to rekindle
that old flame
and give more fuel to it,
or will we let it lie:

and search for other horizons
past the known sky?

Gert Strydom

When Love Feels Brittle

I

At times love feels so brittle
as if a rush of wind
can break the beautiful thing
that binds us to each other
as if the night is rushing on
and the last light of love is fading
slowly away and dying a vacant death.

At times the way life goes
smashes us apart with unplanned,
unexpected and unmeant hurt,
but it only shows how precious
life really is and how short it can be
and that we must make the most
of every moment that we get.

II

If feelings are so true,
as between you and me
time has no real impact
and words unsaid
and deeds not done
do not really matter.

Behind your golden eyes
deeper meaning lurks
and the knowledge
that we are meant
to help each other,
to understand even when
meaning disappears
and to love and to stay true.

III

I'Envoi

At times I see tears in your eyes,
hear the pain in your sighs,
see you roll and twist all night
and I wish to command the power
to make things undone
and to turn time around
but just being near,
to comprehend your pain and fear,
to hear the tremble in your voice,
to hold you against my chest,
to cry, plan and laugh together
is far greater than the rest
and I am truly blessed
that destiny has brought you to me.

Gert Strydom

When Love Has Gone

When love has gone
a person is frozen
and how deep and far
the chill goes,
nobody seems to know.

No radiance of joy
lights a life
where love is lost,
until another love arises
like a phantom phoenix
from its ashes.
and the heart burns
with its own fire
and a ferocity that reaches out.

Gert Strydom

When Love In Time Decays

When love in time decays,
when it loses all of its respects
and you cannot come my way,
when it is only filled with defects

and on the street we do not meet
while you awkwardly walk pass
not even be able to greet
as if there never was

anything between the two of us,
then walk past me
do not pause, just catch a taxi or a bus
as one that is totally free:

do not even look back to me
just let me be.

[Reference: Sonnet 49 "Against that time, if ever that time come" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

When Love Is Not Enough

When love is not enough
to make a relationship last
and independence rears its ugly head

and all is said and done
and what has been is past
and some dreams disappear
and the meaning of existence is gone

and still life goes on
and every thing seems wasted
as if living in vain,

¶Envoi

I wonder why you at a time thought
that you loved me
and if you only live by feelings
and not also by principle
and what all my caring, sharing
and loving bought?

Maybe only pain...

Gert Strydom

When Love Is Not Enough [2]

When love is not enough
to bring happiness
and people are finding greater value
in each material thing
then a kind of monstrosity hides
that alienates them from each other
which estranges there humanity
bit by tiny bit.

Gert Strydom

When Love Is Unfulfilled

When love is unfulfilled
a person does continually yearn for it,
as if at a time
it can be cornered
in a much deeper significance
that brings about something great
but with time healing does come.

Gert Strydom

When Madness Snaps At My Heels

Women with maniac bipolar disorder, depression
and that swearing illness
marry me and crucify me
and maybe,
I have to live alone in loneliness
or never ever
get married again.

Gert Strydom

When Making Love (Cavatina)

This is the time where feelings become real
where we do know
the full impact of love and nothingness,
where we let go
in our existing of every thing,
where first quite slow
the moment stretches to eternity,
where we grasp love intimate and fully.

Gert Strydom

When Man Exalts Himself

When the time comes where human science,
maths and learning do not anymore correlate
with that which is written in the words
of the almighty God,

when man exalts himself like a god,
has no esteem
for the words of God
and wait upon another mighty being,

and does regard himself higher than the creator God,
does see his laws of human rights more important
than the commandments of God
without any respect for the Godly law,

then God in His omnipotence will go much further than any science,
He will reach His hand to the stars and let them rain down,
will shake the earth with earthquakes and tear it open,
and let the oceans swallow the islands

and the wide world will know
that the judgment of the Lord God is coming near.
When the last mighty angel blows its trumpet
Jesus Christ will appear in the sky

and each and every human being will know that He is greater,
much mightier than any reason, mathematics and science,
that He Himself determines all things,
when He comes to fetch His children.

Gert Strydom

When Man Leaves No Place For God (Refrain Stanza Sequence)

(in answer to I. D. du Plessis)

With science to the moon man has gone,
to the planets and the stars further on
he wants to jump and to the most distant place
with weapons that do all life erase
and he argues that God do exist in myth alone
but out of His thoughts comes everything,
secret to Him there is no kind of thing
where He knows He is the originating One
to the planets and the stars further on.

He who with his secret science observe
the baby-steps of man and his audacity and nerve,
laughs at man's idea of the age-old explosion
mourn about Lucifer and man's lack of devotion
where every single thing does Him serve
while man has no idea about the spark of life,
are with the idea of a higher being in strive
where timeless He knows the destiny that man does deserve,
the baby-steps of man and his audacity and nerve.

where humans argue that anything they can do
but that God does really exist they do not have a clue,
where nuclear science brings forth more deadly weapons of war
and humans do kill each other in acts of gore,
while with technology man has a great breakthrough
and for total control man does compete,
while other humans they want to defeat,
while the principles of hatred in all of this is true
but that God does really exist they do not have a clue

until all of this brings forth a terrible judgement on man
when the power of evil and selfishness do the world span,
where man acts as if he does not anymore see his own iniquity
and God is forced to intervene to set the righteous free,
where some people twist nature to the vilest things that they can,

when fire pours down from heaven and the earth-crust opens with it
where God does in His great final judgement sit,
where the schemes and rage of man do the flames fan
when the power of evil and selfishness do the world span.

[Reference: "Mens en ster" (Man and star) by I. D. du Plessis.]

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Gert Strydom

When Mere Moments Are Holy

When mere moments are holy,
when in prayer I go to You
I am surrounded by Your presence
then I see in every flower, in each small thing
even in the stars, sun and moon
that there is of You a kind of witness,

thunderbolts falling blue-white,
the wild untamed stormy wind,
trees that flower in spring,
tells me that You care about my destiny
and that You choose me out as a child
of the almighty Lord of the universe.

Gert Strydom

When Mere Words

When mere words
cannot really say
how deep my feelings
of love for you
really go
and why you make
my heart,
my whole body glow,

then I want you to read
every little deed, touch and look
that says so much
of where words cannot go

and in your heart to know
that God had made you mine.

Gert Strydom

When Moment Synchronizes With Moment

When moment synchronizes with moment
when our movements gets a own character
we cannot stop the intimate fire,
our passion comes blazing, intimate and free;
it falls like spring rain on the earth,
then there is something binding between us,
we are in a world away from the aching.

Gert Strydom

When Moments Do Draw Out Long

When moments do draw out long and silently between us
and You do stretch out Your hands to me
where I stand decaying before You
then I know that in the morning You will wake me up,

then my whole being do become full of Your presence
and in this dark world You do become my stability
even when everything around me does fall into disrepair,
You do still know the course of every single thing.

Gert Strydom

When My Darling Comes To Me

When my darling comes to me
in the street jacarandas are flowering
and I can smell jasmine and gardenia on the wind,
when with her body for moments she astounds me,

and red candles burn romantically in the window,
a table is laid out with snacks and champagne,
while she covers my face with kisses
with the glance in her eyes gleaming.

Gert Strydom

When My Eyes Do Not Remember The Gazes In Yours

When my eyes do not remember the gazes in yours,
when my ears become deaf to your voice,
when my hands are without feeling
for the softness of your body,
when your words do not overwhelm me anymore,
when your smile do not enchant my day
then the mother-earth
will be the place where I rest,
where I will be aware of nobody and nothing.

Gert Strydom

When My Eyes Look On The Beauty

When my eyes look on the beauty
of the early morning sky,
see a bluer kind of hue
than any painter
is able to mix on a pallet,
filled with a kind of purity,
an unspoken serenity

then I know that Your presence
falls like the drops of dew
glistening on flower cups, the leaves
and carpeting grass,

that every day is new
as a gift to all of mankind
filled with the promises
that our choices can turn it into

and the hollyhocks opened
to pristine pink glory, swaying
on their long stems
in the soft breeze,
the geraniums in scintillating colours
flowering in abundance,

even the internodes of roses
stringing with their petals,
every flower bud
is an expression of Your endless love.

Gert Strydom

When My Heart Sings (Free Verse Sonnet)

When my heart sings in passion over you
where you are constantly everywhere with me
then love is a sweet fig, a piece of my memory,
which brings everything to fruitfulness,
when against desperation it stands,
like light in days of absolute darkness,
affirm destination and destiny, which you cannot miss,
then it lets emotion jump around wildly in the heart,
where seasons flicker as if nothing is fixed,
when the weather catches all times in a day,
where I can forget all other things in its grace,
then love brings consistency to living,
it's the beauty to which we do constantly long
and you are the one who I know in all things.

Gert Strydom

When My Life, My World Fall To Pieces

When my life, my world fall to pieces,
when every other one has left me,
when the storms of life bash without mercy around me

and I resist destiny,
will you then still throw your arms around me,
when every other one has left me,

past hope, comprehension still stay with me,
when my life looks dark,
will you then still throw your arms around me

and look with tender eyes into mine,
will you leave wise words with me
when my life looks dark

as if even the gods hate me,
when I have lost all words,
will you leave wise words with me

will you still want to charm me,
will you still love me
when I have lost all words

as an anchor against the fear?
When my life, my world fall to pieces,
will you still love me,
when the storms of life bash without mercy around me?

Gert Strydom

When My Time At Work Is Spent

When my time at work is spent
and I come home at the end of day
I wonder to where it went
while time rushes by without any delay

and by some decree the twilight begins
night sets in
and there's just darkness that I see
before with a charming smile you join me.

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Gert Strydom

When My Whole World Did Fall Apart

When my whole world did fall apart
I could not find any answers,
I had been too disillusioned and blinded
with the thunders bashing down mercilessly

but then I did talk with the God of the universe,
did remind Him that I am still His child,
in the soft evening wind
I did notice His image for mere moments.

That life is sometimes without mercy
that a person has to try time and again,
although everything seems hopeless

must trust past meaning and knowledge
nobody could teach me
while my eyes were focussed on the living God.

Gert Strydom

When My Whole World Was Falling Apart

When my whole world was falling apart
nowhere I could find any answers
and I was blinded far too much by disillusion
and thunder falling mercilessly from everywhere

and then I did talk to the God of the universe,
did remind Him that I am still His child
and in the evening wind
I did see His image displayed for mere moments.

That life is inaccessible at times,
that a person has got to try time after time,
even if it feels as if there is no hope,

have got to trust past meaning and knowledge
nobody could teach me
but still I kept my eyes on You my Lord.

Gert Strydom

When Nothing Anymore Brings Me Peace

When nothing anymore brings me peace,
even in heaven or on earth
and when I find nothing beautiful, or glorious
in the stars blazing in the night sky,

then your eyes are filled with sparkling,
an inner beauty that is lovelier
than any shining lights,
than drops of rain filled with life
falling down during a bright day,

your smile my love, is like a ray of sunlight
bright in its intensity, you dazzle me
and your laughter chimes in precious notes
like a vast symphony and I want to be free,
with no other company than yours.

Gert Strydom

When One Soul Was In Both Our Thoughts

When one soul was in both our thoughts,
we were together at the bright blue ocean,
where you joyously did swim,
gave me a passionate kiss, where we did embrace,
while only the same things inspired us both;
the heaven was a kind of cobalt blue,
together we did kneel, we did pray,
together we trusted on the power of God
while we were in love with each other.

[Reference: 'Wys my die plek waar ons saam gestaan het' ('Show me the place where we stood together: ') by C. Louis Leipoldt.]

Gert Strydom

When Our Love Is True (Sonnet Corona)

I

When all things of our love are really true
like it was on every yesterday,
and nothing at all can make it decay,
when the special thing between me and you

do not pass us by as other things do
and on every sunny day by day
we do live, cry, laugh and sometimes play
and by tomorrow you feel this way too

and still love me then just as tenderly
then I am blessed have joys in excess
when you fill me, even when I lie prone,
your loving is more than I can express
and become part, in what I want to be
in a lower hue, a much simpler tone.

II

In a lower hue, a much simpler tone
where we bring smiles to each other's faces,
this is how we make our love our own,
where we can walk to some different places

and always as allies walk hand in hand
turning defeat to the enemy's retreat,
making this great earth our own piece of land
as true compatriots on the busy street.

Where at times some similar thoughts and speech
comes to hand without having to compare,
without having to split as each to each,
being one in everything that we share:

you are grounded in me like a new root,
my heart is like a growing, rising shoot.

III

My heart is like a growing, rising shoot
whose tiny boughs grow true and somewhat free,
my heart is like a spreading tiny taproot
that anchors you very deeply to me.

My heart is like a small burning cheroot
that always brings you some sweet tranquillity,
my heart is like a yellow ripened fruit
on your beloved type of small tree.

My heart is like some small fishes that scoot
away to safety in the deepest sea,
where none other big predator can loot
but only you in true serenity

and I really wither in your absence;
of me you are the living essence.

IV

Of me you are the living essence
of everything that is good in me
that I experience with your presence
the joy of life with a heart kind and free

and so very subtle, so very gently
your eyes wander into my humanity
as if suddenly and just presently
you do know each single activity

before I even consciously perceive
any kind of living words and deeds
and from you I always only receive
blessings for all my tiny wants and needs,

every single day you make my heart sing,
you complete me fully in everything.

V

You complete me fully in everything
while you walk and run in my shadow,
your love is my greatest single blessing
and yet you say that love you do not know.

When from all of my life you are gone,
something essential and great is missing
and when I am single, the only one
even every single thought and feeling

is halved separately and it feels
as if my whole presence, my body
from my head right up to my heels
do not belong to me or to anybody

without you my soul is really underfed,
as if the lamp shatters, no light is shed.

VI

As if the lamp shatters, no light is shed,
if the rain falls and the rainbow is gone,
when any music instrument is dead
and you say nothing and there is none

other light, rainbow, music or any words
the look in your eye, your soft sensual touch
still then remains as tiny records
of nearness of deeds of love, to vouch

for the feelings, for the real principles
that binds us so simply unseen together
and like true reverent following disciples
of an immaterial thing we do not bother

with separating, without you I have no peace,
I do not know if love can increase

VII

I do not know if love can increase,
boundless in its integrity to lie

in every small thing between you and I
and our happy feelings never to cease

even when with time our lives decrease
still to be under a blue radiant sky
to cherish what we have, before we die
even if our lives are not lived with ease

I would wish for you to be only with me,
to struggle along in life's tournament
even if disaster comes out of the blue,
to live your life to your heart's full content
and I would love you with intensity
when all things of our love are really true.

Gert Strydom

When Out All The Sands Of Time Run Out

(after Robert Burns)

You my love are like a white arum lily,
much brighter than the moon
where you are pure and sincere to me,
of the melody of my heart you are the tune.

As fair and alive as the sun in the sky
you are a part of every single day,
where at heart aware of our love am I
and it will last come what may.

When out all the sands of time run
past eons and this life and death,
in days of joy, tears, sorrow and fun,
you will remain and also in every breath

and I do not have to say: "fare you well."
as in depth your love do to me pertain,
of your mind you do me constantly tell
where together through life we do remain.

[Poet's note: "A Red, Red Rose" by Robert Burns.]

Gert Strydom

When Outside I Do Talk To God

When outside I do talk to God
the cups of the flowers do open,
the redbreast and weavers frolic everywhere,
while I see a small Eden as far as I walk.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When Purple Petals Show (Balassi Stanza)

When purple petals show
speckled black and yellow,
a small modest lily spread
lovely vivid colours
blooming for many hours
as she opens her bright head
and as time passes by
she draws the human eye
before she withers, are dead.

Gert Strydom

When Red The Wine

When red the wine
fills the glass
to its brim,
with sparkling shine
and taste sublime

and candles flicker
in the dark
and soft hands entwine
around mine,

I see the blush
upon your cheek
and the words you speak
sounds like a murmur
in my ear.

There are stars that shine
in the night
but your golden eyes
are much more bright.

Later as passion
gets a life of its own
rapture fills the body,
mind and soul

and I thank Him
that made you mine
and blessed by planting
the first vine.

Gert Strydom

When She Already Catches A Putco Bus At Four

When early at four o'clock in the morning
she has to catch a Putco bus to her work
there is smoke hanging over the shacks,
for a while she walks over the wet veldt,

as the morning star appears and she shivers
from the cold that is icy, see a snake
sailing over the ground and she is scared,
nothing is defiling the early silence

and later with the roaring of the bus
where the headlights of it is very bright
like searchlights, blazing, cutting through the dark
she can still rest for another short while in bliss
before the daily exhausting duties,
that short moment passes far too quickly.

Gert Strydom

When She Brings (Free Verse Sonnet)

When she brings something from the garden into the house
the pots are everywhere in the living-room,
it's as if birds do sing right though the house,
as if she turns the atmosphere around,
while she presses all kinds of roses into vases,
it's as if butterflies and bees want to frolic inside
or fluttering does flap and inside totally astonished
something again draws them to the outside again
when a stream do constantly flow at the fountain,
electrically driven do splash into the fishbowl
and outside a horde of flowers do open
with nature on both sides of the windowpane
and everything is soft and pretty on the eye
where I am busy drying the dishes.

Gert Strydom

When She Brings Something From The Garden Into The House (Free Verse Sonnet)

When she brings something from the garden into the house
the pots are everywhere in the living-room,
it's as if birds do sing right though the house,
as if she turns the atmosphere around,
while she presses all kinds of roses into vases,
it's as if butterflies and bees want to frolic inside
or fluttering does flap and inside totally astonished
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and outside a horde of flowers do open
with nature on both sides of the windowpane
and everything is soft and pretty on the eye
where I am busy drying the dishes.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When She Enters (English Sonnet)

When she enters she does the men stir,
lovely, kind and sharp with wit is she
as if the angelic beauty was lend to her
that almost holy and serene she might be.

Her smile is kind and picture perfect fair
kindness and her beauty comes from within
her countenance is crowned by silky hair
and to look at her sometimes feels like sin,

she seems beyond a mortal human being,
love fills her eyes with single-mindedness,
while excelling in great joy she does sing,
it's as if she does struck me with blindness

while her big eyes are full of intense love,
and our true feelings no one can remove.

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Gert Strydom

When She Stood At The Empty Grave

When she stood at the empty grave
Mary was full of grief and astonished
but when Jesus came to her
she wanted to embrace Him

but He warned her
and speechless she then stood next to Him,
seeing the bright light coming from His eyes
knowing that He leave to go to His Father

knowing that His love is greater than all things
and realizing on that day
that His love circles out to everyone on earth
as salvation against all evil
and for her anguish that moment was healing
while she stared at His enraptured beauty.

Gert Strydom

When Silver Candlesticks Guard (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where silver candlesticks guards against the darkness
I hear the dripping of water that falls
and over the windowsill novelties are displayed,
the candlelight in the bathroom flickers dimly
when I brush my teeth and watch you in the soft light,
I notice your legs and thighs are beautiful shaped
and between us the bath is like a white embankment
but in all of this you are a perfect woman
where I see water gleam over your body and breasts,
where your eyes look tempting and full of secrets,
your teeth are snow-white when you smile at me,
the water wait inviting when you climb out,
I cannot stop looking at you
and outside countless stars sparkle in the night.

Gert Strydom

When Something In The Dark Depths Of Your Eyes Smoulders (Terzanelle)

When something in the dark depths of your eyes smoulders,
burning like a living thing
while you pull your blouse over your shoulders

making a scene of the undressing
a flame awakes in me
burning like a living thing

and in your beauty I see
your humanity that shines through.
A flame awakes in me

and in a way every lovely girl is perfected in you
and when passion awakes in your heavy nipple
your humanity that shines through

makes tender feelings of protection ripple
with their own heat
and when passion awakes in your heavy nipple

you make my life complete
when something in the dark depths of your eyes smoulders,
with their own heat
while you pull your blouse over your shoulders.

Gert Strydom

When Spring Comes (Free Verse Sonnet)

In the apricot blossoms that covers the tree
a black-green starling pecks to be satiated
and outside the last wild cold winter wind blows
but when I catch your eyes sunny full of happiness in the garden
there is an orchard peaches on your soft cheeks
and to me you do remain the loveliest woman
where the frost do devour some geraniums with the cold
while we are sinful like Adam and Eve with the snake
and everywhere there are signs that new life now is going to come
when all kinds of lilies do fill the garden with flowers
and the days do become hotter and longer,
while the chattering of the birds leave us speechless
and like a heavenly angel you are filled with light
while the spring-rain do pour down upon the earth.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When Suddenly The Morning Comes (Crystalline)

When the morning comes flaming-red,
you do astonish me in our bed.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When Suddenly The Thing Called Happiness Is Gone

When suddenly the thing called happiness is gone
and in the great old world we are all alone
then it's hard to find any kind of peace of mind
and it's as if we become the only one

that is facing any difficulty
and its as if the whole world
has turn to black and white and grey
and of the brilliant colours there are none

and when it feels even when we go on our knees to pray
that nothing does the power of destiny sway,
as if nothing is happening
and if it's just another awful kind of day

then yet suffering, heartache and pain
although these feelings sometimes do remain
are full of counterparts
and the little things in life
comfort many troubled hearts
and even brings peace to times of strive

and then suddenly it's with different eyes that we see
our own human fatality
and where and how we fit into the world
and all the small miracles that comes gratis and free
out of the hand of a loving and caring God.

Gert Strydom

When Suddenly You Came Along (Trijan Refrain)

When suddenly you came along
my whole life had changed,
unexpected my love was strong
life was rearranged
and butterflies dart everywhere
while some bees visit here and there
and butterflies
and butterflies
turn my stomach, I am without care.

When suddenly you came along
I did not know your name,
if to somebody you do belong,
but somehow our love came
your face had grace, your eyes did gleam
and your voice was like a stream
your face had grace,
your face had grace,
and you leapt into each dream.

When suddenly you came along
you were most beautiful
and with you I could not be wrong,
as my whole heart was full
of our great love on each new day
and my heart was happy and gay
of our great love,
of our great love
that not a thing could take away.

Gert Strydom

When Summer Lingers In The Last Hot Days Before Autumn

When summer lingers in the last hot days before autumn
every dove, sparrow and weaver gambols
but already the end of the hot season has been set
and there are far horizons becoming the swallows.
Sometimes love is a strange kind of thing
and I wonder why I do constantly get hurt
when with words that do cherish I do attract lightning bolts
and in the twinkling of an eye a whole lifetime passes.
I am stripped in this coming winter season
as if there will never again be a spring and a summer
as if nothing that comes ever again can make an impact,
when already I read the signs of decay,
but still the summer sun lingers in my days of old age
with promises of the golden days that will come again.

Gert Strydom

When That First Morning Was Breaking On Earth (English Sestets)

When that first morning was breaking on earth
sunshine fell on the man and his sweet wife,
in their first awakening there was birth,
to the gentle great happiness of life
while animals paraded in splendour
at the start of the first day of labour.

Around them sparkled drops of the dew fall
while birds and butterflies were fluttering,
the very first opening rose did them enthrall
and every thing living were gathering
while their lives were in sheer completeness,
at each other they smiled in great sweetness.

On Eden's first sunny lovely summer day
the man and his wife were elated in God,
both of the humans did frolic and play
while over the soft earth they did both trod
while they found the greatest joy everywhere
with their attention leaping here and there.

Gert Strydom

When That Last Evening Star

When that last evening star
rises for me
and my last day fades away
into the long dark night
and life's ship sails
to the endless shore,
let me meet the great Captain
who steered my life
and let His hand clench mine
and let Him still be
a friend and guide for me.

Gert Strydom

When That Moment Comes

When that moment suddenly comes beautifully
while you clothes fall at your feet
you slowly fold open like a pure white flower
and my life, my universe comes to a standstill
and I do not hear shots being fired far off outside
when energy and yearning quivers through us
and I become just more than an animal,
while your eyes shine and glitter like emery
and moments are full of what we are and want to be.

Gert Strydom

When That Moment Comes (Sestina)

When that moment do come
you do fold open like a flower,
when at your feet your clothes do fall
and it feels, as we are alone in the universe
when everything is bound in that moment
and I read the depth of love in your glance.

Reflected in the window a rolling tin that rattles do catch my glance
as if it wants to penetrate everything before to a halt it does come,
a child cries and screams for a moment
and at the windows the wind does rustle the geraniums that flower
that to me is the most beautiful red in the universe
where deeper and deeper into you I do fall,

in a moment of purity my self-conceit comes to a fall
and I become someone with a wide glance:
where I comprehend that all men do stand before the God of the universe
that only true love above all things to fullness do come
and yet you are of all women for me the flower
where we both are in an unbroken moment

and there are so many things caught up in a mere moment
that feels like an eternity until something with a loud bang does fall,
above us I see your painting of triangular roses that do flower
and when my eyes do decent in my sober glance
it's as if everything that does bare meaning do together in you come
and through the windows I see the stars glitter in the universe

but it does not really have an impact as we are in our own universe,
on the porch a door creaks and any moment
I like Adam to a fall I can come
when in the distance I hear the bangs of a church bell fall
there is immediate consternation in your glance
when our youngest child do enter our room with a flower.

At first intense anger in my heart wants to flower,
that in any place in the whole universe
he has the audacity and I read disillusion in his glance,
he does linger for only a fraction of a stretched out moment

wordlessly on the floor lets the flower fall
and it feels as if all my emotions to a point do come.

Without a glance at him you drive him away in a shocked moment.
I wish I was somewhere in another universe, when lust do in your eyes flower,
no word fall between us, while everything in the house to a deadly silence does
come.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When That Moment Comes [2]

When that moment comes
you do fold open like a flower
when your clothes fall at your feet
and with your beauty I am astounded

when energy
and the yearning does tremble right through us
your eyes do scraping glitter like emery
while everything is bound to that moment
and everything that we are and want to be

do find fulfilment
when passion, the being together does bind us,
while ecstasy does come to a climax
and we do bind with each other.

Gert Strydom

When The Irises Bloomed At The End Of Summer

When the irises bloomed at the end of summer,
in radiant bright colours
and the evening star was out early
with the blue in the sky wavering

I was mourning the day I lost you
in a similar setting,
but then it was early spring
with all the blooming flowers inviting

me to look at them,
to smell their fresh aromas
and you were lost to me
as if somebody had picked you.

Gert Strydom

When The Afternoon Salute Does Report

When the afternoon salute does report
doves do suddenly flutter up in fright
while people in a mishmash
in Cape Town undisturbed
scuttle in and out of the shops
and the bay lies blue and open
with the mountain gleaming in the sun.

Gert Strydom

When The Autumn Suddenly Comes (Villanelle)

(In answer to Cas Vos)

When the autumn does come suddenly,
year after year I am caught by it.
You do remain lovely to me

even when old age comes as it ought to be
in a world where nothing anymore seems to fit.
When the autumn does come suddenly,

only the arrival of bare winter I do see
and that all things must come to rest do me hit.
You do remain lovely to me

while nothing is from winter's impact free
while life does change slowly bit by bit.
When the autumn does come suddenly,

life with you in it still seems heavenly
and this realisation at the core of my heart does sit.
You do remain lovely to me,

while you think and act at your own liberty,
even if destiny does its worst fragments knit.
When the autumn does come suddenly,
you do remain lovely to me.

[Reference:"Villanelle vir die oudag" (Villanelle for the time of old-age)by Cas Vos.]

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Gert Strydom

When The Autumn Suddenly Comes (Villanelle)(2)

(In answer to Cas Vos)

When the autumn does come suddenly,
year after year I am caught by it.
You do remain lovely to me

even when old age comes as it ought to be
in a world where nothing anymore seems to fit.
When the autumn does come suddenly,

only the arrival of bare winter I do see
and that all things must come to rest do me hit.
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When the autumn does come suddenly,
you do remain lovely to me.

[Reference:"Villanelle vir die oudag" (Villanelle for the time of old-age)by Cas Vos.]

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Gert Strydom

When The Bell Tolls

At times when I hear
a church bell that tolls,
I know that there
is more to life
than just living.

On a Sunday
the bell tolls almost endlessly,
(like a alarm clock)
before the service begins.

At times when I hear
a church bell that tolls,
it rings for a funeral
and I am glad
that I'm alive.

At a wedding
the bell sings a joyful song
and everyone smiles at each other
and wait for the bride to appear.

In the dead of night
the bell tolls lonely
no one cares about
the time that it keeps,
as sleep creeps deeper
into everybody's soul.

Gert Strydom

When The Breeze On The Sea And Land Is Strong

When the breeze on the sea and land is strong
do not feel sorrow when I am gone
as if I am the only man, the only one
and when my ashes are spreading among

the places for which I did long
and become part of every hue and tone
with vivid colours like a anemone
and I am part of the wind, its song

then only remember me
in the words that I leave behind
in their simplicity,
let them remind
you of their beauty and sincerity
as a last legacy that you call to mind.

[Reference: Sonnet 71 "No longer mourn for me when I am dead" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

When The Calendar Turns To The Next Day

(in answer to Ernst van Heerden)

When at night the calendar
does turn to the next day
then there are robbers that sneak nearer,

another farmer-family are being murdered,
another expensive German car
is forced from the road,

pistols and machineguns are aimed at the owner,
another family is being robbed in a suburb,
the husband is tortured to death and beheaded,

the daughters and the wife are being raped,
are left in their blood
and a secret war without compassion is being waged

but when any criminal is being arrested
the shooting command is never given,
nobody are rightfully hanged on the gallows

and after a short visit to a holiday cell,
the criminals
are once again being set free.

[Reference: 'Langs 'n wêreld' (Next to a world) by Ernst van Heerden.]

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Gert Strydom

When The Cape Winter Rain Comes

When the Cape winter rain comes and falls softly
mushrooms rise up everywhere,
everywhere in the plantations and the dale
with the mud flowing around like brown soup
while fog that draws close over the hilltop,
and suddenly a rainbow appears over the pine tops,
while guinea fowl wander around in a large group
but nowhere any thunder bolt resounds
and this world sparkles like a small universe.

Gert Strydom

When The Dark Night Kisses Me (English Triolet)

When the night kisses me
with eternal darkness,
let it be Your light that I see.
When the night kisses me
may I from all impediments be free
and may I then dwell in your loving-kindness,
when the night kisses me
with eternal darkness.

Gert Strydom

When The Darkest Darkness Fall Over Me

When the darkest darkness fall over me,
let me still look at the lights around me
and when the night full of darkness comes, let me remember You
let my eyes go to Your beacons, Your stars, see how Your miracles look

and when painful moments feel as if they can last forever,
let me then think about how You sweated blood,
about that dark and painful hour
when in Gethsemane You had to suffer for me, let me then think of it.

When this life of mine comes to an end,
when I stand as a mere man before Your countenance,
then make me free for everything iniquity in me,
place my life in balance with your blood

and when death comes to take me,
then decide over my lot as Your darling child.

Gert Strydom

When The Darkness Comes Between Us

When the darkness comes between us
bringing overwhelming separation
and jumping with death
between our lives

so that our love is torn apart
will we then still know of love
or will everything between us
be just a empty nothing
as if further there is no meaning?

Gert Strydom

When The Day At Twilight Dies

When the day at twilight dies
the night comes with a thousand eyes
as a glittering living thing.

Gert Strydom

When The Day Did Die

When the day did die
the evening star appeared blue-white,
when the day did die
it suddenly became the dark night,
while the moon rose like a golden yellow pip
with stars hanging like grains of sand,
when the day did die.

Gert Strydom

When The Day Did Die [2]

When the day did die
the evening star appeared blue-white,
when the day did die
it suddenly became the dark night,
while the moon rose like a golden yellow pip
with stars hanging like grains of sand,
when the day did die.

Gert Strydom

When The Day Is Only Just Breaking

When the day is only just breaking
and the morning star has only just appeared
then I have got break my first bread
and start on the waiting journey
where the road is already yearning
for me to travel on
as if my footsteps
are already set on to it
but you have got to go along
and accompany me
so that I can daily,
sometimes hourly, tell you about my love
and the sun, the sky and the stars
can sparkle in your eyes.

Gert Strydom

When The Divine Inspires

When the divine inspires,
brings forth genius with ease
in art light unquenchable fires
that a man has the ability to please

and uniquely unquestionable rise
does he then stand totally alone
among people spreading lies
with all compatriot friends gone?

Does his fellow contemporary poets then leer
and from jealousy hint at faults and in this way strike
acting as if still dear, but teaching others to sneer
as if without any dislike,

playing a deceitful game, as if not having any part
but slowly and surely besieging him and his art?

[Reference: On Addison by Alexander Pope.]

Gert Strydom

When The Drizzling Rain Falls Outside (Free Verse Sonnet)

When the drizzling rain falls softly outside
the small redbreast goes mad,
it does dance joyfully up and down on the gate
where for the God of the universe
loudly it sings twittering
about that which brings life everywhere
as if it's not scared for the thunderstorm
where it is frolicking and jumps up and down
and just where I come in the wet garden
there are rain lilies that suddenly do open
and when I look at the pink-white flowers
I am astonished with Your works
and I realize that similar You are with every human being
in Your own silent loving mystery.

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Gert Strydom

When The Early Buds In Spring Begin Opening (Persian / Rubiyat Quatrain)

When the early buds in spring begin opening
and each bird a song of joy does sing
I see the sunshine in your golden eyes
and to me your love does great happiness bring.

Gert Strydom

When The Early The Morning Does Begin (Cavatina)

When the early the morning does begin
and you arise
my lady, the first doves do happy sing,
while the dew lies
on your garden's most pretty flower cups
and in your eyes
with greatest joy golden the sun does shine;
then forever I want you to be mine.

Gert Strydom

When The Early The Morning Does Begin (Cavatina) (2)

When the early the morning does begin
and you arise
my lady, the first doves do happy sing,
while the dew lies
on your garden's most pretty flower cups
and in your eyes
with greatest joy golden the sun does shine
and forever I want you to be mine.

Gert Strydom

When The Eternal Silence Does Eat Up The Sound

When the eternal silence does eat up the sound,
when darkness do sneak in between the two of us
I will still love you on the other side
even if you do lay totally fatally in my embrace
here in my arms,
after awakening from a place
where the night, the sleep
is totally overwhelming.

Gert Strydom

When The Fallibility Of Life Hits You

When the fallibility of life hits you
and your thoughts paradigm
to try to comprehend
were you fit into everything
and the bigger picture remains unclear

when destiny strikes deadly
and you comprehend
the cruelty of life,
then you know that you are extradited

and still hope remains
that the sun will again
break through the darkness.

Gert Strydom

When The First Heat Comes

When the first heat comes, the winter starts to disappear
weeds and flowers appear everywhere,
fruit trees are flowering,
when the first signs of spring appears,
with the sun flowering in crimson

you are astounded by the many colours
of flowers dazzling glorious in sunshine,
birds sing before the sun rises,
when the first heat comes,

the last stripped branches has disappeared,
the sky becomes a cobalt blue curtain,
you are astounded
by the insects and birds that are gathering in joy,
are caught in the scent of jasmine,
when the first heat comes.

Gert Strydom

When The First Human Couple Did Fall

When the first human couple did fall
and like mere children were hiding from God
the omnipotent Lord of the universe
did bring love as His greatest commandment,
and did already plan to die on earth.
Still people decide where they belong,
as He has left a choice for everyone
while in intensity that war rages on
and He does not force man into salvation
but talks in the heart and in the holy word
in a world where darkness distorts,
while He is showing what true love is,
and only His sacrifice
does free man from ultimate judgement.

Gert Strydom

When The First Rays

When the first rays
of the early morning comes
I rise to meet
the new day.

The sun hangs like a big orange
beach ball in the sky
and the heat
embraces my body.

The bright new light of day
splashes over the hills
and trees
and set everything free
from the darkness of night.

Gert Strydom

When The Flaming Wagon Comes

One night I see a shooting star
in the open twilight of the karoo
that draws a line of light past,
but it comes nearer
and there are flames
around it
while it shines metallic.

My ears almost want to burst
when a squadron of war planes
cut past low over the earth
and with afterburners
climb with power into the air
following the unknown flaming wagon.

Things just past far too quickly
to grab a camera or sell phone
and when the flaming wagon
with speed swerve away
and nothing can keep up with it,
I wonder if it is a secret weapon
or are there somewhere going to be
little green men that land with impudence
and ask for the big leader
or will it be beings
that is just like humans
and wear space suits?

Gert Strydom

When The Force Of Strong Conviction

When the force of strong conviction
is overwhelming and oppressing
as if others in their own interests
want to drive you away,
from this place, from this country
which you hold high and holy
when you are only seeking an own place in the sun
and do also grant others such a place
its as if you are protected,
as if God folds His hand around you.

When a human being is for many almost a god
and they are convinced that he brings a kind of peace
with his rainbow nation
but job opportunities are denied
for every one that is white,
on his command the Church Street bomb explodes
and innocent children, women and men
pay the price for that decision
then a person realises
that even the time of Nelson Mandela is determined
by the God and judge of the universe.

Gert Strydom

When The Front Door

When the front door does close behind you
and the house awaits me without a sound
when some of the furniture is missing
and does leave open space and no children do laugh
then I will try to forget you
and hear the dogs howling heart broken
but in my heart I will know
that something of our love is still hiding there
and I will keep longing
as if seeing you again
just depends on the next moment
but know that the goodbye
does remain the reality between us
without reconciliation between you and me.

Gert Strydom

When The Grey Days Of Winter

When the grey days of winter loose their colour
and the golden sun at springtime sits in the hazy blue
then I can hear weavers, sparrows and doves
that does twitter and coo
and then you are in your glory my wife

when you laugh happy like the summer-sun,
when your fingers pull out weeds
and plant seedlings of new flowers

and like a goddess from mythology
you then hold the green
of your own small world in your hands

and then I do realise
that our love also is continually sprouting
and do flower without questions,
that the days of our lives
stretch into each season
and up into distance

but that our love is perpetual
and can even flower in the worst winter.

Gert Strydom

When The Honey-Dew Clings To Leaves

When the honey-dew clings to leaves,
when butterflies are kissing flowers,
when every morning
there is something new and fresh to observe,
when the Godly presence
does something secret to man

and then I know that you my Darling
was specially created for me
and it's as if I find new joy
when daily I wander like a child.

Gert Strydom

When The Killing Criminals Come

When the killing criminals come
there will be no pistol
or shotgun to protect me
and my family,

since I couldn't pay the price
that the new government asked
and the police legally robbed me,

but they are incapable of finding
my two stolen cars back
or catching the criminals
who were responsible.

Gert Strydom

When The Last Rays Of The Sun Is Shed

When the words, the deeds of love are forgot,
when the last rays of the sun is shed
and you remember me not
while I am gone and dead

and all my poems and words are scattered
while the echoes of who I was are mute,
when the world as I know it is shattered
and some people are destitute

someone else will write words of splendour,
while other couples will be of love possessed
and to it they will their lives render
while in works and words they will be blessed

as love never really falters but always go on and on
even when from this earth we are gone.

Gert Strydom

When The Last Tears Are Spent

When the last tears are spent
and the missing grows too much
and all of the well and loving wishes are sent
and every grief and grouch

has faded to oblivion
then still you will be in my thoughts
while I do pray for a Zion
with you in it and that which I do sought

and for everlasting love and trust
and for a life that is worth living
and in heaven a place for the just
and an everlasting spring

but now we are broken
and our sorrow and pain remain unspoken.

Gert Strydom

When The Late Afternoon Begins To Fade

When the late afternoon begins to fade
then I do still think about you
as if you are right here,
then you are in my memories.
When the first stars appear,
when the light grows faint,
you are in my thoughts
as if we are embracing.

Gert Strydom

When The Late Night Burns Away

When the late night burns away with the morning sun
and darkness disappears
in the game of the blue sky
there is a kind of kindness,
suddenly some peace that falls on earth,
then all pain is missing
and you are suddenly amazed when you awake,
when the first rays of heat falls over your body;

then the sun is like a Godly flame
and on the floor
the splashing rays draw patterns,
when they peep in;
then suddenly you know that you are truly living,
when the birds stir,
you hear the first jubilant cries,
then you want to bow down before the presence of God.

Gert Strydom

When The Lightning Bolts Of Life

When the lightning bolts of life
with blue-white sparks does flashing resound around me
then you are the silence that goes to my inner core

and when the winter does stretch out biting fingers
then you are the one who around a fireplace
do share moments in passion

and every morning you are the golden rays of the sun
that brings new meaning
to the darkness of my life,

who like the Cape's winter rain
do soak to the depths of my soul

and in my pain
you are however the one
who is the centre point of it,
who knows where to lash out
the most terrible blows.

Gert Strydom

When The Love Has Left A Relationship (Novelinee)

When lamp is blown its atmosphere is gone
it is overwhelmed by the dark night
the energy of light had moved on
which in darkness leaves no kind of sight.
When the love has left a relationship
the true one is shattered by some pain,
the one that did it adore and worship,
in whom an essence of it remains
swears in protection not to love again.

Gert Strydom

When The Midday Sun Falls Over Me Fiercely

When the midday sun falls over me fiercely
may Your shadow then be my cover,
when thunderbolts clap mighty over my life
may You then draw me deep into Your hiding place,
please do take my heart and also my own will,
always protect me against the dark might,
I ask that You awake selflessness in me,
that You surround me in the night,
that I see Your Spirit reflecting in my darling
and that in each day You are between us.

Gert Strydom

When The Month Of March Comes

When the month of March comes I am astounded
by the summer that is still lingering,
the sparkle, colour and fragrance of flower upon flower,
the fine splendour

of every cup that still opens for the sun,
birds that frisk about in the branches
with days keeping the intensity of summer
while I perceive the first signs of autumn

in the colours of leave upon leave
that starts to fall one by one
and summer is almost finished
while thunder still reports in the late afternoons

with rain pouring down
and one by one the days of summer are curtailed.

Gert Strydom

When The Moon Hangs Yellow-Gold

When the moon hangs yellow-gold in the darkness
Ghoeroe will awake
and Ghaisa the rain-leopard will afraid
sneak out when the first drops pour down

and Ghoeroe the hippopotamus-bull will make the clouds thunder
while Ghaisa jumps away to far under
where flames lash out white-blue over the ridge
when we smell the rain in the wet sand.

Gert Strydom

When The Moon Rises Golden-Yellow Outside (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Johann de Lange)

When the moon rises golden-yellow outside
then constantly I think about you
where I summarise the whole day for God,
it's then that I do remember you in prayer,
do bring everything in my heart to Him,
and with Him talk about everything in depth,
also about where my heart does sing about you,
so I talk until the late hours come,
where I keep entrusting you to Him,
where He knows how precious you are to me
and I ask that the angels must protect you,
that He must lead you in times of darkness
but more that our love should stay sincere,
that He constantly does step in between you and me.

[Reference:"Alleenspraak by donkermaan" (Monologue at dark-moon)by Johann de Lange.]

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Gert Strydom

When The Moon Rises In The Concrete Jungle

When the moon rises in the concrete jungle
she notices how bare, how stripped
the park is in the early winter

and she becomes aware of the chill
that does not only pierce through her body
but is freezing her whole life.

She notices the moon that is white
as if the rays of it
are unreachable and bleak

and in the distance there are lights
that is beckoning all of the time
that twinkle
like the decorations of a Christmas tree,

which reminds her of a world
where people gambol and cavort,
reminds her of the tinned pleasure
that only lasts for moments

and the price of it
comes with the pain of AIDS,
does penetrate with painful claws
for days, weeks, months and sometimes years
bringing you staggering
to where you can go no further.

Gert Strydom

When The Morning Comes

When the morning comes
we walk into a new chapter of life,
every yesterday is undisguised
and every day has got its new beginning,
throughout the days you leave me speechless,
where we live sincerely and can fabricate nothing
until the days of old age

and if this is not love,
then life does bare no kind of meaning.

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Gert Strydom

When The Morning Peeps Shyly Through The Window

driving away the twilight with the first rays
then the hot fingers draw lines over your body
but still you are swept away to dreamland

and when you turn and move suddenly
then you lie right against me
and I see you open your eyes with new messages
where for moments we are joined.

Gert Strydom

When The Mountain With All Its Peaks Are Ablaze (Pantoum)

flames spread further with destruction
from where the mountain is ablaze
running into almost every direction
with smoke causing a big haze

From where the mountain is ablaze
fire-fighters attack the flames with huge devotion
with smoke causing a big haze
monitors do their planning with presumption,

fire-fighters attack the flames with huge devotion
but the fire spreads as far as they can gaze,
monitors do their planning with presumption,
some people are trapped as in a maze,

but the fire spreads as far as they can gaze,
while fire-fighters use everything at their disposition
some people are trapped as in a maze,
are caught in moments of emotion

while fire-fighters use everything at their disposition
running into almost every direction,
are caught in moments of emotion,
flames spread further with destruction.

Gert Strydom

When The Mountain With All Its Peaks Are Aflame

flames spread further with destruction
from where the mountain is covered by fire
until it rushes to the end of the bushes
and everything that it reaches is burning

from where the mountain is covered by fire
while fire-fighters are bringing the first resistance
and everything that it reaches is burning,
people are jumping fleeing out of the way

while fire-fighters are bringing the first resistance
and the fire rolls on and on,
people are jumping fleeing out of the way
in the smoke do not really know where to go

and the fire rolls on and on
while people are looking with emotion,
in the smoke do not really know where to go
while some are demanding escape

while people are looking with emotion
until it rushes to the end of the bushes
while some are demanding escape
flames spread further with destruction.

Gert Strydom

When The New Morning Comes

I even want to go up a hill
to struggle against life
and from somewhere high
to look upon new horizons

but now its as if everything
does come to a goalless standstill
and around me there is darkness,
as if the sun is setting a last time
on me and on my people.

Still we are looking
to see the first light
with hope that the sun will rise again,
that God will bring the salvation
when the new morning comes.

Gert Strydom

When The New World Is Unknown

Like every coloured leave
falling in the autumn
with trees standing skeleton
the days of each human being runs out
while time continually keeps going on,
when expectations and acts that are gambled away are lost
as opportunities that cannot come to reality
and when all hope and dreams at a time come to an end
and that which had been is eternally passed,
when even ability and knowledge
cannot change the new world
and everything just fades away into memory
of that which may have been
then the new world is unknown and full of fear

Gert Strydom

When The Night Sneaks Near

When the night sneaks near
and suddenly comes almost unexpectedly
as if it's a visitor

then you come and knock on my heart,
then you become the nearest star
when you steal the light from the moon

and it's in your arms that I lay,
where I find my rest and peace
until the sunlight surprises us.

Gert Strydom

When The Night Takes You Away

When the night takes you away,
drags you deep into sleep
how is it then for you?

Are we still walking together
like those who are wooed on the beach
with your hand finding mine,
are we blinded by the breeze on the beach
that goes whirling around us

or are we again etched off like those that are single
in a dark gloomy sketch
that you draw with a pencil
with the darkness that swallows me?

Here I am and not even far away
and are not locked into a monastery
and I do remember you
where you are part of me
as if your humanity
is tattooed into my thoughts
and in the depth of the night
I do wonder about you, about your dreams
if I am also in them?

Gert Strydom

When The Past Day Does Still Linger In Thoughts

It's as if the darkness
walks over the twilight abyss
with a blackness that totally removes sight
before the first stars appear slowly
and outside something rustles in the grass
when the past day does still linger in thoughts.

Gert Strydom

When The Rain Falls For Days Without End

and I lie on a Sunday morning nurturing in your arms,
while lightning sounds far away in the distance
then in the cosiness I want nothing different
and then I feel your breath soft and hot against my cheek,
while a few doves coo peacefully outside,
and I notice roses with their flowers full of water hanging lower
when the sun time after time peeps furtively.
On a day as this there is a kind of rest
that lingers right through the house and nature
and when I kiss you soft upon your lips
a scene of love plays like something from an age-old story
while I smell jasmine and gardenia on the wind
when your soft hand finds mine.

Gert Strydom

When The Red Candle Draws 'n Ring Of Light

When the red candle draws 'n ring of light
while in the darkness
I do express my love to you,
then we do find meaning
while our kisses are lighting fires
before everything else does disappear
and then we know each other intimately
without being aware of passing time.

Gert Strydom

When The Red-Day Comes I Do Pray

I

When the red-day comes I do pray
let your light and love come to the hearts,
when I do cover my face with my own hands
and destiny do astound me to brokenness,
a young man out of a car screams at me
then I wonder which demon does ride him,
then I pray that You do jerk him in his own tracks
where I am away from the road and he is passing,
where without reason people do loose control of themselves
do think that they still can assault, berate and curse me,
then again as if holy do stand before Your omnipotence in church
when in a way I am only searching for Your will and a way out
or even leave threats as comments at my poems
You do notice in my life their fierce hatred.

II

Still I do wait on You to fulfil Your will
as all of these things I have given into Your omnipotent hands,
while I still hold back to take action against them
as it's not I that do keep stirring the conflict,
even when they do want to jump out with fists against me
I know that You will truly accomplish Your omnipotent will,
when they get a black man to phone me
as if I am picking his wife up at a street corner
as You do know how sincere and dedicated I am to You,
You do give me words and do bring my life to meaning,
when they try to begrime my humanity in any way
my trust in You, do still stand strong
and I do know that those that fall in Your hands have no outcome
but that You do remain righteous and full of love.

Gert Strydom

When The Rest Of Nature Comes To Me

Late in the afternoon each bright weaver gambols
when the evening star shines blue-white,
each pretty butterfly flutters around
when wild pigeons land on the ground;
I am astonished in the restless city
when the rest of nature comes to me.

Through the trees the wind is a whispering,
when birds call in the silver twilight,
when the sun disappears, red behind the hillocks,
when stars appear with lights that wink,
I am astonished in the restless city
when the rest of nature comes to me.

Far away guinea fowls are calling,
preoccupied I sit peaceful on the porch,
see in the distance city lights shining
when the bats cavort to and thro,
I am astonished in the restless city
when the rest of nature comes to me.

Gert Strydom

When The Robbers Constantly Loom Up In My Mind (Free Verse Sonnet)

I miss you and my mother and aunt are scared
where the streetlight still shines amber outside
and the sun hangs ruby-red over the horizon,
while this morning I do constantly think of you.
Where I still do believe in God's omnipotence
and two days ago had to face black robbers,
so terribly I am waiting on seeing you again
and wonder what kind of law still does exist,
when the robbers constantly loom up in my mind,
where I know that I will not get the mobile phones back,
the police captain calls it mischief,
fingerprints do laugh with the other police and drive off,
where to pieces I long for you and do you miss,
are struck with how life now really is.

[Poet's note: I will not write politically correct where there is oppression, injustice or any kind of evil. I have been reprimanded before by using colour where it comes to people. I am writing factually correct when I write and tell the absolute truth as it really had been three black men in the robbery. I am 56 years old, my mother 86 and her sister of the black men jerked the 92-year-old lady exact words to my mother by one of the other black men were: "White woman shut-up or I will smash your head until you are dead." His exact words to me were: "White-man I am going to kill you." For a full description of what happened during the robbery read my poem:

Robbery in Springs South Africa at 13h00 on 23 June 2020 (Sonnet sequence) .]

Gert Strydom

When The Roses Are Flowering Bloody Red In The Garden

When the roses are flowering bloody red in the garden,
the hollyhocks grow with their long stems,
when the garden is full of geraniums, irises and lilies,
when the maize at the back of the yard looks gigantic,
do get heads and reach out like fingers,
when tomatoes grow in their beds
and beans do stretch up on the reeds
then I see mother gardening
when the sun does shine brightly in the blue sky.

Gert Strydom

When The Roses Do Get New Buds

When the roses do get new buds,
when the sparrows peck around
in the unexpected snow,
when later the wind howls icily around our house
and the last leaves flutter around
and right through the night
doves coo their love songs
we do know that spring is already looking in
but our lives are laced together
bring through all the seasons that life brings
when constantly you look beautiful in my eyes
and I face into your hope, dreams and love.

Gert Strydom

When The Sky Domes Dull Blue

When the sky domes dull blue,
with doves cooing on the roof,
peeping at you through tree branches,
when finches gambol at their nests,
the sun beacons you sparsely through leaves,
a kind of silence comes, a type of serenity
that forever penetrates into your soul.

Gert Strydom

When The Southeaster Really Starts To Blow

When the southeaster really starts to blow and jerk,
then white horses gallop down in the bay,
then bricks and oak trees are plucked out
when even big ships are tossed to and thro
and pine branches swing up and down,
when doves hide beneath roofs for the rain
and the people of Cape Town have barbeques in their homes,
when it feels as if the cold wants to turn you to stone,
as if the whole of nature is suddenly crying
and then I want to go to somewhere else.

Gert Strydom

When The Spring Rain Pours Down

When the spring rain pours down
it seems as if the road does exude
a glorious cloud

with the fragrance of the rain being everywhere
and the fragrance of new life
that comes from the ground
when new sprouts do appear
and everything about me is green.

At this time birds rejoice
while they catch insects twittering
when a rainbow hangs colourful against the heaven

and God stretches out His great mercy over His earth,
does cover the veldt with green grass and flowers
and also with His love.

Gert Strydom

When The Spring Rain Pours Down [1]

When the spring rain pours down
it seems as if the road does exude
a glorious cloud

with the fragrance of the rain being everywhere
and the fragrance of new life
that comes from the ground
when new sprouts do appear
and everything about me is green.

At this time birds rejoice
while they catch insects twittering
when a rainbow hangs colourful against the heaven

and God stretches out His great mercy over His earth,
does cover the veldt with green grass and flowers
and also with His love.

Gert Strydom

When The Stars Wink

When the stars wink, glittering above me,
it feels as if they do beacon to come nearer,
when I see them stretching to the horizon,
forming patterns or even drawing lines
in the dark ink,

the whole of heaven is covered,
far too awesome to comprehend
with the glory procreated by a almighty God;
when the stars wink.

Later even the bats stop their frolicking,
an owl flutters past when a mouse squeals
and then I do realize
how insignificant man is on this earthly place
while a star jumps for a moment,
when the stars wink.

Gert Strydom

When The Stormy Wind Jerked On The Windows

while the rain fell as if endless,
you pulled me nearer in moment upon moment
and I was caught in the heat of your arms,

could feel your breath against my cheek
while in madness the storm whipped up gigantic waves
as if these cloudy days would last forever
but to me you were a source of light

and nothing could conquer our joy
even when at times
somewhat shy we did look blushing at each other
and eternally your smile will stay with me.

Gert Strydom

When The Stranger Was Passing

When the stranger was passing
with the rays of the late afternoon sun on him
she did looking at him
and somewhat astonished

did recognize him from her younger days
and there was a kind of meaning
that splashed down in the rays of the sun,
that radiated his face like that of a saint
and out of the coals that had been dead

new sparks did come to life
while she did realize that for years
she had been longing for him.

Gert Strydom

When The Summer Sun Covers Us

When the summer sun covers us,
in the unstained cobalt blue,
with its rays shining in glory,
when the summer sun covers us,
let autumn then draw its first lines
when it feels as if summer is without end,
when the summer sun covers us
in the unstained cobalt blue.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Did Hang Like A Copper Bell On The Horizon

When the sun did hang like a copper bell on the horizon
and the silence of the afternoon did come
I already was longing after you
and saw the evening-lily flowering under a silver moon

and when your car lights did turn into the gate
my whole heart rejoiced with joy
and it did feel
as if my day was empty without you.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Died Over The Open Blue Sea

When the sun died over the open blue sea
soft and intimate my hand was in yours,
while you pressed it,
while the water rushed out on the beach
and you are like lovely Eve from long ago,
while it feels as if we only exist for moments,
while there is sunlight, something bright in your eyes,
when time lingers, when we stand in each other's arms
and a seagull calls screeching much further on.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Goes Down Late In The Afternoon (Anaphora Poem)

When late in the afternoon the sun hangs just above the trees and hillocks,
I think that you must experience the colours of the clouds yourself
I think that it would be pretty in a landscape painting,
I think that this dusk brings a silence, that it's lonely without you,
I think that you are late, are maybe still working, or have got some other plans
I think that the gathering clouds will catch you with rain,
I think that the doves tomorrow evening will also be in love and coo like this,
I think that the jasmine and lavender tomorrow evening will also fill the air.
I think I will dream of branches that hit from the wind on the roof,
I think that maybe tomorrow I will see you for the last time.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Kisses The Hillocks

Late in the afternoon when the sun kisses the hillocks
a deep red colour appear in the west
when nature, man comes to the evenings rest,
while I hear guinea fowls screaming from the bush,
there is a kind of silence that comes suddenly,
when man is saying his prayers, is going to God
when some are busy with deeds of love,
with the essence of living and of life
and others still pursue further fame and wealth.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Languished Slowly In The Late Afternoon

When the sun languished slowly in the late afternoon
I held you in an embrace,
while the moon did cling bright white to the heaven,
winking stars appeared in the night

and sweet we were blissful together
when you trusted me, with your body, spirit and soul.
When the sun languished slowly in the late afternoon
I held you in an embrace,

suddenly the evening star did disappear
while I held your hand in mine,
saw the glance in the depths of your eyes
and all the misunderstandings and pain were gone,
when the sun languished slowly in the late afternoon.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Rises And Grows Faint

The sunflowers know when the sun rises,
they follow the hot rays
that unfolds in the sky, that fall
on hills and valleys;
similar your presence, humanity draws me
and it's as if
I am destined to you
when the sun rises and grows faint.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Rises In The Morning

When the sun rises in the morning
away in the east it hangs red
and all the trees in this autumn
are already leafless
but there are still flowers flaunting brightly
on the white rose,
with some bees flying around it
where it rocks gently in the light breeze.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Sets Glowing

When the sun sets glowing over the western horizon
and the night stretches out her long fingers
then the evening star is already glistening
while the night draws shadows in the late afternoon
and the golden full moon hangs high in the sky
when the ibises do screeching fly to their nests
and many birds can be seen in their flight
while I do wonder about my own conceit,
wonder about where I do fit into this picture
and I am amazed by the red beauty
and then the evening air is already cool,
when I take my darling's hand in mine
when tranquillity comes over the earth
and it's as if I can feel the presence of God.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Suddenly Stopped

When the sun suddenly stopped
I entered the house,
robbers had just entered and when I tried to flee
they brought me back; time came to a sudden halt.

Gert Strydom

When The Sun Was Throwing Its Last Rays On The Earth

When the sun was throwing its last rays on the earth,
your hand found mine at twilight,
the evening sky was suddenly smudged by blood

while the evening-wind was softly scattering sand,
while people hurried home from their jobs
and something in your glance had drawn me closer to you

and when suddenly lightning bolts were falling
we found shelter
against thunderbolts sounding ominous,
against the wild stormy wind

we stood for long moments in each other's arms
while the rain were pattering down, while the storm quieted down
with the clouds suddenly drawing open
and the moon's rays falling magically about us.

Gert Strydom

When The Thud Of Sounds Cross Through The Night Hours

When the thud of sounds cross through the night hours
keeping you awake when you close your eyes
until the sun touches the horizon,
violating your home, wanting to drive you from your house

and if you want to correct that people,
they may want to cause more amok,
when the thud of sounds cross through the night hours
keeping you awake when you close your eyes,

they may hit you with knuckle-dusters
or they may take revenge later
and in an incident all your ribs may be broken,
or they may shoot you quite by accident,
when the thud of sounds cross through the night hours.

Gert Strydom

When The Time Comes

When the time comes where human science,
maths and learning do not anymore correlate
with that which is written in the words
of the almighty God,

when man exalts himself like a god,
has no esteem
for the words of God
and wait upon another mighty being,

and does regard himself higher than the creator God,
does see his laws of human rights more important
than the commandments of God
without any respect for the Godly law,

then God in His omnipotence will go much further than any science,
He will reach His hand to the stars and let them rain down,
will shake the earth with earthquakes and tear it open,
and let the oceans swallow the islands

and the wide world will know
that the judgment of the Lord God is coming near.
When the last mighty angel blows its trumpet
Jesus Christ will appear in the sky

and each and every human being will know that He is greater,
much mightier than any reason, mathematics and science,
that He Himself determines all things,
when He comes to fetch His children.

Gert Strydom

When The Time With You Become Holy

When the time with you become holy
and moments crush into each other
and when at night you come to me
then I know that all love like this comes to fullness

and when moments disappear in silence
then I comprehend that pure bliss comes from pain,
when we find each other in our depths
and bind in a moment of the world's darkness

and that we are both then much richer
in love's silent deep mystery
and I come to know that love never flowers out
but at a time comes to its own fullness
when the lingering hunger in you and me
comes to satiation.

Gert Strydom

When The Two Of Us Met

When the two of us met
there was happiness and tears
and it was if our destiny was set
for many great coming years
sparkling were our eyes and we were bold
with a strange kind of fire in every kiss
and our feelings were new and old
in a unknown kind of bliss

the brightness of the morning
touched the specks of dew on your brow
when sadness came without warning
of the moments that we do feel now
when our true feelings are unspoken
and day upon day suddenly came
where apart in longing we are broken
and for weeks the days remained the same

while time with you I do covet
and the sound of your voice is still in my ear
while the feeling between us I cannot forget
and to me you are still dear.

Gert Strydom

When The Vase Lies In Pieces Shattered (English Sonnet)

(in answer to Percy Bysshe Shelley)

When the vase lies in pieces shattered
and the flowers in it is withered dead,
it's like pure feelings that are scattered,
when a true sincere love is forever shed

and when the heart that trusted is broken,
the intimate happy times are remembered not,
but of you I do remember every word spoken
as with you the most sincere life I have got

and love is in its precious great splendour,
where you are my haven when I am destitute
and all feelings to our hearts does render
tranquillity when songs and voices are mute

where I am constantly under your lovely spell
and I realise that we do know each other well.

[Reference: "When the lamp is shattered" by Percy Bysshe Shelley.]

Gert Strydom

When The Very First Time (Passion Sonnet)

When at the very first time I visited you
I knew that you were friendly and kind,
of your inner beauty I did not have a clue
many thoughts went through my mind,

of the broken relationship left behind.
By your green-brown eyes I was captivated,
many thoughts went through my mind,
your beauty had not to me been indicated.

Many thoughts went through my mind,
you looked so very innocent and charming,
dumbstruck I did the girl of my dreams find,
and your lovely smile was totally disarming.

When the very first time I visited you
of your inner beauty I did not have a clue.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When The Weavers Twitter (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Bernard Odendaal)

When the weavers do twitter and the doves coo
before the sun peeps red-eyed
I know that You are like always present,
and I also want to have a conversation with You.
At the traffic lights hungry You do stretch out hands,
Your rain does pour down against the window,
You know me and know about my whole day
and do comprehend each temptation and every decision.
You give the words that do flame in my poems,
it's with Your caress that the wind does comb through my hair,
where in goodness You do look at me and do sometimes laugh along,
and do walk with me and are with me even when I am tired,
where once more I do find You present
in the hearts of my wife and every child.

[Reference:"goeie kwelgees" (good disturbing spirit)by Bernard Odendaal.]

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Gert Strydom

When The Wind Embrace Me Caressing (Crystalline)

When the wind embrace me caressing,
it rustles through the grass as it blows.

Gert Strydom

When The Wind Started Blowing In The Afternoon

When the wind started blowing in the afternoon,
some African red-knobbed coots rose in a screaming row,
while the sun hanged over the water red like fire

and the twilight only lasted moments
while they flew past with slapping wings,
when the wind started blowing in the afternoon,

I felt a light breeze blowing against my cheek,
there was serenity and peace that came to me
while the sun hanged over the water red like fire,

there was a kind of bliss in nature
when dappled Egyptian goose also tried to avoid me,
when the wind started blowing in the afternoon,

I was caught by the sheer beauty,
I heard the call of birds cutting through the reeds,
while the sun hanged over the water red like fire

while the sky was darker and no more azure,
while ducks glide magically through the water,
when the wind started blowing in the afternoon,
the sun hanged over the water red like fire.

Gert Strydom

When The Windows Of Your Soul Are Closed With Tiredness

When the windows of your soul are closed with tiredness,
when you turn, to lie spooned against me,
am I then out of all of your thoughts
or do you want me to cuddle me in your dreams?
When I feel your breath softly against my cheek,
are we then still walking together in your paradise
or are your sleep closed, just meant for you
or do you want to show me the most beautiful flowers
or is there a wall that rises when you are asleep?

Gert Strydom

When The Winter Cold Comes

When the winter cold comes
with the mortality
of every pretty flower,
when the winter cold comes,
amazing with a own beauty
it's in an own vulnerability
when the winter cold comes
with the mortality.

Gert Strydom

When The Winter Strip Trees

When the winter strip trees, uncovering them to naked,
where they stay behind like stripped skeletons
with only here and there birds remaining,
the secret of survival is still hidden,

even when it becomes icy cold,
doves and sparrows still fly past.

When the winter strip trees, uncovering them to naked,
where they stay behind like stripped skeletons,

it is looking as if the season is making an assault
on everything living, nothing can escape it,
there are still flowers blooming,
as if protected against the cold they are keeping watch
when the winter strip trees, uncovering them to naked.

Gert Strydom

When The Winter-Rain Comes (Couplets)

In the garden the speckled barbet calls its mate
while you whisper and its is very late,

when your soft lips do my hunger still
and in this icy winter you do my heart fill,

where rain on the high-veldt sieve down,
you are cheerful, full of life and my very own

and at the windows the curtains shut out the night
but inside bright candles burn with their flickering-light

and the age-old story of people in love we do portray,
where snugly against me intimately you do lay.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When The World Changes (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

When the world changes from what it was before
when men grow to the duties they exist for,
things do become very much better still,
when people have freedom of their own will
when the world does not anymore know war,
when the world changes from what it was before.

When the world changes from what it was before,
when a young couple each other do adore,
when a kiss is filled with special bliss,
words, acts and feelings do not go amiss,
we have the capacity to become much more,
when the world changes from what it was before.

When the world changes from what it was before,
changes from a place of only death and gore
when an honest sincere man governs a land,
places all of his people in God's strong hand,
then much better things are always in store,
when the world changes from what it was before.

Gert Strydom

When The Yellow Sun Starts To Draw Long Lines

(after S. J. Pretorius)

When the yellow sun starts to draw long lines
just before it descends over the distant hillocks
the streets of the town is filled with cars
of the great mishmash driving home.
Suntanned with hats covering there heads
I see white car guards taking their belongings,
men who had lost their jobs, now with their world insane
walk with lowered heads with their faces grim
while some stretch their steps much longer.
They had a work at a time
but now are sun burnt with rough hands,
sometimes on welfare of the local church
with their eyes hidden by the edges of their hats
while they dream of a country where jobs are plentiful.

[Reference: "Sonnet - Uit Malvern" (Sonnet - Out of Malvern) by S. J. Pretorius]

Gert Strydom

When There Is Nothing More

When there is nothing more
to remember you by,
when you fade away
and disappear faceless,
when reality
wants to vaporise
then the night folds cold around me.

Gert Strydom

When Things Change Lightning Quick

When things change lightning quick
and feelings, lives get a new direction
you are surrounded by change,
change that intrude into your life

and still when at a time you think things through,
even where you were caught in a thorny - wood
you see a new horizon, new stars shining
with growth coming from the delay

where another rising day brings healing,
where painful things comes as enrichment to your own life
and even when change circles out wider,
have a direct impact on how you experience things

answers appears from the nought,
you see star upon star shooting past full of promises.

Gert Strydom

When Time Does Bring Me Nearer

and all of my years are running out
at a time and place where I loose my mind
and do forget myself and all of my writings
then life does become an ugly thing.
When time does bring me nearer

then I ask the Father to act
to prepare a place for me at His time
to be sorry for me in His great mercy
and to end my life to bring it to its fullness.

Gert Strydom

When Time Glides By And Days Past Into Night

When time glides by and days past into night
and violet, white even blue flowers are withering
with every morning's light
as if everything is dying

trees are barren stripped of their leaves,
still perfect you are in every way
while wheat are bound in golden sheaves
while winter brings its own decay

it is as if you are still blossoming
with love serene, true and amazing
as if caught in an eternal spring
as if the heat from your heart is blazing:

on the other side of death, of heaven or doom
your flower will still bloom.

[Reference: Sonnet 16 "But wherefor do not you a mightier way" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

When Time Takes Its Toll

When time takes its toll
and age set in,
I will still see you
in the way that you were
when youth was yours.

Even when we stand
at the edge of the last evening
the fire of love in your golden eyes
will still bring everlasting feelings,
to take beyond
were this life goes.

Gert Strydom

When Times Are Bad

When times are bad
and I am with my hands in my hair
and black foreigners from all over Africa
overnight becomes citizens
and have more rights as a citizen than me
and affirmative action
puts her claws into my life
then I wonder about justice
and when merit and experience
will ever again apply

where my ancestors Joost Strydom
from Liefenshoek in the Netherlands
as a merchant seaman of the VOC
in 1678 came to Cape Town,

married his pretty well know wife
Maryna Ras who with a horse
could alone ride days long to Cape Town
with whom noblemen tried to have relationships,

where the indigenous zulu-xhosa-pondo-swazi people
are originating from a group
that during the same time
immigrated far away out of the north
from eMbo at the big lakes in central Africa
under the leadership of Nguni and later Dlamini

and then I wonder how
this country rather belongs to them
and they have to have work opportunities before me

and if you now say anything
about the new migration out of the whole of Africa
for which the country's borders are now wide open
(in such a way that South Africans
must now get visas for Great Britain)
you are seen as xenophobic

and then there are citizens from right over Africa
who become South Africans overnight
attaining more rights than you
who forced by law
get secure job opportunities

and do people from Mozambique murder
Eugene Terreblance,
drug dealers from Nigeria
are caught by the local police

while against your will
you were forced into an army, into a war
still faithfully pay your taxes
when and where you have a job

and the current government
tries to stay in power
while Aids devours its voter numbers

and you as a white man
are despised by the current regime,
are treaded into the ground
while the country are falling to pieces
and then you pray
to Him (the God of the universe) who controls everything
to drastically intervene
rather than rousing people
for a civil war.

[Reference: VOC Verenigde Oost Indiëse companje.]

Gert Strydom

When To Me You Did Come

When to me you did come
of all my wishes this was the sum
and I wished for something more than just care,
wanted us both in love's magic to partake
and your dear presence there was only for my sake
but in your presence I felt speechless and dumb
when to me you did come.

You did love me
with a woman's sweet loyalty
but at the time I loved you more
and between us was a brilliant flame
a kind of feeling that love had much more in store
but at the time I did not know your name
and how unlikely it seemed to be
that you did love me.

Gert Strydom

When Together We Do Awake To Another Bright Day (English Sonnet)

When together we do awake to another bright day
there is something special to the morning
while outside the dogs do barking play,
the train in the distance hoots out its warning

and I wonder if this kind of sheer bliss
that away our breaths for moments do take,
that we find in every kiss, is the way it is,
to every other couple that do awake

and our love does constantly something more seek,
as daily into the busyness of life we do embark
and something of it is present in every day and week
as it remains constant like a set mark

and in times of heartache and pain it does remain
as more depth, compassion and power it does gain.

Gert Strydom

When Tree Branches Rub Against The Roof

When tree branches rub against the roof
the small bulbul runs past
during the afternoon hour
to the pool where it dives and rolls,
stretches out wings and shoot them out straight,
walking boldly up and down
stretches out wings,
stretches out wings
as he walks to and thro.

When tree branches rub against the roof
a light breeze blows,
while the sun burns hot as fire
and the neighbouring child calls
when the afternoon comes with its peace,
with thoughts from the past
when the afternoon comes,
when the afternoon comes
and sometimes I forget the present.

When tree branches rub against the roof
birds peck around everywhere
while moments are lingering
as leaves blow to the ground,
and I think of God as if He is here,
while the shades bring a kind of tranquillity
and I think of God
and I think of God
and find some deeper meaning to life.

Gert Strydom

When Twilight Came

When twilight came,
when stars gleamed in the dark night
you did kissed me upon mouth,
did strange things to my desires,
when you did embrace me
and for ages
we were sheltered against the world.

Gert Strydom

When Waves Sweep Out And Break

When waves sweep out and break,
are sucking on sea-grass trails
and do drag you along as if you are some animal
caught in the power of the great blue ocean
and in the quick sudden development
when horizon, sun and sky does divide
with breakers that break, cleave and spread open
there is something that penetrates your humanity
something about the vastness and potency of the sea
as it's sucking, drawing and clings to you
when you do decide to swim out of it,
are aware of its pure power
and muscles are used to almost utmost effort
to cleave through water, to swim if you are still able to.

Gert Strydom

When We Did Meet (Sonnetina Tre)

When we did meet I had lost all of my confidence
that had been with me through my younger years,
God himself created you as my companion in His providence
and although at a time our love has brought me tears
your love has been to my broken heart a balm
and you have been the strong wind beneath my wings,
the one who brings my restless soul to a place of calm
and I do appreciate the many different things
that you daily do and the simple way
when in secret for me you do pray.

Gert Strydom

When We Do Meet Again (Rubliw)

When we
do meet again
in a week or a month
it will seem as if forever
has set its mark and each kiss does remain
when we again are together
but the being apart
did tear the heart
in two.

Gert Strydom

When We Find Each Other In A Matchless Way

When we find each other in a matchless way
and do bond in a age old way
then there is some vulnerability
when we are blinded in each other

while it feels as if our love and infatuation
brings greater wonder
as if our hearts and souls in affection
without modesty

do reach out to each other
and wonder draws us still much closer.

Gert Strydom

When We Meet Again

Even the sun
that used to smile for me
has begun to go frail
and as the season run on
into its skeleton stripped
time of rest
I am gripped with the fear
that this winter
we will separate
and go different ways.

Yet somehow I hope to see
the tender smile on your face
that has the capacity
to make my heart race
and to embrace you again
when we meet again.

Gert Strydom

When We Played Eden In The Willow Lane

When we played Eden in the willow lane
you were really amorous,
wanted to share the joys of Eve with me
and I was ashamed to unzip my pants

but you showed your breasts and big nipples to me,
pulling me into your arms,
my manliness suddenly unknown till then started to rise,
with the world around us stretching out full of summer's glory

and lost in each other we were both,
had forgotten that somebody might catch us,
when the angel suddenly appeared we were both covered
but the snake

but the rising snake had betrayed us
and of our wiles your dad could immediately guess,
when he picked a cane from the quince grove,
hitting it hard to and thro

but that episode
just drove you harder into sexuality
and time after time you waited on me,
as if nobody and nothing could stop us.

Gert Strydom

When We Walk Hand In Hand Through The Streets (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ingrid Jonker)

Throughout the day there is beautiful things that we do find,
where you take everything pampering in your hands
and through your hair blows the hot summer-breeze
when you want to plant the treasures in the loam of your heart.
When we walk hand in hand through the streets
we notice flowers that leaves us speechless,
the small little house of our heart is open to each other,
it begs that the two of us must enter it.
When so suddenly the sun sets before the darkness,
do gleam bloody red at the end of the day,
it's deep in my heart that you plank it down
where you do hide against the things of the night,
we are renewed in the universe of the body,
our names are written in each other's hearts.

[Reference:"Op die voetpad"(On the footpath)by Ingrid Jonker.]

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Gert Strydom

When We Walk In The Back Garden

When we walk in the back garden
as the sun sets over the hillocks

while flowers are blooming everywhere
and others are now suddenly rising
in this early spring,
in the distance houses gleam white like tents

and the evening air is suddenly colder
when I feel the heat of your hand in mine.

When the dark night comes
we are amazed by millions of stars

and of some you know the names
but when I kiss you, you have forgotten them all
and we only see the moon gleaming reddish
while we are caught in each other

and it's as if the night comes to life in the distance
but we are free from the whole world.

Gert Strydom

When We Walked At The River

When we walked at the river
there were three of us
two boys of twelve
and a girl of ten

and the water
came rushing by
and then the world was great
with the hot yellow sun
in a cobalt blue sky

and we sat with our feet in the water
watching cars passing on the high bridge
and she smiled at me
while holding my hand
and her brother was my best friend

and the three of us
took an oath to be friends for life
but destiny was in control

I'Envoi

and the world wasn't great
with the hot yellow sun
covered by a dark black sky
and waters in flood
came rushing by
in a enormous wave

swept a car from a low bridge
flooding over it
causing the two of them to die
and later at the high bridge
sat only I.

© Gert Strydom

When We Were Primary School Children

When we were primary school children
my mother read treasure island to us
and I could see long John Silver,
walking nearer without a leg
and the tumultuous sea
and pirates
and their treasure
stayed long with me.

At school we daily played with marbles
and performed tricks with yo-yos
and bragged about our pigeons
and between rugby and cricket
and friends and the girls
life performed daily miracles.

Today that world
is long gone
and if children steal fruit
or play rough
like children do,
the police are called in
to investigate something
immaterially small

Gert Strydom

When We Were Small Children

When we were small children
about five and four
my dad had died
of cancer
and I and my brother
had to stay during the day
with the Von Hörsten's
when my mother drove away to work.

Uncle Hendrik was a farmer,
but also with his brother Fritz
wrote story books
and his string of children
who was much older
and bigger than us
(four boys and two girls)
kept us busy
since boys had to stay out of the house.

So it went that we
rode horses unsaddled,
tread on silage
and the second oldest Gardiël
was always on our case,

had put us on donkeys
and the lot of them laughed
while the animals run moody
into rocks
and my brother fell
and got some bruises and cuts.

One day the cornfield
was cut stubble high
to get feed for the cattle
and the breeding bull Kittennel
(a black and malicious animal)
were chased into the crush-pen
and Gardiël forced us on that bull

before he chased it
with a horse
into the cornfield.

On the other side of the field
beyond the border wire
his brothers waved a red flag
up and down and up and down
and Kittennel snored though his nose,
in anger shook his body,
kicked up dust
before he got direction
capering
and storming with full force
at the red flag.

The stubbles flashed
past his feet
and looked like spears
standing upright
and we were afraid
of being pierced
and we rode Kittennel
and no bull
could throw us down that day.

[Reference: The word uncle used here out of respect and local custom and not
to point out family relationship.]

Gert Strydom

When Winter Comes

(for Daleen)

When winter comes there is the silence
of the birds that did migrate
but in love the doves do coo on

but when winter comes to life
old age is a hard thing to live through
but worst than that is the winter of the heart

and yet overwhelming is the silence in it
when two lovers do forever part
and love's music is plucked from the soul.

Such cold acts and words
do send shivers down my spine
and loneliness is another thing

when all the world is happily experiencing bliss
and then the nightly silence
is almost deafening

when love do struggle not to die,
it's like bolts of thunder from a blue sky
suddenly making my ears sing

but the worst of it is
when you and your children are rid of me
like they tried for five years to be

and they have moved most of and the last of my things
under your own orders to be free
but you do return from your fiery anger and hate

to the woman who I did love
as if all the demons have been kicked out of your soul
and tell me that you do still truly love me

when divorced I do the utmost to avoid you

and you call to tell me my dog is mourning me to death
but between your sobs there are tears even in your breath.

Gert Strydom

When Winter Started In May

With winter starting in May
you stir lentil soup around and around,
looking like the most beautiful housewife
while I am astounded by the odours of that meal.

When your lips find mine,
we are for long moments blinded to the world
and the soup almost boils over,
while a strong wind is rattling the windows.

Gert Strydom

When Winter Suddenly Comes

When winter suddenly comes
year upon year I am caught by it,
when there is an end to growth,

when sudden change in age
strip branches, let's them hang lonely,
when winter suddenly comes

and it seems as if all of nature is dying,
when you long back to summer,
when there is an end to growth,

when with the ripe every spring flower wilts
and that an end is coming scares you,
when winter suddenly comes

you are astonished by the yellow-brown creeping death,
when even the bright bird songs wither,
when there is an end to growth,

and subtle even death claims its own property,
after years of decline of a life,
when winter suddenly comes,
when there is an end to growth.

Gert Strydom

When With Eyes Wide Open (Persian Quatrain)

When with eyes wide open I do look at you
there are lovely things in what you say and do
where you are perfectly a lovely woman,
the one that make all my wishes come true.

Gert Strydom

When Words Are Not Enough

When words are not enough
to say thank you with
for all the sacrifices
that speaks an own language,

in the wide world
I would want no other mother
and nobody can lie deeper
in my heart.

Even in latter years
where life is cutting me small
you are prepared
to stay on my side

and this old world
you make heaven to me
and when I look through your eyes
I see another earth
that looks different and better.

As if a angel from heaven
has landed next to me
your words and deeds
the whole time brings honour
to the almighty God
and my thanks
cannot even try
to value you.

Gert Strydom

When Words Like Breath

When words like breath with new life
do constantly come into the brain,
do bring something concrete to the dark passages
of the imagination
with a new glance at that which do exist
it is as if eternity is jerked open
from here and now
and notes are taken of the pas
as if can bring that which is nameless
to an own meaning.

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Gert Strydom

When Words Loose Their Meaning

When words loose their meaning
and only flow on bloodlessly
then I cannot say how much I do love you.

When every touch does not anymore matter
then my hands,
my mouth and body becomes dumb

and are unable to tell you
that our love is something holy, intense
and also earthly.

Gert Strydom

When Words Pull Meaning To Pieces

When words pull meaning to pieces
then I want to embrace you
and hold you gently against me
and by actions begin to say things to you,
pick a bunch of red roses from the garden
as a token of my love,

put more time into our being together
and bring colour to the continuous white of life,
try to bring healing to the scars of your youth
and cover everything that does bother
in a big hole in the ground.

Gert Strydom

When You

When are so beautiful
and lie and look at me
and your fingers play
through my hair,
I wonder what
happens deep in your thoughts
and soul?

When you lie so softly against me
and your fingers
twist through mine,
I wonder what makes you
so wonderful
and what destiny
or God made you for me?

When you keep teasing
and play with me
and I hear you laugh
with gladness,
and I see joy
burn deep in your eyes
I know that I will die;
in a life without you.

Gert Strydom

When You Are Far Away From Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

When you are so far away from me
there are only the days of missing you,
moments become empty without you
and then I live in hellish darkness.
Where destiny constantly gets hold of me
between you and me there is now distance
with the same sun that shines above us
and in love I constantly stay near.
Where loneliness is cutting me small,
it feels as if the sun is hiding our lives,
as if it does hope and faith suffocate
and for you my love remains intense.
Somewhere we are caught in things that hang,
between life and death in our great longing.

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Gert Strydom

When You Are Inside A Church (Free Verse Sonnet)

When you are inside a church
everyone there is in an own world,
while even whispers can be heard.
People may think that the church
is no more than a dead telephone
that is connected to nowhere
that others do pick it up hoping it's different
although in this time, place and age
they do know better they want to listen
hoping that somehow it is different
and yet it truly is alive, as God does really exist
where at His own place and time
He acts in ways that are for our good
like a father draws us closer to Him.

Gert Strydom

When You Are So Far Away (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Dorothy Parker)

When you my love, are so far from me away
at my window sing the flock of many birds
but they do not bring a change to the day
and my woes are written in my small words

while longing does rip my feelings apart
and in this sunny summer time of the year
there is great pain in the depths of my heart
where my pen is dipped in every sad tear

and in their singing the birds do almost their joy shout
while in my heart and life in my own sorrows I do drown,
where from me the greater world is completely locked out
while I dot my small words and their meanings down

and I cannot write down the great loveliness
while you are away and apart from all of this.

[Reference: "Little words" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

When You Are With Me

When you are with me,
time has no capacity to schedule us.
When kisses fall like rain,
there is no pain, no sorrow
and only joy
with no way to time it.

Even in this winter of my despair
where age is catching up with me,
where life bangs me down to the ground,
nothing of this world is around
when your eyes form new worlds
which I in their beauty see.

The blowing leaves, the icy breeze
all passes me, while the summer of your smile
falls with life on my heart.

Gert Strydom

When You Came Nearer

When you came nearer some birds flew up
while the sun glittered on you dark hair
and at that moment I did not say a word
while small devils danced in your eyes
and the whole world around us was vague
while something deep was hidden in your dark eyes
and your presence brought great joy to me.

Gert Strydom

When You Did Come

When you did come
the world had changed
and what was our home
with time was rearranged
but between us all was still the same
and even your face, your body and name.
Although for a time separate the world we did roam,
love was still of our feelings the sum
when you did come.

When you did come back to me
all of our promises and joy was full of sincerity
and about the heartaches I did not care anymore
as life did change and nothing was still the same
as it had been before
but our feelings and our love was still aflame
and for me more precious you had come to be
when you did come back to me.

Gert Strydom

When You Did Tell Me

When you did tell me
that there is no bigger treasure
than our love,
that you see the light
of the stars in my eyes

that the sun rises for you
when I come home,
how our feelings
time after time astounds you

I wanted to believe you,
while we looked at the lights in the sky
as if a kind of bond was right there,
and it was something that no words could explain.

Space flight after space flight has come back,
at times blinded by bright stars
spacemen did bridge space
and could not find the beginning of our love

and its now clear
that some planets, stars-systems and other worlds are unknown
but you are my light in the darkness of this world.

Gert Strydom

When You Do Lie Close Against Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

When in the sheets you do lie here close against me,
then you are my own spring-bride that do drive the winter away,
who says lovely things of a woman to a man,
where moments are too holy and pure to write down.
Spring-woman, you are the own that brings the sunshine back,
the one that germinates my seed at the right time,
the one of whom the birds do sing at the end of winter,
and the moments with you are serene and very intimate
as if all of my life becomes alive with you again,
where every flower and fruit-tree suddenly is flowering
and like this are all of our days sunny, beautiful, open and free
with love falling like rain of which the rivers do overflow
and you make my time lovely full of love and hope,
when you wander with me through the days of my life.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

When You Do Notice Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Cas Vos)

Where you notice the impressions and colour of my eyes
you do realise that we are one in flesh and spirit,
while you read deeper impressions from my heart,
that the two of us serve the same Lord God
and then I know that someone like you I do not deserve,
where without any fear you do sacrifice yourself for me,
where what we have got do heal us from the assaults of life
and love is much more than just a mere kind of maybe,
when people and the world do lash out at us
this bond goes much deeper,
and out of my rib cage you do come to me.
This bond is intimate and full of insight,
something that remains in faith past life,
constantly it leaves you and me speechless.

[Reference: "Misinterpreted" by Cas Vos.]

Gert Strydom

When You Flutter Down Like A Butterfly Next To Me

(in answer to H. J. Pieterse, in answer to Danie Marais)

When like a butterfly you flutter down
I look with the most sincere love at you,
while you do embrace me with your arms,
do make our love to be much more true,

all of the cosmos in a mere moment turns past us
while you lead me to the flowers, by beauty we are surrounded,
do notice every little thing that is in the gift of the morning
and with this experience you are simply dumbfounded,

where for love this is sweet and fertile ground
and you want to keep me very close,
where I notice the love in your green-brown eyes
and nothing that you want I can oppose,

as you are of me the most essential part,
when the wild Africa rhythm do beat in the heart.

[Reference: "Artisjok" (Artichoke) by H. J. Pieterse. "Wees gerus" (Be at ease) by Danie Marais.]

Gert Strydom

When You Lay On My Breast Like Upon A Pillow

When you lay on my breast like upon a pillow
and dreams are slowly sneaking into your thoughts
then I want to go along
to somewhere deep into your soul.

I want to see the glory of your soft hair
that is spread gold-blonde on me
and catch the smell of it.
I want to catch your breath against my cheek,
feel your heat against my body
and I do want to know that you are mine.

Gert Strydom

When You Left My Life

Far too quickly a plucked flower withers,
the bright lustre, colour and smell fades
when it's removed from the ground where it grows
when it is cut off, torn from its own life.

When you left my life on your own
our love had been cut off,
when the door banged close the last time
and that which had been between us did end.

The beautiful cups dry out, shrink and collapse
while the smell vanquishes, gets dull,
and I cry in vain about the decay,
becoming aware far too late that I had been used

like a plucked flower I only go to dust.

Gert Strydom

When You Lie In My Arms

it's as if you bring spring
into our bedroom.

There are doves, weavers
and sparrows outside
that gambols and sings.

Beautiful woman, when you
trust me with you body and soul
it's as if the whole earth
encloses us in a paradise, in a spring garden.

Gert Strydom

When You Look At Me

When you look at me
and I see the light
in your golden eyes,
there's much more
than your words say.

When you touch me
there's deeper meaning,
than I know to express
and I am truly blessed
that you love me.

Gert Strydom

When You Share

When you share
your life and all your moments
and everything
that belongs to you,
as if this is the way
that life has meant it to be
I want to cry with joy.

I have never known a girl
that loves me,
with such sincerity
and so passionate and tenderly
and no other has
become such a part
of me.

Gert Strydom

When You Sleep

When you sleep
with your head on my chest,
I do not know
why the gods chose me
to be such a lucky man.

Sometime somewhere destiny
prepared you for me
and at times,
I wish that I could have
met you much sooner.

When you smile in your sleep,
I ponder on what you dream
and at times it is as if
we have been together,
in another life and time and place.

Gert Strydom

When You Sleep (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

When I come to the bedroom and find you
there is a soft impression on your face,
where you do sleep innocent like a child,
where I hear you mumble and speak in your sleep,
where your dark hair lie spread out over the pillow,
when the starry-light and moonbeams fall over your face,
and at all cost I do want to avoid waking you
as that moment were holy as I do remember it
as years and decades now do lie in between
but in my heart you do still remain near
where again I want to start a life with you,
do not know what to do to get things like that again
as it's as if still you do fit into my heart and soul
where for years I am still holding on to you.

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Gert Strydom

When You Stop Your Last Kiss

while we spend moments in bliss
trembling will our hands be
at moments such as this.

In the depths of your eyes I will see
a type of sweet tranquillity
and I do wonder if moments can be
again like this for you and me?

Gert Strydom

When You Tell Me How Much You Do Love Me

How many days I saw your subtle grace
the lingering smile on your lovely face,
there is a kind of sweet innocence
but also charm and a confidence
and you bring an inner tranquillity
when you tell me how much you do love me.

Sometimes beautiful the day does begin
while loving you closely feels like a sin,
but our intense feelings we cannot ignore
while life changes from what it was before
and you bring an inner tranquillity
when you tell me how much you do love me.

The moment is eternal with each kiss
while we are caught in ecstasy, sheer bliss
and not the future or even times past
has significance while the feelings last
and you bring an inner tranquillity
when you tell me how much you do love me.

Gert Strydom

When You Visited Me

My world was dull
like a black and white film
made by a third rate producer,

but it was like a scene
from a movie
made by Steven Spielberg
when you came to visit me.

Never were you more beautiful
than last night
when I saw you again.

Happiness shone in your eyes
which sparkled
like rare golden citrine
brighter than at any time
and your whole face was aflame,

your auburn hair
were touched by the sun
glittering in every strand
even in the sieving rain

and the dogs cried out
from happiness
trying to cuddle you
in their own simple way.

Your perfume went to my head
and your lips glowed and tasted sweet
in a crimson way
and your embrace made me sway
as if walking on a cloud

and the movie was better than great,
but it was real life
and the genuine characters in it
were you and I.

Gert Strydom

When You Walk On Patrol

When you walk on patrol in the stretched out dry semi-desert
only the shadows follow like feelings of guilt or of new hope,
even when you string out in an attack formation
you are baptised in the fine sand that blows up in the wind.

Gert Strydom

When You Walked Into The World From God To Man

When You walked into the world,
from God to man,
nobody really realized
what kind of offering You were making

when You got involved with man
bringing healing to pain,
with a slapping whip drove out
the white plastered priests

and in astonishment
people saw Your love,
when You with the last bit of life,
near to death,
still spoke of mercy

and asked Your Father forgiveness
for them that in humiliation
with pain were murdering You,
before the wide universe
man merciless had portrayed the depths of sin.

Gert Strydom

When Your Country Asks You To Pay A Prize (Terzanelle)

When your country asks you to pay a prize,
to gain the enemy's territory
some may have to pay with their demise

but as a man you are not free
and they send young men into the gates of hell
to gain the enemy's territory

while at home like kings they dwell
and they despise the tales of war not being glory
and they send young men into the gates of hell

and fighting is just a rotten old story
under the beating of canon and gun
and they despise the tales of war not being glory

to whatever lot may come; death may come to anyone
to go into the havoc that war brings
under the beating of canon and gun

they are careful not to express its true tidings.
When your country asks you to pay a prize,
to go into the havoc that war brings
some may have to pay with their demise.

Gert Strydom

When Your Eyes Did Suddenly Leave Mine

when no more I could find the sunshine look in them;
I had to know that you
wanted to bond to another man, to another lover

and I did escape to another world,
back to my sunny Pretoria.

Gert Strydom

When Your Eyes Glow Like Two Suns

When your eyes glow like two suns
that shines above the dome of the sky,
that does penetrate me
with every glance from you
then there is something that goes right through my emotions
and even when I feel impulsive

its as if your eyes are always following me in my thoughts,
as if next to me you do experience everything,
as if our bond will last eternally

but more probable its because I do miss you
and cannot comprehend a life without you.

Gert Strydom

When Your Hand Folded Around Mine

When your hand folded around mine you did smile
and I saw the depths of your soul
as you caught the profile of my face,
and your skin was soft while you were so very near,
while the essence of my heart was very happy,
and I speak to the Lord of you when later I did kneel down.
When your hand folded around mine

all of my own emotions did betray me,
as I felt age-old like a fossil,
and I wondered if falling in love did inspire you
to take my hand in the church,
when your hand folded around mine

Gert Strydom

Whenever We Walk (Decuain)

Whenever we walk you keep up with me,
while the sun glitters in your golden hair
and together we have tranquillity
while all of life seems great and very fair
as if something unseen is in the air
and it might be somehow in the fresh wind
or just part of our very own affair
or only something somewhere in my mind
but your true love stays with me constantly,
its essence works predominately.

Gert Strydom

Whenever You Away From Me To Stray (Triolet)

Whenever you away from me stray
my little planet has lost its light
and my life turns to grey.

Whenever you away from me stray
with someone else go off to play
around me there is only night.

Whenever you away from me stray
my little planet has lost its light.

Gert Strydom

Where Against The Forces Of Destiny I Do With All In Me Love You (English Sonnet)

(in answer to William Shakespeare)

I do not have a lion's claws, the teeth from a tiger's jaws,
or a phoenix's blood or a feather from the harpy brood,
to for you stop nature by its distinct reigning set of laws,
while we do live a life that in a way is truthful and good

or an antique pen, or a heinous crime to halt the ticking of time,
or a Siren's pure tears that turns hope and faith from all fears
to make a spell, a ritual, a incantation or formulary of this rhyme
and nothing but this simple verse to shelter you against the years

where loving you feels in essence like sin and losing while we win,
how have we to each other been fitted, what errs have we committed
but still in my flesh, my heart, spirit and soul you do dwell within
and in this life where we are no person has our essence outwitted,

where to each other we do in sincerity still day after day stay true,
where against the forces of destiny I do with all in me love you.

[Reference:"Sonnet 119 What potions have I drunk of Siren tears" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Where And When Does Freedom Really Come?

I am just a normal guy
who wants to make a living
and I went to university to study
but what is the value of it now?

My country has been given away
and Afrikaner businessmen go along pliable,
with suppressing laws
as if they are not in the highest positions.

Still I have got to pay tax
and my people are brutally murdered
on farmsteads and in the cities,
and even from before Dingaan
it is the story of this country.

of striking at, plundering and robbing
and of piercing, cleaving people open
as if taking, robbing and murder
has been generally adopted by some
from ages past
as if corruption and misdeeds are permitted

and I wonder how to stay in a country
where you work yourself to a standstill
for what belongs to you
which others later want to claim as their own
and where and when does freedom really come?

Gert Strydom

Where Apart From Each Other We Do Live (Italian Sonnet)

On the phone this morning I did your voice hear
where apart from each other we do live
and to you I want my heartfelt wishes give,
come to you with joy and no kind of fear

with only tranquillity and happiness and no drear
like a child in your love hope and truly believe
where I do this longing of the years grieve
and wish that you could be constantly near

where for decade we both have happiness sought
do of every gentle kindness approve
but with destiny life is not as it aught
but still through many years you do me move
and we are both by our lives caught
but yet forever we are in love.

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Gert Strydom

Where Apart Our Love Silently Goes On (English Sonnet)

Where separate our love silently goes on
I do remember the times of laughter sweet,
where you do live in me while you are gone
and precious are the times that we do meet,

while like music after the quieting of the song
do vibrate as if in the air the sound is living still,
is the memory that do remain powerfully strong,
of all the times that we are together in goodwill.

The fragrances of you in my mind do remain,
as if they are present in our lovely sunny home
and in the heart there is no kind of imminent pain
as at weekends to you, my sweetheart, I do come

and sincerely life and love truly is just like this
in times of both lonely heartache and extreme bliss,

Gert Strydom

Where Are We Now?

There had been a night
that the darkness
did really shake her cloak
and hundreds of stars
fell out of the heaven
drawing lines in the sky,

the moon did hang red like blood
and blotted with the sun
in did flee away into the darkness

and people did notice these things,
did trust in the predictions
about these events

as if the coming of the Master
is right at the door
and sometimes I do wonder
when I look at this old world:

where are we now?

Gert Strydom

Where Are You My Darling?

Where are you my love, where will I find you
when the sun comes early with its first light,
where are you when butterflies careless
blind me in moments with their bright colour?
Where are you when life wants to devour me,
who knows you intimate, knows your face
when my life wants to yield before winter,
or are we leaves blowing in the wind?

Or stars passing or jumping in the sky,
destiny turns our lives round and around
like some in vain words written in this poem?
Where do we go with each joy and sorrow,
is it to you that I send my dear love?

Gert Strydom

Where Do I Fit Into It All?

I have seen
brave men passing me.
Men who were composed
when death came agonising by
and stuck to the training
taught before

I have seen men believing
that victory belongs
to those that really dare
and snatching immortality
from the claws of death
against an outnumbering foe.

Still the meaning of it all
isn't clear to me
and what battles and wars won
really bought?

I have seen good men
giving up their lives here
and sick of the impact of crime,
loosing hope for a future,
going away to stay
in another country.

I have seen wild men
making a life
out of whatever
destiny bestowed on them
and living it up
before the years
of old age could come.

I have seen grave men
calculating the cost
of investing in a desperate society
and deciding that all is lost
and withdrawing their investments

to make other opportunities
their goal.

I have seen great men
building up their lives
and starting new careers
from the ruins
of bankruptcy and unemployment
and against unfair laws
and black economic empowerment,
prospering from the lessons learnt
from life.

The question remains with me:
where do I fit
into it all?

Gert Strydom

Where Everything Is Threaded So Deep Into Each Other (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to C. M. van der Heever)

The roses fold open their deep-red cups
where with a soft fragrance they do entice
when one after the other they do open with the sun
where it dips everything over the hillocks bloody red,
everything becomes brighter as the day continues,
Day lilies and morning glories follow the sun as it goes,
there is rejoicing in everything that does exist in the summer-days
where the redbreast, weavers and doves do walk to and thro.
Butterflies, beetles and bees frolic from flower to flower
where they gather nectar and everything is fertilised and impregnated
as if the existence of everything is threaded deep into each other,
the birds do peck the fruit that comes to fullness
and bright white-hot the sun hangs high in the sky
in the great cycle of nature's secrets.

[Reference: "Alles gee verniet" (Everything gives in vain) by C. M. van der Heever.]

Gert Strydom

Where For Our Love I Have Got Great Hope (Italian Sonnet)

Where for our love I have got great hope
while a moment becomes full of power
that acts transitory during a single hour,
where all of my life is in destiny's scope,

tying me to reality, you are my only rope,
even if the storm rages and do me shower
you are against all of this like a tower,
the one that finds the way against the slope,

where you do act with faith and amazing grace
and any kind of thing with you I can discuss,
even if people are acting by their ill will,
you are with me in any time and at any place
while I do constantly pray for both of us,
that our world would be tranquil and still.

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Gert Strydom

Where From My Childhood I Trust You

My God, I beg that You do pour your blessings out on humanity,
where from my childhood I do trust You.

You know that I view my wife as most important to my life,
that day after day I do adore her more.

I beg for all of humanity that You do curtail this virus,
that You do preserve my wife where she is working for You.
My God, I beg that You do pour your blessings out on humanity,
where from my childhood I do trust You.

There is now more people perishing in every report
and just like a child to a parent I want to cling to You,
ask that You do fold Your omnipotent hand around every person
and I know that righteousness every person does lack.
My God, I beg that You do pour your blessings out on humanity,
where from my childhood I do trust You.

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Gert Strydom

Where God Do Prepare The Universe For His Children (Refrain Stanza)

Over the veldt rises the shy moon in a narrow yellow band
when like the flowering cosmos the stars stand
where the universe God do for His children prepare
while over you and me He takes great care
where everything is in His hand
and life is measured out only fleetingly
but everywhere I do God's love see
and His great mercy I cannot really understand
when like the flowering cosmos the stars stand.

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Gert Strydom

Where I Am Broken By Missing You (Couplets)

Everything coming between us is superfluous as you make me complete,
in every moment in the scope of the day I do you need.

Where the weavers continually to each other are twittering
and the doves to each other do coo it's a sad thing,

while missing you breaks me and it feels like an eternity,
where even in this virus you are the best part of me.

In my body, soul, thoughts and spirit I do withdraw
of your impact, your presence and company that leaves me in awe.

Wherever this pestilence of a virus comes living ends bit by bit
and nobody can reveal the time of being free from it,

while all joy, happiness and even decency from people do disappear
and each one to God as one day in judgement is near

but to deny that God does act in such times is self-delusion
as He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient in times of confusion

but more than this it's the time where He does for each person care,
where each one returns to a relationship with Him and also to prayer.

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Gert Strydom

Where I Am On This Huge Adventure

I try to play the games of life
as I find them and there are many
but I try to never lie
as integrity is something valuable to me
and what I write only at times
do mirror my life
and where I am on this huge adventure that life is
there are many things to learn and to do,
while constantly I do meet new people,
do witness their joy, their heartaches and pain.

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Gert Strydom

Where I Do Live (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

Where I do live in the structured reality
of a career that does not anymore exist,
You are still daily standing at my side.
You are right here in all occurrences,
where the things that happen are not from the decisions that I do make.
Mere human beings and destiny does continually strike at me,
You do daily lead on the narrow way on which I have got to go
but You do not force Your will down on my independence.
Senseless suffering, pain and destruction and everything bad
does come from man's own choices just like in Eden
and as a human I do notice Your perfect love
while You do make my way straight and right
and I am astonished with Your grace, love and righteousness
where even in the most difficult times You do make my life better.

[Reference: "Theodicee" by M. M. Walters.]

Gert Strydom

Where I Do Love And Miss You Without End

Flowers and poems to you I have sent,
everything I could think of I have tried,
that you are here at a time I did pretend

where I do love and miss you without end
and at times you laughed and sometimes cried.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,

At times gifts to you I did present
and at times your tears I have dried,
that you are here at a time I did pretend

but most of all I prayed for the virus to end
while from it many people have died.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,

where in this time we do on God depend
and never to you about a thing I have lied,
that you are here at a time I did pretend,

locked-down too little time with you I have spend
and your happiness and sorrow I have spied.
Flowers and poems to you I have sent,
that you are here at a time I did pretend.

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Gert Strydom

Where I Do Stand With The Stars

Dirk Opperman talks of starry holes
where the holed drum of God does burn,
of stars that eat the universe,

André Letoit speak of stars
that do in the night do dart and gad about,
like radioactive angels with headlamps
in search of God's white throne,

for the cabbalists the stars are,
especially Orion, the portal
to find God in the heavenly realm

but to me the stars are the torches,
the beacons of God into eternity
where he does knot and untie the seven-star

where He does walk through the darkness of eternity,
do find His way through time and space at the right moments and places
and He is the source from where all things do come,

the One whose glare does exceed the lustre
of all stars, heavenly-bodies,
comets and planets in bright purity,
the true light that does lead others to the truth.

[References: "Nagwag" (Night watch) by D. J. Opperman.
"Tafereel" (Scene) by André Letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

Where I Note Words Down

Like a butterfly you flutter down on the bed with me,
outside a stormy wind blows and recklessly the moon shines
and every jacaranda tree in Pretoria is flowering for you
where in mere silence you do overwhelm me.

I was surprised when this dark night
came to lie together with us in bed,
when your love turned my life around,
where time and again you told me of your love.

Where I note words down
that I want to leave eternally
it's if my world comes to a halt
when I realise that I cannot exist without you.
You are in my core and in my greatest longing,
you make me happy and you make me scared.

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Gert Strydom

Where I See The Beginning Of A Sunny Winter-Day

In the garden resounds the call of a boubou shrike
where I am longing just as he for his mate en intense for you
and the icy wind trembles in every blade of grass,

move through the Oak trees and the long bulrush
where I see the starting of a sunny winter's day.
In the garden resounds the call of a boubou shrike

where lettuce seedlings are busy sprouting,
do hold the promise of life and a harvest
and the icy wind trembles in every blade of grass

but over a virus the whole planet is in sorrow,
where daily I do entrust you and every human being to God.
In the garden resounds the call of a boubou shrike

and without you my existence feels empty and in vain
but still I cling onto your love on a winter-day
and the icy wind trembles in every blade of grass.

That God does still control everything is implicit,
that He holds every life in His omnipotent hands.
In the garden resounds the call of a boubou shrike
and the icy wind trembles in every blade of grass.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite
to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Where I Stand Full Of Wonder (Rondeau)

Where I stand full of wonder where the sun rises over the hill
with bright light the valley, the plain does fill
while I see the rushing waves rolling in and out of the sea
and there is a kind of joy in me
where I am away of the city's ill.

Here all of nature seems free
although the wind has a kind of chill
and life is peaceful as it is meant to be
where I stand full of wonder

while about me everything seems at ease and still
as if in this part of the world you can do, as you will
and my heart is silent full of tranquilly
as if in this place there is no iniquity
where I stand full of wonder.

Gert Strydom

Where I View Your Love In The Greyness (Free Verse Sonnet)

When the grey clouds open at a place
there hangs a giant bright rainbow
very magnificent up high
where clouds do cover the whole heaven,
just there on that small open spot
and that small sign catches the eye
where inside I dry myself shivering
while the thunder draws blue-white lines
where I view Your love in the greyness,
I smell the fresh fragrance of the wet ground,
hear doves joyfully coo in the rain
and I realize Your love is unlimited
as everything is grounded with your true care
and with your compassion I am swept away.

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Gert Strydom

Where I Wait On God To Lead Through The Darkness

1

The sun sets red in the silver twilight,
there are doves singing to God their songs of praise,
the wind blows softly and it's suddenly dark
and I am longing for you but cannot expect you,

2

where I wait on God to lead through the darkness,
as a virus is causing havoc and is a danger to you and me
and I pray send You angels out or please do act
but then You can just speak and it can stop,

3

or You can limit this thing if You want to.
Outside the wind suddenly becomes stormy,
there are branches at the oak tree that do swing up and down,
it feels as if the lock-down is pressing air out of my lungs.

4

Your mercy is not just used up,
there is rain that I smell coming near.
The wind all at once stops as if the weather calms down,
in the distance there are blue-white flashes that I notice,

5

the evening air is somewhat cool
and It's as if I can feel Your presence.
Where I am asking all of these things from You:
that You must take care of humanity,

6

I do not deserve it and far less
any other person that You must prevent this,
as no human being is on own accord pure
and I constantly ask these things and I hesitate,

7

where this virus comes from atheists that do not regard You,
where scientists here in South Africa laugh at Your existence
and think that they and the CDC in China can bring salvation,
where this thing is devouring humanity,

8

while You are but a myth to a great part of the human race,
where You do really exist but on purpose they choose not to regard You,
I do remember that You do say that nothing can separate us from Your love

and hereby I ask save humanity and my wife and me.

[Reference: Romans 8: 38,]

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Gert Strydom

Where In Longing Our Love Silently Goes On (English Sonnet)

Where in longing our love silently goes on
I do remember the times of laughter sweet,
where you do live while I am from you gone
and precious are the times when we meet,

that is like music after the quieting of the song,
do vibrate as if in the air the sound is living still
in the memory that still remains powerfully strong,
of times together where we live in God's goodwill,

the fragrances of you in my mind still do remain,
as if they are ever present in our tranquil home
but in the heart there is an awful terrible pain,
while in the week alone I have got to roam

and I miss you and you seem so very far
but weekends are special in the way that they are

Gert Strydom

Where In This Entire World With No Other Woman I Can You Compare (English Sonnet)

Lovely are your eyes and so they will be forever for me
and through the passing years just the same they do remain
where through passing time in my heart the same you will be
and time after time into my life you do gorgeous come again

some might call it lust where I do love you to the very extreme
but in this harsh life to me you are godsend out of high heaven
while still you make me happy and even at night make me dream
do bring tranquillity and wonder when the world treats me uneven

where day upon passing day I can gaze at the beauty of you face
while in my life you bring kindness, happiness and joy to my heart
where I do only know you in your almost serene kind of true grace
while both of us in this life like on a stage do play a different part

to me in your humanity and loveliness you are very lovely and rare
where in this entire world with no other woman I can you compare.

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Gert Strydom

Where Is The Place?

(for Daleen)

Where is the place where we did dream together
when you did still love me,
when your small hand did neatly fit into mine,
where our prayers without vain conceit
could go sincerely to the Father
when you were at my side

and yet the morning, the afternoon and evening is just as blue
full of the sun en darkness as once with you
and maybe in vain I did trust my heart and life
and time and secrets to you.

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Gert Strydom

Where Moments Stretch Out Between The Two Of Us (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Ina Rousseau)

Where mere moments do stretch out between the two of us
like mother-of-pearl is each moment of shuddering and trembling
as if we can take each other to eternity.

When your fingers do draw soft lines over my face
I want to cover your body with soft fluttering kisses
while our hearts like the doves outside do sing songs of joy,
we are for each other much more than just relaxation and healing
where every thing does turn just around you and me.

Where the wonder so pure, holy and clean
do live in the space of only a moment

I see your eyes gleam in their depth's full beauty
which shows you more than a mere human to me,
where in my arms you do call out, shudder and tremble
and outside there is darkness and the expanding night.

[Reference: "Kaleidoskoop" (Kaleidoscope) by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

Where No Sun Raises Its Rays

Autumn, spring, summer and winter comes
where no sun raises its rays,
where no wind blows or any snow falls
in the temple of the heart.

The eyes portray like shining lights
the currents of the soul
reflecting the great continent
called the mind

and noise falls through the channels
of the ears
breaking on the shores
of meaning and sense.

Tears come from the well
of emotions in the deep
where feelings sprout
in flowers or weeds
which grows or wither away.

Gert Strydom

Where Nothing Can Replace You In My Life (Couplets)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

This lock-down where we now are apart
let me take images from the heart

that brings you constantly right here to me
and this is not separation in how our lives are to be.

In my thoughts are your laughter and every glance
as measures against that which does loneliness enhance

and I know every line of your lovely face,
how you do move with an own kind of grace,

where these strange days endlessly keep coming
and I am amazed by the deadliness of a viral thing,

where nothing can replace you in my life
and I do long for you presence, my dearest wife,

where the government's plans do proceed
and we do truly each other's presence need

and where the yesterdays were full of joy,
today there is a virus that does destroy.

More infected people the government do reveal,
where I fill my time in order with life to deal.

Unanswered remains why the virus did not in China stay
where over the world it does kill people day by day

and continually I pray for you and to keep good faith,
where I entrust you to God to keep you safe

and what more can I say than that I do really miss you
that life without you is empty in how I live and in what I do.

[Reference: "Sonnet:Die vreemde dae wat ons twee apart" (Sonnet:

The strange days that we two apart" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Where Now Still All Of This Glorious Summer Stretch Out (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

Neither nuclear bomb nor weapon of war or earth, sky or sea
but human mortality along with frailty slowly absorbs our power,
against the way of life and its destiny even for love there is no plea
where it's only like a dream, or a slowly withering kind of flower.

Where now still all of this glorious summer and its days do stretch out
while nothing stands up against the unstoppable marching of our days,
where every living thing perishes and granite and titanium are not stout,
years, decades, millenniums and aeons do come and go and the earth decays

and in all of this we do as mere mortals permanency throughout eternity lack
and there is nowhere in human reach where time's cut-off switch is hid,
while nothing can turn our lives, our times, our acts and words again back
and only God can restore life from death and can the passing of time forbid,

where now I pray that eternal will be my true and sincere love by His might
that past these humble words in time unlimited to you it will shine forever bright.

[Reference:"Sonnet 65 Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless
sea" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Where Once A Hillock Was

Where once a hillock was
I see bulldozers, trucks
and cranes
busy digging
deeper into the earth.

Houses and tower blocks
rise where once
plants had grown green
against that kopje
and from infinity,
were undisturbed
until man's hand
stretched out.

No one will know
how great it looked before
buildings broke the serenity
and the rich started to dwell
in houses above the cliffs
and nothing will ever mend
the damage done.

Nature is dying,
pines away and disappears
while people
are erecting buildings almost everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Where People Believe That This World Does Decay (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where do people believe that this world does decay,
that all kinds of disasters do abound on this planet
they do loose sight of God in the universe,
while you and I in this time realise the depth of our love,
where the heat of the sun falls over our bodies
we notice the golden moon while the dogs yelp,
where these things do concern all people
in the veldt we see the thunder reporting blue-white
while the two of us run barefoot through the rain,
where we and are still in His hands
we experience stars that fall from the sky
while without cares we do live day after day
and God's love and mercy do have meaning for us,
while we do know each other in love, happiness and sorrow.

Gert Strydom

Where People Live In The Concrete Jungle

Where people live in the concrete jungle
with apartments as their property
and no one knows of grass or flowers
or any natural life source

lorries drive the whole time with ton upon ton
of rocks and sand to construction sites that amazes.
Where people live in the concrete jungle
with apartments as their property

they see nothing of nature from their balconies
while just more and more arrives in the city,
disguised from the essence of existence,
with only the charm of the rays of the sun,
where people live in the concrete jungle.

Gert Strydom

Where Sincerely I Love You

Suddenly everything in a terrible time is in confusion,
with a deadly virus the whole country is in a commotion,
where sincerely I love you from the depth of my heart

and the winter-sun is not hot but only mellow,
while the doves still coo love-songs to each other.
Suddenly everything in a terrible time is in confusion,

where I only want the best things in life for you
and of your body I know every curve and contour,
where sincerely I love you from the depth of my heart

but the sorrow of others do wash over a person in a tidal-wave,
while restrictions and regulations sweep everybody along.
Suddenly everything in a terrible time is in confusion

but my love is much more than just mere feeling
and with the missing and your isolation I am terribly moved,
where sincerely I love you from the depth of my heart

and this severe winter is much more icy than just cold,
while humanity are in a struggle against something deadly.
Suddenly everything in a terrible time is in confusion,
where sincerely I love you from the depth of my heart.

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Gert Strydom

Where Star Systems Do Disappear In The Nought (Sonnet)

Where star systems do disappear in the nought,
far away from our earth's atmosphere
where nebulae, planets and stars shine
and dark holes absorb everything near,
even past the burning jaws of hell
and where space does collapse into the abyss,
where solar systems form and get life
the omnipotent Lord God builds his fortress and His stronghold
and time, distance and space do make no difference to Him
when He comes to true salvation in the depth of distress
and His sovereign holy omnipotent righteous will
commands Armageddon and the jaws of death,
does order the spark that becomes thunder, the drops of rain
where on His judgement-seat He does judge and bless everything.

Gert Strydom

Where Stars (Rubiyat Sonnet)

Where stars are in the tree of the night
they do glow in the dark blue-white
when like a cat the moon sneaks higher up
before the red-day brings its bright light

and in all of this you are stretched against me
where with your love I am involved intensely,
while the evening wind finds its rest somewhere
while through the night you lie against me cosily

and shadows outside come to life and jump around
while a dove day and night does utter its cooing sound
an owl sinisterly does keep calling as if death is to come,
against each other nothing do our tranquillity confound

and after twilight the cobalt blue do its colour regain,
God does pour His great mercy out upon the earth again.

Gert Strydom

Where Summer Comes With Its Full Maturity (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Where the summer comes to its fruitful fullness,
where the sun do envelope each flower, bush and tree,
I am here constantly with you happy and speechless,
where in every aspect you do fulfil me as a human being
but now that the twilight do suddenly cover everything outside,
where the evening star and moon already hangs high,
it's as if God is here present between you and me,
as if we find signs in everything of His benevolence,
where the sun glows on the peach, apricot and fig trees
as if everything wants to honour God's pure presence,
where everything grows abundant in this great summer,
where I do have to desire nothing more in all of life:
you become almost holy in a summer that carries matchless fruit,
where I want to ask nothing more than this abundance.

[Reference: "Herfs" (Autumn) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Where The Baobab Tree Finger Points

Where the baobab tree finger points,
the bush veldt sun fries you to tatters,
some camel thorn trees hook and pierce,
jackals and hyenas cry and laugh at night,
the moon rises yellow, with stars appearing
all over the sky shining like jewels,
it's as God himself is walking around in the veldt.

Gert Strydom

Where The Entire World Is Abundant With Great Joy (English Sonnet)

On this bright lovely day you do seem so sadly
where the entire world is abundant with great joy,
and I will accompany you into nature gladly
while the smallest thing seems to you annoy.

In the veldt and in the wood there are many sounds
that does fall in simple tranquil loveliness upon the ear,
here everything is serene with nothing that confounds,
while tranquillity and songs of love and praise we do hear

Mark how one bird does sing of great happiness to another
and also how all of life seems right here such a simple thing
while without words just observing we do walk with each other
and hear the redbreast, the cuckoo and weaver their songs sing

where each bird has got a partner as a loved and special one
as if a struggle and hardship and worry there is none.

Gert Strydom

Where The Journey Of Life Really Goes

My blue honda motorbike
with a full tank of fuel
is broken
and is being repaired
and while I count my money
I see that I have enough,
but for the last journey
of the week
and I wonder how
I am going to be able
to take that ride?

At the bus stop a car guard
is watching cars
and a black woman
that needs five rand for a ticket
and is dressed elegantly
in a red work suit,
gets the money from him
and he doesn't even know her
or wants anything in return
and its weird seeing a near beggar
giving to the prosperous.

a Bus without any sign of destination
stops in front of me
and I wonder where
this bus is going?

I cannot stay standing
at the bus stop
and I know that I must travel
on this bus.

When I get aboard
the bus looks right
and there are other people,
that I know
that also rides on it.

I tell my destination
to the driver and pay
and he gives
a ticket to me.

When I ask to where
the bus is really going,
he wants to know
to where life's journey really goes
and my money
is placed back in my hand.

Gert Strydom

Where The Longing Must Rely On Memories (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's first when we stand face to face
that more than acts and words do come to perfection,
where constantly you leave me dumbfounded with your person
and we do really understand each interaction between us,
where the being together becomes much more than words
as constantly you do turn my days and my life around
and maybe I am romantic and with love very stupid
where I think that you are the one that do exist for me.
Bodiless there are now words between us
as bodies are only the sphere of existence
where the longing must rely on memory,
words become one-dimensional with my beating heart,
feelings come to the intellect in meaning
and constantly I do love you more.

Gert Strydom

Where The Rainbow Ends

You said that it is like
a never-ending rainbow,
stretching over the sky,
from horizon to horizon
a sure sign from God

that something great was sprouting
from the words that I did write
that will reach the hearts
and minds of people
right across the globe,

but at that moment
I only saw a dull blue sky
with the blazing sun
scorching down

and not the rains
the rising seeds
that was still to come
and I stated that
all rainbows end some time
at which you just shook
you grey head
and said my boy,
you got to have faith.

Gert Strydom

Where The Waves Roll In And Out (Refrain Stanza)

Where the waves roll in and out forever more,
while we both stand close to each other on the shore,
I see you footsteps next to the sea on the sand
while in mine I do feel your hot soft hand
and endlessly I do you love and adore
when our lips meet not a single word is spoken
where we are too scared that the moment will be broken
and I wonder what life has still got for us instore,
while we both stand close to each other on the shore.

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Gert Strydom

Where The World Hits Me Down

Where the world hits me down
I ask you to see me as your own
and make my free from all iniquity,
O God, have mercy on me.

When my whole world suddenly wavers
I still see your stars in their glittering behaviour
and I beg do not pass; let me your face see
O God, have mercy on me.

In my country there is desolation and unrest
and still I am asking you to bless,
keep me from wretchedness free
O God, have mercy on me

My lot is the conclusion of my apostasy
and daily I still see your delivery
while here I am confessing before you in transparency,
O God, have mercy on me

When in glory I stand in grace
then my eyes will be on your face
and in your presence I will have no other plea:
O God, have mercy on me.

Gert Strydom

Where These Problems I Do In Your Hands Lay (Couplets)

To me the president looks weary and trouble-torn,
as if many worries had his brave spirit outworn

and humbly I do for him and Your guidance pray,
that You will enlighten each and every day,

where no antidote do this virus supersede
and of great leadership this country is in need

but You do appoint persons to a time and a place,
can also the impact of this pestilence totally erase

and where scientists and great men are perplexed,
You know how to solve it, what to do next,

You do have all the knowledge and great wit,
to fathom anything, know how to encounter it,

and I do pray that You act in the best way,
where these problems I do in Your hands lay.

[Poet's note: In this poem I am talking as a South African although this prayer
goes
much wider than only South Africa.]

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Gert Strydom

Where They Belonged

When I was in metric
(now grade twelve)
in the agricultural science class
an English girl took a chair
next to me
who had a secret crush
without getting
any attention from me.

I just wasn't taken with her
and she was a little brash
and they lived
on the other side
of the railway tracks
and she had a reputation
of sleeping around.

When we studied
animal copulation
she acted as if
she didn't really understand
and asked me some questions
which made me blush
and it was clear
that she had other plans instead.

Ignoring her didn't help much
and heart broken she went to cry
on her sister's shoulder
who was my class teacher
and taught me English
at the time.

We did an IQ test
(the first in my years at school)
and I scored only too well
and without really knowing
my personal circumstances
the teacher told the class

that I was lazy,
but much more than that
she marked my English grades down.

I didn't know what had got into her
and in the second quarter
like a angel from heaven
a female inspector
(specializing in English)
visited the school.

She couldn't understand
why my marks had slipped so much
and we had a very nice chat
where she demanded
all my English books and tests.

She graded everything again,
my grades took a hike,
the teacher was called in
and almost did the same
and after that
my grades were where
they belonged.

Gert Strydom

Where They Had Passed

While on patrol
I found a buffalo's empty cranium
left by hyenas, jackals,
vultures and other carrion eaters
and the section camped
and made a small fire right next to it.

We heated some food from our ration packs
in a fire bucket, killed the fire,
spreading sand over the burning tablets
and slept under a starry sky
with weapons close at hand

and the next morning enemy terrorist tracks
were treaded right next to my head
where they had passed without noticing us.

Gert Strydom

Where This Deadly Thing Brings Great Change (English Sonnet)

My love, in these days I severely miss you so
where this lock-down requires great patience,
I pray you and humanity do God's love know
that He makes this time full of new resilience.

Where we are facing an invisible deadly enemy
life changes completely from how it had been,
while also nature changes in its own secrecy
where the first impact of this autumn is seen.

Where this deadly thing brings great change,
I do wonder what comes after days of waiting,
if it's something great or does it life rearrange
and what prospects are people anticipating?

I know that this binds you much closer to me
and that people after the lock-down find liberty.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Where This Moments Stretch Far Over The Borders Between Us (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Gilbert Gibson)

When silence is like a coat, cosily neatly do hang over your shoulders,
the moment between us linger when eyes do talk their own language
and we are both tired of the big leaving,
then I am caught in the wordless moment,
while you press me tightly against you in our great longing,
where only the language of expression does leave answers
and like a angel with a holy glare you face radiates
where this emotion and love come unforced,
where this moments stretch far over the borders between us,
the nearness the embrace do tell their own things to us,
while we cherish each other past the borders of a moment,
while we draw each other closer in that moment,
when love wants its greatest confirmation between us
and like this you do constantly come into my days and my life.

[Reference: " (11) daar's 'n stilte wat om jou" ((11) there's a silence that around you) by Gilbert Gibson.]

Gert Strydom

Where This World Is But A Grain Of Sand

Where this world is but a grain of sand
in the enormity of endless space
while man struggles in a eternal race
to be more to achieve, to really live,
to love and be loved,
to matter to some one and to society,
in reality we are just actors on a stage
while the rest of the universe looks on
while the struggle through aeons rages
between the forces of the Divine
and the minions of hell
while destiny does leave no man free
from taking to a side
but yet the wave of time comes crashing
onto the shore of life
and like grains of sand we are swept along
when death does take dominion
and oblivion comes to whom and what we were,
to the hearts of our living descendants
when from life we are gone.

Gert Strydom

Where Thousands Of People Die (Couplets)

Where a person have to be thankful to be living,
where this virus is still a thing that is killing,

it causes thousands of people to be ill and to die,
it's feeling like a kind of hell where to live we do try,

where people are locked-down as if in house arrest
by something that do humanity pest,

it's as if a person is standing at an abyss
but in God's omnipotent hand is all of this.

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Gert Strydom

Where To Now?

The old voortrekker is gone
to meet his Maker
and greeted his children, wife,
bible, gun, wagon,
horse and piece of ground
and trusts that God
will protect his nation and country
against all evil.

In the gun safe the Martini Henry, Mauser
and Lee Metford are resting now silent
and hasn't been seized yet
like my own firearms,
for which I did not have money
to pay the ransom
and was taken by law enforcers
of the new government
that wants every thing.

The old four colour lies in a chest
with the orange white and blue
like it's with dead things,
and will never again stream
like it belongs
for flags for which the price
was paid with blood.

I see the weather
stir up with black and grey clouds
and I wonder if the new country
really will break my people to pieces
while many thunder bolts hits around me
and some of my people
are already away and spread over the earth
and I wonder when our rainbow
will also come some day?

[Reference: Die ou Voortrekker by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Where Trees Stand In The Winter Night As Skeletons

Where trees stand in the winter night as skeletons
out of the clouds of fog the silver-white moon rises
and in the distance a dog is barking,
when other sounds come that no man can understand,

lightning-bolts flash down without end
and as a mere man
I see the omnipotence out of the hand of God

when the windows rattle as if something wants to come in
and I am astounded by the great scene
when the first drops begin to fall
and rain pours down over the dry earth.

Gert Strydom

Where We

Where we are on the stone vessel
that constantly does speed through the universe
and do turn around the sun in an orbit
that does determine time as seconds, hours, days and weeks
and months and years
where seasons do come and go

everything is caught and measured out
in a age of technology
where nothing does really function perfectly
without electricity or power
of whatever source.

Where every day just does become a mere anthill
in which we do find tasks and obligations
and tinned become a part of the greater whole.

Where the insects and butterflies and birds
do flutter away busy with their own existence,
where the rain and sun and wind and moon
continually have an own warp and woof

and in outer-space away from us
time at another place,
maybe in another dimension
has no impact
where yesterday, today and tomorrow
is everything of only here and now,
where from eternity to eternity
moments do stretch out in perfect love
and God in his omnipotence
do maintain
this small rebel-world with love
where it does orbit outside of the here and now.

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Gert Strydom

Where We Are Apart Without To This A Goodbye (Luzvimninda Sonnet)

The days that we are from each other away,
it's as if something is lacking all of the day
as if something essential did not with me stay
and now in the lockdown in a desperate way

our liberty and freedom of movement is gone,
it's as if the impact of this thing goes on and on
where I dearly miss you, my beloved one,
the grandchildren even every daughter and son,

where we are apart without to this a goodbye
and still the bright sun hangs in a cobalt blue sky,
around the house still the weavers and sparrows fly,
the passing of summer into autumn catches the eye

and I remember the holiday at the far-off sea,
where we were together and totally free.

[Poet's note: The seasons are opposite in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth
from
those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

Where We Do Winter Behold (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

Where around us sheer winter we do now behold,
like skeletons are the trees with no leaves that hang,
while piercing and penetrating is this severe cold
and away are the birds that up to autumn still sang,

while my life is in the stark dark night of such a day,
where chilly, quiet and frozen such a night is at best,
where those exposed are by nature swept from life away
to go uncalled for into their eternal unbidden time of rest

while you to me are the warm embers of a retaining fire
while right next to me in the death of youth you do lie
do come to me with a kindling enrapturing kind of desire
where who and what and where I am are nourished by

while together in our feelings and devotion we are strong
where in my arms to the end of what this life is you belong.

[Reference: "Sonnet 73 That time of year thou mayst in me behold"
by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Where We Face The Trials Both Together And Alone (English Sonnet)

Although in our love for each other we are one
yet separate as persons the two of us do remain,
where we face the trials both together and alone
we live through times of joy and sadness and pain,

yet we view each other sincerely in truth and respect
and in the darkness we become one in the time of night
where being two persons brings to us the loving effect
while we know each other in times of bliss and delight

where I do only wish to your praises with others to be
where married in sincerity you do not carry my name
while in true kindness and with words you honour me
where in this more than love for each other we do claim

and our love although true do much further than feelings go
where in my heart of your loveliness and kindness I do know.

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Gert Strydom

Where We Smell The Rain (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where we smell the rain that falls in October
it's grey outside and lightning falls blue-white,
you are astonished with the many flowers in the garden,
where you sit with a leg on the couch over mine.
The room is newly painted out blue-grey,
the leather benches are firm and do still smell of leather,
I am astonished with the Pierneef painting,
your lips are hot and soft under mine.
The television on the wall plays its own movie
of a hero and heroine finding each other again
but for us that moment do carry no meaning
and outside a strong wind blows and the window rattle
where I look upon you as the most pretty of all women
while you do kiss me intimately and hold me in an embrace.

Gert Strydom

Where We Stand At The Beginning Of A New Year

Sometimes we want to go back to a shed in Bethlehem
when we are at the beginning of a new year
and we long to a time and day
where things are different, but life goes on

and in the here and now we are caught,
sometimes full of happiness and at other times afraid
when peace and joy are almost within reach
when hope, new promises and better days almost hang on the horizon

and still He walks like long ago in Nazareth in advance,
while He beacons the way arrow straight
where sometimes we see Him fleetingly
as if He is waiting on us to catch up

but we remain afraid of the coming times
and sometimes lose our view of Him.

Gert Strydom

Where Were You, Where Was I?

Where were you, where was I
when God created, set the globe
of this world in its place in the universe,
founding it to spin, to have night and day
setting seasons, years to exist?

Where were anybody when the sun the first time
devoured the darkness, when earth and ocean,
the blue sea parted to let dry land appear

and who can declare the knowledge
of the starting of life, who has the capacity
to bring it forth?

Where were we when angelic beings
saw all of these happenings,
sang together in joy,
before mere man
started living, as a rational being?

[References: Job 38: 4-7.]

Gert Strydom

Where You

Where you unknown to me
I would have find the one or other way,
to get in touch with you
and love would have flowered between us.

Where you in another country
my road would have led
to your place
and I would have wanted
to stay forever with you.

Where you on the other side of the stars
and carried away by the last stroke
that destiny makes with the timework,
you would have stayed a princess of faraway
and I would not have found you anywhere,

but now you are here with me
and the princess of my heart
and without you
everything would loose meaning
and your mere nearness
is what makes life wonderful for me.

[Reference: => Princesse Lointaine by A.G. Visser.]

Gert Strydom

Where You And I Exist In Different Worlds (Free Verse Sonnet)

I will believe that the virus will pass,
that at a time I will see you again,
where no one deserves this lock-down.
It's night and outside a golden-yellow moon shines
where you and I exist in different worlds:
where you give food to people and believe it is to serve God.
That you can get the virus remains a great maybe
where locked-down I do constantly remain before God.
I pray that you do not get this thing doing your work,
I do again forgive you for all the things between us,
believe that God do limit this thing away from you,
that you and I will at a time exist together again
and if you get this thing while you are exposed
then all hope and everything between us may be past.

[Poet's note:My wife manages the Springs "Meals on Wheels" and do deliver food to elderly and poor people from the time of level five of the lock-down as she has been doing in normal times.(Level five of the lock-down is the highest level of lock-down.)]

Gert Strydom

Where You Awaken Each Desire (Triolet)

With you in life I am blest
where you awaken each desire,
of women to me you are the best.
With you in life I am blest,
your loyalty I do not have to request
and continually I do you admire.
With you in life I am blest
where you awaken each desire,

Gert Strydom

Where You Do Become Part Of The Cycle Of My Life (Rondel Prime)

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Mere moments comes to fullness in the new day
where you do become part of the cycle of my life
God's love is poured out on me through you as my wife
and I wonder what does in this new morning lay

and about what may come I cannot say.
Is it full of fun and joy or hardship and strife?
Mere moments comes to fullness in the new day
where you do become part of the cycle of my life

and at times together we do have fun and do play
but at other times destiny does cut like a sharp knife
yet before me lies the beauty of nature like a still-life
and I know that you will stand by me come what may.
Mere moments comes to fullness in the new day
where you do become part of the cycle of my life.

[Reference: "Rondeel" by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

Where You Do Look At The World

Where you do look at the world
from a different perspective at your home,
the distance is far too great for me to come close
and I try to put my thoughts to words,
here from my silent existence,

with your breath that softly like that of a child
do come snugly out of the blanket
and I do find faith in Him from whom all things do come.
Where you do lay with your breasts that do flower,
I will be outside like the blind wind

that blows from far and here in the chilliness long
while a sickle-moon does hang in the sky,
when the stars above my head do glisten and look at me,
as the only witnesses of my love for you
and silent I will turn into myself without any other urge.

Gert Strydom

Where You Do Stand Above All Things

Where You do stand above all things
and immovable are filled with pure light
that does go out to the end of the universe
You do let my darkness yield

with the knowledge that You do bring
that I can see Your love in everything around me,
how Your compassion does penetrate everything
does go to everybody even to Your foes,

the councils of Your enemies to You are clear as glass
where You do make decisions and are aware of every single thing,
yet You do send Your blessings to everyone
and I stand here estranged from my own will,

do beg that Your light do fall upon me,
that Your thoughts do fill my words do explode in them.

Gert Strydom

Where You Do Wait Like A Father On Your Children

(after A. G. Visser)

You hang the universe in the nought,
know about every shooting star,
unfathomable is Your insight and intellect,
Your works are secret and explicit.

Your power does unfold with omnipotence
and all things serve You with respect
but You do also know pain and anguish,
do know of that which waits in the future.

Your foots do walk on infinity
beyond the borders of space and time,
yet man's heart is a place where you do dwell
and constantly You do rescue in every circumstance.

I notice Your presence in every day,
I hear Your voice in the thunder,
I smell You when the rain falls on the ground
and Your work is also in the stars in the night.

You are present in every human that laughs,
in everyone that yearns for something more in life
as an inclination to You is build into each one of us
where You do wait like a Father on Your children

[Reference:"Tot waar ons weer die sterre sien" (To where we see the stars again)by A. G. Visser.]

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Gert Strydom

Where You Stand With The Garden Hose

Where you stand with the garden hose
a seed plume whirls
all around us on the afternoon breeze
and it waits hanging for moments,
bright water shoots through your thumb
and I wonder how many days do remain
to be so perfect when we are together?

Gert Strydom

Where Your Femaleness Comes From A Mystical Source (Free Verse Sonnet)

In you my love finds its saturation,
where your spirit pierces into my deepest soul,
where constantly I do know of your beauty
and you do take me far past normal yearning
but for my own deep secret passion,
you do remain in every way my antidote
where your femaleness comes from a mystical source,
with true love as in the Godly Scripture
where you let me be the human that I am
and I do always read love and comprehension in your eyes
but about your deep secrets I can never guess,
just sometimes they are perceptible in your razor-sharp spirit,
where I do always know and have not got to suspect:
we are both humans of flesh and blood.

Gert Strydom

Wherein Obscurely

On a road near a place called Hotazel
there were no trees,
just the flat openness of the great Karoo
and semi-acrid no stream
crossed that big open plain
and in this flat desolate piece of land
I saw a man on a bicycle pedalling on obscurely
right into the distance
engulfed by the shivering heat
looking like plates of water
and some crows with white breasts
flew past croaking
and it was just a white-hot sun
in a blue open sky.

[Reference: Karoo: "a semi-desert plateau region in southern South Africa."]

Gert Strydom

Wherever Destiny Falls

(after Hannah Szenes)

One two three and we part
a few strides taken in the dark
and the smell of making love is still strong
and our feelings remain a question mark.

One two three and tomorrow you may see me
not as a lover, or even a friend,
but might be my enemy
and in a week or two I might not still be here

and life is sometimes great, sometimes fair,
sometimes the dice rolls
when it's cast to another side,
and the end I feel is quite near

and what you mean to me, doesn't count,
does not matter at all,
what matters most is in the balance
and when the dice falls, you are lost

while the game of life is still on
and for some going strong
while I am trying to play again
somewhere else

and one two three and we part
a few strides taken in the dark
and the smell of making love is still strong
somewhat like new rain on the earth

and I am still gambling and I may be right,
I might be wrong
and we embark on where destiny falls,
rather than on what matters most.

[Reference: The last poem of Hannah Szenes:

:

"One - two - three... eight feet long
Two strides across, the rest is dark...
Life is a fleeting question mark
One - two - three... maybe another week.
Or the next month may still find me here,
But death, I feel is very near.
I could have been 23 next July
I gambled on what mattered most, the dice were cast. I lost. "]"

Gert Strydom

Wherever The Sun Does Fall With Its Rays (Refrain Stanza)

Wherever the sun does fall with its rays
while in our world people do go on in their ways,
and in the Côte d'Azur, Provence or Pretoria does tarry
there is hope that the new morning does carry
where over mountain and dale its light stays
but when in a radiant crest the moon covers it
with the importance of the sun we are hit
and as a red ball it glows on many days
while in our world people do go on in their ways.

Gert Strydom

Whether I Win Or At Time Do Down Fall (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In a world of hardship, calamity and woe
you are in my heart, my blood and my head
and your image remains wherever I do go
you come to me in dreams even in my bed

whether I win or at time do down fall
you are my constant greatest truest friend
my sweetest lovely love and my all in all
that loyally sticks to me to the very end

and whether my enemies go to any length
and of their deeds I learn things here and there
in you I do find my comfort and my strength
while constantly you do truly support and care

and while against destiny and enemies I am at rage
to you I do write humble little words on a page.

Gert Strydom

While All Things Are Not In Man's Control (Swinburne Roundel)

A virus out of control is dangerous to humans on the earth
begins in China with devastation as its goal,
while God's angels protects straight from birth.
A virus out of control.

is deadly to humans while to resistance there is dearth,
where I love you by my heart and my soul,
it seems not even life is something worth.
A virus out of control,

as it infects people with speed cause them not to gather or trod
while danger is abundant on each corner and street,
where in prayer we do call on the omnipotent Lord God
as it infects people with speed.

In the Southern Hemisphere it came in the summer heat,
while seedlings and fruit sprouted from the fruitful sod
and was to the taste satisfying and sweet,

the virus had its incubation period,
in a few months it did its attacks complete,
seemed to all the world secretive and odd,
as it infects people with speed.

To the hands with the things people normally sought
a change has come as infection grew in all the lands
while as a gift, death, the Satan brought
to the hands.

Where my darling our love still lasting stands,
you are in each memory and thought,
while everywhere death's carrier expands.

Before all of this we knew of this thing nought,
while so many flowers I planted for you on the sands
and daily their beauty and fragrance was brought
to the hands.

Your lovely eyes in green-brown splendour knew
the sun as it did rise and went dim in the skies
but now nobody knows what is up anew.

~~Y~~our lovely eyes

are dimmed by sleep and bright when you rise,
while daily in this time God do carry you through
and you believe we will see each other in paradise.

Although the sky in this winter still do remain open and blue
and everywhere the virus man's technology decries,
your character and love does remain true and sorrow bedew
~~y~~our lovely eyes.

Is our existence strange and tranquil the cobalt sky?
Where a pestilence makes the entire world its range,
why it came and now do effect humans we know not why,
~~I~~ our existence strange?

Is the entire world but a primitive sorrowful grange?
There is a glorious palace up somewhere high,
while from God Satan did all humans estrange.

Where here once that beautiful Eden did pass by.
by the choice of man to pre-history came a huge change,
where now amidst a virus we do sigh,
~~I~~ our existence strange?

As an angel without wings by name you are beautiful and fair
and I know your figure, its curves and your frame,
where by character you do for others care
~~A~~s an angel without wings by name.

Soft hearted straight from heaven you came,
do other people's worries bear,
do lift them up from a life of shame

and this kind of humanity is nowadays far too rare,
where you view all humans as exactly the same,
are of the grief and heartaches of others aware,
as an angel without wings by name.

[Poet's notes the seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.

In the introduction of a poetry volume of Algernon Charles Swinburne it says that he devised the poetic form called the roundel, which is a variation of the French Rondeau form. I know the French Rondeau form (that had also been popular with Dutch poets) and the French roundel form (called in English the Roundel Prime/). The French roundel is well known under French, Dutch and Flemish poets especially the roundels of the French duke Charles d'Orlé type of poem set high demands on the poet with refrains and limited rhyming of only a an b and run to fourteen or thirteen verse-lines and is very different from this roundel form devised by Algernon Charles Swinburne and I am not very familiar with this roundel form but have encountered it in a very short English poem by the Afrikaans poet ID Du Plessis. I have written this poem of mine on the verse-form as in the poem: "A baby's death" by Algernon Charles Swinburne on which the composer Sir Edward Elgar wrote the music for the song roundel: "The little eyes that never knew light."

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Gert Strydom

While Angels Were Singing Songs Of Praise

nobody heard God the Father cry,
when His only begotten Son was burrowed to man
and later was nailed to a cross as the scapegoat,
had been sacrificed for everyone

and I wonder about that kind of love
that full of omnipotence and knowledge
come to suffer selfless
and as a human I am missing in a world full of sin.

Gert Strydom

While Being At War

Dear Lord I see
white teeth gleaming
in smiling black faces
of mere children
carrying AK-47 sub-machine guns,
RPG rocket launchers
and landmines
and they are part of the Unita army
in neighbouring Angola

and the games they play
includes rape, killing and robbery
and while I drive by
they salute
before holding out their hands to beg
for another cigarette
and I wonder if anyone of them
has ever heard your name?

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Gert Strydom

While Bells At Twilight Toll (Parody)

(with apologies to A. E. Housman)

While bells at twilight toll
this day like usual, I am without a soul;
soon in the evening I myself will be gone
whispering for the night to come on.

I cannot blame the bright light
nor your whispering back in the night;
though even if we in this night were still
before we part I would catch a chill.

[Reference: XVII "Bells in the tower at evening toll" by A. E. Housman.]

Gert Strydom

While Candles Burn Intimately

The flames in the fireplace make tongues
and you and I dance slowly
while candles burn intimately
and make long shadows

and your eyes gleam and are large,
you do look innocent
and it feels as if the whole wide world
lies open before us

and I feel the artery
beating in your neck,
your perfume fills my nose
and there is something deep
that I read in your eyes.

Outside the branches of the avocado tree
are beating on the roof
and time is busy
getting its own wings
but inside we are dancing
as if we are free from everything.

Gert Strydom

While Clouds Did Mill (Cavatina Sequence)

While clouds did mill, ominous thundergirt
and in darkness
pile all over the distant horizon
we did caress,
with lips upon lips silently meeting;
our God did bless
us with His own lingering company
while in a storm we did each other see.

Wind did suddenly rock the little tent's roof,
our God's presence,
was everywhere, we were without a care,
to its essence
we talked about His might in that night;
our innocence
almost childly kept us from doing wrong.
both of our bonds with Him were very strong.

Gert Strydom

While Daily I Do Try A Living To Make (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

While daily I do try a living to make
I do claim your heart for my love's sake
where you are so lovely, pure and gay
and daily into my life I do you pray
although I do make many a mistake
there is so many things that I wish I said
while a great part of life do still lie ahead
I want us in all small and great things to partake
I do claim your heart for my love's sake.

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Gert Strydom

While Day After Day Does Into Our Lives Come (English Sonnet)

Where like two love-struck doves we mingled,
for our love we have got a secure beautiful nest
and away are the days where we were singled,
where in life being together might be the best,

while like the swelling sea our emotions surge,
while it's almost like paradise to us right here,
all others from the heart we do for all time purge,
while we do hold each other far more than dear

and that kind of woman I have now found in you,
where I am living as if on an all-time kind of high
and my feelings are sincere and to the heart true,
where it is if I am walking on cloud in the sky,

where to you my heart is a true sincere home,
while day after day does into our lives come.

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Gert Strydom

While Days And Months Do Come And Go (Italian Sonnet)

(after Arthur Symons)

While days and months do come and go,
the memories of you do forever remain
and you are deep in my heart and brain,
intimate and wonderful I do you know,

as if with you God did a true blessing bestow
and when I am in loneliness and I am in pain,
I do think of you and of us again and again,
while my busy days do rush to and thro,

that your lips do find a way to my heart,
with the kind of essence that in a kiss is,
where your true love I want to capture
and even when we are separate and apart,
you do bring me life and you bring me bliss
while in my thoughts you do me enrapture

[Reference: "As a perfume" by Arthur Symons.]

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Gert Strydom

While Eternity Feels Almost Within Reach (Italian Sonnet)

While eternity feels almost in reach,
second after second life does ebb away
as a deadly virus now daily is at play,
do us of nature's mercilessness teach

where face to face and each to each
dear things we do to one another say.
Locked-down with you I cannot stay.
I remember our holiday on the beach

where life seemed so simple and free
and happiness and bliss was a part of it
as living was present in all we did see
while we experienced joy bit by tiny bit
and still right now you are dear to me
where these days do into God's plan fit.

Gert Strydom

While Everything Is Turning Brown Outside

While everything is turning brown outside
and this winter is getting its grip
you are still
the most beautiful flower in my garden,

and your fragrance stays in my thoughts with me,
while I hear your voice
by playing your songs over and over again
and I wish that I could steal you,
could transplant to be here with me.

Gert Strydom

While From Dreams Of You (Persian Quatrain)

While from dreams of you and events I prognosticate
that our lives are not only ruled by mere fate,
where in this world and time we do inconsistent stay,
of the depth of my love I am telling you before it is too late.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

While He See The Two Playing There

How much I miss
Kyla and Tinkie today
that now plays at another place

and I see the big black dog
and the very small white one
with her big eyes
that run together
in immortal fields

and the small one hops up and down
in the long green grass
while she tries to keep up

and make barking noises
and it's Kyla that herds off Tinkie
like a mother looking after a small one.

At a stream
with clear transparent water
small Tinkie waits patiently
with her pink tongue
hanging out of her mouth

while Kyla swims like a otter
up and down
and barks her greetings
to a African red knobbed coot
who drifts with babies
on the water

and in the shade
of a big old willow tree
is the Creator of all things

and there's a smile
that goes from His mouth
past His eyes
while He watches

the two playing there.

Gert Strydom

While Here The Lovely Summer Is Now Ending (English Sonnet)

You do bring me a true kind of felicity
and this I know is true and sincere love,
where you do now live separate from me
and our love no one can from us remove,

while here the lovely summer is now ending,
where autumn has a milder heat upon the noon,
still the love between us is something existing
in this season and in life winter will come soon.

Hope waits upon love that remains at its prime
when the cooler shorter days are far less gay,
where in youth and in older age it has its time,
whilst it do never at any time decline or decay:

what great wonders do you still to me do,
when in company I am together with you.

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Gert Strydom

While I Am Busy Reading A Book

While I am busy reading a book,
the world does fade away
not in the context of the words
but sleep does take me away
to another place
where there is silence and rest,

I am jerked awake
when the book falls to the ground,
do notice how the light
like a sun
does burn at the reading lamp
while tiredness is taking its toll.

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Gert Strydom

While I Am Lost In Poetry (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

While I am lost in poetry's endeavour
daily I do with the writing labour
words for you burn in me like fever
where I deem to love you forever
do wish to win much more than your favour,
want to the loveliest things to you sing
pray that God will you into my life bring
where mere moments with you I do savour
daily I do with the writing labour.

Gert Strydom

While I Am Still Far Over The Hill

When life takes me
over ghastly paths with a precipice
I want to stray into the darkness

but still your heaven is stretched out blue over me,
with the sun burning intense warm white
and I look at the moon where it's high,
or low in a variety of
yellow, white and even silver colours

and when the wind rises cruelly to devour me
You are always there with arms wide open,
like a father coming to the rescue,
who is already running
while I am still far over the hill.

Gert Strydom

While I Dig In The Garden

While I dig in the garden I think about you
when I hold flowers on their stems,
sometimes I walk into your paintings,
while I am wondering how you fit into my life
and still it is as if something of you clings to me.

There's a white jersey belonging to you in my cupboard
that reminds me and like your eyes the sky is blue
and in due time the works is getting more difficult
while I dig in the garden.

I draw on my shirt's sleeve,
am wondering if you still like me,
when feelings are touching my heart,
I see the first raindrops splashing down,
how drops glitter like dew,
while I dig in the garden.

Gert Strydom

While I Do Love You

I have seen lives shattered,
and at times falling apart
as if even years are scattered,
have experienced the pain of the heart
and even when I feel tattered
in your presence a new day does start

that burns like a never ending flame
your kind of loving is a glorious art
and even if the past events mattered
I am different since out of the blue,

you unexpectedly came,
to paint my world a different kind of hue
I want to honour your name
in everything that I do
as my life will never again be the same
while I do love you
and to only you my feelings are true.

Gert Strydom

While I Get A Few Coins From My Pocket

Yesterday there were young black men
standing in underpants
at the Apies river
and they were busy
washing their clothes
in the dark brown water

In one of the remote corners
of Sunnyside
a big cardboard box stands
at a shop's entrance
on the sidewalk
and I see an old white man and woman
crawling out of it one winter morning
and they have got a half white bread
that they share with a white and black fox terrier.

At shoprite in Voortrekker street
a young black man
tries to sell fake perfume
and wants to know nothing
about removing his head
from the car's window.

I place his goods
next to my car's door
and tell my darling
to close her window
while he walks round the car
to get him out of the car.

At a pick-a-pay
there's a small white woman
that's a car guard
and always helps politely
to get the bags into the boot.

Then I realised
that if you just look around

there are countless people,
that life bites into pieces
and I wonder where
everything in this country is going?

While I get a few coins from my pocket
out of my pocket,
I feel guilty
to live like a king
and to see
others struggle around me.

Gert Strydom

While I Wish Life Would Be As It Was Then(Couplets)

This being away from you my love, weirs me thin
as you are in my life, mind and under my skin.

This Corona virus does not leave anyone without distress,
even in dreams it comes to me when I do rest.

Many weeks ago I did see you face to face,
you were happy at our own dwelling place.

I wish life would be as it was then
and you are in the fantasies of me and other men

but so much more than just this kind of thing,
to my you are wonderful and amazing

and all that love really is remains a mystery
but you are more than just perfect to me

and right here I pray for you each day,
that God will protect you while you are from me away.

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Gert Strydom

While In A Loving Embrace You Touch Me (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

While in a loving embrace you touch me
between us there is a kind of tranquillity,
while I see the beauty of you kind face,
between our mouths there is little space
in your shining eyes some longing I see,
while in a loving embrace you touch me.

While in a loving embrace you touch me
this moment is how life is supposed to be
while almost intimately we stand together
barely touching, barely caressing each other
and from all whims and worries we are free,
while in a loving embrace you touch me.

Gert Strydom

While In My Soul Echoes Every Word You Do Say (Villanelle)

Over the phone you voice sound like a song
and my heart leaps as from me you are away
while too much I miss you and for you do long,

Without you all of life and the world feels wrong
while in my soul echoes every word you do say.
Over the phone you voice sound like a song,

you are tired but you spirit is still strong
and suddenly you have bettered my day,
while too much I miss you and for you do long.

I know that together we do belong
and during that conversation suddenly I feel gay.
Over the phone you voice sound like a song

and you tell me that life does sweep you along,
where I wish that right now I could with you stay.
Over the phone you voice sound like a song,
while too much I miss you and for you do long.

Gert Strydom

While Johnny And His Section Is On Patrol

An artist paints a bushy landscape,
paints colours of a setting sun
with fleecy clouds hanging in the blue sky
while Johnny and his section is on patrol.
The canvass has a river where shots rang out,
an angry crocodile that tries to catch him,
black coots fly up and Johnny feels afraid,
when a trooper detonates a landmine,

three riflemen cover his position,
the enemy shoot with tracer bullets that draw lines,

they are caught unexpectedly by Johnny's return fire,
and flee from the very start of the fire-fight
with a wounded comrade that longs for God,
Johnny's men are brave and capable,
a soldier is shot to smithereens, lies droopy like a doll,
some distance away a hissing snake slithers,
to vomit is an unstoppable urge;
down at the marsh a long-tailed widow-bird flies.

Gert Strydom

While Locked-Down From You (Italian Sonnet)

(For Daleen)

While locked-down from you I am away
a deadly virus is going through the land
and now nothing is as we have planned
and longing away from me you do stay

and it's another cold sombre winter's day
where I do wish to take you by the hand,
wish you my sincere love to understand
and daily for protection for you I do pray,

I believe the virus will be away in a while
while thousands do over loved ones grieve,
only do remember the times that they had
and in my mind's eye I still see you smile
as happy on your daily duties you do leave
to bring some joy to a world that is very sad.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

While Looking As Pure As A White Lily (Cavatina)

some wantonness,
a private, intimate, secret blessing
does now possess
your very smile, your eyes, your small motions
and your bright dress
while familiar, innermost, essential
you entice to a blissful potential.

Gert Strydom

While Loving You (Cavatina Sequence)

While loving you I entered into
a world unknown
where the boundaries are ever changing,
where the things shown
carries hidden messages of you and me,
where we both own
a kind of beauty, finding pain and bliss,
the deepest kind of passion in each kiss.

Gert Strydom

While My Days Were Only Solitary (English Sestets)

While my days were only solitary,
my destruction came at the greatest speed
while demons, humans descended on me
with their utmost kind of malignant greed
I prayed while my life was in waste,
to come to my salvation in great haste,

while day by day was only passing by,
while everything was just working out wrong
while it felt as if you did not hear any cry
I asked my God, how long still, how long?
At your mercy desperately waiting,
waiting for anything to be happening

while I did not comprehend the designs
of your plans for my life, for my future
when I could not find any positive signs
of hope or salvation, not a feature,
against my common sense I still did trust
that overnight my life you could adjust,

even when my own efforts were in vain,
at your very feet salvation I did claim
when my emotions only turned to pain,
believing the promises you proclaim
while continually I tried and headed on,
trying to remain sincere, true and strong,

when in no human face I could find grace,
or find a person or place where I belong,
when I could not wander from place to place,
when even friends were doing me much wrong,
God, I was down on my knees before you,
still insisting that you had to be true.

Gert Strydom

While Nature In The Spring Is Flowering (Cavatina)

While nature in the spring is flowering
something is there,
is visiting the broken earthly sphere
and everywhere
there are signs of a divine presence
coming with care
and in the sheer purest loveliness,
we see something that God's love does possess.

Gert Strydom

While Night Animals Were Frolicking Around Outside

While night animals were frolicking around outside
you came to lie against me,
with stars shining brightly in the dark sky

and you wanted me to recite some poems.
Outside the wind rustled the potato trees,
you came to lie against me

while the golden moon for a time was wavering
and everything was pitch black around me.
Outside the wind rustled the potato trees,

before sleep eventually led me away
and jasmine, lavender and gardenia was on the wind
and everything was pitch black around me.

but in no dreams I could find you,
you waited wide-awake for first light
and jasmine, lavender and gardenia was on the wind

and the stars shined like jewels in the night.
While night animals were frolicking around outside,
you waited wide-awake for first light
with stars shining brightly in the dark sky.

Gert Strydom

While On Military Patrol And Crossing A River

While on military patrol and crossing
a river where some weeping willows
were growing on the bank
I remember days long gone
when the black boys threw
clay at me
from bending willow canes,
or shot small rocks with catapults
but now they were armed
with AK-47 submachine guns
and RPG-7 rocket launchers
and the old South Africa
and my boyhood was lost
and my R-1 rifle that could shoot
right through trees and their guns
claimed a terrible cost called death
and still somehow
the blood on the earth
was an alien type of sacrifice
without me really knowing
what all the battles fought
and all the bloodshed bought?

Gert Strydom

While On Weekend Pass

In 1988 when I was called up
for a military camp, to go to war
while doing duty in the operational area
I got a lift with the Flossie (the mail plane) ,
to Waterkloof air force base
for a quick weekend pass,

and brought my kit
and sub-machinegun along
visited my fiancée,
got the key of her apartment
from the caretaker who was very patriotic
and waited in the apartment
as a surprise to her
when she got home from work

and took a quick shower
just after arriving, to be fresh and neat
and when I closed the tap
I heard somebody walking
around in the flat,
but immediately realized
that it wasn't her
and thought that a intruder,
a thief or someone like that
had entered and that I would be able to
catch that person red handed

and only wrapped in a towel
around my hips, sneaked out to the bedroom
grabbed the R5 sub-machinegun
and rushed into the lounge
where I pointed the gun
threatening on the new maid.

Sufficing to say that on her very first day
she saw me armed with the military rifle,
gave one big yell,
ran out of the door screaming blue murder

and never was seen again.

Gert Strydom

While Our Do Beat (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

While our two hearts do beat you are out of reach
where we do love each other each to each
and I yearn for you on every lonely day
for your love and company do pray
remember a day long ago on the beach
where a life of dreams destiny did compel
and as if under your spell I do want to love you well
and I learned whatever lessons God might teach
where we do love each other each to each.

Gert Strydom

While Our Two Hearts Do Beat (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

While our two hearts do beat you are out of reach
where we do love each other each to each
and I yearn for you on every lonely day
for your love and company do pray
remember a day long ago on the beach
where a life of dreams destiny did compel
and as if under your spell I do want to love you well
and I learned whatever lessons God might teach
where we do love each other each to each.

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Gert Strydom

While Our Two Hearts Do Beat (Refrain Stanza)(2)

(for Annelize)

While our two hearts do beat you are out of reach
where we do love each other each to each
and I yearn for you on every lonely day
for your love and company do pray
remember a day long ago on the beach
where a life of dreams destiny did compel
and as if under your spell I do want to love you well
and I learned whatever lessons God might teach
where we do love each other each to each.

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Gert Strydom

While Our Two Hearts Do Beat (Refrain Stanza)2

(for Annelize)

While our two hearts do beat you are out of reach
where we do love each other each to each
and I yearn for you on every lonely day
for your love and company do pray
remember a day long ago on the beach
where a life of dreams destiny did compel
and as if under your spell I do want to love you well
and I learned whatever lessons God might teach
where we do love each other each to each.

Gert Strydom

While Picking A Rose

While picking a rose
you are for moments astonished
in wonder over the colour,
the beauty and the soft fragrance
but a small thorn catches you,
leaves a small dot of blood at your wrist
and you cut off some more roses
that you do arrange
and push into a vase in the front room
and while you are caught thought-struck
you look lovely, you do look wonderful.

Gert Strydom

While Shadows Creep Lifeless Everywhere (Cavatina)

(after Edward Thomas)

Invisible animals in the darkness
do outside go
as they sneak around without sound their eyes
do like fire glow
while shadows creep lifeless everywhere
as the wind blows
fear leaps like a big panther, far too little
is the world of sight, as I feel quite brittle.

Gert Strydom

While Spring Is Turning Into Summer

Maybe for far too long
I have been flabbergasted
by your sweet innocence,
by the realization
that you truly loved me once.

Maybe for far too long
I have been missing your kisses,
your tender embraces
while hoping and longing
to have you back.

The untamed growing of the flowers,
the roses, carnations, irises,
jasmine and lavender
of your fragrant garden
have been bewitching me.

Maybe it is time
for you to really love me,
for us to make a new garden together,
to plant memories
while spring is turning into summer?

Gert Strydom

While Stars Sparkle With The Coming Of Night

While stars sparkle with the coming of night,
she remembers him saying her name,
and a desire burns into her centre core,
desire for his kisses, his gentle touch.

Maybe her marriage lacked something,
while sex to both of them had become
a kind of routine where boredom
made her urge for something else

and yet her husband stayed true
while his kindness and generosity
was going to new depths,
while guilt and sometimes shame

were always present in her heart,
but a certain kind of clarity
brings the other lover back,
brings back moments

of the ecstasy of the flesh
where she again felt single
in a strange kind of way,
as if her body,
her love,

and her reason for existing
could be his and nothing more.

Gert Strydom

While That Night Was Darker Than Anything (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Edwin Arlington Robinson)

Where shadows were creeping over the wall
in twilight skies
there I waited at her favourite spot
dusk caught my eyes
while in the garden I did remember
a paradise,
intensely I wished her to come,
I really wished for her to be home

but who can break that devastating spell
of utter death
from the place of eternal lifeless rest,
had she bequeath
a lingering presence I wondered;
I felt her breath,
but it only could have been the breeze stirring
while that night was darker than anything.

I was however still yearning for her,
for a sweet kiss,
as without her my life felt really lost,
her I did miss,
did not know which way to go from right here;
in how life is
love still was fresh and was still lingering
as if greater than any other thing.

[Reference: "Luke Havergal" by Edwin Arlington Robinson.]

Gert Strydom

While The Cold Winds Do Shake The Windows

While the cold wind does shake the windows
the leaves of the trees do vanish
and it's the last part of summer
while I stand shivering in the bedroom,

and you look
out of the bed's cosiness at me,
give a long yawn
and want to drag me back to your heaven

but duties do call inescapable
and within moments I have got to go to work.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

While The Day Is Cheery, Sunlit And Bright (Cavatina)

Some jasmine, lavender, sage, thyme, violet
and the red rose,
daily exhale perfume, are scented
in their purpose
while poignant the butterfly, dragon-fly,
and small bee goes,
flying far beyond our scope of sight,
while the day is cheery, sunlit and bright.

Gert Strydom

While The Days Do Run On

While the days do run on
at times there is a kind of hesitation,
a familiarity that you have been here
and outside it's raining
and the nights are dark and silent
when dreams come as they will.

Together with you
I want to discover the whole world,
constantly I want to learn to know you better,
want to go for moments deeper into moments,
I want to hold you tenderly
until the night perishes in the morning,
during the bright day I want to be with you
and I want to read all of the unsaid things in your eyes.

Gert Strydom

While The Eland Gives Its Last Convulsions

the male lion rushes on to it
and growling chases the females away,
as it grabs the carcass and drags it along

and the females and pups lie docile
when he feeds on the carcass.
When the eland gives its last convulsions
the male lion rushes on to it

and there are hunting dogs barking with hunger
drawing some snarls and roars from the females,
while some hyenas make cunning plans,
and without being bothered the male lion eats curtly.

Gert Strydom

While The Gale Swept In

(After Christina Rossetti)

While the gale swept in
he confronted her on the beach
and she climbed on rocks
just out of his reach.

He knelt on one leg
with the wind howling
with his voice
and begged for her hand

with the white beach sand
pelting her face
like sandpaper
and she denied him
shaking her head

telling him to find
someone else instead
as she had no feelings for him,
had already
other plans set in place.

His grandmother,
a sorceress,
blacker than the night
from somewhere in Africa
past the Nile
did cast her spells
from behind a flickering candle-light.

The sky went dark,
the tormented sea,
the howling wind
the raging waves
swept them away
like specs of sand

and to this day
no one know
what happened there
and to were they went.

[Reference: "Jessie Cameron" by Christina Rossetti.]

Gert Strydom

While The Mist Swept In (Cavatina)

On that morning dull white the mist swept in,
the small boat-house
in dark colours protruded at the lake,
his loving spouse
embraced, kissed him drawing him close,
startled red grouse
shot up from the reeds in great amok,
a boat on the lake did up and down rock

Gert Strydom

While The Night Takes Of Her Nightdress

While the night takes of her nightdress,
spreads her stars out blue-white and naked
and prepares herself for the caress
of the coming sun

I see the wind pulling
on your blonde curls of hair,
catch your fragrance
like lavender on the evening wind

and your lips
are pomegranate-red in the moonlight
that spreads her golden cloak
and you are prettier than just beautiful

and a mere moment does linger
when you walk right into my arms.

Gert Strydom

While The Storm Outside Is Quieting Down

Next to me you lie peaceful and quietly
while we are finding deeper meaning
and no emotion is spilled into words.
Next to me you lie peaceful and quietly
and I see your arm hairs rising
from pleasure like a tree flowering in spring
and next to me you lie peaceful and quietly
while we are finding deeper meaning.

Gert Strydom

While The Storm Outside Is Quieting Down [2]

While the storm outside is quieting down
the last lightning bolts falls slamming
sounding like canon shots,
you are busy peeling an orange
and from fright you hand stops still
while we listen to the voice of the God.

While the storm outside is quieting down
the last lightning bolts falls slamming,
I polish the my pair of glasses,
you are again peeling in thin orange strips
that folds around your hand when you remember something
as if something has walked over your grave you are shuddering
while the storm outside is quieting down.

Gert Strydom

While The Summer Rain Falls Angrily

While the summer rain falls angrily
and lighting bolts hits reaching everywhere,
we are running to the washing line
to remove clothes.

The dogs run along splashing
en everywhere in the house
mud spots are treaded in
and it's nice to be dry and cosy
in the warmth of the house.

Gert Strydom

While The Summer Sun Burns Fiercely Over Us (In Answer To Koos A. Kombuis)

While the summer sun burns fiercely over us,
we are already living in the Promised Land,
we are on no meandering road
that runs into the desert
as long as our eyes are focused
on the Lord
and we constantly trust Him.

We are in no desert
although foreigners crowd at our gates
and by criminal misdeeds
are transforming our Eden
into the portals of hell

and the God that we follow
has previously rescued our fathers
and He hears the prayers of everyone,
has got the omnipotence to act
against the mammon
that draws up in hordes
in the new morning.

Every day it's His pure light
that still constantly falls on us,
even when there is darkness
that now is at the order of things

and as long as we are living,
the hope remains that the almighty God
will bring His salvation like before
and we find our hope and trust in Him
and He draws his laager, His crowd of angels
around the house of each one
who trusts in Him and are awaiting His salvation
and let there burn flaming torches
in the churches of the night,
there is a new morning

on which we are waiting praying.

[Reference: Die kerke van die nag (The churches of the night) by Koos A. Kombuis.]

Gert Strydom

While The Year Does Skeleton

While the year does skeleton,
hangs in this winter
there are sparrows, grey turacos
and doves catching my eyes

and from somewhere
a squadron of weavers suddenly do appear
that mob around
the seed that I had spread upon the lawn
like a hungry crowd out of the sky

and they sing exuberant
while they eat the treasure of food
and I know
that God does also just like this
stretch out His hand
with wonderful things that are in store for me.

Gert Strydom

While The Year Hangs Skeleton

While the year hangs skeleton
in this winter
there are sparrows, starlings
and doves catching my eyes

and from somewhere
a squadron of weavers suddenly does arrive
that descends on the seed
that I have spread
like a hungry crowd out of the sky

that does sing jubilant
while they eat the seed
and I know
that the Lord does also
stretch out His hand
with wonderful things for me.

Gert Strydom

While To Be Our Own Gods We Do Pretend (Roundelay)

To evil and gold we sell our livelihood
do not even honour our bonds of blood
and innocents to destruction we do send;
while to be our own gods we do pretend.

We talk of peace and then create greater gloom,
to steal resources we send others to their doom,
even if everything civilized we have to bend;
while to be our own gods we do pretend.

Hard pressed by the little lives of men,
that exploits and then goes to wars again
this earth lies shattered almost at an end;
while to be our own gods we do pretend.

Gert Strydom

While Watching Nine Eleven On The Television (Rhyming Sestina)

In horror I saw the scenes of nine eleven on the television.
"Why are those towering buildings burning, " asked the boy.
"Hijacked aeroplanes hit those buildings in a collision."
The puppy did with the small rolling kitten toy.
To me this was to Arabic involvement like an admission
and America would any such terrorism to the core destroy.

The puppy growled at the kitten as if he was he going to destroy
but ignoring the dog the kitten now sitting erect watched the television,
untouched and unnoticed lay the puppy's plastic chewing toy
and in stupid playfulness the puppy ran into the kitten in a collision,
the annoyed mewling kitten purred at the boy who rescued it.
Sorry yelped the puppy in short howling noises as an admission.

"I will slap you like I did before, " threatened the boy in a admission,
while angrily hissing the cat told the puppy that it would it destroy
and I saw scenes of firemen rushing to the rescue on the television.
Stroking the kitten, it had become the boy's next toy.
"Cars and trains collide but not aeroplanes, that was no collision."
"Two aircraft flew into those buildings, " I answered the boy.

"Imagine being on one of those hijacked planes, " said the frightened
boy.
"From no Arabic state to this there would be a admission,
whoever did this is mad as to ash America is going them to destroy, "
the boy said and in shock saw firemen dying on the television.
The wriggling kitten did not see itself as the boy's playing toy,
jumped in attack onto the dog more than in a collision,

The puppy expected this attacking kind of collision,
avoided it and jumped on the lap of the boy
and the cat had enough and jumped on top of the television,
the news flashed scenes of a plane trying the pentagon to destroy,
for not being ready from the FBI and CIA thee was no admission
while in havoc terrorists did with the lives of innocent people toy.

Teasing it the boy did with the puppy toy,

scenes of a train and car collision
did not get the attention of the boy.
"I am going to make you fierce, " said the boy in an admission.
Something did another building near to the two towers destroy.
Scenes of people fleeing for their lives were on the television.

On top of the television the kitten did with the bunny-ears aerial toy,
the growling puppy amused the boy. This event was deliberate and no collision:
"we were not prepared, " said in admission as spokesman:
"that anyone would destroy."

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Gert Strydom

While We Both Stood Up On A Hillock

the big dam stretched out shining below us
with your eyes watching the daybreak,
together we watched the beauty without saying a word,
I wanted to woo you right there
but that loveliness caught us both
while red-knobbed coots flew screeching past.
There is something special to our being together,
something unmentioned that binds us to each other
while I notice great joy in your gaze,
something that a person can only find in nature
and sometimes we do not notice the beauty of it
but nothing can bring a greater kind of peacefulness
than here where you jump right into my heart.

Gert Strydom

While You Are Much More Than Just Dear To Me (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

Where to and about you are written in my poetry
people do about our love and our feelings know
while you are much more than just dear to me,
where I do you as a lovely person in words show.

Where you do dwell in you own kind of excellence,
to me you are truthful, beautiful and very kind,
to other women in my mind you do bring a difference
but to you not all of my verses are in subject confined

as together we do live moment by lovely moment
beautiful, true, kind and sincere you are stated in words
and as such a person in my life you are always present,
where in how I experience life and feelings this accords:

and you and these themes will never from my poetry be gone,
where with you present vividly in my life I do not live alone.

[Reference: "Sonnet 105" Let not my love be called idolatry" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

While You Are With Me

When Adam and Eve lived in Eden
the sea of faith stretched out into the blue
meeting the sky's canopy
and its waves pulsed anciently
gathering water from the stream of life
and love, grace even the power of man
seemed at that time as to be unlimited
as if life could stretch on into eternity

Tonight the wind is blowing through the window
moving the curtains in a tender breeze
and in the distance I can hear the ebb and flow
in which the waves continually go
and the moon is casting light
that stretches out over the endless ocean

Your breath touches my breast and face softly
and I read true happiness in the smallest things
see your breasts rising and subsiding
while the sea is continually flinging
grains of sand crushing on the distant beach
and though sometimes it feels as if out of reach
happy moments are lingering
while you are with me

[Reference: "Dover beach" by Matthew Arnold.]

Gert Strydom

While You Do My Mind And Spirit Fill (Sicilian Sonnet)

People say that only a fool rushes in
while you do my mind and spirit fill
do know me completely in what I will.
When I loose by destiny with you I win.

I believe our love was destined to begin
and you brighten my days when I am ill,
do warm me up in winter's coldest chill,
our intimate relationship feels like sin.

You drive me mad and madly do love me,
each sweet smile brings joy to my heart
and at times life brings its own tranquillity,
of my life you have become the dearest part.
Where we do not know how each day is to be
life comes to a standstill when we are apart.

Gert Strydom

While You Draw Me Deeper Into Your Arms (Stanza)

(in answer to Marlise Joubert)

The moments that pass linger and are not just fleeting
where that eternity do not only last a minute or two.
It's as if for a honeymoon each other we are greeting
while much deeper into your arms I am drawn by you.
We do not play games with affairs that only bring pain
but we are to each other intimate, sincere and profound,
and true and committed to each other we do remain
where each time it's as if we are on unsteady ground,
are dumbstruck as hours past in a intimate meeting

[Reference: "intermezzo" by Marlise Joubert.]

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Gert Strydom

While Your Feelings For Me Are True

and God night after nights pours out the rain
the flowers and grass jump
in the hours of darkness
and our lives are intertwined
when we do become like one person
and our garden becomes a small paradise
when new flowers even weeds
rise higher and higher day by day.

Gert Strydom

While Your Tears And Laughter In Moments I Do See (Octave)

Love is like the air that we breathe in invisible
but always around us it does maintain life,
where the effects of it is visible
in words and acts and in all that we do strive
and distance is something that does rob you from me,
where longing is something straight from hell,
while your tears and laughter in moments I do see
that does about the depth of your feelings tell.

Gert Strydom

Whirlwind

There's a question
that never gets
An answer for me
and all the time
it roams in my thoughts:

from where does love come
and where is the place
where it goes?

It's as if every time
I am at the same place
and somehow
have to stay behind alone.

Around and around
and I am lost
at places
where my love was once

and nothing keeps love with me
and life
takes its own way
even in my humility

and who can ever
get the answer
without being cynical.

Even when I see
magic in the eyes
of someone new
maybe there is later

no answers to be found
and my life
is being devoured
by the whirlwind.

[Reference: Wie is die swerwer by Gert Strydom]

Gert Strydom

White Ambulances

Moaning they drive past
with flashing red lights
to stop silently at places
while their occupants jump out in white coats

do kneel at patients in a circle,
do touch them with their rubber gloves,
do carry them away on stretchers
that does neatly fit into the back of the ambulances

and the doors with the red crosses slam shut
before they drive away,
at times do cut in, in front of cars in the traffic
and the curious people that watch chatting

can go on with their daily lives
and can forget of the accident, of the man with the broken leg.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

White Mine Worker's Song (In Answer To Don Mattera)

At their jobs beneath spinning wheels
next to yellow mine dumps
and the small train track
after non-payment of many months salaries
people's lives cannot now turn back
while the mine owners are black

as a man takes the last sight
of the stars gleaming above him
before he hangs himself
on the tree in his garden
only death welcomes him
as he has lost any way
of making a living...

[References: "Mine worker's song" by Don Mattera. "Num spokesman Lesiba Seshoka said in a statement on Thursday that the union was outraged at hearing Aurora's commercial director Thulani Nogbane telling the committee that all Num-affiliated members at Grootvlei and more than 80% at Aurora's Orkney mine had been paid...Aurora director Zondwa Mandela told the committee that illegal miners, acid mine drainage and the termination of a water pumping subsidy by the Department of Mineral Resources as well as involvement by the trade unions Num and Solidarity, were to blame for the mine's cash flow problems..."Num is pleased that a successful application by the department to obtain another compliance order has been handed down, " said Seshoka, adding that this should force Aurora to pay outstanding salaries. Solidarity's Helping Hand project visited the NG Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) Strubenvale, Thursday providing struggling workers with much-needed food hampers, as well as feedback on the portfolio committee meeting. Aurora management has declined to speak to the press." The Springs Advertiser Wednesday, 20 April 2011.

"The need for aid to workers of Aurora Gold East Rand is stronger than ever, following the recent suicide of Marius Ferreira. Fifty-two-year-old Ferreira, a respected fitter in the mine for many years, gave in to the pressures of ongoing non-payment of salaries over the past 18 months. Taking his own life by drinking ant poison, he passed away at Far East Rand Hospital on March 29,

along with the last inkling of dignity and pride he once possessed. A loving father and husband, Ferreira's death devastated those who knew him – most of all his wife, Susan. A resident at a retirement village in Krugersrus, Susan's struggle to come to terms with her husband's death has only being heightened by the ongoing struggles that she is now forced to face alone. "They went from a comfortable living – Marius earning on average R16000 a month depending on overtime – to one of pure struggle, " explains a close family member, who prefers to remain anonymous. "They were forced to sell everything. They were forced to move to the retirement village as they could no longer afford the house they were in. They lost their cars and were eventually at the point where they even had to sell their bed linen and cutlery just to put food on the table, " she adds. Ferreira's death appears to have sparked a string of potential suicides, with no end to their seemingly never-ending struggle in sight. Johan Cronje and his wife Chané*, together with their three children; aged 11,10 and six; are on the same dark road as Ferreira – Johan having attempted to take his own life no less than three times on Thursday evening. "I was busy in the kitchen when I went looking for Johan. I found a rope tied on a noose already set up outside, " explains Chané. Calming her husband down, Chané kept a weary eye on him through the night – not daring to sleep for fear of waking up to find his lifeless body. He attempted to hang himself twice more that night. "We were comfortable once. Never would we have expected to find ourselves in such a position, " says 32-year-old Chané, tears threatening to break. A qualified winding engine driver,36-year-old Johan's R18000 salary allowed Chané to fulfil her role as a full-time housewife at their Groot Vlei Village home, caring for their two sons and daughter. Losing their vehicles, furniture, dignity and hope as salary problems persisted. Johan's failed attempts to find alternative work is considered the main reason for his suicide attempts...The couple is R48000 in arrears on their home, recently receiving a eviction notice. Chané says that the last payment received from Aurora was at the end of January – a meagre R1800,10% of one months salary." The Springs Advertiser Wednesday,11 May 2011.]

Gert Strydom

White-Sight

Your words do tear me to pieces
and I wonder how such things come from your mouth?
I have disguised my bitter pain from you
and too many times I had to swallow away my own humanity.
Everything that I can I have pressed into our love
and at times my own will have been almost mute,
while I hoped for love to flower again
but by force you have twisted my life around
and now I know that nothing can melt the ice in your glacier-heart
not even my blood, the sun or whatever my love does
and it's as if you are a part of an ice-age
but maybe you are tuned to your own ways and things,
do prefer this cold season above spring and summer
and at times six months of darkness.

Gert Strydom

Who And What I Am No One Really Knows

Who and what I am no one really knows
and the things in my mind
at times like a tornado blows
for a place of escape to find

into a world of bewildered noise
where my esteem and memories are lost
in a place without comfort or joys
where in shattered pieces my words are tossed

where even a whole religion spreads gossip and lies
while I try to walk with the creator God
they try to destroy my integrity, my humanity dies,
and friendless on uncharted ways I have to trod

while my own loved ones know me not,
do not even comprehend the thoughts that I have got.

[Reference: "I am – yet what I am none cares or knows" by John Clare.]

Gert Strydom

Who Is It?

Who walks every day
into my heart
and so easily scratches around in my deepest soul,
it's my darling who laughs heart shattering beautiful.

Who watches the birds
from the porch with me
it's the one with whom I build my dreams
and get passionate kisses from.

Who catches my eye every day,
it's the most beautiful woman,
the one that I want to marry,
who's hair hangs in auburn strings.

I want her forever with me
and to tell her of my undying love.

Gert Strydom

Who Knows Fireworks?

Who knows the fireworks
when volleys of rockets at night
in bows do find their targets

and when flames appear
when Ratel armoured cars
and Olifant main battle tanks
fire their cannons
in acts of war?

At night when I do dream
those images remain with me.

Gert Strydom

Who Knows The Reasons Why

Who knows the reasons why,
life passes some people by.

Some people have a life set,
from the cradle to the grave.

Others fight and learn and try,
and at times trick fate.

At times even if you play it as right as you can,
destiny diminishes every thing.

Maybe the secret is in:
to have learned, loved and been a living thing.

Gert Strydom

Who Really Rules The World

I

At times I wonder
who really rules the world
and it might sound quite silly,
and you may think that every country
is sovereign and ruled by its own,
but at times
I know that land of the free
thinks that she does.

She sees other countries
as her colonies,
where her produce are sold
at prices that she sets
and where her companies
gather resources in.

Her CIA gets others
to help fight her wars
and in Angola, Afghanistan and Iraq
non-American soldiers are dead.

II

Some people think
that secret societies like the ulluminate
and free masons
pulls the economic strings
that sets the way
that the world turns.

They see conspiracies everywhere
and maybe some organizations
do look out for their own
and in a way the really rich
do not pity the poor
and are set in the getting of more.

III

The state of society
and our world portrays
the fact
that Lucifer and his host are sure
that they are in control
and that everything
is on the track that they set.

Pestilence, poverty, famine, wars
and disasters are spreading everywhere
and no human regards another
as his or her brother
and everything is set
in the here and now.

IV

When I look up in the blue sky,
or see the starry lights
in the dark night,
the beauty of each flower,
animal, plant and tree
tells me
that only the creator God
rules supreme.

Every day my world stays
in His mighty hand
and He is present
everywhere that I go
and I know
that this earth belongs
to only Him.

Gert Strydom

Who Touched Me?(Refrain Stanza)

Everyone knew that I was a broken human being
when the Lord surprised me, knew how I was feeling,
I wondered about constant pain and destiny
I heard about a Man that from illness could set a person free
and for years I did fit into the role of hurting,
I knew that I had only to touch his cloak
to eternally in faith healing to invoke
and painless full of power was the healing,
when the Lord surprised me, knew how I was feeling.

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Gert Strydom

Who Will Ever Know?

What calamity brought
evil Lucifer and his wicked host
through galaxies without number,
with countless stars and planets
to this earth, to where we are?

Was it just mere chance
to stumble on the place where man lived,
or didn't they have any other place to go
to escape Michael and his holy host?

Or was it part of destiny, or eternal law,
in the ordinance of God without flaw
to sacrifice His own to save man
or was chance, will or law or none
responsible for this? Who will ever know...

Gert Strydom

Who Would Be Able To Think?

I. Who would be able to think?

Who would be able to think
that your eyes as pretty
as stars shining in the heaven?
Who would be able to think
how restless my heart is beating,
that you are more beautiful than I had known before?
Who would be able to think
that your eyes are so pretty?

II. Who would be able to think?

Who would be able to think
that your eyes are prettier
than the sun hidden by banks of fog,
than the stars shining in heaven,
that the tears glittering on your cheeks
comes with a deep meaning?

Who would be able to think
that your eyes are prettier
than the glowing champagne which I am pouring
that the look in them would bring me to a confession
about feelings which hide in my heart like a lizard
while we touch glasses
and who would be able to think this?

III. Who would be able to think?

Who would be able to think
that your eyes are prettier than stars,
that you bring new meaning, to stars hanging in the sky

that your tears glowing against your cheeks
comes with a deep meaning?
Who would be able to think

while we touch glasses
that you are lovelier than I could comprehend before,
that you bring new meaning, to stars hanging in the sky

and when I pour sparkling champagne
the look in your eyes, could bring me to a confession?
Who would be able to think

how restless my heart is beating,
about feelings which hide in my heart like a lizard
that you bring new meaning, to stars hanging in the sky,

how deep I drown in the depths of your eyes
and that for a life long I have missed you?
Who would be able to think
that you bring new meaning, to stars hanging in the sky?

Gert Strydom

Who Would Have Thought?

Who would have thought that a time would come
where daylilies flower right through the winter
and that I would find my wife and darling
in my days of old age?

Gert Strydom

Why Do Events In The Country Change To Cryptic Darkness

Why do events in the country change
to cryptic darkness and savagery
that unfolds around other people
and do fall on people without distinction?

While I do wait on Your bright light
that has to come as salvation,
I am astounded by the decay
that day after day

are apparent everywhere in murders,
marauding expeditions, rape and the slaughter
of people that do not deserve it
and still I am waiting

on the acts of the omnipotent Lord God that I do serve
and I wonder why am I now becoming aware of this evil?

Gert Strydom

Why I Remember The Anglo-Boer War (John Dee Sonnet)

They were tough men who believed in God
who used the holy word and the rod,
ancestors from Dutch and French Huguenot stock,
farmed with vineyards and livestock,
and our language and customs, to some odd
came from centuries that were harsh and hot,
where people herded sheep into a flock
from frontier life, where small children could cock

a rifle and could the hinterland unlock,
could fire at moving targets while at speed
but the British came to cause some amok,
destroyed women, children saw the need
to plunder, pillage, to burn, to kill, to shock
to make Christians, another nation bleed.

[Note by poet: This poem is written in remembrance of the twenty thousand (some figures are as high as thirty five thousand) innocent white Afrikaner women and children that died in British concentration camps, after their farms were scorched by the British in the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa, which includes a great grandmother of mine. For a clear picture of these atrocities read my epic poem "Through the eyes of a field coronet" which is based on the eyewitness account of field coronet JJ Potgieter.]

Gert Strydom

Why I Want To Be A Real Poet

I want to be seen as a real poet
so that my poems,
will not be censured or banned
or disappear from poetry websites

when they do expose events and people
for what the truth really is
I do not specialise in hate speech
but do cling to the truth and to reality

especially the poems about the Anglo Boer war,
about Christian church leaders who state that Jesus Christ is a myth,
about the South African border war,
about the oppression in neighbouring Zimbabwe,
about the Jesus seminar people,
or about the tragedy of being oppressed
by the current South African ANC-government.

I do not want to be told by British poets
that it's okay to kill twenty thousand
women and children in concentration camps,
that in the blitz in London many more died
because they do not like a poem of mine,

if anyone do not like
the honest truth that I write
they can write a poem
as a answer to mine
instead of having it banned.

I want that people to react to my poems
as works of art,
rather than seeing me
as the party in each poem
and although their friendship
are sincere and is highly valued,

to value the written word above me
and where my poems answer

the poems of other poets
to read them as they are written
and to read those poems of others too

as I am free to write in whatever
style, technique and way that I choose
and I have written poems in every poetic form
that I do know to exist throughout the world.

I want the many African ladies
from Tanzania, Gambia, Botswana
and Sierra Leone or wherever they are,
not to comment at my poems
with their contact details

as a match for me,
or to send me emails
about how randy
some of my sensual poems are making them,
this is poetry, not a dating site.

I want my friends in Cuba,
not call to call me
an agent of the CIA
or an apartheid government stooge,
over a long forgotten war

that I was forced to participate in,
that is still haunting me,
where every enemy Cuban tank not shot out
was found still in prime condition
with occupants fleeing into the veldt
and I was forced to kill to survive,

I have never worked for
the American government
and I am a South African citizen,
I am an accountant and a poet
and this is poetry not another war.

I do not want to be seen as too deep,
too dark or profound, but to be understood

by even primary school children
if the subject matter is suitable
for them to read or hear.

I want to change the current country,
to change the world to a better place
for everyone

where people of my nation
are free to find a job
and opportunities are given on merit,
on qualifications and experience
not according to some oppressing law,
and I want the robbery and the killing to stop,

I want governments to think twice
before making innocent boys
deadly killing machines

and sending them to destroy,
to be wounded to be killed
to come back bomb happy,
more of a soldier than a man.

It's clear that some people see me
as raging, mad, seriously afflicted
over sensitive, a hypocrite,
a religious fanatic and being in love

and isn't a real poet
all of these things and much more?

But unfortunately the things
that I am writing about
is a lot of nonsense
and I really do not have a clue
in poetic styles, in rhyme schemes
in rhythm,
in free verse
and being a real poet
is totally irrelevant to me.

Why This World Exists (In Answer To Louis Esterhuizen)

From the moment that I could think
I was wondering why this world does exist,
man is born in a place
where everything goes to destruction and decay?

What kind of God creates a place
where there is pain, suffering and hardship
where catastrophe at times hit mercilessly
as if every thing is going into damnation and darkness?

Some faiths believe that man
reincarnates over and over,
to in the end become part of a god,
have got to live though this desolation time and again.

Only the Christian faith declares
why our world is in this state,
about a almighty God who comes, to take up man's guilt
with a salvation plan and how its going to end.

If you read the holy Bible carefully,
it's clear that Lucifer was created perfectly,
that out of his own will he wanted to be equal to God,
he wanted to stop worshipping God.

When he broke the law
he created the biggest crisis in the universe
persuading other angels to act in rebellion,
where Michael (who is like God)
and his angels defended the heaven.

At that moment God could have wiped out Lucifer
and his followers instantaneously
but then everyone would serve Him out of fear and not out of love
and his Godly character did not even consider that possibility
whereupon He made a plan to solve this problem eternally.

God exists from eternity and is without a beginning,
through Jesus Christ, God created the world, by His own hands formed man
in the image of God and blew into him the breath of life,
He created man as two sexes, as man and woman.

Man was instructed to multiply,
to bring forth a own life in his image, to bring forth children,
to rule over the earth, the animals, birds and fishes
and everything was perfect in the whole earth, in every single thing.

It was then that God started the thing called time,
determining a period of time in which sin has got to abate,
where man as ruler had to lie down laws,
had to eat from the fruit of the earth,

proving to the universe that God is only love,
that dominion demands just laws,
going to the meaning
that the creation came from love.

No angels have ever been ordered to multiply
or to reign, Satan wanted to rule,
wanted to receive worship and become a god,
used his opportunity to lead man into darkness

saying in deception as he still does, that man will get knowledge
will become like God and will not die
and man had then lost his glory
(so as if the master of darkness could bring light)

and in free will man chose,
where his choice had an impact on everything,
even cursing his descendants to a damned world
but God came to place Himself in man's place

and many people believe that I am only telling a myth here,
but my almighty Lord Jesus Christ lives.

Gert Strydom

Why?

If I could paint
I would paint a portrait
of a shot out Ratel armoured car
standing in a landmine field.

Out of which the smoke still rises
And I would print in defencelessness
with every brush stroke
of armoured steel failing
against projectiles
and then becoming a coffin

and enemy soldiers standing grinning
with teeth brilliant white
and bones of fallen comrades
that tried to stop a horde of barbarians
and hyenas and jackals standing drooling
and vultures turning in the sky

and in the background till the horizon
enemy tanks, armoured cars
and men would lay shot to pieces
with pools of blood, intestines
and shot of legs and hands

and the title would be: Why?

Gert Strydom

Wild Flowers

A speck of Kalahari desert
sun baked and stretching
as far as the eye could see
where winds had blown
red-brown sand before
the air was sweet with the odour
of thousands of wild flowers.

Everywhere were different colours,
shapes and sizes
and nature had set its garden
right there in the desert of Namakwaland
and the miracle that a few showers
of rain brought
stretched out all around me.

Gert Strydom

Wild Garden

I saw rows of white,
yellow and red lilies bloom,
next to the railway tracts.

Loaded trains rattled past
and that garden,
sprang up by itself between the weeds.

With the early summer rain
rows of blue, white and pink wild flowers
bloomed next to the road that passed nearby.

Some finches nested in the trees
and red, yellow and green birds
flew past the vast garden
of earth that came alive
as far as the eye could see.

Gert Strydom

Wild Horses

With their manes blowing in the wind
they run with open mouths that foam
and at full speed they turn away
With their manes blowing in the wind
they gallop with thunder coming from their hoofs
as horses that run free under a blue sky.
With their manes blowing in the wind
they run with open mouths that foam
before somewhere they stop to graze
with their manes blowing in the wind
on the beach next to the narrow beach
and they look tame but are wild
With their manes blowing in the wind
they run with open mouths that foam.

Gert Strydom

Wild Horses [1]

With their manes blowing in the wind
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Gert Strydom

Wildly My Heart Beat From Just A Glance (Swannet)

At times why you love me remain unclear,
while you do believe it is meant to be.
Totally matchless is your beauty to me
and I am dumbstruck when you are near.

Wildly my heart beat from just a glance
and vivid you are in my dreams and life,
where I know you sincerely as my wife,
know how you do every day enhance

I see endless possibility in what you do,
do know all your secrets and your mind
also that you are gracious and very kind
that to your word you are sincerely true

At times why you love me remain unclear,
and I am dumbstruck when you are near.
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Gert Strydom

Wile The Wind Whispers A Song (Swinburne Roundel)

I remember you with your hair wet,
what your smile did to me do
a year after we met,
I remember you,

how you looked me through,
more than friendship was that day set
but of love I do not have a clue:

how you tangled me in your net
and to this day my feelings are true,
while locked-down away from you I fret,
I remember you,

your hair naturally curly in strings fair,
how serene and glad your eyes looked at me
and there was something between us right there.
~~Y~~our hair naturally curly,

with your face without make-up how you did me see
and suddenly as a woman I was of your distinctly aware,
also that much more was between us going to be

and now with all my heart I do for you care
but to go to and be with you I am not free,
while a deadly virus does the world scare.
~~Y~~our hair naturally curly,

brings me back to your pickerel smile
in a time that the world is under attack,
to a moment that we looked at each other for a while,
~~B~~ring me back

to how much you do me still attract,
to a time of innocence and no guile
and in this time we do all kinds of freedom lack

while we live in a world that is harsh and hostile
and I miss and long for you and this flashback,

do remind me of your beauty, personality and style
Brings me back.

While the wind whispers a song about each feeling
this upside-down life feels extremely wrong,
while with death the entire world is reeling,
While the wind whispers a song,

the syllables echoed by the doves is strong,
but it's as if destiny is part of our lives stealing
and even the shadows do sing along

while every day with the virus we are dealing
and at heart I know together we do belong,
do pray to God to be humanity healing,
While the wind whispers a song.

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Gert Strydom

Will I Tell The World And Not Be Able To Be Silent

(after Herman de Coninck)

Will I tell the world
of how soft your arms, body and nature is
when in rapture you do embrace me?

Or will I say that you do believe in princes,
do follow fairy-tales sometimes in depth
but do know in all of this that God is the true hero?

When you lie softly against me with loving lust
the whole universe comes to halt in that moment
as if it still trembles right through everything that is wonderful and lovely
like mountains of which the snow-covered peaks glisten through the fog.

[Reference:"Zal ik niet kunnen zwijgen over" (Will I be able to be
silent over)by Herman de Coninck.]

Gert Strydom

Will I Write About Heroic Deeds?

Will I write about heroic deeds?

When the sun daily struggles through the clouds of mist,
will I look between kaki-weeds, beer bottles for meaning
if the reports of damage, of evil things

are incessant disguised in cloaks
where the country is full of gangsters,
people stand and pee on street corners against walls,
life is webbed like gossamer

where evil creatures sit and wait on a moment
to suddenly attack
and evil is breeding out everywhere?
Will I write about what I see and how ghastly
weeds are filling the country,
or will I just shut up, be silent about that which exterminates us?

[Reference: Sal ek? (Will I?) by Ian Raper.]

Gert Strydom

Will Nature At A Time Be Really Lost? (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Archibald MacLeish)

Will nature at a time be really lost,
no snowflake fall
as the world becomes extremely hot,
while big and small
live in a man-made kind of sheer hot hell?
If man kills all;
the fish, each bird, each animal and tree,
what's living will at a time, no more be.

No bird will sing, or even be flying,
tranquility
will be gone in a world as stark as stone,
each thing lovely,
each leaping fish, diving crying great eagle
will die slowly,
when all of the ozone layer is gone
and the greenhouse effect just lingers on.

[Reference: 'The Snowflake Which Is Now And Hence Forever' by Archibald MacLeish.]

Gert Strydom

Will You Know About My Love For You

Will you know about my love for you
while you are embraced by another
and how deep betrayal cuts, how difficult it is
to get you out of my heart?

But every day the sun shines in the sky,
the sky stays heavenly blue
and it's only in dreams and thoughts
that I still see you
and I want you to pass me eternally

to shoot with a pistol at somebody else,
to swear at another as faeces,
to stab somebody else with a knife blade
and break your word to somebody else
and take your indeterminate anger out on someone else

as what I can, I have given
while you were trampling me down
and now I have walked into another life,
but the price you made me pay
and the sacrifices that I have made
for you and your children
was just too big,
so big that life
is still overwhelming with it.

Gert Strydom

Wind (Italian Sonnet)

It was a sunny day with the sky a dull-blue
at the begging of a September spring
with the wind of a winter August not yet ending.
Normally we made a kite with newspaper, some glue

and reeds and your grown children came with their own retinue
on that sunny Sunday, bought at the traffic light something,
that could be constructed into a huge flying wing
and when it was supposed to lift off they did argue

while in the piece of veldt near an electric mast
we were looking at the very small wild flowers,
felt the wind brushing through our hair
while your daughter in law waited alone like a outcast
and I was sure that later there would be some rain showers
while that kite did not take to the air.

Gert Strydom

Wind Bride

Without you my days are empty,
as if blown by the wind,
as if everything is swept away
like pieces of sand

into another place,
into another sombre world
where clouds knot through the air
melting into each other

and even some of the flowers
have the colours of your eyes
the winter grass
looks almost like your hair (only the colour differs)

and when you suddenly knock on the front door
standing there with rain and wind
stringing your hair
your arms shoot round my neck.

When I draw you in through the front door
your hair is swept against me,
while I am lost in your eyes,
and you are like Kokoschka's wind bride.

[References: After the painting of Oskar Kokoschka. Windsbruid (Windy-bride)
by H. J. Pieterse.]

Gert Strydom

Wind-Swallows

Just before the rain they fly twittering
until the drops start to splatter
and they have got to flee to their nests
before bolts of thunder can obliterate them.

Gert Strydom

Wind-Swallows (Free Verse Sonnet)

Where tiles and the roof meet each other
they did build a nest from grains of mud
to hold the small ones safe
and with the neat building work I am astonished
and I wonder from what offspring they do get the mud
where I do constantly look at those small birds,
just before the rain do notice their antics in the air
when they swish to and thro and they do turn around and around
but when the blue-white thunder does sound ominously,
both do quickly swish to their nurturing-place,
are out of the wild stormy-wind when drops do fall,
are covered in their own small fortress
and like this the God of the universe also covers us
draws us close in His embrace like children.

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Gert Strydom

Winged Arrow

There is a winged arrow flying up
which is buzzing from my bow
while my eye is set to a higher place,
far past the stars.

When it rushes through space
and continuously flies up,
let it then take my message
cutting space apart,
going right through the big universe
to where the creator is

and when I stand on my knees
let His answers already wait on me,
let brave angels surround me
and let I see His hand in my life.

Gert Strydom

Wings Of Destiny

I

Ask any parabat that jumped at Cassinga
and he would tell you
that destiny has wings.

While facing a battalion of
Cuban tanks and armoured cars,
out of the blue and as if by magic
a Buccaneer appeared.

There was nothing more beautiful
than to see that jet
making self-sacrificing dives,
before it flew off to disappear
into the blue sky,
but let me tell that heroic story
as I know it.

II

Coming back from a bombing raid on Cassinga
the next target of Captain Dries Marais was
the Swapo camp at Chetequera
and he insisted
on arming the Buccaneer bomber,
with armour penetrating rockets
in addition to the standard
high explosive rockets.

Andries Marais himself
couldn't explain the reason
for the irregular request,
but kept on insisting
that every third rocket
should be armour piercing.

Even navigator Ernie Harvey
was perplexed with this request

and they were tense,
while preparing for
the strike mission.

The Buccaneer took off
and in a short while
crossed the Angolan border
and just when Ernie Harvey
were going to check in
with Tactical headquarters
things went mad
on the operational frequency.

The pilot Warneke
who had relieved them at Cassinga,
reported a armoured battalion
consisting out of tanks
and BTR 152 personnel carriers approaching.

The operational frequency
was far too cluttered
to get through to Tactical headquarters
and they heard
two Mirages being scrambled,
but there wasn't time to arm them
and they had only
only 30 mm cannon.

You need an excellent navigator
to keep track to a target
over the featureless Angolan countryside
and navigator and weapon systems operator Ernie Harvey
had replaced the maps
with the ones of the new target,
but the navigation computer
still had the settings.

III

When fighting against tanks
and armoured cars
with only a few landmines

and rocket propelled grenades
to stop them,
even light machine guns
are quite useless
and still I kept on shooting
while the LMG's barrel got red hot
and I tried to keep the enemy back.

There was great joy
to see two Mirages
cutting the armoured cars apart,
but the surprise on the enemy
of that Buccaneer
dropping out of the sky
with its armour piercing
rockets will stay with me
to eternity.

Two tanks were shattered
and stood burning
after the first past
and the twin-barrelled 14.5 mm anti-aircraft guns
that the BTRs were trailing
were being deployed
and the Buccaneer
took one of the anti-aircraft guns out.

Suddenly the air was filled
with Puma helicopters landing
and the Buccaneer
took out a BTR
and two tanks started shelling us
and the Buccaneer kept diving
at close to the speed of sound
until the tanks disappeared
into the bush
and we lifted off safely.

There was nothing more beautiful
than to see that jet
making self-sacrificing dives,
before it flew off to disappear

into the blue sky.

Later I heard that 17 hits
were counted on that Buccaneer
that safely landed at Grootfontein base
and to this day,
I know about no greater heroes
than the two
flying in that Buccaneer.

.

[Reference: Cassinga Swapo military camp / town. Parabat=> South African
Airborne / Parachuting soldier.]

Gert Strydom

Winter

The winter bites this morning
with chilling fingers
and there's ice in the wind,
that blows through every thing.

The car is hot
and I am missing you,
while I drive alone
to work in the dark morning.

The car's lights
cuts the path open,
but every thing is a lot more icy and cold
when you are gone

The drive let me realise
that I am not made,
to go through life's winters
without you.

Gert Strydom

Winter (In Answer To D. J. Opperman)

Through dark nights I am alone,
I am still missing you in this bleak season
while the storm wind blows strong in the rain,
I forget everything that love could do,
while I hear the storm moaning like a beast,
when the weather trembles wet against the windows,
then the naked trees do not have any leaves
and then suddenly everything around me gets silent,
over your life so completely wasted.

[Reference: "Voorwinter" "Pre-winter" by D. J. Opperman.]

Gert Strydom

Winter (Parody)

(with apologies to fanie olivier)

Already early in May you can feel the wind gallop,
it is already cutting icily from twelve o'clock
and blows sand
leaves and old plastic bags sky-high.

Across the street the neighbour's drain is overflowing
and sewerage flows along at the end of the yard,
while the other neighbour's wife forwardly winks at me
and she's a flamboyant girl,

her husband is well built and somewhat angry
and she has got a teenage daughter, who draws attention like her mother,
dressing at times somewhat nakedly,
while the neighbour comforts himself with bottles of brandy,

sometimes wanting to know about his wife's wiles from me,
when I see pain and grief eating at him.

[Reference: "winter" by fanie olivier.]

Gert Strydom

Winter (There Is A Fear Clinging To You)

There is a fear clinging to you
when you come as sign of decay,
that the days of a person can also suddenly turn to this,
can become lifeless with the going of time,

with no thunder smashing down invisible
and there is a beauty to you,
while piercing winds are blowing,
when you are stripped but still living

as if at times you carry a cloak of death,
are stripped from alacrity, from growth and every urge
as if something disconsolate comes in life,
as if for new life you are waiting in vain

and then after days of rest new buds appear,
the iron bolts are broken with time.

Gert Strydom

Winter Memories (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Early morning the rain sieves down softly,
I do smell the wet earth,
notice the neighbour's car going into the street,
my cellular phone peeps a message the second time,
the pot in which the geraniums are flowering looks somewhat weathered
but it does not really get rain where it is standing outside,
in the distance a church bell does ring off six o'clock
and I do hardly notice the dove at the window
as in my thoughts I do smell your "panache"; as if you are right here
where we were married and comfortable against each other
and to that distant Cape winter this weather does remind me
while outside the lights of cars do past one after the other in the thick fog
and still it feels where I am lying as if you do fit in the hollow of my arm
but the moment fades away as it is years past.

Gert Strydom

Winter Night

The wind and winter bites piercing
and I want to lie closer to you
and outside everything is quiet.

The moon hangs silver
and throws a dead light
and I feel how cold,
this winter really is.

Your hands are hot
when I touch them,
but feels icy
when you touch my body.

Somewhere in the distance
cars are passing,
but its peaceful
and nice and hot
in our bed.

Before I close my eyes
and disappear into sleep,
I thank God
that you love me
and for how marvellous
you really are.

Gert Strydom

Winter Night [1]

Your icy fingers
try to creep in to the room
through the French windows
and I hear your voice cry
past the corner of the house

and outside you're many eyes
glimmer bright in the sky
and even though you want to kiss me
with the golden beams that flow
from your fat mouthed moon,

I will wait until you pass bye
and the yellow white sun
returns to the sky
and until then
lie comfortable in bed instead.

Gert Strydom

Winter Prophecy (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

In a night where thunder-flashes do come down
you are astonished with this kind of weather in the Cape,
walk with a big smile into my arms,
while I see frangipani's flowering outside,
I find your lips fondling soft under mine
and outside the lightning draws some more blue-white lines
but it's enchanting and wonderful to be with you,
to know you in all my happiness, prosperity and pain
and we are both blinded for moments
but for years I do continually find you
and here you are now into my life,
my green-eyed woman, my heart's girlfriend,
to me you are the only important woman
and here you are right against me.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Winter Rain

She comes as an uninvited guest
when she's expected less
and in times of the year's
cold misery
she falls like icicles
out of a grey winter sky.

Her coming when the faded earth
is at its bare rest
with stripped trees
and yellowed grass
and bare patches
where flowers should be;

vexes me, as nothing rise when she falls
and just more chill follows her drops.

Gert Strydom

Winter Remembered (Cavatina)

Stripped naked to the most inner core
as during winter
a leafless tree stood very near to death
a branch did splinter;
as if out of proportion drawn, printed
on a printer;
lonesome my heart was there in the weather,
as nothing good could bring us together.

Gert Strydom

Winter Storm

Storm clouds spread
like a sinister monster
blurring out the moon
and stars
and the night is black
and all natural light
is blotted out.

Flying rain is set alight
by creeping thunder bolts
that spread over the dark sky
and crab like
twists pinching here and there.

Fog is in the meadows
and creeps up to higher places
to be everywhere
and it's icy
and the chill freezes.

Big rocks of hail
fall like bombs
from the sky
and crush and dent
before they splatter

Around the house
bolts thunder
and plants are beaten to threads
and branches whip
upon the roof.

The power is cut
and every thing outside
is really dark,
but sparks hisses and flies
from the hot fireplace
at the chimney.

Candles burn romantic
in the hot lounge
while we share supper
and drink dark red wine
from crystal glasses.

Gert Strydom

Winter-Night

There is ice in the wind
and here and there a flower wilts
are devoured by the ripe
and when the moon rise brightly
leaves whirl around everywhere.

Gert Strydom

Winter-Night (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Eugene Marais)

Leafless like skeletons stand trees
everywhere in a multitude filling the veldt,
like monsters out of nightmare dreams
with bare spot upon bare spot
everything in this winter is stripped,
where at a time there had been green grass,
a person feels unfrequented and without hope
but the mercy of God does remain,
although the cold icy wind cuts
right through the walls of every house,
where it cries like a motherless child,
are inconsolable for hour upon hour,
but we still do entrust our cares to Him
from whom all salvation and love does come.

[Reference:"Winternag" (Winter-night)by Eugene Marais.]

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Gert Strydom

Winter-Night (Free Verse Sonnet)(1)

(after P. J. Philander)

Early in the evening I lock the cold out at the door,
the heater burns bright red in room,
almost like rain snow-snippets fall against the window,
outside the entire world is white, icy and pretty,
while the chilly snow with wind do cover everything,
the dogs at the neighbour do complain sorrowful,
it's so chilly that I put some more clothes on
while outside the neighbours do carry parcels from their car,
when suddenly ominous a thunderbolt bashes down,
the lights flicker and then suddenly do go out,
I light a candle and shadows do fall over the wall,
mimicking me as something without a head,
the wax melts and drips down,
and without power the coldness does sneak more and more into the house.

[Reference: "Wingeraand" (Winter-night)by P. J. Philander.]

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Gert Strydom

Witchcraft

At sunrise I know that we have parted
and that you now have someone else
and it feels perverse
that you now love someone else more than me

and for years I am enchanted
maybe through my whole life something is left
of you beating in side of me
and still something of that love is lasting,
although I have lost you

and sometimes when darkness sneaks up on me,
when I am alone and your image sneaks into my dreams
I want to ask you to leave and to bewitch someone else

and no person can forever stay single
as time goes on, with passing years
and vainly I hope
to have you again

but have decided to expel this sorcery
your whole soul, your face and body,
to open my heart to someone else
and to write her name on my soul

but every time that I have someone, you rise from the ashes
as if this bewitchment gets new life
blowing the flames up again

and to me it stays sorcery.

Gert Strydom

Witchcraft: At The Light Of Day

At the light of day I know that we are separated
and for years I am bewitched,
now that you stay with another man,

maybe lifelong something remains
and when I am alone, it's your image that sneaks into my dreams
and for years I am bewitched

and sometimes when the night sneaks up on me
I know that nobody can stay alone forever
and when I am alone it's your image that sneaks into my dreams

but time runs on with years passing
and I decide to expel this witchcraft
I know that nobody can stay alone forever

and I exorcise your whole soul, face and body
from how it had been once
and I decide to expel this witchcraft,

to burn everything of yours to dust and ash.
At the light of day I know that we are separated
from how it had been once
now that you stay with another man.

Gert Strydom

Witchcraft: I See Myself Reflected

I see myself reflected in your green eyes,
in times of tears, also in times of joy
and wonder at the powers you employ
to bring light to me, to the darkest skies

and although your words hit deep without lies,
your smile at times may be but a decoy,
but your feelings comes without any ploy
as something quite strange where the self dies

where love becomes a kind of witchery,
that offers everything totally selfless
and gives without any hesitation
in everything that you do for me
bringing energy, a sweet kind of rest
when you are act without anticipation.

Gert Strydom

Witchdoctor Inyanga And The Impundulu

(In answer to A. G. answer to D. J. Opperman)

Alone in the hot late-afternoon a old grey-haired man do sit
under the cool shade of a giant Tamboti tree
that is rooted in the cliffs
while he is searching the will of the ancestors
where the tree does branch up into the clouds
to the top water like a Yggdrasil,
that reaches between the earth, heaven and hell
to tell him about the instructions
of the Unkulunkulu, the Great-Great One.

His nerves are already at an edge
and maybe death does come
as over him flies a hammer-head bird
that does screech all around the tree
until more hammer-heads do come
and troop together in a swarm,
do take prey out of the dark stream
that does flow past the gigantic tree,
and he thinks of his children and grandchildren
that does work in factories far away with steel,
do wait upon the hammerheads
to shake loose from the darkest part of the stream
the spirits of the ancestors
that they can stimulate him
with news and instructions from the underworld

when the Impundulu does jerk him awake
and do come down with blue-white flaming light,
do split a huge camel-thorn tree apart
and the witchdoctor is speechless
when that explosion does burn into his back-eye,
when he notices small blue-white sparks crackle
as this judgement is something that comes
from up high from Unkulunkulu, the Great-Great One
who does send Impundulu out of his nest up in the clouds
to come and punish,
with their big beating wings the hammerheads do fly up

while Inyanga does not trust the peace.

The heaven that was earlier cobalt blue
is now black and dark with clouds folding over each other,
when no spirits do come to him to twist his mind with illusions
only the clouds are shaking
and Impundulu is here and there diving down from the sky,
the sulphur smell still does come from the split tree that lies smouldering
and he wonders what kind of a judgement and harm
Impundulu is bringing from the Unkulunkulu?

The earth does shake and away from any tree
Inyanga has to find shelter
as there is a wailing in the sudden wild wind
as if it is telling about murders, plunder,
marauding expeditions, rape and oppression
and suddenly he is scared that Unkulunkulu
do wants to devour him and his people out of vengeance
with every thundering bolt of Impundulu
he is unsteady on his feet as if blinded
and he is suddenly afraid for his people,
for each man, each woman and child.

[Reference:"Impundulu" by A. G. Visser. "Ringdans van die hamerkoppe" (Ring-dance of the hammer-heads" by D. J. Opperman. Poet's note: The Hammer-head bird (also know as the shadow-bird, umber-bird, umbrette)is according to legend a bird that does call upon death to ding to legend The "Impundulu" is the thunderbird that lives in the upper branches of the great Tamboti tree, in the clouds where its nest is. This tree has interestingly the same properties and is indeed similar to the Nordic "Yggdrasil" legendary tree that connects the under-earthly (hell) , earth and heaven with each "Unkulunkulu" is the omnipotent Lord God.]

Gert Strydom

Witchery (I)

Without a formulary from you
I am dumbstruck with what to me you do.

Gert Strydom

Witchery (Ii)

When at night you do sneak near
it's into my heart that you do crawl
where your eyes burn like those of a cat
and in you I loose my sole and mind.

Gert Strydom

Witchery (Iii)(Persian Quatrain)

I look at you while you talk and it's pure witchery
as you are far past pretty and very witty,
where mere words have an impact on both of us
and I fall in love and you become more than dear to me.

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Gert Strydom

Witchery (Ix)

At sunrise you do leave me speechless:
enchanted with you my life turns around
and I see no talus-bones that you do throw out
when you come to me with acts of true love.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Witchery (X)

(after Rosa Smit)

Daily you do leave me dumbfounded,
and I cannot disguise my love
when my heart jumps wild and unruly.
What formulary and enchantment
did come out of your mouth in the night?
A black cat sneaks past with amber eyes,
of all women you are the loveliest to me,
into beauty you turn my times and days around,
and I cannot disguise my love.

[Reference: "heksery" (witchery) by Rosa Smit.]

Gert Strydom

Witchery (Xi)

With words you did write signs against the night-sky,
and every monstrosity you drove away from our love,
you did speak out rites in my sleep over me,
your eyes are wet while you beg to the gods,
as you do rub your hands over my cheeks,
I hear your soft words in the darkness
and if it is for love a kind of enchantment
then I do not really know love or what drives it,
and every monstrosity you drove away from our love.

Gert Strydom

Witchery [2] (Sonnet)

Every morning on your face you put you war paint
and to some people you are a self-sacrificing saint,
helping old people and the poor comes from your heart
and doing such things, like a Tabitha of old, is probably a art.

The bathing salt, lipstick, blusher and perfume
do fit you well and let anyone assume
that you do not really need any makeup
and that great beauty lies under your costume

but I do know you very well,
know the truth and the lies that you do tell
do not your innocence trust
have been for years under your bewitching spell

and now that we are apart
somehow you have torn out my heart.

Gert Strydom

Witchery Vi (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

I remember us at a time together at the Spur restaurant
at a candle with your eyes big and your nose lifted in spirit
and you remind me about rain coming down
with a terrible drought throughout the land
and just like then I am dumbstruck by you,
I cannot hide my feelings,
I cannot stop looking at you
and with love I am still stupid,
I do not know how to tell about the gleaming of your eyes,
with which you are climbing back into my heart,
about their colour and your smile
and with words I am sometimes stupid and clever
but it's witchery that you do perpetrate
and simple words that I do write down.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

With A Bottle In His Hand

I see a lightning flash
in the night
and it cuts past flats
and it draws a blue white line,
on its way down
to where it hits a tree
in the old park.

When darkness blinds me,
there's a cigarette that glows red
and a old man sitting on a bench.

He protests with a bottle in his hand:
"Lord, take your thunder.
Not even God, can stop Kerneels Bester
to take a drink."

The old man laughs as if mad
and takes a long drink,
before he presses the bottle
into the air.

With the bottle above his head
the man stands against the weather
and like that he still stands,
when the first big drops begin to fall
and I hear another thunder roll.

Gert Strydom

With A Dead Soul

For most things in life
there's a cure.

People look at their bodies
and go to a gym,
or climb quickly into a swimming pool.

If hair gets too long
its trimmed at a barber,
but for a broken heart
no healing can be found.

People live on with a dead soul,
while daily happenings blows past,
like meaningless greetings
of hello and goodbye.

Gert Strydom

With A Flood The Streamlet Swell (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

With a flood the streamlet swell
where it meanders in the dell
and the rushing water flow
where alone my image glow
on the pond as if from a spell
where I am fascinated by the tranquillity
but alone this scene do come to me
of this beauty I could my love tell
where it meanders in the dell.

Gert Strydom

With A Glance On Cuito Cuanavale

Through the dense wilderness
where the red earth swallows everything
Ratel armoured cars burst through the bush
from Rundu to where
the Cuzizi and Lomba rivers cross
while scouts reconnoitre the enemy
and it unleashes a battle that lasts for days
that crushes and burns thousands of enemy soldiers
and everywhere around us there is danger,
there are enemies fighting and others deserting and running away
where we press them in between the two rivers
to where we make a death acre

while the enemy shoot with their battle tanks and armour,
Mig-warplanes every now and then drop their bombs,
South Africans pull the heart out of FAPLA,
out of the Cubans and the Russians
and the shadow of the South African soldier falls
over Africa and far away hangs
over Cuba and Russia
and mothers and wives in Angola and Cuba cover their faces
while they long for their husbands and boys
and suddenly the communists start to talk about peace,
politicians as if in rapture
make accords and do tolerate each other
as if we are brothers in the universe
and the world that had been disappears into the nought.

[References: "The battle at Cuito Cuanavale: "The results of the campaign up to April 1988 were 4,785 killed on the Cuban/Faplan side, with 94 tanks and hundreds of combat vehicles destroyed, against 31 South Africans killed in action, 3 tanks destroyed (SADF tanks entered the war after the Lomba River campaign) and 11 SADF armoured cars and troop carriers lost. A total of 9 Migs were destroyed and only 1 SAAF Mirage shot down." (General) Jannie Geldenhuys. (1994) : At the front. Jonathan Ball Publishers. P240.

"The South African force, under the command of Colonel Deon Ferreira, was tasked with carrying out three operations (1) Operation Modular - The aim

of which was to halt and reverse the FAPLA / Cuban advance on the UNITA strongholds of Mavinga and Jamba, (2) Operation Hooper - The aim of which was to inflict maximum casualties on the retreating FAPLA / Cuban forces after they had been halted and (3) Operation Packer - The aim of which was to force the FAPLA / Cuban forces to retreat to the west of the Cuito River." Nortje, Piet (2003) .32 Battalion. Zebra Press.

'In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 UNITA fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla brigade and mauled several others out of a total Fapla force of some 18,000 engaged in the three-pronged offensive. Estimates of Fapla losses ranged upward of 4,000 killed and wounded. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officers played a central role in its execution.... Huge quantities of Soviet equipment were destroyed or fell into UNITA and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat... The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms and its strategy.... As of mid-November, the UNITA/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of FAPLA's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters.' Crocker, Chester A. (1992) High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood. (Crocker was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Reagan Administration.)

John Turner claims that: "following their losses, the Cubans were convinced that further military confrontation with the SADF would not succeed." Turner, John W. (1998) . Continent Ablaze; The Insurgency Wars in Africa, 1960 to the Present. Cassell Plc.

Comments made by a Soviet adviser to the Cubans in Angola: 'The people's armed forces for the liberation of Angola have not been able either, even with the help of the Cubans, to decisively defeat the enemy and drive him out of the territory or the country." M. Ponomarev, Krasnaya Zvezda Magazine; 20 May 1988.]

Gert Strydom

With A Heart Attack

(for Danie and Ansie Brand)

With a heart attack Neville passed from life,
where that thing cuts right through any parent.
With Your Son the thunder flashed, the sun stopped shining,
when You saw Him suffer innocently for humanity.

My cousin is nearer than a blood brother to me.
My God, how do a person stop the pain of a father and mother?
I could not stop that terrible thing with high-blood pressure,
with a heart attack Neville passed from life.

I called upon You and was still conscious,
my lungs wanted to explode but You were like always near.
There was pain and sweat on Neville's face.
(where that thing cuts right through any parent) ,

his fiancée found him on the bed dying
(she is shattered as she was hair-fine set on him) ,
the pickup truck was packed as Neville wanted do drive to the farm.
With Your Son the thunder flashed, the sun stopped shining,

every person in heaven, every angel and cherub, wanted to intervene
but that shameful death for everyone's sin did not pass Your Son
and the temple's thick curtain was torn right through,
when You saw Him suffer innocently for humanity.

With pain in his chest Neville were dying,
the ambulance and doctor was too slow at the help-line,
while with his fiancée he struggled between life and death
and his fiancée later shocked and defenceless stood at the doorframe,
with a heart attack.

Gert Strydom

With A Roaring Sound Waves Crash

With a roaring sound waves crash
under Waenhuiskrans,
and they cave there
when gigantic tongues of spray
like white stars break mightily
drenching everything with deep water
like white stars,
like white stars
just before the red dawn comes.

With a roaring sound waves crash
deep out of the dark sea,
like a pack of hungry wolves
that does not give up territory
the water keeps hammering
where it knocks against hard rock,
the water keeps hammering.
the water keeps hammering
until it flows through the cave itself.

With a roaring sound waves crash,
hit battering blows
with endless power
into the folds of the rock
and caught you and I stand
where we see a spectacle
and caught
and caught
mightily the sea sweeps past.

Gert Strydom

With A View On Clifton Beach (Cavatina)

Rubens would have been quite happy to paint
with the white beach,
the view through the window with topless girls,
just out of reach
with their fuller figures making great curves,
and almost each
very voluptuous and here and there
a perfect slim woman without a care.

Gert Strydom

With A View On The Passing Road

She walks to the porch
and she carries a basket full of pomegranates from the orchard
while the brown dog is running all around her,

at the step to the porch her husband greets her without a word
and a pomegranate falls so hard that the pips scatter
and she carries a basket full of pomegranates from the orchard,

she steps into the red juice that sticky blots the floor,
she barely hears his damn it
and a pomegranate falls so hard that the pips scatter,

and he says that she is incompetent and clumsy
but her gaze is on the road,
she barely hears his damn it

and she hopes that a shining new car will on a day take her away
and docile she bends to pick up the remains of the two fruit
but her gaze is on the road,

where she is setting her scope into the distance.
She walks to the porch
and docile she bends to pick up the remains of the two fruit
while the brown dog is running all around her.

Gert Strydom

With A Virus In South Africa They Do Spread Death And Pain

As if regulations are just applicable to some
minibus taxi operators operate for selfish gain
as they transport people to work and home

do block streets and unruly do roam
where at a time no passengers will remain.
As if regulations are just applicable to some

more state control like in communism does come
and with a virus they do spread death and pain
as they transport people to work and home

and murderous their actions do seem gruesome
while racist laws apply and righteousness has a stain
as if regulations are just applicable to some

and whatever they do the government do welcome,
while many more people do die and all seem in vain
as they transport people to work and home

and state-control and a curfew is meddlesome
as no other business do from the COVID-19 impact regain,
as if regulations are just applicable to some
as they transport people to work and home

Postscript:

to benefit just some of the rainbow-nation
and taxi operators to the law run rife
while laws apply for only some of the population
as they do initiate lawlessness and strive,
are against any kind of emergency recommendation
and eventually just a few people remain alive

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Gert Strydom

With A Visit To The Keats Memorial Home (Refrain Stanza)

Outside a mulberry tree hangs to the ground
but in my thoughts his odes do jump around,
inside where my feet creak on the floor
he wrote the poems that people do nowadays adore
while the attacks on him did fiercely sound
and he was caught by the power of destiny
while critics did him only in disdain see
while in the end with tuberculosis he did no cure found
but in my thoughts his odes do jump around.

[Poet's note:I do here refer to the "Quarterly Review" and
"Blackwood's Magazine" where destructive criticism was published
about Hunt's literary circle (of which Keats was a member)and on the poem
Endymion was said that it is absolute nonsense and that Keats should stop
writing poetry.]

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Gert Strydom

With Age Gripping (Limerick)

With age gripping
driving the passing years in
it is as if the shadow of death already lingers
with hastening embracing fingers
but life sprouting with spring comes like a new blessing.

Gert Strydom

With All Of My Dreams

With all of my dreams
I did love you,
do remember how you eyes look,
can gleam of happiness

and together we did get into bed
did discover each other much better
while your kisses were soft and passionate
and now that the year are stretching out

you are still my playmate,
the one for whom I at times do yearn,
and I do remember how perfect you are to me
when at night you lay next to me.

Gert Strydom

With All Of The Dark Painful Urges

you do come as my greatest longing
while we are cut-off by misunderstandings
in the twisting walls of a labyrinth
and it's as if doors are continually slamming in my face,
as if time and again you want to walk out of my life
and sometimes I do search earnestly for liberation
out of this continuous imprisonment
and our feelings so intense and intimate
force my life and heart back to you
and I have got to deviate from a healthy balance,
again do start with my misconceptions and wandering
and without an end I do love you.

Gert Strydom

With An Easy Lucidity

With an easy lucidity together we went to bed,
with eye catching eye, a kind of sheer tenderness
a pathway of clothes marking the way.

As we entered the bedroom
very few words were expressed
in that urgency that was totally overpowering.

Our need was so great for each other,
while touching and kissing went to bliss,
to a kind of true happiness,

a earthlessness where time and reality
rocked suddenly to a standstill
in the desperation to overcome separateness.

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Gert Strydom

With Autumn's Last Whirling Wind

With autumn's last whirling wind winter is back,
on the wind something is burning like incense
and I see hadidah-ibises in their screeching flight,

copper-red they sheen moments in the sky
but they disappear just as puffs of smoke.
With autumn's last whirling wind winter is back

and in this time nobody is formidable against a virus.
Inside mother is cooking pea soup
and I see hadidah-ibises in their screeching flight,

there is something darker than a cobalt hue to the sky
and you do love me and sincerely I do love you too.
With autumn's last whirling wind winter is back

while the world is full of rumours of a deadly thing,
people incite others against the police
and I see hadidah-ibises in their screeching flight.

It's as if all of nature do sigh for the things of man
while locked-down in thoughts you do appear to me.
With autumn's last whirling wind winter is back
and I see hadidah-ibises in their screeching flight.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

Gert Strydom

With Big Brown Eyes

With big brown eyes you look at me
when you awake
and outside a wild winter wind blows
when you do touch me
and with a glance that is full of trust
you close your eyes
with the brokenness that others see
and I know that I do not deserve you.

Gert Strydom

With Blazing, Electric Blue Thunder

(after Pablo Neruda)

With blazing, electric blue thunder
the morning is alive in this summer.

The wind tosses the threatening clouds like washing
torn from the line, waving goodbye without hands.

The mouthless harsh voice of the wind
howls right through our blissful silence.

Thunder bolts rock exploding in bright white light
while the wind rips leaves, branches and trees

as if in remembrance of long gone battles and wars
while it tosses squalls of pattering buckets of rain

sounding like the roar of a havoc orchestra
from the very gates of destruction, right from hell

while big oak trees sway as if only twigs,
some topple torn right out from their roots

and against me storm tossed in passion you are laying,
coming weightless full of fiery blazing desire,

with tender sweet lips that are kissing bringing bliss
and outside the wind roars as if its power is endless.

[Reference: "Es La Mañana Llena" "The Morning Is Full" by Pablo Neruda.]

Gert Strydom

With Change Comes Pain

With change comes pain, branches hit on the roof
where at a time you could sit on the porch,
the garden is falling into disrepair, with weeds everywhere,
roses and lavender bushes are only growing at places
and turned into yourself you take life at ease.

In loneliness you decide to move,
with the emptiness in the big house almost suffocating you,
at times you want to fall on the bed and cover your eyes,
with change comes pain.

At times things go out of control, so intensely that you gasp for breath,
it feels as if everything is declining, you feel like a wreck,
are walking from empty room to empty room,
with a feeling that you can die;
with change comes pain.

Gert Strydom

With Courage I Want To Look Into Your Eyes (English Sonnet)

In you I have seen some great virtue,
a kind of loving that comes selfless
from the heart, a dedication that is true
a kind of kindness that is ready to bless.

I have loved you, as you are really fair,
not only for your company, great beauty,
for your outward looks and your auburn hair
but for the way that you make it your duty

to spread your kind of sheer light and sunshine
when I am around, to whoever you meet
a real kindness that no one can decline
and here now I lay my soul at your feet,

with courage want to look into your eyes
past all previous days, past all goodbyes.

Gert Strydom

With Each Breath (Cavatina)

With each breath, each heartbeat closer you are,
your lips, your smell,
the gaze of your eyes drives me quite crazy,
I know you well
but still you remain a big mystery
with shell on shell
covering new beauty, some depths profound,
while to you I become much deeper bound.

Gert Strydom

With Each Other

(after T.T. Cloete)

Together we enjoyed evenings
in each other's company, dined out,
at times we talked and sometimes were silent;
for months we knew about our love,

we visited and drove around,
shared poems, stories and memories,
at times we only stayed peacefully at home,
we knew that love can never be boring

and we talked almost right through nights,
we went to church in suits and ties and coats,
we embraced every time that we got together,
even in rain showers and in muddy patches

while we were becoming much more in love.

[Reference: "die welkomsomhelsing" (the welcoming embrace) by
T.T. Cloete.]

Gert Strydom

With Eternity In His Mere Hand

With eternity in His mere hand
and the darkness in which there was nothing
He did form everything; from only specks of dust
you and I was in His thoughts
and for every thing that exists there was knowledge
when time suddenly came to life,
when He formed in His own secret ways,
with his gaze going to the last of His work
and He looked at man with great sympathy,
at the start of our history.

Gert Strydom

With Every Glance At The World Around Us

With every glance at the world around us,
on nature, on the humanity of other people
our existence is enriched,

it is with new eyes that we look upon our world
experiencing the colours, odours and touch of the wind,
where a smile cuts to the depths of the heart

and sometimes we still feel steam-rolled away,
aching into the heart and soul
as if our lives are decaying
and things seem totally out of control

until something lets us deviate from our normal way of life,
when we walk into another world.

Gert Strydom

With Every Sunny Day Coming In This Summer

With every sunny day coming in this summer,
with each flower it's as if God himself is here,
I find knowledge hidden between the flowers,
as something of Him, I became aware of Him,

there is rest with the sun in the blue sky,
I am not anxious; weavers are playing in the branches,
some are speckled, my life becomes serene,
in the outside air, even near the precipice

I feel healthy, as if He is bringing hope or life,
where birds are singing and every day is full of promises,
is full of love, with His love
that pierces everything, even the secrets of life.

Gert Strydom

With Eyes Closed Against The Bright Light

With eyes closed against the bright light
of the new morning, shadows creep into my thoughts
shadows and longings to lost love
and the way that things were supposed to be
and I wonder why life has stripped you from me
and there are no answers that I see
in the blinding light of reality
and sometimes it feels like, looks like
as if even every ant, every insect has a destiny designed
and it feels as if the world
gives choices, that mornings comes with clarity
but for me
who keeps struggling on
as if stuck in the labyrinth of destiny.

Gert Strydom

With Eyes Far Greener Than The Sea

With eyes far greener than the sea
she looks at me and there is some tranquillity
when she folds her hand round mine in trust
reminding me of purity, of a white lily

and Madonna-like is the sanctity of her heart
while even her smile does sincerity impart
and a kind of peace descends between us,
while I realize that nothing can draw us apart

even when her spirit burns in a kind of rebellion
when in anger she sometimes talks in aversion
there's still a secret understanding
and every gesture, every mood is just a diversion

from admitting how much she loves me
and when she is in act and will free,
even in raging anger
she remains lovely.

Gert Strydom

With Eyes Sparkling Green And Gold

With eyes sparkling green and gold
you did look at me
and for moments we looked at each other.

Out of the branches of the old pepper tree
doves shyly peered at us
and the wind rustled through your hair.

I wanted to show you the flowering irises,
wanted you to smell the jasmine
but we were caught in each other.

Gert Strydom

With Happiness She Knows That She Is Pregnant

With happiness she knows that she is pregnant,
that she still has got something left of him,
she becomes aware of how beautiful life is
and the new life in her does bring new meaning.

Now she is alone without him,
the one in whom she could pour out her heart
and for almost nine months she cries without end

until her new life does come
which she regards as a keepsake of him,
a child around whom she does build her life
and she is astonished by his innocence,
his commitment to her.

Gert Strydom

With How The Night Can Unfold

With how the night can unfold
I am quite familiar
with how teeth, wing and claw
can grab, can tear and disfigure.
I have know the inside
of each moment, each second and hour
how things functions, fits in;
I have seen the fire
in the eyes of carnivore in the back-veldt
where the remote places can bring peace,
I have seen how nature had been
with the simplicity that makes it great
and in the faces around the circle of the fire
every other thing had been excluded.

Gert Strydom

With Hunger In Your Eyes

With hunger in your eyes
you did look for a moment at me
with a gaze that does not recede before anyone's
as if from me
or from someone else you would find help,
as if I had to hear you begging voice
and you did tremble in the cold wind
and somewhere you did loose your own humanity
and again
you wanted food from me
where you were wandering helpless between the shops
and I did not know what to tell you
as life did also turn its back on me
and I did draw the old jacket tighter against my body.

Gert Strydom

With Leaping Spray The Sea Explodes

With leaping spray the sea explodes
against a rock, explodes again
just as before with surf
that constantly leaps and fall

while a grove of pines are near to the shore,
and once more the spray
rises up into the air
and fall at my feet like rain.

In my thoughts you are back,
again I feel your soft hand in mine,
as we once had walked along this beach,
but it is only memories of a distant past.

No illness where you could beg in mercy,
could find a new kind of faith,
was offered you and far too suddenly
destiny shattered what we had.

I have a kind of life,
where at times I try to forget
but it's to no avail as remembering
always comes back.

The waves of the sea still leaps in vain,
coming down in a shower
and you were here and you are gone
while I have pain; life goes on like before.

Gert Strydom

With Mere Words (Free Verse Sonnet)

It's with mere words that I come to you
and I remember how together we pruned the roses,
late in winter while the August-winds howled
and now we wait on spring to leave us speechless
but in all of this you still do turn my days around,
where I see love glowing deep in your glance,
while with a hosepipe you are wetting the garden
and the feelings between us we cannot disguise
while the spring, life and love do wait on us
like summer do linger in the background,
while you pray that the abstractions between us disappear
and against me lie cosily at night,
God still does determine everything
while your unpredictability lets my heart beat wildly.

[Poet's note: In the Southern hemisphere of the world the seasons are opposite to those in the northern hemisphere and hence August is the last month of winter.]

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Gert Strydom

With No Disguise (Rondelet)

With no disguise
our eyes did meet across a room,
with no disguise
you told me some very great lies
that made a relationship bloom
that brought utter havoc and doom
with no disguise.

Gert Strydom

With Our Legs Twisted Through Each Others

With our legs twisted through each others
I can feel her heart beating under my finger tips
and there is something in her glance that binds me to her
while her fingers caress my face
and her hair is spread over my chest
like autumn leaves
with her fine fingers being like butterflies that flutter.

Gert Strydom

With Self Contempt I Stand In The Veldt [1]

(after Rudolf Otto Wierner)

With self contempt I stand in the veldt
and each heroic act
is just another task that destiny does demand

that does not make me greater than others
and the hunger to kill
flows on and forth
while war machinery
does sing in a deadly choir

and the rifle in my hands
that point to the enemy
is stripped from any language
but death that it brings about
and the knowledge does intrude
that still it brings destruction

[Reference: "Hungerblümchen" by Rudolf Otto Wierner.]

Gert Strydom

With Sincere Intent (Pirouette)

As the time do fly by
with sincere intent I
love you in all I do,
even if days are blue
truly you do love me
truly you do love me
yet all my faults you know,
you talk with so and so,
with interest your eyes glow
about time long ago.

Gert Strydom

With Sincere Words (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

With sincere words I want to talk to you
to you soul, spirit and heart carry through,
say how wonderful you really are
that I miss you where you are so far,
that you are precious in everything you do,
that this kind of love makes day upon day holy,
that you do touch my humanity,
that my messages are heartfelt and true
to you soul, spirit and heart carry through.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

With Some Grand Imaginings

With some grand imaginings
a dream unfolded about you and me,
a dream so sharp and clear
as if it was happening in reality.

Your presence was distinct,
the sound and tone of your voice,
the warmth, the feeling
of your explicit touch
but in my awakening
there was only thin air
in the room about me.

Gert Strydom

With Sunny Smiles (Triolet)

With sunny smiles love you did my heart feed,
as if a part of my life you were meant to be
and patched me up when I did bleed.

With sunny smiles love you did my heart feed
until to all your charms I did concede,
in mien a wonderful woman I do see.

With sunny smiles love you did my heart feed,
as if a part of my life you were meant to be.

Gert Strydom

With The Corona Virus Loose Just Before The Lock-Down Date

People were buying up everything in the shop,
right here at the Springs Strubenvale Pick n Pay
people did not their two-meter distance stay,
with a trolley a lady rushed into me, did not stop,

They had charcoal with steak and chops on top,
right here my own people thought it a holiday,
together they clucked, in large groups did stay,
insolent impudent with death they wanted to drop,

I thought this a cultural thing, the distancing,
that personal space were respected by my own,
that they knew a simple cough could death bring,
they did not regard it: this virus deadly, unknown,
to the much higher authority they were not listening
and this is probably how a country does brake down.

[Poet's note:I am talking here about white Afrikaans and English people of all ages.]

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

With The Distance That Comes Between Us

With the distance that comes between us
I do sometimes loose you
with not really seeing you
in the person-to-person conversations.

As if time and the power of destiny
does stand drastically between us
I do loose you sometimes
where both of us do live in different worlds

and at times I do want to touch you,
I want to see you sometimes, want to nurture you,
are afraid that everything between us
will finally be lost.

Gert Strydom

With The First Light (Crystalline Poem)

With the first light of every day,
Your great power does in me stay

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Gert Strydom

With The Fourteen-Day-Rain (Free Verse Sonnet)

While the fourteen-day-rain outside do day and night whisper
the aroma of the wet earth and new life is everywhere,
while almost endlessly the rain keeps falling
the two of us at night lie cosily together in the cold darkness,
it's as if a person can listen to how the world is going
while thunder like the voice of God fall around us,
while the two of us are together as a pair in the universe
and in sin and pain this world is shackled
but together we do find the God of love,
notice His handiwork wherever we come,
do together experience what sincere love really is
and outside a cold icy wind blows,
with each with other and the mercy of God we are speechless
while He remains with us in the greatest darkness.

Gert Strydom

With The Intimacy Of The Early Dusk

With the intimacy of the early dusk
the table is clear for saying prayers
while you bake pancakes,
where I see the dough hissing splashing about in the pan,
while the olive oil does gleam bright and shiny,
and the smells of sugar and red cinnamon do hang
while you blot out oil from the backed pancakes
and it's as if I am imagining my young childhood days
while you do play tumbling with a pan,
when your eye catches mine and you do steal my heart.

Gert Strydom

With The Late Afternoon Sun

With the late afternoon sun I keep remembering
how very awesome you are to me
and when the night comes suddenly I wait upon you
when I have been missing you daylong.
Then you are in every thought
and when the hot sun descends blood red
you bring new meaning to me
when you look for me on your return
and then we notice the white evening flower,
how the stars sparkle bright white-blue.

Gert Strydom

With The Late Afternoon Sun [2]

With the late afternoon sun I keep remembering
how very awesome you are to me
and when the night comes suddenly I wait upon you
when I have been missing you daylong.
Then you are in every thought
and when the hot sun descends blood red
you bring new meaning to me
when you look for me on your return
and then we notice the white evening flower,
how the stars sparkle bright white-blue.

Gert Strydom

With The Morning

With the morning in your laughter
I do greet the new day
and you are mine, only mine,
right through the darkest night.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

With The Setting Sun

With the setting sun
our dog has puppies
and gets five of them under a bush
(perfect tiny Jack Russell's)
and I leave them as the evening comes
not wanting to disturb her
where she is covering them

and in the kitchen I am washing dishes
are moments away from the television's dim witted rush
and I hear you, my darling, laughing
and that sound seems sweet in my ears
and although I do not understand
the complexities, heartaches and miracles of life fully
I feel lucky to be your man

and in the distance the turbines whine
at the Impala Platinum Refinery,
the siren of a train rings into the night
while lorries and cars rush past on the highway
and although our finances are tight
life is beautiful and it's really great
and the dishes are washed and dried and packed away
and I return to you
and are away from the cold world outside.

Gert Strydom

With The Smell Of Turpentine

With the smell of turpentine
and paint in front of the fireplace
you paint magical lines
with blue, green and gold
and I look at you
while brush strokes
like magic make abstract images appear.

The Creator must have looked like this
while He looked at the world
while building it
and I see your golden eyes
looking carefully at the painting
and at times you frown
while you try to draw perfect lines
and light and colour
create magical feelings
and flow into each other
and you build shade and depth.

Gasping for breath lovely are you
while your fingers play with the brush
and there are more than curves and lines
from which your beauty comes.

Gert Strydom

With The Sun Hanging Bloody-Red (Couplets)

With the sun hanging bloody-red in the twilight
I want to bring wishes of love to you at the beginning of night,

In the lock-down a person do not know what to do,
where something is touching humanity as it runs through,

where I pray for all of mankind and for you and me,
that omnipotent He leads and acts presently,

that these days are known for His presence in each experience,
for His salvation and mercy in each inconvenience

and at night I pray for you and also for your peaceful sleep,
that by the wind and the rain that falls God do you in safety keep,

where everywhere around me there are of autumn a sign
as if by a master's great forbearing design

nature goes into a time of rest and tranquillity
and more stripped I see trees daily

where I am looking at the coming of fall as kindness,
and I hope you know how much I love you in all of this.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere.]

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Gert Strydom

With The Taste Of Gooseberry

With the taste of gooseberry on your lips
you do embrace and kiss me in our beautiful garden,
your one hand is full of bright-red bell-chillies
which you picked among the weavers from their bushes,

the sun and a day-lily is in your hair,
while the fragrance of gardenia surrounds you,
your eyes swallow me where I look into their depths,
do see the whole cosmos in the green-brown of them,
the fingers of your other hand has red-brown earth on them,
while you do grip the sweetest orange carrots,
you are earthy and walk barefoot on the hot sand
while bees do turn threatening around us,
the Jack Russell jumps up and down
and snaps at them try to catch them out of the air.

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Gert Strydom

With The Twinkle Of First Sight (Rubaiyat Sonnet)

With the twinkle of first sight in their eye
a flaming star soared across the sky
as it shined with its own new light
and in only a wink it did pass by.

What a strange kind of thing it was to some,
as they thought that a time of joy had come
as the star had brought a kind of good news,
and led wise men away from home.

In every birth of a child on this earth
there is a kind of hope, a kind of worth,
the promise of passing on love and life
of a kind of warmth far beyond the hearth;

that great miracle of a small girl or a boy,
who will at a time either build or destroy.

Gert Strydom

With The World In The Cooking Pot (Tennyson-Turner Sonnet)

I saw quite clearly many dogs and cats
caged and whining somewhat fearfully
among some terrified hamsters and rats
looking, gazing, whimpering tearfully

before being cooked or fried alive
for some strange kind of people to eat
while more people did constantly arrive
walking in expectantly from the street.

I saw no animal befriending man
and in a horrific kind of vision
how radical science and nuclear fission
in the hands of madmen fried every human

turning on the living nuclear emission
looking like an extreme calculated plan.

Gert Strydom

With These Events (Free Verse Sonnet)

With these events your love become essential to me
where our days and nights suddenly are missing to me,
where everything is clear but nothing makes life simple
and sometimes my fears and even wishes feel superfluous
but this faultless honesty brings agony
where in everything there is also a kind of bliss
while things between you and me come to harmony
as if I do experience tears and pain and sorrow in secrecy
where honestly I am trying to formulate that which do exist,
where uncertainty cannot constantly hang between us,
I wonder if you do understand the intensity of my love
or are you and do remain in all of this humanly scared?
Maybe only faith, hope and love do remain for both of us
when we do loose ourselves so deep and passionately in each other.

Gert Strydom

With Time Your Voice Grew Faint

With time your voice grew faint
as if it wants to disappear forever
and sometimes you still appear in dreams
as if you are only daring it at night

and then for moments visits me
as if you are longing for the land where the sun shines.
With time your voice grew faint
as if it wants to disappear forever

and this nightly meeting
I sometimes really want
and sometimes I want to avoid it,
as it again brings pain;
with time your voice grew faint
as if it wants to disappear forever.

Gert Strydom

With Words (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

With my words, spirit and soul
my hands, lips and mind
and without any kind of fear
I want to know you on the other side
and so very deep in my heart
you found a place for your lair,
stood by me in times of my sorrow
and in you I believed like a child
where you do bring tranquillity and joy
and also do turn my whole world around,
you make my heart sing and jump wildly,
do know me as a man intimately and honour me
and you are fully a perfect woman,
the one around who I build all of my dreams.

Gert Strydom

With You (Free Verse Sonnet)

With you my days are bright cobalt blue
where you do hold the promise of the new tomorrow,
everything is very pure after the days of rain,
while we do entrust our lives to God.
In the moonlight you say that you do love me,
where I stay enraptured with you,
where all the years do fall away
as in everything there is only you.
When you do keep me company
I want to trust you with my secrets,
the unsaid things that remain outside of conversations
as you are my mistress, companion and wife.
I do not want it different in the future
and want to tell you the loveliest things.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

With You (Rubliw)

With you
forever seems
a very short distance
and long gone are the lonely days
while some enchanting moments do abound
and you do spin my life around
changing it in some ways,
even my dreams
to you.

Gert Strydom

With You I Am On New Unknown Ground (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

With you I am on new unknown ground,
when the sun raises red there is new hope,
I taste the spring and summer in your mouth,
do notice how my life in love with you does progress.
The dew falls softly on us when we do sleep outside,
the air is fresh and above us darkness as blue and black
and I want to bring every beautiful thing to you,
in love as a thank you and offering.
The sun radiates from your eyes and beautiful face,
there is a song of praise coming deeply from your words
and at night we walk in the star-light
as we are dumbfounded with the whole world,
while you do live in my soul, my heart and in my blood
and that this is much more than love is something that I do suspect.

Gert Strydom

With You I Want To Make Eye Contact

With you I want to make eye contact
and then I want to love you,
want to massage your back and feet
until all of the love cards
in Cardies makes sense,
and every love song
has a secret meaning for us.

Gert Strydom

With You My Life Goes Up And Down

With you my life goes up and down
and there is never a silent kind of time,
while you are my very own
and like a rose in its prime

you are lovely in your own kind of way
and more than special to me
as if you are blooming on your own sunny day
in an awesome kind of beauty.

Gert Strydom

With You My Love Did At First Sight Begin (Hybridanelle)

Love is a thing that person can fall in
very suddenly and head over heel.
With you my love did at first sight begin,

you did capture my heart, mind and spirit
in the soft-hearted kind way that you are
and more I learned to know you bit by bit,

and more you did my heart and my love win,
on principle and not just on how I do feel.
Love is a thing that person can fall in,

it's more vivid and greater than anything by far,
and much more than just special I view you
in the soft-hearted kind way that you are

but it overwhelms and does feel like sin,
and with you around my world do reel.
With you my love did at first sight begin

but deep at heart love is sincerely true,
where your qualities are real and not an illusion
and much more than just special I view you.

Although with a virus unsteady the world does spin,
love does not flake off and away like paint peel.
Love is a thing that person can fall in

and although death do bring to hope disillusion,
love binds the two of us just closer together,
where your qualities are real and not just an illusion

and although things now are ready-made as in a can of tin,
love sees things through, sticks to and is tough like steel.
With you my love did at first sight begin

but our love is for the worse and for the better,

where daily I witness you in great beauty.
Love binds the two of us just closer together,

at times you make me earnest or as if I am high on gin,
at times you do draw me closer or away do things wheel.
Love is a thing that person can fall in:
with you my love did at first sight begin,

where you are perfect in imperfections to me,
you did capture my heart, mind and spirit
where daily I witness you in great beauty
and more I learned to know you bit by bit.

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Gert Strydom

With You Somewhat Unfamiliar

With you somewhat unfamiliar, your smile goes
through all the barriers of my self-preservation,
infatuation surrounds me with great power.
with you somewhat unfamiliar,

your presence has got a deep simplicity;
your eyes, face and body has disconcerting beauty,
feelings bubble intimate and age-old

so half know and still unexpected
and we are both caught and unmarried
but I cannot resist your humanity,
with you somewhat unfamiliar.

Gert Strydom

With You That Do Love Me

With you that do love me
I do not know what to expect
and without you I will miss my whole life
and you are in every night and day.
Now that it's already becoming late summer
there are the most beautiful flowers that bloom,
and the years that do remain are coming too quickly to their end
when my whole life comes to fulfilment.
Continually you do bring sunshine
and you give me an urge to live,
while you bring the joys of happiness and pain
when I do really know the depths of love
and I wonder how long this summer will last
before our days grow faint with the winter.

Gert Strydom

With Your Awakening (Free Verse Sonnet)

The world is still going on its way at first light
the birds do flutter, whistle and frolic
when a person drinks in the early morning like coffee,
there is a smile on your lovely face
and here with you and me God is present
when the sun rises through the hillocks and later does shine higher,
while the early tranquillity bit by bit do linger with us
between us it is intimate and holy
where today we find the Lord in everything joyfully,
where He wanders from flower to flower together with us,
where we notice the red-cheeked peaches hanging on the trees
and do keep hoping and believing in the power of love as a child,
where the entire world is beautiful and open to us,
when I catch the glance of love in you pretty eyes.

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Gert Strydom

With Your Bright Presence

(for Annelize)

With your bright presence, the sunshine
irradiating from your green-brown eyes,
you can matchlessly define my happiness
and so terribly intimate

is the way that you look at me,
where you lead my thoughts astray
and our lives is a age old story
full of happiness and sadness

in which a man and woman finds each other,
from the time that Adam perceived Eve
and with every shadow falling, every perception
we are both enthralled like a child,
we find something precious, in each small gesture
that makes our hearts sing jolly and overwhelmed.

Gert Strydom

With Your Grace And Friendship I Am Enraptured (Rondel Prime)

When destiny and sorrow do jerk us apart,
You do bring the two of us together again,
where You do protect us from all kinds of pain.
You are the core of our happiness in my heart.

Nothing can Your loving goodwill thwart,
You do magnificent and wondrous ways maintain.
When destiny and sorrow do jerk us apart
You do bring the two of us together again.

In Your presence from my self-conceit I do depart,
when Your grace and personality do with me remain,
I may loose the world but with You eternity I do gain,
Your kindness and love becomes of me a part.
When destiny and sorrow do jerk us apart,
You do bring the two of us together again.

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Gert Strydom

With Your Soft Lips

With your soft lips on my cheek
I am caught in moments that draw out,
I am melting in every beautiful gaze,
with eyes flaming and touching
you let my time linger in moments

and near to each other in trust
you voice sounds like birdsong
and we are both affectionate;
with your soft lips.

Sometimes you look scared,
as if I am going grab or catch you
and at other times you understand,
when we kiss each other pleasantly
without getting our feelings in restraint;
with your soft lips.

Gert Strydom

With Your Soprano Voice

With your soprano voice
you should be able to fill
concert halls full of people
if you wanted to take it further.

In front of the mirror you sit
totally nude
where you are combing your hair,
are pulling curling tongs through them,

while you do sing yourself a song
of a couple that loves each other
with a pure voice
of which the sound

does pierce through the bird songs
and I see how your hair
does fall over your shoulders
with your white back familiar and soft.

Gert Strydom

Withering Into A Dead Thing

All in her splendor
my love went into the world,
and the new morning.

My best friend caught her eye
while she walked
into the sun.

shaking her head
to make her hair fall
in a frenzy of auburn colors.

The sea was turning
taking the tide in
and so were the seasons

from autumn in to winter
and winter charging
into spring

and our love
was left behind
withering into a dead thing.

Gert Strydom

Without A Anchor (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Bernard Odendaal)

The stars glisten in the window against the velvet of the night,
the golden moon is smaller than cut in half like a pirate ship,
you lie against me and are in your curves near to perfectly endowed,
I turn around; feel your hand gliding to me,
where your breath softly almost caressing do blow hot in my neck,
you smell of shampoo, spices and a bit of perfume,
outside the neighbour is admonishing his wife and children,
I turn around and a nipple peeps big and climbs out of your pyjamas,
on the cold night air I smell gardenia and strong jasmine
and spices as if we are sailing near to islands and you are all around me,
there is shadows moving on the wall in the moonlight,
we do take each other to a place where everything slides away,
your teeth gleam snowy-white where they are like two rows of pearls,
it seems as a thunderstorm is brewing and the lighting outside bashes down
blue-white.

[Reference: "Voor anker" (At anchor) by Bernard Odendaal.]

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Gert Strydom

Without A Car In Pretoria

There are few things that bother as much
as to look for your car
and almost to count the other car's,
when you come round a corner
and to be without a car in Pretoria
and to know the fear
that it is stolen.

There are fewer things that bother as much
as when two of your cars get stolen
and something is wrong with the insurance of both
and to be without any car in Pretoria
and to tell everyone that you call
of your predicament
and no Police ever being able to find any car
and every similar car that drives by
looks to you like the stolen one
and the robbers are now much better off than you.

There are few things that bother as much
as to walk
and stand with a hand stretched out
and the worst is to tell other people
and to be without a car in Pretoria
and to read comprehension in their eyes.

Gert Strydom

Without Any Resistance

In your arrival there is no ohm
as all resistance breaks
when you do come to me,
where your curves and lines do glide in satin,
are softer than any whispering,
your perfume is fresh and both known and unknown
as you are pretty, my attractive wife,
where your smile like sunshine
now brings a new morning full of hope,
when Teatro or Russel Watson or Eros Ramazotti
in Italian sing beautiful of love that remains eternally,
when candles burn in our bedroom,
secretive over the walls do throw shadows,
where after a year apart
your and my own year of jubilation begins together
and you and I are like Adam and Eve
who find each other again after the separation of the falling to sin,
somewhere with forgiveness and sincere love
when you are again mine.

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Gert Strydom

Without Boundaries I Wanted To Go To You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

With the absolute truth of life I wanted
in our sincere love totally unembellished
name the unspoken real things to you
from which other people might at times keep away,
I wanted to trust you with the dark things that do hesitate.
Simply humbly without reaching for vanity
I wanted to tell you how noble you come into my thoughts
as out of deep reflection a person does look at the unconsciousness.
Where that which is between us does flicker in the lines of my verses,
I wanted to go nobly and sincerely to you,
to tell you about you and me without fabricating anything
in sorrow, fun, bliss and also in the pains of life,
as a mere human with defects and abilities stand before you,
when I did realise for you my love, all my words are far too few.

[References: "Grense" (Borders) by N. P. van Wyk Louw. "Dilemma" by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Without Change Our God Exists

Without change our God exists,
through aeons the same,
to our fathers a comfort and help
and with us still his love remains

and though time passes quickly as a dream
while the generations of men and nations
come and go, wilting as flowers after spring
the hearts, minds and works of everyone He does know.

Without change our God exists,
through aeons the same,
to our fathers a comfort and help
and with us still his love remains.

Gert Strydom

Without Concern About A World Awry (English Sonnet)

I wish that right now to you I could return,
right next to you at night in our bed lie,
that we could live together without concern,
without worries about a world awry,

while you do peacefully next to me sleep,
while it is just like any other weekend
where we do to our usual routine keep,
that in our lives we do together spend

but being locked-down is catching up
with both you and me in this horrid time.
I miss you and even my female pup,
even if she does me at times begrime.

I wish that backward I could this time trace,
to be with you right now at our own place.

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Gert Strydom

Without Doubt

(after N. P. van Wyk Louw)

Without doubt

I want to immediately come to you
and everything that is unsaid that lies between us
I want to say in clear love filled words
but at times I feel totally without words and stupid

and now in my early middle life years
I do want you constantly near to me,
I want to tell you of the things
that people do not talk about
and that which is pure, holy and noble
I want to leave with you.

[Reference: "Grense" (Borders) by N. P. van Wyk Louw.]

Gert Strydom

Without Forcing Us

Now I have to go and get ready
that I can go out,
before the fatalism
catches me
and I wonder where it fit into religion.

If you first have to consider
if everything you do
are influenced by fate
and if God maybe
controls it on His own
and try and life
as if you first have got to get
His act of will for it,
life passes you
with time.

God is everywhere
and yet He leaves a choice
of how our lives go
without forcing us
into a set pattern.

Gert Strydom

Without God I Cannot Really Find Meaning

(in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Without God I cannot really find meaning in my life
when my own abilities, words and acts do blind me
what I had been, what I am and will become, becomes a mad rush
in a life where for no purpose I do dare my words and acts
but still I want to go to God and stand before Him humbly
with the trust and love of a mere child,
where He is the buoyancy and the beauty that exist in all of my poems,
where He comes constantly to my salvation when destiny do devour me,
when my own abilities, words and acts do blind me.

[Reference: "Credo" by Daniel Hugo.]

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Gert Strydom

Without Matter

Without matter to what you think you do know,
without matter to what position you do have in life,
be to judge other people very slow
even when you do witness unhappiness and strive.

Without matter to what experiences you have lived through
give others the chance to be themselves and to explain,
be careful in the way that you do act, in what you do,
as you could be responsible for unmentionable pain

when you do conclude to what you on the surface do see
and do not know the true feelings in the heart
the intention of what things is going to be
as living is a special, knowledgeable kind of art

in which each person does only play a role
but it does affect the world in whole.

Gert Strydom

Without Noticing Butterflies (Decuain)

Without noticing butterflies and bees
for many years we have both lived alone,
while autumn and winter came to the trees
and far too quickly the years are now gone
but I have found you as my only one
and at times you think that I am bitter,
while maybe something in my trembling tone
does betray the tears that sometimes glitter;
in this late summer not just anyone
but only you can turn my heart from stone.

Gert Strydom

Without Pain

We want to love and exist without pain
and dwell without fear
in everything that is dear
and the things that could be love
and in this way we really learn
to heal each other
that love is unique, different from everything else
and we do find depth in our commitments.

Gert Strydom

Without Restraint (Decuain)

Without restraint you gave all of your heart,
while we became much more than just dear friends
and even in your most beautiful art
your greatest passion swept to perfect ends,
in the way that your brush, your pencil bends
and in the late summer of our bonded lives
there is nothing that anyone pretends
as constantly new meaning living gives,
and as we do to and thro daily dart
now it's most painful when we are apart,

Gert Strydom

Without You

I write words in vain,
words of which the meaning
you do not comprehend

and how to press love
into a few words
I do not really know

and you are away
and we stay a hundred miles from each other
and it feels as if

it is in different worlds,
as if every thing with time looses meaning
and I play the songs that you sing over and over

as if I can hear something in your voice,
read your poems time and time again,
as if it can bring something of you back to me

while destiny flattens me
and you run
like water through my fingers

and without you
my life is without meaning
and it continues aimlessly

and I do not know
why things at times do not work out,
why I am fighting life's struggle in vain

and I cannot get you
out of my heart,
and cannot fight against you being part of me

and my blood is pouring, as my heart is broken
and my life falls to pieces without you
and I hope that your plans are only prosperous.

Gert Strydom

Without You (Cavatina)

Without you my days are very empty
and solitary,
life seems without its essence without you,
too ordinary
days do string on while from you I am gone,
it's necessary
to have your company, to see your face
weekends do seem a Godly kind of grace.

Gert Strydom

Without You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after George Weideman)

Without you mere moments do change to nothing,
months do change to years where the drought is severe.
you are a part of my daily necessities of life,
you are my fixed fortress when life does leave me perplexed.
Without you I feel unwelcome and an outcast
as if nowhere in life I can fit in,
like in the drought ditches inside a river,
I am washed out like old face-clothes.
Without you my life is a dried out medlar fruit
of which the nature changes to dust,
where no words or acts of mine do anymore make an impact
and useless I do shuffle on in life
but you are like the rain which the redbreast does call,
like the fuchsia that flowers in the winter on the porch.

[Reference: "Sonder jou is my dae leeg" (Without you my days are empty) by George Weideman.]

Gert Strydom

Without You [2]

In my thoughts we sit on the porch
of the big old house
in fifth avenue
and we watch the sun setting,
with colours that no painter can reflect
and the smell of the flowering jacarandas
is heavy and sweet in the air,

we drink sweet wine, from a bottle St. Anna
and your smile and the short happiness
I cannot catch here

but now there are tears that hang heavy
on my eyelids
and I am afraid of every new morning,
as without you my life is shattered,

without you
my life is like a cup full of holes
from which the water of life, flows continually,
as if I am caught in a world
where my destiny is already set

and this is just a helpless daydream
which is disillusioned
in the brightness
of every new tomorrow
and the reality of life.

[Reference: Sonder jou ("Without you") (a song) of Mandi Engelbrecht.]

Gert Strydom

Without You Even The Red Daybreak Fades

Without you even the red daybreak fades
and without you
every day, even when its summer
becomes blue and grey,
without you I loose the yearning
to trust
that every morning brings promises,
without you my life runs in a lonely circle.

Gert Strydom

Without You My Life Is Empty

without you I loose the capacity to trust
that life can become better
and without you I live alone in a world full of darkness.

When your are with me, every day has got meaning
and then I become aware of the first spring flowers
and it's as if everything gets new light
and then I do know what real joy is.

Gert Strydom

Without You Near (Triolet)

Without you near my joys are few
while still in my mind I do you see,
do you in your full beauty view
Without you near my joys are few
but every day hope comes anew
and your phone-call brings tranquillity
Without you near my joys are few,
while still in my mind I do you see.

Gert Strydom

Without You Nothing Has Got Meaning For Me

(after Herman de Coninck)

Your jeans, jerseys and scarves
are blue, red and yellow
and there is enchanting in them
but only when you do wear them.
Your bras and stockings
can lure any man,
(do proclaim advertising flashes)
but without you they have for me no meaning,
everything does hang at the right places in the wardrobe
as if they are just goods on the shelves of shops,
but things of your choice that do fit you perfectly,
even the shoes stand in neat rows

and when you do kiss me
there are wonderful things that it does to me
but everyone that looks through this window
only see mere words in a poem
and do know nothing even when we are constantly intimate.

[Reference: "Je truitjes en je witte en rode" (Your jerseys are white and red) by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

Wolraad Woltemade (Cavatina)

Beyond Table Bay far within the blue deep
man and horse waits
while their bones lie in sacred bravery
at the sea's gates
still lunging to and thro in the great swell
their forceful traits
are burnt into the hearts of small children
and of many South African countrymen.

Gert Strydom

Wolraad Woltemade Appears

He comes from the sea as a spectre
with seaweeds hanging on him
and rides his horse
that its hoofs crash like thunder
until he stops to climb down

and looks at the wide world,
are astounded for moments
and the horse snorts, sniffs in the wind,
wants to return to the sea again.

It's clear that everything now is different
and he notices a ship sailing past,
hears factories droning in the distance
and smell the age-old fog of the sea.

[Poet's note: After fearlessly riding into the storm swept sea to rescue several people from a sinking ship (De Jonge Thomas) on 1 June 1773, Wolraad Woltemade had perished in the great waves.]

Gert Strydom

Woman (2)(Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

Life did make her an angel,
other people did notice something holy and beautiful in her
as she was serving God above all things
and His love and kindness did touch her.
In front of her husband as a mere human being she was naked
but as a human he did not deserve such a wonderful wife,
would loose the world and everything for her,
wanted to protect her honour and life with his
as her love and beauty did come from her heart,
although she was supple, slender with a ravishing face,
where as a human she did not want to control him
and day upon day she did astonish him with small and big things,
in a dark world she was his life's light
and he was happy to honour God along with her.

[Reference:"Portret van 'n vrou" (Portrait of a woman)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Woman (3)(Free Verse Sonnet And Small Ballade)

(for Annelize, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

This is where I do find you
when after years you do climb back into my heart
and although a life-time is past
I do notice that your eyes do gleam the same

Chorus:

but if this hour becomes far and disowned
I did still pour out my love and wishes to you

Where you can bring days and nights for me to perfection
I wish that this moment would last forever,
I do want to be involved with your life and your heart
as between us an unslakeable fire does burn

and like a child I want to hope and believe and trust
that everything can become wonderful again,
that again I can find and discover you as a woman
that we can make each other's lives happy.

[Reference:"klein ballade" (small ballade)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Woman (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

In my spring, summer and autumn you do remain to me
the only true and pretty woman
that does stand out above every season and tide,
you are the only one that I do want to trust
in war, devastation en continual dilapidation,
in towns and cities that do frolic in the night
your love does bring a woof into my own universe
like the sun that does again come with each day
as if you do primeval protect something immortal and secret,
are hard-wired as the catalyst to the best that I can become
when you do make my times, my days, and my humanity holy
astound me with your love, grace and carachter,
where I do notice tenderness, depth and insight in your glace
when moment-by-moment you bring my world to a standstill.

[Reference:"Die vrou" (The woman)by Elisabeth Eybers.]

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Gert Strydom

Woman (Iv)

(in answer to D. J. Opperman)

With her decision and action she brought calamity
to her husband and every human being,

she did send humanity to the apocalypse
but she did repent in her days from that hour

and yet she carries to eternity
her monthly pain from that time,

she has got the ability to make or break a man,
to bring him to honour or to scandalise him

but at a time the Saviour came from her loins
and of everyone she did love Him most

when God as a man did pay respect to her,
did talk with authority about selfless love.

[Reference: "Vrou" (Woman) by D. J. Opperman.]

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Gert Strydom

Woman (Iv)(Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

The sea stretched out into the endlessness
as if it is without an end and a beginning,
the saltiness was in your hair and on your skin
where you were picking up shells on the beach one by one,
when the daybreak there in the distance with the far perspective did astound,
where the sun draw a line to eternity while it was rising
where I looked at you, did scout you with my eyes,
where you were drawing a silhouette against the sea and land
and I did realise how deep and serious intense I do love you,
where I thought about the ways of love
you were innocent, happy and full of trust like a child
and your hair was rustled by the beach-wind,
that someone like you does come once into a life
and are unparalleled still do turn around and around in my thoughts.

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Gert Strydom

Woman Of Mine

For years in secret I longed for you,
thought and dreamt about you while I riding in a Ratel armoured-car,
while rifles and cannons fired in the eighties,
when the army took me to the border and Angola
and in the many years I saw you in other women
but kept wondering about how you really are.

Life did speed up with me
and no woman was truly the right you
but when I did loose everything and my life did fall to pieces,
when all of my dreams did disintegrate,
I was unemployed and without esteem
but in all of this I missed you throughout my life.

l'Envoi

Now that I do know you for years, I do know that I am really living,
you are like a wild-plum from my childhood that I do bite to the pit
where you do cling to my soul, my spirit, my mind and heart
it's as if parts of you do cling to my hands and to my life.

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Gert Strydom

Woman Of Mine (English Sonnet)

(after William Shakespeare)

Away from me in pain you were roaming,
where of your inner thoughts I do not know
and back to me you my love, were coming,
while outside birds do love songs bestow

as if each other they are constantly greeting,
where our love remains true to the hereafter,
on weekends again and again we are meeting
where I do remember days of fun and laughter

and both our sorrows and joys are plenty,
where all of life and destiny is still unsure
where we are not still sweet-and-twenty
and love does everything kindly endure

in days of friendship, joy and passionate bliss
and maybe at its core life really is just like this.

[Reference: "O mistress mine" by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

Woman Of Mine (English Sonnet)2

At times we lie with limbs interlacing
and in my neck your hot breath I feel
as in sleep each other we are embracing
and the feelings are actual and surreal

as darkness draws its shadows on the wall,
invoke images that sneak, move and creep
and outside under the moon the leaves fall,
in all of this right against me you do sleep.

It feels as if in love we will never be apart,
while a gentle smile is on your sweet face
and I can feel the beating of your heart
while you do sleep on in tranquil grace

and here next to you I do lie totally awake,
scared to disturb you or a movement make.

Gert Strydom

Woman With The Cello (In Answer To Johann Johl)

Next to an apple tree at a crossroad
a woman plays a song of love
which is swept away by the wind,
as she plays a cello at her thigh

the wind blows swishing past and she is alone
and wonders when spring will come
with the apple tree blooming again
and half-blinded she plays
with her heart that she pours into the song.

Three howling foxes are caught by the melody
and they linger as if they are hanging onto the tune
while she plays with deep a deep kind of longing.

[References: Painting: "Woman with the cello and foxes" by Andrzej Busza. Gedig: "Vrou met tjello en jakkalse" (Woman with the cello and foxes) by Johann Johl.]

Gert Strydom

Women Do Remind Me (Sonnet)

(after Elma Mitchell)

Women do remind me of angels without wings
that can do many different things,
of soft hearted people that do really care
whose small touches are almost everywhere.

Armed with a knife, hammer, or axe,
they do cut, pulverise, gut and broil
in their pristine kitchens they do never relax
while something sizzles or fries in the oil

where they are busy with precise formidable chemistry
are preparing dishes of food in the way they should be
and they are simply great in whatever they do
while with love they bring order in the hullabaloo

in all of this do simply get time to look lovely
while most of their task their men never do see.

[Reference: "Thoughts after Ruskin" by Elma Mitchell.]

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Gert Strydom

Wonderful Things Have I Today Seen (English Sonnet)

(After John Keats)

My love, wonderful things have I today seen,
many raindrops dripping down like small tears,
where in the wind the oaks did backward lean,
while indistinct through clouds the morning peers,

everywhere the world after the rain is green,
with the bashing lighting and my mother's fears,
I was in a more tranquil world than it had been,
where through it all birdsongs a person hears,

while to you in love I do here simple words write,
I see the moon through clouds like curtains peeping,
in a rainy but yet still tranquil kind of colder night,
as if the moon is shy and are secrets to herself keeping,

but what would any of this or any beauty truly be,
if you do not know how much you do mean to me?

[Reference: "To my brother George" by John Keats.]

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Gert Strydom

Wonderland Without Alice

When I think of wonderland
I do not think of Alice, the tin man
or even the cowardly lion,
not even Marilyn Monroe
or a glittering place
sublimely beautiful in a city somewhere
but about the here and now
happiness springing out
of a pretty loving girl
who wants to keep me company
and in whose eyes I see fantasies
who makes this world
a great place for me.

Gert Strydom

Word Storm (The Creation Of A Poem)

I

At first the sky is crystal blue
and the sun hangs high,
in the way that it
always take.

Specks of white clouds appear
and more and more
are creeping near.

The clouds are getting heavy and dark
and suddenly the sky
is filled and the sun
is blanketed out.

II

The screen is blank
and words are sweeping in
till suddenly the image
is near and by itself
become words and lines
and maybe rhymes
and subject and language
and verse structures itself.

Drops of rain
starts to fall
and drops turn into
a blizzard of words,
that finds their mark
and dropp down as sounds
and transforms on paper
to a symphony of words.

Gert Strydom

Wordless (Rubiyat Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Wordless your eyes will feast upon my face
for silent moments we will each other embrace
I will glance upon the marks of the decades
with a finger all the lines on cheeks trace

your sweet lips will be soft under mine
and to me you will look godly almost divine
while I will for moments glance into your soul
and that day will be splendid far past just fine

and the tranquil coloured evening will come
while in silence we walk to your beautiful home
while I glance now and again at your sunny eyes
and we will be breathless be overjoyed in welcome,

be matured but as a boy and girl very much in love
with feelings and emotions that no one can remove.

Gert Strydom

Words

I know somebody that says things
without thinking about it
and without caring
about the impact of words.

Where words are at times innocent,
it can be deadly
and at times it's impossible,
to make things
that has been said undone.

Words can make people,
can inspire, cheer on,
bring gladness,
but just like that
words can break people
and cause great unhappiness.

It's wise to care about every word
and to protect your mouth
before you speak
and really hurt somebody.

[Reference: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits." Proverbs 18: 21.]

Gert Strydom

Words (2)

I thought that words
would draw you closer to me,
but words set us apart literary
in the real sense
and forever you and I
will never be coming together with words.

Words although magic
are always reaching out
to someone else,

as if you see
each and every poem
as competing against yours
and never do we bond
by the skill of words

and even the words written to you
carry their messages
but do not really hit the mark

as if I am only giving blank pages
with absent messages
and my writing more and more
does create less for you.

Gert Strydom

Words (In Answer To Vincent Oliphant)

When I read in a great poem
that humanity lies beyond
the borders of life and culture
I saw the poet hope
as if peace
would suddenly come down from heaven

and I did wonder if it was possible
to remove the animal from man
who rather wants to tread down,
vituperate and steal?

I did become to realise
that the people in whom
the indwelling of God does lack
are filled with darkness
and like barbarians they do believe
that violence is the last resort

and still it did not take the bullet
out of every firearm,
and still it did fail
to make anything else of the Panga blade
than a deadly killing thing

and the reality of the unknown robber
who sneaked around with a knife in the back of my yard,
my two cars that were stolen,
the loss of my work,
and affirmative action
does still threaten my life,
does force me down upon my knees
to pray to the omnipotent God.

[Reference: "Woorde" (Words) by Vincent Oliphant.]

Gert Strydom

Words [2]

Words could be witnesses of truth,
or lies, full of fibs,
indicators of character,
or inhumanness
depending on the company
that they keep

and some words
are only applicable to some people
like courage, love and respect
but all words are filled with meaning,
tone and colour.

Gert Strydom

Words From A Husband To A Wife (Envelope Couplet Sestets)

Spend your time with me until the night end
as we attend a party at the house of a friend
smile and talk to me as if I am someone else
laugh merrily at the jokes our host tells,
while you dance with me where the stairs bend,
spend your time with me until the night end.

Spend your time with me until the night end
smile coyly while a drink I recommend,
treat me like a stranger you have just met
while our eyes are just on each other set,
let your glance shy before mind descend,
spend your time with me until the night end.

Spend your time with me until the night end
even if our friends do not really comprehend
why we are different from our old stances
why we are romancing in all our glances
while like some strangers we together blend,
spend your time with me until the night end.

Spend your time with me until the night end
as if life on a moment do depend
while you act just like a brand new lover,
as if our feelings we did rediscover,
as if we met only on a godsend,
spend your time with me until the night end.

Spend your time with me until the night end,
friendly greet the old smiling reverend
while we proudly walk past to our dinner
as if we are just two love-struck sinners,
while our unfamiliarity we do pretend,
spend your time with me until the night end.

Gert Strydom

Words I Do Write (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to Johan Myburgh)

Words I write as formularies in what they are
that does tell about life and about absolute truth,
that do make a impact where oppression do constantly torment,
where in this time I draw constantly comparisons
for the much deeper impetus of the Lord and I,
not a as artist that only shows his wares
but do write every word and phrase to the heart
and do make a weft on a set time and place
My words I do write for much more
than only existence in bread and wine,
I sing about you and that our love is eternal,
where I cannot stop all of the verses
and I do not only write about beautiful companionship
but my verses are about the deep secrets of true love.

[Reference:"Jongleur" (Young one)by Johan Myburgh.]

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Gert Strydom

Words Of This Mere Man

I

Even if prince Michael
would whisper
great words in my ear
and I would hear
choirs of angels sing
the holiest and most beautiful
songs and poetry
or Gabriel bring messages
and revelations
and the will of God to man,
or if Raphael would tell me
his archaic gospel,

I would not find the words
to match to theirs.

II

Even if my words
inspired be,
they only come from me
and no prose or poesy
will ever match that
of a celestial being
and yet at times I read
power, beauty, danger
and pain
and sketches
and religion
in my lines

that is more
than words of this mere man.

Gert Strydom

Words Sometimes Take On A Own Meaning

Words sometimes take on a own meaning
and sometimes they are sharp and painful
as if there is much more to words

as if a kind of secret knowledge hides in them
that are sometimes something moving.
Words sometimes take on a own meaning

but somehow words can at times miss things
and are sometimes dependent on feelings
as if there is much more to words

when through it all love brings a kind of bonding
and so you and I are attractive to each other.
Words sometimes take on a own meaning

and daily a bond develops between us,
while you become more considerable to me,
as if there is much more to words

you constantly live in my thoughts,
while love becomes real through words.
Words sometimes take on a own meaning
as if there is much more to words...

Gert Strydom

Words That Are Like Water

You say: 'read my poem
and say if do find
the deeper truth'
or is something else still hidden in it?

But how can I
whose words do flow like drops
in a stream in all directions,
that is at times a part of the clouds
in the sky
that falls crackling down,
find the words that you are searching,
when you do not even find them yourself?

Or is this how love really is,
that no words
can truly catch it?

Gert Strydom

Words, Words And Only Words

When all words are said and done,
when every opportunity is gone
to live in peace, to find harmony
maybe I will be the only one

who will still pray on my knees,
begging for Your mercies
as I have seen the ravage that war brings
and know the insecurities

of manmade solutions that do not hold
even if at truth's very threshold,
and no words might be necessary
if Your love can unfold

and turn our own upside-down world
back to what it is supposed to be.

Gert Strydom

Work

For many bosses I have worked hard
and from early to late
I have earned a living
and tried to play my part
and some were nice and courteous
and others really mean
and past strict
and from all of this I now know
that whatever you do you it's a hash
and that you can trust no employer
and before you know it
you are seen as a threat
of being too capable
and businesses are set
that who works the most
receives the least.

Gert Strydom

Working Man

I did shave and shower,
did drive my car out of the garage
while my wife and children were still sleeping
and already I longed for meeting my family again in the afternoon

and I did twist through the busy traffic to Johannesburg,
did wait on the escalator at work,
did pin in a security code at the right office
and the day at the office did begin

and when on an afternoon I did come home
my children were away at university
and the signs of the years were already on my wife
when like always I held her tight
and outside the weavers did frolic in a big oak tree.

Gert Strydom

World-View Caught In The Subconscious

Outside the winter is dismal
with poison loaded in every glance,
where people are selling themselves,
do merciless chase after the next Rand,

do set up traps for each other,
trees do skeleton and are almost without any shadow
and the language is totally unknown
as if from a wild, foreign origin.

People are self-obsessed, very important
in their own eyes,
do want to believe the newest madness
that they are gods.

Even the animals do flee in the veldt,
there are snakes everywhere,
even baboons that run about,
the sky is full of birds that agitated do call,

the wind whirls as if it wants to build a tornado,
storms of hail hang all over the east,
thunder does constantly flash down blue-white,
rain pours down that road do stream like rivers

as if the seven last plagues
or Godly curses
are already hitting the earth
and these things do point to the Second Coming

but when I do awake
I am soaking wet,
while the sun does rise fiery-red
and the pet-cat does want its breakfast.

Gert Strydom

Would My Words

Would my words keep filling you with hope
and would you still stay true to me
although time passes in years
while your humanity feels sold out?
Would I still be able to trust you
and hold you tight
when the vortex of life wants to swallow me
and will we still be able to built a life together
when my career is falling apart
and the thunder of destiny does lash out around me
and I have lost every friend
and stand alone in the entire universe?
Or do you live in a world with hues of grey
while I still proof true to you?

Gert Strydom

Write Me A Few Words

Write something today
that sweeps my feet, my heart away
with a kind of loveliness,
that falls softly like a golden ray.

Tell me of your love, true and sincere
let me sweet nothings in your voice hear
enrapture me with the wishes of your heart
that as a soft caress falls on my ear.

Read me a few words
that you have written only for me,
catch me with your voice's melody
and it will be like the sweet chords

of a unknown symphony,
when in it only love I do see,
as if all our dreams of tomorrow
captured in it will be.

Set all of your inner feelings free,
bring to me your joyful company
and every day, every tomorrow
will only be filled by a kind of tranquillity.

Gert Strydom

Writers Block

At times I say to my pen
write dear pen
and scribble or scratch,
but whatever you do
write down words
and make sweet poetry
out of them.

But the pen lies silent
as if it's ink is dry,
like a broken violin
that cannot play anymore.

So I go to my thoughts
and say think dear man
and dream and sing,
but I have forgotten everything
and every hymn
that I use to know
is gone out of my memory
as if it never was there.

So I try to dream
and to see pictures
of scenes of how
the words in the poems
should be,
but they grow stretching
away from me.

So I talk to my Muse
and no Muse answers me,
but when I pray
a thunderstorm flashes past
and words comes gliding down
like drops onto a thirsty soul.

Gert Strydom

Writing Ode

To write is maybe like being able to use magic,
being able to catch holy words
and from somewhere
I try to find the creating energy
but usually it comes by its own accord

and sometimes I have got to be alone,
but at times
I can be among people
at a noisy place
where I do lock my thoughts off
and do place them just where I want.

Or at times it's like a prayer
where a person does hang
at the edge of the horizon
and tries to capture
the life that does surround you
in the essence
that does give meaning and value,
pain or even the abyss.

Or maybe it's the power
that comes from my muse
that tries to keep flowering
as I do take a oath
that does stay true to Him

and when my words do want to dry up
I ask like a child
to the omnipotent Lord God
to give more images,
ideas, thoughts and living words
and when I look
there are more and more.

Gert Strydom

Years Of Life

I have previously observed this place
and this meeting is surely destined,
maybe somewhere here, we did embrace,
while emotions now grabs hold of us
and now that you also do recognize me
your eyes are heavenly blue.

The air above us is heavenly blue
where we look at the stretched out sea
and recognize something of the coast and sea
as if our coming here is destined,
the being together grabs us
as if we are embraced by this moment.

The wind is swishing strong and it embraces us
and we see white horses on the heavenly blue sea
the sand is swished up by the wind
and looking at you, I am stunned by your beauty
and the peppering sandstorm hits us
and I recognize my love for you.

On this shore you did admit to being untrue,
clenched onto the steel railing
as if to that moment was destined
and my eyes at times heavenly blue
then was grey, while I looked at you
and fear and pain clenched my soul

Seeing you again clenched my heart
made me recognize that our love still exists
where you stand watching the beach
and I feel embraced by the past
as if everything now is, in a world so heavenly blue
with a place for you and me in it.

Have our lives been destined to this winter
where chilliness clenches the body, soul and spirit?
As if being caught by something out of our youth
recognized by memories

and I see the perception in your eyes, once heavenly blue
but I see you have now aged.

Lord where we now in later years see Your creation,
are our lives still embraced by You?
Is there a place for my wife and I in your domain beyond the blue sky?

Gert Strydom

Yellow, Bright And Brash Wherever I See

Yellow, bright and brash wherever I see
innocent and yet living free
with the spring they are rising,
as their seeds are spreading
as in blasphemy to every cursing industry.

Gert Strydom

Yesterday

Yesterday shots were fired
at the school of the children
while they were waiting on the school bus
and one of the parents were attacked

by criminals who tried to rob his car
and right through the children
the robbers and the parent
did fire shots at each other.

The criminals did flee away
and for some people that parent was a hero
but I was very upset
and just happy that my boys were intact.

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Gert Strydom

Yesterday Is Stuck In My Thoughts

Although I feel battered,
spent and chased away
yesterday is stuck in my thoughts.

Where we had breakfast
on the porch,
watched birds
pecking up seed and crumbs

and the lovely setting sun
caught in different colours
on the clouds,

but now I am alone
and have a view
of pink hollyhocks
on long green stems

protruding next to and over
a sawn down tree
of which the trunk

is like modern art
fingering up
out of a rock-garden

and some birds peck
against the mirrored windows
of my bedroom / study

and the big old brown Labrador
and the little golden Cocker Spaniel
lie stretched out on the lawn
watching the road

and I do not know
what happened to us
or why I am still
battling to get a job

and why the expenses
of life shattered
us apart

and yet after every thing
that happened between us
I love you still
and are amazed
that you are gone.

Gert Strydom

Yesterday Morning

I saw you yesterday morning
could kiss your soft lips,
do intimate things to you
but late in the afternoon we had to part

and now this morning
the gesture with which you push your hear back,
your smile and how you look at me
is past as if it is dead.

Gert Strydom

Yesterday On Good Friday (10april 2020)during The Lock-Down In South Africa

1

What a situation it was at Checkers in the Springs Mall
when our own Pick a Pay was closed on a holiday,
while we had to get food and other necessities,
as the lock-down had been lengthened by another two weeks,

2

where you, mother, were walking with your walking stick in the shop,
continually did come and stand far too near to other people
and repeatedly I told you, mother, that it is deadly,
that no one knows who could be carrying this Corona virus.

3

That where you are very deaf, mother, I had to talk very loudly,
where you, mother, treated any black person that were shopping
as some one that were working in that shop,
asked such people where the things were, for which we were searching.

4

Where you, mother, did not want to hear about the distance thing,
where I did become more serious and did talk louder with you
and then out of the blue there is police intimidation,
with a policeman with a mask on making a beeline for me,

5

who do not only admonish me and read me the Riot Act,
but threaten to take me out of the shop with violence,
touching the pistol on his hip again and again
and stood so close to me that I could smell his breath.

6

He did not care to infect me with something deadly,
where this virus is in the air in part of its existence
and I do not know with whom or what this policeman
in his work have to deal with,

7

where he twenty times tell me that he will teach me
how to talk to you, mother, and also every time
that he as a policeman with violence will take me out
of the shop, will take me out and will take me out.

8

Such unheard rage that just wants to burst out
in mere violence is for me with civilised people unknown,
especially where to be a white-policeman
is used as a weapon against a innocent person

9

and like a long-play-record that jams he repeated the same thing
over and over to me as if I have got no ears,
on which I cautioned him that my brother is a barrister and a judge
and I asked him to point out to me what laws I had broken?

10

On this he still owes me and will forever owe an answer.

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Gert Strydom

Yesterday You Read Book

Yesterday you read a book
and at times while you watch television
you are so caught up
that reality
flies past you.

Still you know exactly what I think
and where my thoughts are going,
before I speak about things.

Gert Strydom

Yesterday, Today And Tomorrow

Today part of my life is shattered
and lay in pieces
like a pane of broken glass.

Yesterday my wife left me,
for another man
and her children
do not any more regard me
as a father,
though I sacrificed
my life for them.

Yesterday my reputation was in ruins
and not only with the people that I know,
but across the globe
lies were spread by emails about me
to make me loose integrity.

Yesterday two cars were stolen from me
and no police could find the cars
or the villains
and the insurance
absconded from paying
with very clever clauses.

Yesterday I started doing contract work
and do not really know
from where the next job will come
and what lies ahead
for the next month or year.

Today part of my life is shattered
and lay in pieces
like a pane of broken glass,
but today I started a new life
and are free
from the persons
that impeded me.

Today I love somebody really special
that I know loves me,
today I act as I always did
with respect and integrity,
today I do my work
to the best of my ability,
today I go to interviews
and still believe
that the right permanent job will come
and today I live my life
as if it's the last and only day.

Only the great creator knows
what tomorrow holds,
but tomorrow is safe
in His hands and I wait
while His love unfolds
with the passage of time.

Gert Strydom

Yet Between The Two Of Us

(for Daleen)

During the winter it had been
as if we were barely living,
death in every dead piece of grass
and dead alike tree we had seen
but now during spring it's amazing
as the deadliness of winter did pass.

The spring rains have not yet come
but at our home
the grass is a bright green
through the fruit trees the birds roam
as if they do love living

but yet between the two of us the life
of love has ebbed away
as if it's essence have got no more to give
and for me this is a bitter kind of day

where your children bring my last things
and the echo of our lost love rings and rings.

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Gert Strydom

Yom Hashoa

There are things
which people never discuss,
like wickedness and destruction
and loss of humanity
that comes with hate.

It's funny how people
lose sight of God
and declare wars in His name
and kill the innocent in office towers
and lose all humanness.

I could never understand
why like animals,
people have been kept in camps.
Even my great grandmother
died in a British concentration camp
and the names of the predecessors
of many Afrikaners,
stays written on their hearts.

I see terrible photographs
of people lying like broken shop dolls,
where they are famished, molested,
embarrassed, degraded, broken and killed
and Yom HaShoa
hits mighty blows
into my soul.

Having been a soldier myself,
I wonder how warriors
could lose all humanity,
or were they only
sociopathic animals
without any honour and fame;
when they demonstrated their cruelty
in Auschwitz–Birkenau,
Buchenwald, Treblinka
and at other places.

I am a Afrikaner boer
and from Scottish decent
and my forefathers fought as boers
and rebels, against the British
and my Scottish great grandpa
stood against them.

We can go back
and trace and know our families
and somehow every body;
might be a Jew.

I sometimes wonder
from where my father's names,
Jacob and Solomon comes
and if it is only from
the sacred book.

Still identity, integrity
and freedom
and being humane,
goes much further
than race and nationality.

In the end
everybody stands
at the feet
of the Judge and Creator;
where words and deeds
carry their own power.

[Yom HaShoa=>Holocaust Remembrance Day. With thanks to Mahdoka, for the pictures and message in her email that inspired this verse.]

Gert Strydom

You (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Johannes Prins)

You long after a hot high-veldt summer day,
also for the early peach fourteen-day rain,
say that I am aging your man and must laugh more,
do walk away and look back like Lot's wife who did turn to stone,
you wink and a finger gestures that I must follow,
but you turn around again and do surround me with your arms,
do then laugh at cause and effect,
while the bell of an ice-cream cart does ring outside.
You say that it's so stuffy as if a monster is breeding outside,
the redbreast sings and frolics for the rain to come,
you complain about Peter who snips everything off in the garden
and when I do kiss you your love is not disguised,
you dream about Madrid, Casablanca and Paris,
want to go the arch of triumph and the Eiffel-tower.

[Reference: "jy" (you) by Johannes Prins.]

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Gert Strydom

You (Free Verse Sonnet)(2)

(after Johannes Prins)

You long after a hot high-veldt summer day,
also for the early peach fourteen-day rain,
say that I am aging your man and must laugh more,
do walk away and look back like Lot's wife who did turn to stone,
you wink and a finger gestures that I must follow,
but you turn around again and do surround me with your arms,
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you dream about Madrid, Casablanca and Paris,
want to go the arch of triumph and the Eiffel-tower.

[Reference: "jy" (you) by Johannes Prins.]

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Gert Strydom

You And I (Refrain Stanza)

(after Ina Rousseau)

As if a kaleidoscope further circle out with you and me,
like patterns on mother of pearl I do our relationship see,
we are finely brought together like light on glass,
and this moment is a perfect thing that does not pass.
My love, every movement and gesture is meant to be
where in a second it's more than anything
and you do carry for me and I for you great meaning,
where you and I and everything feels like eons past eternity,
like patterns on mother of pearl I do our relationship see.

[Defence: "Kaleidoskoop" (Kaleidoscope) by Ina Rousseau.]

Gert Strydom

You And I During The Covid-19 Pandemic (English Sonnet)

While a cloud of fog hangs over the town
and a deadly virus is by everyone known
I smell the pouring rain that patters down,
and locked-down everyone are on their own.

All over the world people have died
but to the deadly thing there is no end
and in loneliness over me you have cried,
where too little time with you I have spent.

You do my heart and all my senses fill
and worldwide a deadly virus does kill
and this winter has a merciless chill
while scientists brag about their skill

and away from each other are you and I
while day after day slowly passes by.

Gert Strydom

You Are (Crystalline Poem)

In the aura of remembering,
parts of you I see in each thing.

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Gert Strydom

You Are (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

You are the only true one,
against our love I have no resistance,
you are the lightning in my rain,
the thunder in my thunderstorm,
that does burn into my the back of my eye,
the tranquillity when the storms rage around me
and you are in my heart and in my mind,
in my soul, my spirit and my blood
you are the woman that comes into my dreams,
my mountain and my fortress when I get hurt,
you are my rose, my daisy and my flower
and you are gorgeous far past pretty
but through the decades I do miss you
where you do remain in my most beautiful memories.

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Gert Strydom

You Are (Free Verse Sonnet)(2)

You are my spring-bride when the cherries do flower
where curls run down your neck,
you are the one that leave me breathless and that do bring me to a halt,
the one who leaves me speechless in any other season,
You are in every dream even when the morning comes,
the one for whom I do look out and of whom I have got to beware,
you are the one that turns my life totally around,
my feelings and love I cannot disguise for you.
In you eyes, your understanding and your soul I am lost
where I long for you right through the four seasons
and from here I would take you far away if I could
as you are destined from God for me
and you do make me happy and also totally scared,
you are my pure moments in the summer-sun.

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Gert Strydom

You Are (Free Verse Sonnet)(3)

You are my spring-bride when the cherries do flower
where curls run down your neck,
you are the one that leave me breathless and that do bring me to a halt,
the one who leaves me speechless in any other season,
You are in every dream even when the morning comes,
the one for whom I do look out and of whom I have got to beware,
you are the one that turns my life totally around,
my feelings and love I cannot disguise for you.
In you eyes, your understanding and your soul I am lost
where I long for you right through the four seasons
and from here I would take you far away if I could
as you are destined from God for me
and you do make me happy and also totally scared,
you are my pure moments in the summer-sun.

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Gert Strydom

You Are A Butterfly

You are a butterfly
flashing over leaves,
landing on flower cups,

caught in the bright light,
spreading open your colours,
gliding up into the blue

and you always fly on
without really stopping
anywhere.

Only for a moment
you were with me,
caught in a second
with swishing wings
that rested without motion

and I beheld you,
while you entranced me
until the deeper truth came
and you opened your wings again.

Gert Strydom

You Are A Part Of Me

You are a part of me
and I carry you along
every night and day

and even the yellow sun
reminds me that you are the one
and no fate or religion
or any kind of destiny
can convince me
to let you go

as you are the breath, the blood,
the synapses that binds me
and you are in every thing, every part
of my beating heart.

Gert Strydom

You Are A Part Of My Most Beautiful Days (Free Verse Sonnet)

You are a part of my most beautiful days in the past
and I think of you where I see the sun gleam,
while slowly it rises over the far eastern horizon
and locked-down you and I are in the present
with a deadly virus as the only reason
and scientists hold themselves very clever
while China cannot get out of a predicament
but daily you are in all of my prayers,
where we both live in a broken country,
where we loose close contact with each other
and our days do run out mortally just as sand,
the government turns our lives upside-down
while humanity waits on another side
and I swear at night I can hear your voice calling me.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are A Special Person (Free Verse Sonnet)

I want to read the depth of your soul and laughter in your eyes,
come in prayer to the church of your body
as I do love you deep and cordially and you do move me
and in my thoughts and in my heart we are always together.
Our house smells of the summer-sun and flowers that are blooming,
it smells like tangerines, oranges, apples, mangoes and cantaloupe,
you drive me crazy and you do leave me dumbstruck
and in this great place there is love between us.
You are a special person and also my mate and sincere wife,
one that do catch the world in paintings that do hang everywhere
and it's cosy and comfortable when we lie spooned and I have you in my arms
but where these words do just slightly catch something of love
you are the one of whom I dream when I sleep,
you are flesh of my flesh, my love, faith and hope.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are Also A Visitor

Lord, when even for a month
I do not see the sun,
when the Cape's winter rain sieves down
as if it can last months long,
when it looks as if the sun
is totally absent,
when the winds even pull down oak trees

then I know that Your love is present,
that where around the fireplace
I find a little bit of comfort
with my loved ones
You are also a visitor.

Gert Strydom

You Are Always Flowering In An Endless Spring (In Answer To William Shakespeare)

Some similarities do I find
between you and a day in spring
when lovely birds sing
and rain new life brings

and yet far too soon that season is left behind
and still you stay pleasant and kind
a being without any irregularities, noble and pure

and while the sun brightly shines,
the cobalt sky is blue, your eyes have a darker hue

and when the sun declines before the night
your eyes sparkle with more lustre
than any light of the vast darkness:

and you are always flowering in an endless spring,
with a deep beauty that is true, that I find in you.

[Reference: Sonnet 18 "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? " by William Shakespeare.]

Gert Strydom

You Are Always With Me

You are always with me.

Lord, in this life and when I am dead,
in my iniquity and when from sin I am free,
You set my way on which I should go ahead
and wherever I want to be
You guide me to gain my daily bread.

In nature I here your voice in the lightning rod
and to You daily I do my sins confess
as You are my only saviour and God
and even at night when I rest
You are there, even on the steps that I trod
even when life is like a test.

Gert Strydom

You Are At My Side Wherever I Do Go (Wreathed Octave)

You are at my side wherever I do go,
in times of woe and of great bliss,
in each kiss of our love I do know
and we do glow in the way that it is,
I do miss you when you are gone,
as you are the one that brings me joy,
as a boy and a girl daily we do atone
as life goes on, we love without any ploy.

Gert Strydom

You Are Away(Crystalline)

(for Annelize)

Like a lizard clings to a small crack
you are gone and then do come back.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are Beautiful

You are very pretty
and the sun rising over the horizon
loves you,
while his red rays folds open.

The irises of which the colours are purple blue
and kingly on green stems
likes you and flowers perfectly,
to try and copy you.

Wild birds living in the trees
in the street
eat seed that you leave
and they realize that you are wondrously beautiful.

When the postman passes
he looks at the paintings on the outside wall
and thinks that if this is what comes
from your hand,
you really must be lovely.

The small white lapdog
looks admiring at you
as if you are a goddess
and knows were your splendour lies.

Envoi

Your auburn hair cherish
your pretty face, which is more beautiful
than a statue chiselled from white marble
and there's light
in your golden eyes
which witnesses deep beauty.

You are beautiful,
and only you do not realize it.

Gert Strydom

You Are Beautiful (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to D. P. M. Botes)

You are beautiful and every person spots it,
know about your garden and they do admire you,
the neighbourhood-watch that lonely do protect the streets
cannot wait to day and night look at you
but for you there is no truth in this
while you read the newspaper or watch television
and you think it's only something that others and I do fabricate,
while you look at the messages on Facebook,
think that every other man wants to misuse you,
even the old men to who you do provide food
who from distress use your welfare
want to share their time and company with you.
and you are far past being lovely
like a Dorcas do follow the ways of God.

[References:"Jy is mooi" (You are pretty)by D. P. M. Botes. Acts 9: 36.]

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Gert Strydom

You Are Beautiful [1]

It does not matter anymore
that the gazes of other men follow you,
that at times they look into your eyes as if caught,
that traffic cops sometimes want to follow your car.
You are lovely with something past mere beauty
and everybody can immediately see it,
there is no other more beautiful woman to me;
our being together is far more than just a maybe,
your love is something that I do not deserve.

Gert Strydom

You Are Caught In Moments

You are caught in moments
in passion like a kite pulling,
where you hang in wild winds

in a frolicking flight and still you are scared,
every moment is emphasized.
You are caught in moments

at your own insistence
want to pull me down in yearning
where you hang in wild winds

but sometimes it's as if you are longing,
want to shelter against me,
you are caught in moments

want to break away in the song of the wind,
still you leave an impression
where you hang in wild winds,

you are searching in impulse and desire
with nails that you put into my back,
you are caught in moments
where you hang in wild winds.

Gert Strydom

You Are Free

Not by shooting bullets out of guns,
or exploding bombs and missiles
or tanks and armoured cars that conquering
beacon of land, or aircraft that make
the air their own will people ever really be free.

Not by the exclusion of others,
the reserving of work,
expropriation of land,
possessions and money
or merciless violence
will peace ever come.

Not by hate, despair, robbery,
murder, injustice measured out as just,
might, corruption,
force, impoverishment and indoctrination
are the population bound in a nation.

Not by killing in war,
religion that tries to get righteousness
with violence
and bestiality in man
is paradise filled.

l'Envoi
Only by love and respect
where you ask forgiveness
for your own weaknesses
and do not keep holding others accountable
for the mistakes that they make
you are free from self
and before the world.

Gert Strydom

You Are From Me So Far Away (Villanelle)

While LM Radio does my favourite music play,
my love for you runs to eternity
and you are from me so far away.

It's another icy cloudy winter's day
and daily I pray that near to you I can be.
While LM Radio does my favourite music play,

it keeps me company and with you I want to stay
where you are far more than just precious to me
and you are from me so far away.

The Corona virus does all of our plans delay
and it brings great fear to our tranquillity.
While LM Radio does my favourite music play

I hear the truth that the BBC reporters say,
do wonder when from the virus we will be free
and you are from me so far away.

Daily for the world and you I do pray,
where I do the devastation of humanity see,
while LM Radio does my favourite music play
and you are from me so far away.

[Poet's note: The seasons in the Southern Hemisphere of the earth are opposite to those in the Northern Radio plays music hits from the sixties to the eighties and also to me the very best local Southern African English music.]

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Gert Strydom

You Are From Your Free Will My Mistress (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Louise Boshoff)

You are from your own will my paramour and wife
where you do love me with the faith of a child,
while we do bond with each other in pretty things
where you do keep me with you with forthright love
and in all women that I encounter I see you
as if I constantly do find parts of you around me
and at times you are carefree and wild like the wind.
There is something enchanting beautiful when I look at you
and when by destiny I have got to leave
you are the one that do find me again and do sneak in
where your footsteps do lie throughout my heart
and you like Eve you do stand across my life
where nowhere I can hide from your love
and I would want you in no other way.
[Reference: "kontrak" (Contract) by Louise Boshoff.]

Gert Strydom

You Are Gone, Gone From My Life

You are gone, gone from my life
and with time I should have known
that things were petering out
but although destiny had its impact
my career was falling apart,
I still had this absurd hope
that somehow our love was stronger,
stronger than the events of life

and at a time I was totally disarmed
by your gentleness
and now realise that somehow
I should have foreknown
that things would end
the way they did
and maybe the demonic gods
are laughing at me now
with their dim world view,

but the almighty Lord walks on my side
and few things remain in the world
that I once wanted with you

and also maybe absurdly
I am waiting on a new morning
when my star will rise again,
will shine against all adversity
and I am trying to have faith and hope.

Gert Strydom

You Are In And Outside Of Me

Its foggy icy chilly outside with a lot of rising vapour
inside you are like my breath and I wonder what has the day in store?

Against the window I see your reflected image
and in thoughts I am pulled back as if to another time and age,

the landscape is blotted out and shiny
and while I think about you I am insignificant and tiny

while outside softly falls the drizzling rain
and the world is washed clean without a stain,

I see how God is pouring out His mercy
the morning is red like port and here you are with me

and still fog hangs like smoke
while on our lives in prayer I do God's blessings invoke

and maybe love does the best for others seek,
I think when my lips softly do touch your cheek.

Gert Strydom

You Are In Every Word That I Write And Say (Free Verse Sonnet)

Deep in my heart I have a special place
from where love goes out to the world
and when the stormy winds and darkness comes,
then you again draw me into your arms.
You gave the circle thing back,
said with it we forged bonds
that no human or unearthly thing can break
and together we again went into the world.
You are in every word that I write and say,
the one who wants my world much better,
as my companion, mistress and wife
the one with whom a lifetime lays between us.
You are in my soul, spirit and mind
and if God wants it the one on the other side.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are In My Soul And In My Mind (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Karen Kuhn)

You are the breath that burns in my lungs,
around you hang my heart's life and death
and my need of you is past great,
you are in my soul and in my mind
and to you I come without any resistance
as you are always with me even in a time of need,
in this life you are my own partner
and against your love I am vulnerable.
You are like cigarette-smoke that makes an impact
where constantly you do infiltrate my being,
without you I do want to withdraw from everything,
where day after day I get more addicted to you
and later I do desire you day and night
where I do discover another world with you.

[Reference: "Jy's Gauloises" (You are Gauloises) by Karen Kuhn.]

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Gert Strydom

You Are Like Aphrodite To Me (|free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

Your words did somewhere in a place in my heart stop
and the mystery of what you say and are did knock on my heart
when like an angel emblazed with light with love you came to me
and still thoughts linger constantly in my mind and I am without words
as I have found you as a eternal precious one
and your voice, your fragrance is even in the wind
but when I do have no contact with you
where I am seeing I am totally blind
as you are like Aphrodite to me and totally matchless
and the thing that people call love is to me without borders
as when you came out of the water at the bright sea
and with love and longing I am at times defenceless
where I do stand totally alone and are waiting on you,
do hanker after an undetermined day and your pure laughter.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are Like No Other Women

You are like no other women
that was in my life
and like a puzzle
you fit into my world.

There are times that I know
that the Almighty,
has created you for me
and I am captivated
by the marvel that you are.

There's no other
to whom I can go
and embrace
and be able to know,
that it's genuinely love.

When life brings change
and things and unemployment
tries to drag us apart,
you still reach out for me
and you let me
become still more in love with you

When death takes you away,
I still search for you,
in the place
on the other side of the blue.

Gert Strydom

You Are Like The Serene Open Sky (Free Verse Sonnet)

Day and night you are like the serene open sky
over the scenery of my life,
I find you at places where I do not expect you,
in each moment's remembering and meaning,
further and much more widely than my horizons you do encircle me
where constantly the sun finds its way through your eyes,
you are at my bitter end and also at my beginning,
are as unpredictable as the wind
when the sun and moon walks footpaths right through your heart,
there is tranquillity that you constantly do bring,
the days and nights are full of magic and open to me,
when the birds do sing their songs of praises through your mouth
and sometimes I want to embrace you
when creation do have meaning for us both.

Gert Strydom

You Are Lovelier Than Any Other Woman (Strambotto Toscano)

You are lovelier than any other woman
that I in all of my life have ever known,
and I as only a normal kind of man
measure your shining eyes that are golden-brown
and do all of the greatest things that I can,
I even notice on your face the smallest frown,
as deep in my heart you are the only one,
with eyes shining as golden bright as the sun.

Gert Strydom

You Are Lovely

You are lovely and few
can outdo your beauty
when your eyes sparkle like dew
in the early morning while you smile in modesty

and they both have the colour of all the oceans
displaying feelings of tender gladness
bringing something sweet to emotions
in a world of sheer madness

and when I look at you countenance
in my heart stormy winds are waken
while love and loveliness fill every glance
while to the depths of my soul I am shaken

while you are so vivacious
and this very moment becomes extremely precious.

Gert Strydom

You Are Mine

Right through the night
you have been mine
and while time got wings,
I felt your soft body
clinging to me
and there was something
in your touch and embrace
that left another state of grace.

You were mine
when passion ran
like a wild fire
and your breath,
brushed my cheek
and cries of rapture
went in to the dark night
and pleasure found its mark.

In every possibility and way
that life goes on,
in every attitude and feeling,
you are my woman and my wife
and the one
around whom I build my life.

When I hold you in my arms
it feels as if nothing can part us
and I hear your true heart
beating for me
and I am free from self
and love with more than mere passion.

You are mine and will forever
be with me
and even when this life
speeds past its limits,
it's just like the morning mist
and the infinite thing that binds us
still remains in my heart

and in a way
we can never part again.

Gert Strydom

You Are Mine (Free Verse Sonnet)

When at night in the heaven I look at the stars
your words do sound caressing in my ear
and I realise again that I do not deserve you
while constantly wonderfully you do charm me.
When with each other we do build a own puzzle
and I smell apples on your sweet breath
while you are embracing me close to your body
as the moon dives away behind the clouds
then I know that I can never leave you,
while big-eyed you do look at me,
lay so soft and supple right here,
you are picture perfect and enchanting
while the moon brings something holy for us
and you are mine and I am your very own thing.

Gert Strydom

You Are More (Persian Quatrain)

Constantly you tread a footpath through my heart,
of my fondest memories you do remain a part,
your mesmerisms I do know intimately
and I miss you when we do from each other depart.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are More Than Just Beautiful To Me (Sicilian Sonnet)

There is softness to all of your skin,
some dazzling to each curve and hip,
a real magic touch on every sweet lip
and with you more than love I do win,

you do make my head and emotions spin,
it's as if with you on steady ground I slip,
with you my world do up and down dip
and in more sincere love you draw me in.

Your imperfections do fit me perfectly
and most of your thoughts I can tell,
you are more than just beautiful to me
it's as if I am under your charming spell
and that is the place where I want to be
as you love me and know me very well.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are More Than Just Wonderful (English Sonnet)

You are more than just wonderful to me
and truly you do love and I feel the same
where we do know each other in honesty
and beautiful and lovely is your name.

it's like a fountain of emotion in my ear,
as I know you intimately and well,
to me you are precious and very dear,
it's as if I am always under your spell

and never can I this life with you forget,
as daily your words and acts I do receive
and you are lovely from the time we met,
where daily in you I do sincerely believe:

still more precious you are with the years,
I know you in times of happiness and tears.

Gert Strydom

You Are More Than Lovely To Me (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

When smiling at you I nod my head,
read every word from your lips
that are painted inviting ruby-red
and feel the softness of your fingertips

then you are more than lovely to me
where you are rapturous starry-eyed
and a true angel in you I do see
of whom all self-conceit has died

and in life you do not play a part
as your true self I do really know,
I do know the feelings in your heart
while with radiance you do glow

where to me a single kiss is bliss
in the very way that life together is

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are More Than That Person To Me (English Sonnet)

To find a woman that really does care
while we do live, laugh and cry
is nowadays something quite rare
but in this time as life passes by

you are more than that person to me
and I wish so much to again see your face,
where in a lock-down our lives are to be
and I believe that it will pass by God's grace,

where daily we do to all of the rules abide
but missing you remains a terrible thing,
in its wake too many people have died
and a person feels almost guilty to be living.

I miss you so while days without you are spent
and to me you are innocent and eloquent.

Gert Strydom

You Are More To Me (Persian Quatrain)

Than a missing rib you are more to me,
you are the one that fits perfectly
and when around me the world do fall to pieces
then with an embrace and words you do set me free.

Gert Strydom

You Are Much Too Quiet

You are much too quiet
and do not even say anything
and when you speak, your voice
is soft more husky than usual
and maybe you are still
not really awake

and while we are driving out to the street
an avocado pear falls from the tree
with a shattering crush,
splattering into pieces on the big pavement stones

and surprised, even with a little shriek
you draw away, protecting your body,
your entire face with both of your hands
with fingers spread out.

Gert Strydom

You Are My All Season Girl (Free Verse Sonnet)

You are my all season girl and wife
who flowers constantly more lovely than spring,
the one who constantly leaves me speechless with her love,
the one who I trust with everything in my heart.
In summer you are my tender drops of morning-dew
when the sun rises bloody red and bright over the hillocks
and in life you do turn my days around to become much better,
you are the one, who I keep warm against me in winter,
you are my overcoat that fits neatly over my whole life,
the one who brings me love and life in every season of the year,
you are the one that stands between this life and me,
the one in whom I have faith and at times do pray for and fast,
the one who stays with me through the struggle of life
and with you in my life my days carry on and on with happiness.

Gert Strydom

You Are My Angel And My Devil (Free Verse Sonnet)

As an angel and devil that God share:
you leave me wounded and heal me,
you lead me into temptation and to tranquil waters,
are in my dreams, in my life as someone real.
There are a 1001 nights, which we live through
while the two of us in bliss cling to each other,
Arabic carpets come into my mind:
in my beautiful memories you are woven in.
In the impasse of sleeping and being awake
I cannot comprehend your phrases completely,
while you talk as if you have conversations in your dreams
and here you are away from a world full of fear.
Sensuously I love you in this time,
while love stretches into eternity.
© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are My Angel Of The Morning Light (Persian Quatrain)

You are my angel of the morning light,
the one who turns my upside down world bright,
you are the only one to whom I yearn
during the darkness of the night.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are My Big Eyed Woman

You are my big eyed woman, my girl,
in whose heart I find true love
and even if destiny sometimes shakes me,
even if the wild stormy wind blows

and even when life wants to devour my humanity
and even if I become blind in my old age
I still find the warmth of your caress,
and continually I am loved by you.

Gert Strydom

You Are My Constantly In My Thoughts

You are my constantly in my thoughts,
are present like the evening and morning breeze,
are refreshing like the afternoon rain
that continually brings new life,
you are a beautiful companion like the rising sun,
you are every day in my heart
with a new song like the doves that romantically coo outside
and in this gorgeous spring you are the only one
that does catch my eye and do astound me with loveliness
like the lilies and roses that do flower daily
and I do want and need and love you
as my heart is full of the great things
that you do bring to me.

Gert Strydom

You Are My Darling (Sonnet)

You are my darling, my wife,
the one with whom I walk through life,
the one that is mine, my inspiration and hope,
the one that holds me tight against her breast
and when you are right against me, it is as if I do behold myself
in your gaze and at times I am stripped from my own conceit,
when we do have deep conversations with each other and with God
and I do wish that which you are for me would never abate,
that each and every day will just bring bigger understanding of each other
as you have grown into to me and are a part of my flesh
and I do know you, do know what you are thinking even before you do talk
as you are my magic potion, the best part of my life and my healing,
you are the one that have ideals of what I can become,
the one that creates a place of peace for me in a world full of hatred.

Gert Strydom

You Are My Dream-Woman (Free Verse Sonnet)

for Annelize, in answer to André Letoit)

To be with you again,
to read the expression in your eyes
somewhere in a dream house
and to prepare curry and rice in your kitchen,
to hold you in my embrace once more,
to trust you with every wish, longing and secret,
to walk with you in a lane of oak trees with shadows stretching long
and draw you into my arms,
make you more than just something and a human to me,
you are my dream-woman far past all other women
whose voice does eternally lie in the recordings of my heart,
the one that I yearn to have near to me
and I yearn to learn to know you again,
to scout the whole planet with you.

[Reference: "iets" (something) by André Letoit.]

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Gert Strydom

You Are My Flower Woman

1

I want to remember you eternally,
I want to know you better than you do know me,
continually come back to you on each weekend,
make the bed and maybe also breakfast,
as you are more than just part of me

2

and the flowers I will keep bringing,
sometimes red roses, some white, or pink or orange
that I grew from cutlets we will plant together,
maybe on a cloudy day we will smell the rain in the distance
and there is no little flower game that we play
of have or have not as you are mine and I do belong to you.

3

The flowers grow in our garden or in pots
maybe now too many to count
as the children call that place Eden
and every season even in winter others do flower
but when spring comes we both are there speechless,
as love always asks for more and more.

Gert Strydom

You Are My Wonder

You are my wonder in the fine gossamer web of what life is,
in my days where destiny does deceive you do bring meaning,
where in all things you do keep hoping and believing,
and in all of this I see your love and God who does work in secret.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are Now Sleeping On Your Side

You are now sleeping on your side
with your back turned to me
and I see the line
that your spinal cord is making
and my sight follows it over your buttocks
till it disappears at the back of your ankles.

You are now sleeping on your side
with your back turned to me
but it only causes my hand
to slip easily over your curves
and to hang on your soft breast
as if I can catch the life in you
magically like this.

Gert Strydom

You Are Pleasant, Sweet And Kind (Sicilian Sonnet)

At weekends I take you in with my eyes
and to me you look like an angel divine
while eternally your love is only mine
and feelings from my spirit and soul rise

they are more sublime than the skies
and as at twilight the sun is like wine
I know the day will be better than fine,
the principles of love in your heart lies

that nothing true sincere love debars
that you are pleasant, sweet and kind
as your eyes do sparkle like the clear stars,
that you are in my soul, body and mind,
that with you happiness is never sparse
and that God does our lives together bind.

Gert Strydom

You Are Present

You are present in my heart and my mind,
also in everything that I experience and feel,
with you all of my life have got a close connection

and just as you are I do know no other person,
and I do only want the very best for you.
You are present in my heart and my mind,

but suddenly here is a virus from China, a foreign country,
and about the impact of it I have got a foreboding.
With you all of my life have got a close connection

but locked-down you are away from me at a distance
and too silent is the noise and bustle of the city.
You are present in my heart and my mind

and biological like a weapon from an enemy,
this pestilence destroys without any compassion.
With you all of my life have got a close connection

and I believe every life is in God's omnipotent hand,
this thing is not in His will or plan or purpose.
You are present in my heart and my mind,
with you all of my life have got a close connection

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Gert Strydom

You Are Present In Each And Every Heartbeat (Villanelle)

It's as if it's you and our grandchildren I want to greet,
I hear children's voices in the early sunshine
and outside the bush-shrike's refrain sounds sweet,

the lovely refrain it does again and again repeat
and I am so glad that your love is mine.
It's as if it's you and our grandchildren I want to greet,

nearby I hear the pattering of large and small feet,
while the sheen of the sun has something almost divine
and outside the bush-shrike's refrain sounds sweet.

You and the grandchildren do my life complete
but locked-down the world is in quarantine.
It's as if it's you and our grandchildren I want to greet

but my glance does only an empty garden outside meet.
I do go back to posting some poetry
and outside the bush-shrike's refrain sounds sweet.

You are present in each and every heartbeat
and without you nothing seems to be fine.
It's as if it's you and our grandchildren I want to greet
and outside the bush-shrike's refrain sounds sweet.

Gert Strydom

You Are Present In Each Deep Thought (Hymnal Octave)

You are present in each deep thought
in each new day that come,
our love was as if by God brought
to my heart's peaceful home
after many battles were fought,
you bring hope and then some,
you bring faith as it ought
and everything wholesome.

Gert Strydom

You Are Prettier Than Beautiful (Sicilian Sonnet)

You are more pretty than beautiful to me,
starlight sparkle within your golden eyes,
in them the depth of your heart daily lies
and I do want to love you past all eternity

but sometimes in them sadness I do see,
something hidden in your sleeping cries.
A brilliant smile await me when you rise,
it's as if you know how the day's going to be.

A holy image lingers on your sweet lovely face
as if God is momentarily present in your heart,
that selfless kind of love in your life I do trace,
we do together pray as we do the morning start,
to you there is an unknown kind of lasting grace:
your lingering kindness set you from others apart.

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Gert Strydom

You Are Pretty And Cute

You are pretty and cute
terribly feminine
probably wonderful
and maybe exceptional

but doll what am I
going to do
when we do kiss each other?

Gert Strydom

You Are Sitting On The Veranda

You are sitting on the veranda
enjoying the breakfast
of eggs fried with tomato with toast
and huge cups of very special tea
that I had made for you.

Sweet innocence radiates from you
while you watch the blooming
purple irises, some white lilies, pink,
orange and ruby red geraniums
and birds fly down
from the pepper tree
to peck up the seed
that I had put out for them.

There's a melody in your voice
while you give some toast with Marmite
to the dogs that gather
with twisting tails
to get their treat
and the morning is sweet
and our house is a moated fort,
a treasured place
where only we are locked in.

Gert Strydom

You Are So Fine On Me

You are so fine on me as light on glass.
and before I think,
you know where my thoughts are going.

You know me better than I know myself
and nothing can remove your prints from my soul
and you are delving deeper into me
and your green shoots wreath
around my deepest bark
and you grow into my soul
where you fit perfectly.

You swim deeper into my life's streams
than any other has gone before
and you fill all of my dreams
and you are so fine on me as light on glass.

Gert Strydom

You Are So Lovely (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

In your walking I watch your flowing grace
and you are so lovely that I can take you any place
I see the look in your eyes the glowing of your lips
and there is electricity in your slender finger tips
your mere presence makes my heart race
with a kind of fire that very few people discern
and in myself I can feel you deeply tenderly burn,
you fill my head, my heart and in me every space
and you are so lovely that I can take you any place.

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Gert Strydom

You Are The God Who Leads Me To Victory (Novelinee)

When about me the heavens do rumble,
you are the God, who leads me to victory,
in destiny's roughest kind of tumble
in all things you help me to remain free,
when there is no resistance I can muster,
when everything about me burns like fuel,
when all of my own reserves do fluster
in the world's darkest, most ominous duel
you give me the will to face another sequel.

Gert Strydom

You Are The Lovely One

(for Annelize)

You are the beautiful one
with the valleys in your sunny eyes
at Paarl and Stellenbosch
and the mountain passes in your laughter
that meanders past Clifton
all along the coastal road
passing Simon's Town
with the bays in your arms
False Bay,
Gordon's Bay
and Betty's Bay
with the Pacific and Atlantic oceans on your lips
where I have lost all of this
and now are trying to find back.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Are The One

You are the one
that was destined to be
everything in life for me.

With you with me
the sun is much brighter,
the light of the stars at night
twinkles soft and tenderly.

Everything is much more intense
and my life has a clear purpose
and everything in it makes sense.

Where will everything go
and what will I do
when destiny and time takes you?

Gert Strydom

You Are The One (2)

You are the one that come into the silences
and of my life you are the sum,
the one (next to God)around whom everything turns
and like this you turn my days and life around.

Gert Strydom

You Are The One (3)

You are the one that come into the silences
and of my life you are the sum,
the one (next to God)around whom everything turns
and like this you turn my days and life around.

Gert Strydom

You Are The One (Crystalline Poem)

You are the one that I adore,
from whom I ask God for much more,

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Gert Strydom

You Are The One [2]

You are the one in whose depths I hide
when life at times tries to capture me,
the one to whom I long for many nights
when monotonous the wind moans outside.

Gert Strydom

You Are The One [3]

You are the four walls of the house that does cover me,
that brings a cool shade against the destroying sun,
the place where in the cutting winter
I am hot and cosy

and when the stormy winds do bellow
when rain, hail and thunder do pour down
you are the one
to who I declare my heart,

the one that knows
the depths of my soul
as if my thoughts
are your own.

Gert Strydom

You Are The One That Brings Joy To Me

With the rays of the sun starting to shine this morning,
when the garden was full of flowers with opening cups,
my heart was confused and without speech,
when you took a shortcut through my thoughts,

I was waiting for you to come home
and I had expectation and hope
but when the time drew nearer I was somewhat stripped.
With the rays of the sun starting to shine this morning,

the beauty of the flowers were disguised in the early twilight
but already the birds wanted to chat
and like a teenager in love I was somewhat stupid,
when the garden was full of flowers with opening cups.

Time suddenly elapsed far too quickly
when suddenly you were coming along the road
and I was wondering how things between us would be,
my heart was confused and without speech,

then a leave was circling twisting round and round
while a weaver dipped its head in the drinking bowl
and you were far prettier than the most beautiful flower,
when you took a shortcut through my thoughts,

when the gate suddenly squealed while opening on my property
with a cloud hanging white like a giant pillowslip,
I realised that you are the one in all of mankind
who brings joy to me, when the day started to end
with the rays of the sun.

Gert Strydom

You Are The One That I Do Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

You are the one that I do trust with all my secrets
above all other women you are utter beautiful to me,
wonderful even when you do turn my world upside down,
you are the fortress that I do build against the world,
in the silent moments I think about you
and even if the black-collard barbet twitters the day red,
even if the frost of life is spread out everywhere
I pray to God to hold His hand over you,
heroic as a warrior you stand at my side,
are not blinded by the insanity of gossip
but it's with sincere love that you do come to me
where you are vulnerable but also a heroine to me
and I trust in our love and on God like a child
when day after day you astonish me with your humanity.

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Gert Strydom

You Are To Me

To me you are the most beautiful person,
the one on whom I did pray and wish,
the best that the years has brought me
and much more than any other thing,
you are the one that takes my hand,
you are my most honourable and precious treasure,
that live does grant me.

Gert Strydom

You Are To Me Past Unique

(for Daleen, in answer to Daniel Hugo)

In life we do together function well,
you are to me past unique,
where you do find meaning in everything around us
and in life and with me.

Ask me and I do not know specifically
but about you I cannot keep silent
and you are greater than any painting,
special, wonderful and very energetic:
you are to me past unique.

[Reference: "Nog 'n liefdesgedig" (Another love poem) by Daniel Hugo.]

Gert Strydom

You Are Very Hard To Try And Forget (Stave Stanza Sestets)

I do not like the loveliest poetry,
or any kind of music better than you
and although these things are awesome to me
they do not have the ability to be true
but from the very time that we had met,
you are very hard to try and forget.

There is something in the way you do smile
that draws me, does all my feelings beguile;
it may sound somewhat absurd or dissolute
but I find you beautiful and very cute,
more intoxicating than wine or a cigarette,
you are very hard to try and forget.

Gert Strydom

You Are Vivid (Terzanelle)

You are vivid and picture-perfect to me,
in your presence it's as if there is static in the air,
while I love you to the nth degree.

I smell the fragrance of your blonde hair,
in my mind is etched you slender curves,
in your presence it's as if there is static in the air

and you set me at ease and make me on my nerves,
with you my life runs full of adventure at the edge,
in my mind is etched you slender curves,

it's as if I am constantly walking on a narrow ledge
but to the depth of my heart I do you like,
with you my life runs full of adventure at the edge,

where we both do races through cars on my motorbike
and you do act with decisiveness and with poise
but to the depth of my heart I do you like

and to me your voice is a song and not mere noise.
You are vivid and picture-perfect to me
and you do act with decisiveness and with poise,
while I love you to the nth degree.

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Gert Strydom

You Are Vivid, Beautiful And Kind (Sicilian Sonnet)

You do dwell deep in the depths of my heart,
mean more than anything in the world to me
do fill me with excitement and tranquillity.
Signs of you I find even in my art

and I love you and you do play your part,
it's even if you have changed destiny
as things are changed from they use to be
and nothing can tear the two of us apart.

At times I do you really understand,
at other times you drive out of my mind,
and in the world you lead me by the hand.
In you sweet serenity I do find,
where suburbia becomes the Promised Land
and you are vivid, beautiful and kind.

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Gert Strydom

You Are Woman

(in answer to Oskar Prozesky)

You are the thunder that comes down blue-white in the high-veldt,
when stuffy and pressing the air longs for rain
and you are the rainbow that hangs heaven-high,
when your smile and your humanity leave me speechless.
In you the taste of peach and tangerine is un-disguised,
you are the constant yearning of my heart, spirit, soul and flesh
and you make me very happy and make me scared
as in a mere moment you turn my life and my world around.

[Reference:"Verlange" (Longing)by Oskar Prozesky.]

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Gert Strydom

You Are Wonderful

You are wonderful and sometimes full of mystery
and at times I do not understand you completely
but your smile, your laughter and the things that you do say
are treasures that no money can buy
and I do not want you any different.

Gert Strydom

You Ask That I Must Again Turn Back (Free Verse Sonnet)

(after Elisabeth Eybers)

You ask that I must again turn back with a gesture,
must go away from that which is safe and secure,
that I must accept changes in you and your family
and that everything does remain the same is no secret,
where you do expect that I have got to forget everything,
must come and face a similar lifelong barrage,
where I know of the breaking down of my humanity:
that your people do not even respect or regard me as a human being,
where you did bring about and speak out the end of our relationship
and then it was with you and your people's deeds night to me,
but now you do want that I break my intentions with someone else
as if there still remains something between us, you do expect:
that after all of this no change has come
and here I stand totally confused and astonished.

[Reference: "wat jy vra is net die klein gebaar" (Sonnet. All that you ask is only a small gesture) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

You Ask What Then, My Lamb? (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to my wife, Daleen Enslin)

Do you know that I believe in you and your love?
It is something of hope, trust and faith,
you bring solidity to my unbelief,
in sincerity you have got a lovely ability
to turn everything around although it's upside down,
you are resolute against my superstition,
even if life makes me a hothead.
I know a better tomorrow comes, it's just so.
Also that no death or anything does devour love,
God's compassion is new with rising sun,
still I believe in you with the trust of a child,
that nothing can avert the impact of sincere love,
we are connected to each other past this life
as you are a part of my soul, my spirit and blood.

[References:

The better tomorrow: Matthew 24: 30-31: "30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other."

With pleasure I quote Daleen's poem here:

"Do you know? " by Daleen Enslin

"Do you know how much I love you,
that days do turn without you,
without end or limit.

Do you know that I exist only for you,
every moment of my day do scream your name out,
I notice you in everything around me,
you are my red sunbeam morning glow.

Do you know that I love you,
far past the starry-blanket,
up to the end of time
my darling, I want to say it to you.

Do you know that tomorrow may never come
what then, my lamb,
but now you must know this:
love is as strong as you do believe in it."]

Gert Strydom

You Break Every Cliché (A Reply To Octavio Paz)

As I turn the magazine's page
I see your lovely face
catching my eyes
like a morning glory opening
for the sun in a clear sapphire blue sky

and the glitter of your teeth
shines like a set of perfect pearls
and the lines beneath your dress
draws attention to your sheer beauty

and I write this poem to you
whose intelligence and character
I know from the times
that we have met
and I know that there is much more
to you, than photo perfect looks.

Far too many men view you
as just one more shallow head
and instead I know that your beauty
comes deep from your heart,
that it's part of your soul
and that your integrity
makes you to break every cliché

and that your good humour
and sharp wit
makes you a pleasure to be with
and that you break
the frames that people set you in
by just being you.

[Reference: No More Clichés by Octavio Paz.]

Gert Strydom

You Burrow Into My Heart

I

You burrow into my heart
are up against the embankment of my goodwill
and it feels as if we will never be apart
as if you do not bare me any ill

and there is only ground and hard skin
set between the emotions of love that does remain
while you are centring in
with all the heartache and pain

that comes with life as it daily goes
and at times you do feel much to close.

My resistance is weak,
while I am trying to protect my own humanity,
are trying to regain my mental capacity
and I wonder what you do seek?

II

You are rubbing me mad,
are turning love into lust and desire and at times I am glad and other times sad
while you are driving to be one
with my central core,
are trying to secure me before I am gone,
are burning me with a kind of fire
that can destroy and also make whole
that needs and wants just more and more
and I see you eyes peering into my very soul
while I wonder if this is how love really is
and find something deeper in each and every kiss.

Gert Strydom

You Came As My Delivery

You came as my delivery
from a world that tried to overthrow
in storms and rain that did continuous flow,
at a time that I thought that I never would be free,

when I saw all my own iniquity,
when I did not know where to, to go
and men saw you as only human but you art not so
but by your Godly power you brought me to see

that you Jesus Christ, was still pointing the way,
that you know my troubles well,
was on my side throughout,
at the worst with me you chose to stay
in a world where men in war, in trouble and sickness dwell
you came to the rescue while I felt totally worn out.

Gert Strydom

You Came To Me In Serenity (Rondeau Redouble)

You came to me in serenity as someone beautiful and gay,
that morning was hot full of sunshine and bright
and all my fears and tears were swept away
while you stayed right through the night.

You were happy, and it was sheer magic despite
the stupid things that I did at times say,
before we laid next to the glowing firelight.
You came to me in serenity as someone beautiful and gay,

where we looked at the wind on the lake in rippling circles play
while the waves were very tiny and without might
on a tranquil, calm awesome day,
that morning was hot full of sunshine and bright

with doves fluttering in their cooing flight
and in the sky there was nothing black or grey,
only the sparkling bluest sight
and all my fears and tears were swept away.

When a storm had risen with foaming spray,
with gigantic waves crushing threatening and white,
something special happened on a rainy winter day in May
while you stayed right through the night.

My love here now I give you my plight,
that even if from me you do stray
if you somehow run away in fright
I will still remember and say:
you came to me in serenity.

Gert Strydom

You Can Change The Names

You can change the names
of places and call them,
what you want.

My people who life there,
will still be living there
next year and for many years more.

You can change the personnel
that work for the city
and the inadequate delivery of services
and corruption,
will in time make you
pay a handsome bill.

You can change the names of streets,
and fashion them
to your heroes.

Never could you undo
the acts of those
whose names they originally bared
and everyone that uses them
will still know
what they were called before.

Without fixing the roads
people will remember
about the holes in Slovo street
and the dead robots in Mandela drive,
which will keep them alive

You can change the names of airports
for its better that way,
that the world knows
that they coming
to an new country
that's has fallen years behind,
from where it was before.

Gert Strydom

You Can Hold All Of My Attention

You can hold all of my attention
and it does not need a swimming pool or tennis court
where under women you are a unique

and there is something special and different to you
where with a mere glance to take my breath away.
You can hold all of my attention

and maybe I am on earth a the most happy man
where through destiny you do stand with me,
where under women you are a unique,

where you still love me sincerely when life does bash me down,
even when destiny does tore us apart.
You can hold all of my attention,

you are in all of my days in the wonderful memories
and do love me more that yourself
where under women you are a unique,

there is electricity when my hand folds over yours,
When so easily deep into my heart you do find a way.
You can hold all of my attention
where under women you are a unique.

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Gert Strydom

You Climb Into My Dreams (Free Verse Sonnet)

You climb flop into my dreams,
are in the end and in the beginning,
serious is the situation that I have with you
as nothing of it is fabricated.
You are my own dream and also my woman,
the one that day after day I view intimately,
I do love you with everything in me,
you are the one that I do trust with my secrets.
Lovely to me is your own coming and going,
you are the one that does exist for me
and when we are separate for a long time
I cannot understand these things,
where as the light and darkness we do find each other,
sometimes are companions like the rain and the wind.

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Gert Strydom

You Colour My Life

You colour my life
with new thoughts, with music
with poems that you write

and paint brush strokes, like magical signs
right across my body
and now I miss you
while I remember all the beautiful things

and we are far apart
as if you are lost
and we now live in two different worlds
and still there is a special place
where I find you in my thoughts
and I wonder if you are missing me?

Gert Strydom

You Come To Me

You come to me during my impotence,
bravely face any kind of unsure resistance
with loving lingering enchanting persistence.
Serving a holy God full of omnipotence

you come to me in a world full of violence,
with a intimate presence in my existence,
with love's sweet sure luring insistence,
with words even in times of severe silence

do express the very essence of true love,
find me even when I do from you depart,
act and look like an angel from above,
do invade my body, soul, spirit and heart,
you are as tranquil as cooing white dove
and from all other men you set me apart.

Gert Strydom

You Come While The Summer-Rain Falls

You come while the summer-rain falls,
do carry parcels and magazines in your hands,
near to you a lightning bolt comes down,
in alarm everything falls to the ground.
I come nearer with a big black umbrella,
our lips meet for a moment hot and wet
where we do share the umbrella with each other,
water splashes down past our heads to our feet.

Gert Strydom

You Coming Home (Couplets)

(in answer to Elisabeth Eybers)

From outside amber shined the streetlight
when suddenly you appeared from the darkness of the night,

the light splashed bright over your beautiful face
as you reach with a finger over my cheek did trace

and while you bended to kiss me
you large lovely eyes I did see,

softly above the streets noise
I found and again lost your voice,

the following moment stretched out as such moments do,
in the night it was only we two

in moments of passion of life and death,
happiness and bliss was on each breath

and later so very close you lay
while we said no words to the break of day.

[Reference: "Klein ballade" (Small ballade) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

You Complain That The Dogs Of The Neighbours Keep You Awake

but I do suspect that you do miss me like I do you,
it's as if the empty room tonight is suddenly breathing,
as if without you being near I do not trust the darkness.

Gert Strydom

You Cook Vegetable Soup

You cook vegetable soup
and I look at you
while you cut green beans,
carrots, onions, celery, parsley
and tomatoes into two pots.

There are herbs, spices
and pepper that you are scattering
and two types of soup powder
that you throw in
and the pots steam and buzz
while I am washing the dishes
and the smell
makes me hungry
and I wonder
if the soup
are going to taste as good
as it smells.

We drink tee
and there's medicine
that you give for flu
to me
and it's great
to be with you
to read the look
in your beautiful eyes.

Gert Strydom

You Cry Over The Phone

(after Herman de Coninck)

You cry over the phone
when you do tell me how intense you do love me,
that now for week you are missing me very much
is as if there are just worse tears on my do not cry

and the MTN-reception is bad and we are cut off
but it's bad to live miles from you

and when you do phone again
I want to tell you about the sincerity of my love
but it only stays at darling, my love.

[Reference:"Geen sentimenten die me schrijven" (No sentiments I do write)by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

You Did Become

You did become flesh of my flesh,
spirit of my spirit
as you are in the deepest part of me
and I want it never to be different

Gert Strydom

You Did Become [1]

You did become flesh of my flesh,
spirit of my spirit
as you are in the deepest part of me
and I want it never to be different

Gert Strydom

You Did Become [2]

You did become flesh of my flesh,
spirit of my spirit
as you are in the deepest part of me
and I want it never to be different

Gert Strydom

You Did Become Human

You did become human in a primitive time,
walked through dusty roads full of humanity and hope,
told rejected people about forgiveness,
made miracles against the laws of nature a reality,
did touch broken humans with soft fingers,
did heal people from their pain,
did read their grief in their eyes,
did tell everyone how love really works
and when the Spirit of God did descended upon You
a pure kind of bright holy light did radiate from You

and here where I come full of sin to You
I am like a child
in my own years of old age
and You do continually find me daily.

Gert Strydom

You Did Change The Way That I Do View A Woman (Sonnet)

You did change the way that I do view a woman,
did change the way that I do comprehend love.
With you I do feel more than just another man
and our true deep-hearted feelings nothing can remove.

I do want to connect with you in each and every way
that is possible between a man and his wife,
for mere moments with you I do constantly pray
and that a change will come to my whole life.

Without you my days are extremely lonely,
as if only darkness does exist everywhere,
as to me you are special and the one and only
and constantly I dream of having you right here.

You are beautiful, charming, joyful and smart
and you are constantly in my mind, my soul and heart.

Gert Strydom

You Did Enter My Heart

You did enter my heart, you sneaked in
almost unnoticed with a simple smile;
it was such a quite kind of thing, happening
without me being aware and in a while
a sheer emptiness was in my heart
when from each other we were apart.

Gert Strydom

You Did Seep Into My Heart

You did seep into my heart,
have made friends with my hands and body
and now that you are becoming well-known to me
between us no games do exist

as you did become a part of me.

Gert Strydom

You Did Seep Into My Heart [1]

You did seep into my heart,
have made friends with my hands and body
and now that you are becoming well-known to me
between us no games do exist

as you did become a part of me.

Gert Strydom

You Did Suddenly Leave Me Behind

You did suddenly left me
while the spring did whisper in the branches
was speaking a secret kind of language
while thousands of blossoms did appear everywhere
and just as silently you did disappear.
while a thousand flowers was all around us
but in another summer you did again appear
and knew what love really is.

Gert Strydom

You Do Bring Light

You bring light in a dark world,
even there where the might storm winds blow,
You draw Your route in the darkness,
while You charge lives with your own fervour.

Gert Strydom

You Do Burrow Right Into My Soul

You do burrow right into my soul
through every barrier that I have made
and when you are near
every resistance crumbles

and I see a kind of grace in your eye,
a kind of sparkle that entices and speaks to my heart
and with you time gets wings and does fly
as if to my life you are destined to be a part

and to you all kinds of resistance is weak
while your presence is driving me mad
and even the look, the expression of your face
talk without words

and have a serious reality to it
as you are in my pulse and in every breath
as if you are made to fit
to be a partner even beyond the limitations of death.

Gert Strydom

You Do Drive Me Totally Crazy (Hybridanelle)

Everything that you say and do,
the touch of your soft fragrant skin,
do draw me much closer to you

and darling, you do simply amaze me
with the way that you do smile,
you do drive me totally crazy

but do know me through and through
and the smell of your fair hair does draw me in.
Everything that you say and do

let me feel captured and totally free.
When I am sad you do bring me joy
with the way that you do smile

but always to me you do stay true
and you make my world out of control spin,
do draw me much closer to you,

do sweetness, care and selflessness employ
and with patience on me you do wait,
when I am sad you do bring me joy.

About all the things of love I have no clue
and making love with you feels like sin.
Everything that you say and do,

do bring me closer to you and do me elate
while I get to know you better still
and with patience on me you do wait,

where only great things you do pursue.
The way that you do conversations begin,
do draw me much closer to you

and you do my life with beautiful things fill.
You are like an angel without wings,
while I get to know you better still,

where together through life we do continue
and when I loose with you I still do win.
Everything that you say and do,
do draw me much closer to you,

where with love for you my heart sings
and darling, you do simply amaze me:
you are like an angel without wings,
you do drive me totally crazy.

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Gert Strydom

You Do Exist

Dear God of the holy trinity
when in this morning light I see this day,
it can be like any other
or it can be the greatest one of all
depending on what I make of it,
as a being with free choice
and I do not need to explore the vast world,
nor do I have to dwell in scientific research
or bother with laws of mathematics
to know that You do exist, that by unknown,
incomprehensible power you have created the universe,
space and this planet called earth,
the sun, the sky and even man and much more than this:
that you love me and every other human being.

Gert Strydom

You Do Know

You do know even when at times
you want to look away from me
that I do love you past any rationality
and I that in your heart
you do have a special place for me

and there is nothing that can stop us
to recklessly love each other
even when it brings loss
to the people that do surround us.

Maybe it's the wise thing
to stay away from each other
or it seems as if your children do think this way
(as if they are standing in our shoes)
but I rather want to have you with me
for the rest of my life

and do want to love you more sincerely and intimate
than I know that it is possible
(you are right when you do believe
that I can never live without you)

and it becomes clearer to me
that I will destroy every other relationship
when you do come into the picture
and for me there is no other just like you

but what your children do not really comprehend
is that you are my lawful wife
and you and I are bonded to each other
before the Lord God

and when we are away from each other
we cannot wait to get back to each other again
as love does find a way through all kinds of things
and do constantly keep trusting, believing and hoping.

You Do Lead Me On (Couplets)

In mere words to You lord I did pray,
You did drive all of the demons away,

brought my words past this world's scope
brought back to my life love and hope

and even when my life turned around,
You put my feet back again on solid ground.

When destiny did my life and career to the ground burn
against all of this and every hardship around you did it turn.

You are my fortress in the midst of distress,
my true friend when all of my life is a great mess,

You do give me living words when mine are gone
even when all of my words are petrified to stone,

You do lead me on and do straighten my way
bring to me the beauty of every new red-dawn day.

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Gert Strydom

You Do Live

You do live in
the canvas of your soft skin
and I look at you, some call it lust, others sin
but we do call it love, the way that life begins.

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Gert Strydom

You Do Not Know (Italian Sonnet)

(after Dorothy Parker)

You do not know
how much I care
about the little things that lays me bare
as love at times come and again go

and sometimes it is in happiness or sometimes woe
while my sincerity is always there,
love is a thing at which I still have to dare
and it's not always constant even if I want it so

and sometimes I am again on my own
while love flies like a bird away
and even when I do not want it like this
my beloved's heart at times turns to stone,
while at times it's a great happy day
and this is the way that life and love is.

[Reference: "A Portrait" by Dorothy Parker.]

Gert Strydom

You Do Sneak Into My Poems (Refrain Stanza)

(in answer to Joan Hambidge)

I notice the impression of your eyes and face
and to me our love is intimate and more than a kind of grace.
No heathen astrologist have got to predict our days
while we do love each other in so many ways
and you do sneak into my poems that everywhere I find of you a trace
where constantly I find your footsteps left behind
and you are in my memories and constantly in my mind
and to me our love is intimate and more than a kind of grace
you do fill my flesh, soul and spirit and are present in every place.

[Reference; "Kode" (Code) by Joan Hambidge.]

Gert Strydom

You Do Talk About Camouflage, Day Patrols

(in answer to Ernst van Heerden)

Tell me great poet tell me
how it feels to be called up against your will,
to from very high above the earth fall down by parachute,
and to have an enemy camp beneath you?

Have you seen canon shots from a hostile T-55 tank
pierce a Ratel armoured car's armour,
did you scatter the white powder over those killed
where they lay in trenches
or have you jumped from a burning armoured car?

Have you seen what does remain
when a soldier on patrol does detonate a landmine
or does receive a mortar bomb
or a rocket grenade as a gift from the enemy
and then you do talk of soldiers
that walk through the bush?

You do talk about camouflage, day patrols
and about hiding behind sand bags,
but have you seen the black population totally mad
necklace each other,
have you seen a burning person crying?

¶Envoi

For your poems I do have great respect,
as I know that at a time you had been a soldier
and that you are a great poet
but you do not know
how misery could circle out wider in the bush war,
how veteran soldiers now do not know
where they do fit into their own country.

[References: "Marlene" and "Skietgoed" (shooting goods) by Ernst van Heerden.

"Onder wasgoeddraad se onderhempies deur
klouter klein poenskop Krisjan van De Wet
langs koue waters van die balie,
gooi kole in die erdvarkgat en skiet
pif-paf op kronkels van die rooikopslang.

By geroeste konkas, Wagter met sy blaffies,
skreeu die makkers: "Honoris Crux is joune! "
Jy's veilig deur met 'n granaat in die vuur
nou hol vir die vale in Mulilo se bos,
omseil met jou tekkies die landmyn se brul! "

(My translation)

"Shooting goods"

"Through under the washing lines and undershirts
small bold headed Krisjan De Wet climbs
next to cold water out of a drum
and he throws coals into the hole of the anteater and fires pif-paf
on the coils of the red headed snake.

At some rusting drums the dog Wagter is barking
and his comrades shout: A "Honoris Crux" is yours!
You are safely through with a hand grenade in your fist-
now just to run to the bush of the pale Mulilo,
sneak with your running shoes around the roar of the landmine! "

(Note a "Honoris Crux" is a South African military medal for utter
valor.)]

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Gert Strydom

You Do Turn My Life (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Daleen)

You do turn my life upside-down
and do bring the very best like this together,
where you do confirm your feelings and decisions
while I do believe in the immortality of love
and maybe all things are better like this
as on your lips I constantly do hear my name,
in how you view me you are full of joy and thoughtful
and on my life you have got an unknown ability
where in this life you do constantly find me,
do cover my life and existence with your kind of love,
where I find you present until I lie down to sleep
and in our relationship I do believe sincerely like a child,
that you do love me past the scope of this world,
that no words can tell about the depth of your love.

Gert Strydom

You Draw Beautifully With Your Pencil

You draw beautifully with your pencil,
sketches of almost any flower and plant,
things that are alive and some things that are dead

even a woman giving birth
on the beach.

You draw beautifully with your pencil

on a table are slices of bread
with a hungry dog on the other side;
things that are alive and some things that are dead,

there are children that are wasting away from starvation
and a woman's hand with a wedding band.

You draw beautifully with your pencil,

a sounding level going down a well
being held by a strong male hand.
Things that are alive and some things that are dead,

you sketch and sometimes it's any thing valuable;
even people in love on a tropical island
and you draw beautifully with your pencil
things that are alive and some things that are dead.

Gert Strydom

You Dream

In Spain you want
to buy a villa
and dream
that we desert away into the world.

That we disappear from here
and go to a foreign place
and stay in a new country
and only you and me
are going there.

That we talk our own language
among people
that does not understand
what we are saying
and you paint great paintings
and I still do not know
what I am going to do there
(maybe fall more
in love with you)
or perhaps
it doesn't really matter.

Envoi

When at a time
we awake from this dream
perhaps things work out better
than what I expect
and we'll lie next to the Mediterranean,
with a seagull
screaming in our ears
just like here.

Gert Strydom

You Email A Photograph

You email a photograph
of a hand holding a baby
and surely all of us,
are in the hand of the Almighty.

Even if our things look grim and dark
He still stays in control
and sometimes He let us wait a while
and at times we just don't,
see the way that He blesses us.

Some times it happens
that we do not understand things,
and at times
we do not know the way
that life's path leads.

He still plans the right way
and even when it doesn't feel so,
He determine that things work out
for the best. and His hand
stays almighty and strong.

Gert Strydom

You Filled My Wavering Sight (Novelinee)

I have seen a lovely garden that speaks
of the most tender kind of loving care
with tranquillity, beauty at a peak
with different flowers everywhere
in colours and fragrances that delight,
in their bright variety, their kinds of hue
but then you filled my wavering sight
with your words and intentions that are true
and I have never met someone like you.

Gert Strydom

You Fit Perfectly Into My Life (Sonnet)

You fit perfectly into my life
I feel your steps where ever I go,
I even see your reflection in the glass
without it betraying your presence
and the times that we laugh together
now are happening more and more;
as if our humanity waits on each other
fragments of current events stay lingering,
as if you are the light in my life
I search for signs in the Milky Way,
in human recollections and even in memories
to find why you are know, but without explanation
of this connection between us,
that only draws us tighter together.

Gert Strydom

You Fold Around Me

(in answer to Herman de Coninck)

You fold around me with days that are full of rapture like sin,
where days and nights do pass without us noticing
where your mouth, your body and you are more than a human being to me,
where you come into my life like the drizzle that falls for days,
where nowhere else but in your heart and in your love I am home
and for you and with you I want to wander right through the world,
you make me more than a part of you
as if it is Eden before the snake came there,
where every word is sincere
and full of truth with an eternal impact
and through eons a person
does not have to say the word love
to know the depth of it.

[Reference: "En zij omhelsde hem met al haar" (And she embraces him with all of her) by Herman de Coninck.]

Gert Strydom

You Give A Smile

You give a smile
that makes my legs lame
and your eyes,
tells their own story.

Your lips are wet and soft
and when you lie
with your hot body next to me,
nobody have to say a word
and I am glad
that you are part of me.

Gert Strydom

You Had Awaken A Blazing Fire In Me (English Sonnet)

You had awaken a blazing fire in me
as you had shouted my name at the gate
while you waved extremely merrily
and the night was dark and it was quite late

with the songs of birds, the song of the wind,
the songs of insects while the moon shone bright
and your image, starlit eyes is in my mind,
with the fire of stars as a light in that night

and we walked and talked until tears
filled your eyes with a great happiness,
while the night, the wind and the years
cried out against the time of loneliness

with our joy happy as a bubbling stream,
while the bliss of a kiss was like a dream.

Gert Strydom

You Had Awaken A Eternal Love In Me (English Sonnet)

You had awaken a eternal love in me
as you had shouted my name at the gate
while you waved extremely merrily
and the night was dark and it was late

with the songs of birds, the song of the wind,
the songs of insects as the moon shone bright
and your image, starlit eyes is in my mind,
with fire of stars and moonlight in that night

and we walked and talked until tears
filled your eyes with a great happiness,
while the night, the wind and the years
cried out against the time of loneliness

with our joy as happy as a bubbling stream,
while the bliss of a kiss was like a dream.

Gert Strydom

You I Do Hold (English Sonnet)

(for Annelize)

You I do hold me with blinded blissful rapture
where I do go through sunny day after sunny day
where our friendship and our love do endure
wherever destiny does in our lives lead the way

even if we do weep, laugh and cry and swear
in times of spring, summer, winter and in fall
still for you throughout my life I do truly care
and all of the lovely great yesterday's I do recall

and from the Lord God I do get some strength
in times of wealth and bliss and times of woe,
you do comprehend do talk with me at length
where your great loveliness I do truly know,

in you I have found tranquillity and happiness
where you bring me joy and the greatest bliss.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Jerked Me Out Of My Dark Yesterdays

1

Almost out of myself I search for all kinds of answers,
do talk alone with an expert or sometimes in a group.
I thought all kinds of love for me did wither away
with this silent kind of unknown pain
and it's as if eternally in life I am without answers,
cannot and do not want to avoid the impact of destiny,
by their own days, months and years do jog past.

2

I want to find something to stop my destruction,
everyone that I think could help I do call in
but unexpectedly by yourself you came to me,
like an angel suddenly prominent appeared in my life,
as if sent from God in the word with black upon white,
as if presciently I do see you again:
"I am going to marry you, " you say directly straight to me.

3

Speechless and suddenly enraptured I look at you
while silently in my thoughts I call on God,
and with unexpected things you do leave me dumbstruck,
it's as if you cannot disappear out of my thoughts,
as if unexpectedly you possess part of my soul and spirit,
as if you came to stay in the deepest part of my heart,
while my dogs do happily cry and bark at you.

4

You have caught me and my heart wants to race away,
when I visit and have to leave you cry on the porch
and time and again you turn my days and my whole life around,
you are in my flesh, my spirit, heart and soul and mind.
I love you sincerely and at times you do insist say it,
holy en passionate and earthly is the thing between you and me
you do make me brave, undaunted, sincere and silly.

Gert Strydom

You Know That You Are Very Deep In My Heart

You know that you are very deep in my heart,
how much I adore you
while in your absence I miss you for long moments

and love brings a kind of sorrow
but continually you sneak deeper into my heart.
You know that you are very deep in my heart,

my words, my deeds and feelings are no secret
but sometimes my words get few,
while in your absence I miss you for long moments

and you are in every thought
and our comfort with each other has been present from the beginning.
You know that you are very deep in my heart,

that our love goes much further than just sympathy
that nobody can fabricate such feelings,
while in your absence I miss you for long moments.

Everything that I am and want to be you do know
and sometimes you are in every word and sentence.
You know that you are very deep in my heart,
while in your absence I miss you for long moments.

Gert Strydom

You Laughed The Lost Years Away

When the sun went down in an orange copper-glow
and your hand found mine warm,
all of life was better than good
and dumbstruck like a small child
you glanced at the beauty when the darkness came,
saw the shiny evening star hanging high
and with God's beautiful handiwork you were speechless,
caught for moments,
the lost time was without meaning,
as if only here and now
is the great beautiful reality for us both
and we did embrace,
all of the turn-off roads disappeared into the nought
with the amber light of the night
while innumerable stars did shine down upon us
and lovely was your face,
with your eyes big as if they wanted to swallow me,
with your soul revealed
and still I do remember the impression of that moment:
as a woman you are wonderful.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Lay Naked On The Bed

You lay naked on the bed,
stretched out on your back,
with the room's window open wide

as if you are trying to catch the breeze,
while the sun is touching the mountain top
the last time in the late afternoon

and I see your breasts moving up and down
while you breathe, where you lay with legs wide open
where sunlight is falling on the little hairs

totally unaware of your shame,
so as if you are only a little girl
while you sleep on

and I draw a light coverlet over you,
before the dusk catches you
with a sudden chilliness.

Gert Strydom

You Let Me Glow

You let me glow deep under my skin,
where I do realise the wonder of you,
you set sparks free deep in my blood,
an intense, intimate kind of deep glowing
and love remains something between heaven and hell
where I miss you into my deepest soul,
you wonderfully are different from any other woman,
you do save me when life does me hurt,
where I do realise the wonder of you.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Lie Stretched Out Next To Me

You lie stretched out next to me
while sunlight splashes over us
with breasts rising up and down and a naked thigh.
Lavender bushes wave on the other side of the windowpane
while you turn around and the sheet slips further down
and your fingers reach for mine.

You lie stretched out next to me
while sunlight splashes over us
and I get a view of your whole body
over soft curves into your niche
and still you are asleep,
my stick stands like a mast
and you lie stretched out next to me

Gert Strydom

You Long To Go To A Place Near Mountain Streams (Triolet)

You long to go to a place near mountain streams
where we wander around in our memories
or maybe to the Knysna forest you go in your dreams.
You long to go to a place near mountain streams
for which your heart at times screams
where we wander among the trees without worries.
You long to go to a place near mountain streams,
where we wander around in our memories.

Gert Strydom

You Made Me Believe

You made me believe
in angels
and something of the divine
when you became mine.

You struck my humanity
with greater beauty
than I expected
from any human being.

Yet your spirit
blazed through every word
and every deed
in much more than sincerity

making me believe
that your love is something
great and powerful.

An entity that cannot perish,
nor grow dim with time,
or age or changes in our reality

and in you I see reflected
the man
that I ought to be.

Gert Strydom

You Make Me Fierce And Vigorous And You Make Me Blind (Free Verse Sonnet)

You are the girl who is fair,
or sometimes you hair is dark or tinted.
You are the one in whom I do find bliss,
the one that fiercely beats in my blood.
You are the one that do stop my world
and you remain innocent like a young child,
you make me fierce and vigorous and you make me blind,
it's with you that my life gallops through the world.
You are the one that supple and softly lie spooned against me,
the one that takes me to dance in the rain,
do chase me away and then realise that we are bonded together,
you are the one for whom constantly I say pampering words,
you do bewitch me, and enchant me in a blissful trance
and in this life you are to me much more good than bad.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You May Be A Realist

You may be a realist,
who have got her life firmly in control
and as a romantic, I am
striving for a much better world

but somehow you understand me
to the depths of my existing
and your loving, your respect
is a very precious thing

and even if destiny arranges things,
arranges every day, in how we live and play
you are the one, who brings meaning to everything,
the one that brings meaning to who I really am.

Gert Strydom

You Must Come (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to George Weideman)

It's as if the blossoms have greater beauty this year
where the apricot, peach and almond does flower
and you, my love, must come here to me
where I do alone experience nature in its loveliness,
where the redbreast constantly does call the rain,
with weavers, sparrows and doves do twittering sing,
you must come, as I stand alone on the porch
while everything brings to each other their love.
It's as if the days pass quickly like the season
where the summer-sun does hang in the cobalt sky,
you must come to be with me in this time,
to catch the love and beauty for moments
when the cobalt blue at twilight becomes so dark,
you must come while God still is pouring out His mercy on us.

[Reference:"Dis of die blomme" It's as if the flowers)by George Weideman.]

Gert Strydom

You Must Not Show Any Fear

(in answer to Yehuda Amichai)

You must not show any fear,
and have to have a tan
even if not using
the malaria tablets
that causes you to burn spots
(which I take anyway) ,
scared of fever, weakness
and death that comes without it.

You must not show weakness
and I am showering
in a hedged off shelter
pulling the string
from a bagged bottle,
being afraid that all of the country,
will wash away into the dark.

In the daytime I walk patrols with special force soldiers,
sometimes are flown in by chopper in for hot pursuit
on enemy tracks,
some nights are dropped by parachute from very high,
but tonight while the moon is rising big and white,
huge enough to inspect
the dark ditches, the valleys in it
I am showering in the middle of nowhere
in a small military base

and after the battle I came crashing down,
crashing down in myself,
start retching,
shaking without anyone noticing
but are still dedicated to staying alive
and people think of it
as the ordinary soldier thing.

[Reference: "You Mustn't Show Weakness" by Yehuda Amichai.]

You Never Came

You never came
and time caught on to me
while I waited in vain

and still you did not know
that I was expecting you
to appear out of the blue.

Longing gave a wish to me
to be with you
but even though you love me too

the pressures of live demands
that I am here and you are there
and at times live isn't fair

and divine you are
but a human still
and what can I say
but how much I miss you.

Gert Strydom

You Played With A Hero Character

You played with a hero character
and I cannot remember if it was Superman
of GI Joe
and your younger brother
had a monster or a beast
maybe a dragon or Minotaur
which both of you used to throw
in to the plants
creeping up against the garage wall.

Then one day suddenly
it appeared on the top floor
of the apartment where we lived
and I do not know which character it was
which flung my shirts, pants, suits,
pairs of shoes and ties
down from the sixth floor
screaming at me to go.

I went up to fetch the rest
of my belongings and it was a beast
for sure
that almost assaulted me
(who was your Mommy giving a show)
and tried to destroy
every thing that I owned.

I shouldn't have let her crawl
back into my heart,
or visit me with that old green car,
and there and then
we should have parted for good

but I loved you both
as if you were my own blood
and she was the light of my morning,
my afternoon and darkest night
and I tried desperate
to make our relationship work

toiling on it for years

and the character kept returning
growing more powerful
as time went by
and I never really knew
what I had let myself in
until I saw its full fury
and had wasted years
and all of my savings
totally in vain.

Gert Strydom

You Remain

Like a precious small chest
in which you close your jewels,
you remain deep in me.

Previous girlfriends
are swept out of me
like leaves in the wind
and the times with you,
are kept hidden away
in my heart's photo frame

Even if I am in heaven
or maybe in hell,
nothing can take you
from my heart.

Gert Strydom

You Remain Precious To Me

I remember the gloss
that you put on your lips
and how soft and hot
they were against mine

and how you press kisses
on letters and cards
and I remember your brown green eyes
wherein I am lost

and the Estè Lauder perfume
that makes you smell like a flower
and how wonderful pretty
you look every day

and I remember how you loose
your bikini top in a wave
and the boy watching you big eyed
while I bring a towel to you.

and the haunted hill that we visited
and your car that went
in the wrong direction

and how we travelled
along the coast past Houtbay
when you were mine
and how sparkling you looked at me

and I know what it is to love
and I wish that we could still be together
and be able to look at you like then
and that we could embrace each other
to eternity
as you remain precious to me.

Gert Strydom

You Resisted With Words, Plans And Actions

You resisted with words, plans
and with actions you tried to avert,
daily you erected new higher ramparts
to try and ward off,
constantly you tried to force me back,
where I tried to love you
past time and counsel,
in silent betrayal you did fall in love with me.

Gert Strydom

You Say That I Can Stand Against Every Stormy Wind (Couplets)

You say that I can stand against every stormy wind
when in an embrace I do your arms around my neck find,

can stand when the wolves outside begin to blow
as if you do about a inner strength know

but outside the neighbours music causes a ruckus
and inside cosily are the two of us

where streched out against me you sleep
while the neighbours do me awake keep.

Gert Strydom

You Say That Love Like Ours Is Eternal

You say that love
like ours is eternal
and I wonder how
to let moments stand still,
as if they never can pass on.

You embrace me with fire in every kiss,
with a look in your eyes
that does magical things to me.

You tell me that now
for the first time
you know that you are living
and I feel the pulse beat in your breast
under my fingers
while your nipple gets hard

and your bright blue eyes
are exceptionally beautiful
while you throw your blonde locks
with a movement
back over your shoulder.

When you walk away,
leaving a picture for my eyes,
your perfume still stays with me
and I know how happy I really am

but a few hours later
you are forever gone
and the decision
has been taken by destiny for you
and the angel of death
keeps avoiding me.

Gert Strydom

You Say That Love Like Ours Lasts Forever

You say that love like ours
lasts forever
and I wonder how
to let moments last,
as if they never can past.

You embrace me with fire in every kiss,
with a look in your eyes
that enchants me.

You tell me that now for the first time
you know that you are living
and I feel the pulse beat in your chest
knocking under my fingers
while your nipple gets hard

and your bright blue eyes are really pretty
while you throw
your blonde hair
with a movement over your shoulders.

When you walk away
leaving a picture for my eyes,
your perfume still lingers with me
and I know how happy I really am

but a few hours later
you are forever missing
and the decision
has been taken by destiny for you
and the angel of death
keeps passing me.

Gert Strydom

You Say You Do Feel Very Bourgeois (Free Verse Sonnet)

You say you do feel very bourgeois and civil
with the big stretched out citizen-yard,
the house with its bathrooms and bedrooms,
the gigantic garden that is almost a park
but with your children and all of this
your world is totally empty without me
and I tell you that I do love you profoundly,
that you have got to rest on one day in the week
but that kind of thing you do never get
where your painting, drawing and poetry art goes backwards
and you say that we together and into each other
know that we do really exist in this life
but I feel from the time of the heart attack
as if my whole existence is only measured out.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Sit Under A Hot Eiderdown On The Couch

You sit under a hot eiderdown on the couch
while we look at each other for long moments,
time hooks fast and stretches and lingers
and for your love I can only thank God continually

Gert Strydom

You Sit With Legs Spread Wide On The Floor

You sit with legs spread wide on the floor
while laser disks are strewn all around you,
where you are searching for a song
which you do hanker after,
in music you want to find a deeper meaning
and through the open window the wind blows
so that your hear do conceal part of your face,
you are forced to move your head
and when I draw you to your feet
there are small demons dancing in your eyes
when your soft lips
do burn full of promises on mine.

Gert Strydom

You Sit With Your Legs Astride On Ground

You sit with your legs astride on ground
while compact disks are spread out around you
searching for a song that you long for,
wanting to find deeper meaning in music
and through the open window the wind blows in
causing your hair to cover part of your face
and you move your head
while I draw you to your feet
and there are small devils that dance in your eyes
when your lips burn
full of promises under mine.

Gert Strydom

You Sleep

Your eyes were bright when I looked at you,
in the moonlight you looked like a goddess,
your lips were hot and soft on mine
and lingering that moment passed.

Where cosily warm I lie against you,
innocence is caught in the remembering,
I can hear every breath and heartbeat,
it's if the mere moment do remain.

You sleep and there are trees knocking on the roof,
wildly the wind blows leaves up against the window,
while a full-moon climbs silver-white against the night,
the scene of the big everything and stars lets me pause.

May you love me today, tomorrow and forever
and when the new day comes.

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Gert Strydom

You Soft Lips On My Cheek

Your soft lips on my cheek
lets time linger for moments
when I am drawn to you
when you look lovingly at me
when that moment becomes precious
when reality gets a new kind of meaning
when we are together

Gert Strydom

You Stand Watering The Roses

You stand watering the roses
dressed in a blouse and short pants
looking down at open flowers on long stems
with big bright brown-green eyes,
slender and slim with beautiful graceful thighs
looking rather ravishing
and the blazing sun hangs above your head
the flowers swing in the slight breeze
and in this spring
you are the prettiest thing
that I have seen.

Gert Strydom

You Stay The One

Your eyes are oceans
on which I sail at times
and sometimes cannot fathom
the depths of it.

Your mouth is a hurricane
that folds around me
and catch my thoughts.

Your hands are like flames
with heat
burning through my whole body

Your breasts are peaks
rising fierce against the heaven
catching my eyes

and your body is a harbour
that shelters me
against the pounding storms,

but you stay the one who understands
and knows the depths
of my soul.

Gert Strydom

You Stayed Right Through The Night

You stayed right through the night,
you were sweet beautiful and fair
and up to the next morning light
you were with without a single care.

With the first light you had to go away
while I heard your heart beating from under your breast
but you lingered on that day
and with your love I were truly blest.

I asked you to be my bride,
as in loving we could not be celibate
and you accepted with pride
to be much more than my bedmate.

Now every morning it's you beautiful eyes that I see
and as long as I live
you will probably accompany me
as my lovely beautiful wife.

Gert Strydom

You Suddenly Walked Into My Life

During my whole life, for many years,
I have been waiting on you
and then suddenly you walked into my life.
I do remember
that it was unexpected when I noticed you
and now suddenly
I do swear before the heaven and hell
that our love is much more than just a game.

Gert Strydom

You Talk About Flowers In Adderley Street

(in answer to I.D. du Plessis)

You talk about flowers in Adderley Street
but my eye catches the sugar bushes and aloes against the ridge
and the rough rocks are covered with wild plums,
porkwood and medlar trees
and I can smell the sugar-sweet fragrance of the flowers
that hangs on the evening breeze

and when the thunderstorm flame up behind the hillocks,
thunder flash upon thunder flash
is burnt into my inner eye
and I smell the odour of electric fire
and of the drops of rain
that pours down upon the red ground

and my friend,
here away from the turmoil of the big city
a man can still become humble
before the omnipotent Creator.

[Reference: "Blomme in Adderleystraat" (Flowers in Adderley street)
by I.D. du Plessis.]

Gert Strydom

You That I Love As My Very Own

You that I love as my very own,
happiness have made your face its sanctuary
while the golden sun has your hair as its throne
and in your gaze blue heaven is caught in tranquillity
while you are more lovely than any other girl that I have known
and your loving comes selfless and free
while your body is sublime with stars glittering on your gown
and I can hardly believe that you are in love with me.

Like a fragile butterfly whose colouring comes in millions of hues
you still remain after our time is spent
and although death and destiny has brought some issues
with a kind of painful intent
and other people about you have different views
I still wish for you to remain just another moment
and even some godly statues
of Diana, Aphrodite and Athena are dead and silent

while you still are speaking to my heart
with a kind of unknown power,
of me you are still a lingering part
while I feel your presence in every rain shower
while you sneak into my words, into my art
and I am near to you with every opening flower
where I catch your sent as if we will never really be apart
and still you are away from this world and your life is over.

Gert Strydom

You Turn My Heart Into A Muddle

while time passes us like an eternity
when your green-brown eyes stare into my soul

and I wonder why you do love me
and outside there is drops of rain, the wind is dancing,
while time passes us like an eternity

and daily I am blinded,
am caught in the beauty and love that you have
and outside there is drops of rain, the wind is dancing,

but here in the room the sheets are twisted around us like a net
and I am aware of my feelings for you,
am caught in the beauty and love that you have

and as if nobody and nothing can extinguish it
there is something much more and greater than love between us
and I am aware of my feelings for you,

while my heart at times are beating for you.
You turn my heart into a muddle,
there is something much more and greater than love between us
when your green-brown eyes stare into my soul.

Gert Strydom

You Walk Where The Golden-Brown Grass Rustles

You walk where the grass
rustle golden-brown in the wind,
and sometimes you take a shortcut through the cornfield,
sometimes it's at the marsh where I find you,
where you smile shyly.

Gert Strydom

You Walked Smiling Right Into My Sight (English Sonnet)

In the setting sun in the mellow twilight,
when the day its brilliance the sky denies,
you walked smiling right into my sight
with eyes in which your heart openly lies,

wordless did you your own feelings express
with love in your heart's pure dwelling-place,
while shadows moved with the light being less,
enchancing the beauty of your gleaming face,

the moon was creeping into the sky from below
and you seemed so sweet and very innocent,
around us red did the rays of the sun glow,
yet you were dressed in fashion very eloquent,

in the moment it seemed that anything possible be,
while the birds, the wind and we were totally free.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

You Walked Straight Into My Dream Last Night (Decastich)

and with you brought a myriad of memories,
of happy times, of sad times,
of events that we did experience together
and at times we were in bliss
and it felt like only yesterday
that we did kiss for the very first time
and in your presence life held a special kind of promise
as if there was something great to come
in every new tomorrow.

Gert Strydom

You Want To Go To Spain

You want to go to Spain
and next to the Mediterranean
buy a villa
and stay in a big old house
with balcony windows.

You want to sit at a cafe
in the street
and paint paintings
of the scene around you
and sell them right there

and get lunch at a small table
with French bread, cheese
and a bottle of sweet wine
and look at how friendly
the sun shines there

and late in the afternoon
you want to take siesta
and for a time
go and lie on a big old bed
under fans
or against the hillock
walk in fields
of purple lavender,

but the language there is foreign
and I wonder what more
and how a person fits
into such a place
between people
with a different culture?

Gert Strydom

You Wanted To Know About Evil And Good

You wanted to know
about evil and good
and God's brotherhood

and what integrity really accomplishes
and why it's always easier
to lie and cheat

and I told you (my son)
about a God with boundless love
reigning from the heavens above

who like a Father forgives
and about responsibility, integrity
and the other marks of a man
which proves who we really are.

Gert Strydom

You Were Far Past Beautiful (Ballade)

(after Gert Vlok Nel)

I

At Helderberg College in Summerset West
you were far past beautiful
& we were very in love with each other
where you were almost a teacher
& I was studying business,
the sun gleamed in your eyes, your smile
& your lips were soft & sweet
& I was summoned by Peter van As (a dean)
where they believed that we were wooing each other in public
& photographs he displayed
about standing too near to you
& daily he exercised in the gym,
did grab me by the breast
& pushed me up against the wall of his office
& he was big & I a Special Forces medic,
did tell him that he is going to fall hard & deadly
& he said that this relationship must come to an end
& I that the one between him & his wife
must end just in the same way
& outside the gate in your car we wooed each other
& at that spooky road did embrace & kiss
& they did not want
me to visit you at the home of your parents
& after the army & the bush-war
at twenty-three I had to get permission from my mother
& you from your father & mother in writing
that I may visit you at home
& now you are a business executive
with a son & daughter of your own
& you were unhappy,
wanted to take your own life
& from your husband with the big chin you are divorced
& he is an insurance broker
that plays golf with your son.

II

Chorus:

& I cannot embrace you anymore,
cannot woo you until your ears turn red
& you are not my wife
& blissful was our time
but like all beautiful things it's in the past.

III

So pretty were your cards
while I did write my first poems to you
& and picked a thousand roses from the gardens of the college
& we phoned each other constantly from the moneybox
& your lips did gleam while you climbed into my heart,
did tell me about our love
& later you were blissful in my arms
while eternity & moments did come together
& the bewitched house in Brackenfell
made you move back to your parents
& that apartment in Boland Park in Durban Road
I cannot forget
& that you had been my wife & loved me
& I remember Gordonsbay & the Strand
where you lost the top of your bikini
& Bloubergstrand where the iciness did minimalise everything
& the huge boat of your dad
& how we tried to ski on the sea.

IV

It's maybe a story for the tabloids
& Huisgenoot & You & Drum
but suddenly when I touched you
from aversion the hairs raised all over your body
while the man with the mouth & chin tried to seduce you,
told you that I would never be anything in life,
that I cannot drive & you were afraid of this
& before I could find myself
a summons from the Supreme Court arrived at my work
at Tygerberg Hospital
& the man that had been a friend & a colleague
did steal your photo & also did steal you
& bloody my heart was jerked out of me
& above from Boland Park

from fifteen storeys I wanted to jump
but thought about him laughing about it
& at the Strand & at Gordonsbay
people on that December holiday was past happy
& there was no relationship between you & me
& pain hanged like a cloak.

V

The last memories I have of that time,
is how you did throw your hair back,
did look at me as if I was the devil
& slammed the doors
& a court order prohibited me to come near to you
& I took trains to work & back
& how strange the head official at work treated me
& I asked for a transfer to Pretoria,
to H. F. Verwoerd Hospital to get away from you
& on the midnight-flight to Johannesburg I did fall asleep
& a beautiful airhostess did awake me & smiled
& I looked at her & wanted to die just there.

[Reference: "I was beautiful in Beaufort-West" (& you were
beautiful in Beaufort West)by Gert Vlok Nel.]

Gert Strydom

You Were Gone (Poet's Echo)

I tried to remember you
from the way that you look,
from the small frown between that your eyes
against the sharp light,
the way that every now and then
you touch your locks of hair,
but you were gone.

I tried to remember you
when at another place
at times I dreamt about you
and my body was burning for you,
when I could feel your kisses,
your hands on my body,
your breath touching my cheek
but you were gone.

I tried to remember you
when the stars at dusk were shining above me,
with the sun kissing the hillocks,
the night breeze blowing against my body
and I was wondering if you sometimes
think about me when the night is long and lonely
when you lie sleepless until morning light.

For years I was searching to find you,
but you were gone - Until now.

Gert Strydom

You Were Laying With Your Head On My Chest

You were laying with your head on my chest
and said very little during that night
as if words were unnecessary
and still you were against me.

Outside the plants moved eerily
while the storm wind were screaming outside
and the scent of love and rain was in the air
and your body still glowed hot against mine.

In the room it was icy cold,
but hot against your body and buttock
and I felt your heart vibrate in your nipple
and our feelings were intensely new and age old.

Gert Strydom

You Were Like A Angel Surrounded With Sunshine

In the pool of the fountain
the sky reflect cobalt blue
and shadows fall over the inner court

and there are images sprouting up
whirling in my brain about you and me
in the pool of the fountain

and you were like a angel surrounded with sunshine
and dripping wet we embraced each other there
and shadows fall over the inner court

and even the wind blows with a chorus
and there are pure white lilies that I look at,
in the pool of the fountain

and the time with you was noble, was totally pure
or so everybody was thinking and we kept the countenance of it
and shadows fall over the inner court

drawing the two of us, line after line
and the sky is now reflecting dull blue
in the pool of the fountain
and shadows fall over the inner court.

Gert Strydom

You Were Past Cute

Our feet were in
green moss filled water,
the wind was in our hair
and the white-hot sun
hang in the blue sky.

We sat in the shade of crying willow tree
and had a picnic next to the river
and ate delicacies and drank some cool drink.

You were past cute with your straw hat
under which your lips looked alluring soft red
and I saw heaven in your golden eyes
and we were in love.

For moments we were caught
in the wonder of nature,
time flew and minutes hastened
becoming hours.

Gert Strydom

You Were The One

(after Jan de Bruyn)

You were the one,
the one who could still love me
when my life was destroyed, turned to rock,
with my dreams laying shattered

and with my trampled name
destiny had cut me to pieces,
a so-called holy man confirmed it to you
but you wanted to stay away from me

and maybe you were haughty,
had no comprehension, or a urge for self preservation
or a type of aloofness
that hanged over me like a guillotine

and you were much too scared
when I longed for you the last time.

[Reference: "Joune was die laaste deur" (Yours were the last door) by Jan de Bruyn.]

Gert Strydom

You Were To Me (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Elisabeth Eybers)

You were to me more than the light in your eyes,
you did give me hope in my inability.
You were to me more than a smile and laughter,
you were to me the sun in the summer day
and at night you were my hot nurturing,
the angel that brings me nearer to the Lord God.
To me you were the one that does believe me against the world.
You were to me my trust and hope, the light from above.
You were to me the stirring of my heart,
the source of all my joy and all of my sorrow.
You were the one that do really know me,
I did loose and win everything back with you
and still I am madly in love with you
as you are an angel directly from God.

[Reference: "Die geskenk" (The gift) by Elisabeth Eybers.]

Gert Strydom

You Who Are God (Free Verse Sonnet)

(in answer to M. M. Walters)

My Lord and my God You do say that You are like Your Father,
You do say that those who know You, do really know Your Father,
still that which is Godly do remain a secret to man
where You Jesus as the Son and as Michael have conquered over Lucifer
and You Holy Spirit and You my Lord Jesus do bring man
to really accept God and to find Him in a relationship,
where You did jump into this cruel wild untamed world
as the Christ, the Messiah, as the Godly Child
where Your Father not like some die perceive it stand away from man
but is actively involved with our daily existence in His great care
but that it goes for You Jesus over the salvation of each human being
to reconcile everyone with You, with the Holy Spirit and with the Father.
You Jesus are the truth, the light and the way to the sinless eternity
and You do force no one to a relationship or to decide for Your righteousness.

[Reference: "Wat soos God is" (Who is like God) by M. M. Walters.

Poet's Note: "Michael

(Hebr., "who is like God"), called St Michael in the Christian churches, one of the seven

archangels in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, presumed to be leader of the angels (see Daniel

10: 13,21; 12: 1) and guardian angel of Israel. According to the pseudepigraphic Book of Enoch,

Michael and his command of faithful troops defeated the rebellious archangel Lucifer and his

followers, casting them into Hell. In the Talmud, his relationship to the other angels is compared

with that on earth of the high priest to Israel; thus, he is considered the immediate lawgiver to the

prophet Moses on Sinai (see Acts 7: 38) . "Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia.]

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Gert Strydom

You Who Constantly Truly Love Me

You who constantly truly love me,
draw the barrage
of the pain and worries that I carry
and silently you endure my inabilities,
while you make me to be a man
and every hour
also brings a silent kind of joy, relief,
when love becomes real, when you are with me.

Gert Strydom

You, My Love Are The One

You, my love are the one
whom I had dreamt about
for many years while shedding many tears
that in my awakening was always gone,
but now you know me inside out.

You are a warm welcoming for a wanderer
who had roamed the deserted desert
and in the acrid wastes
suddenly I came upon
an oasis with water and trees
and some greenery

where with humility and openness
like in the first primal deed
you with sincerity loved me,
creating a little Eden of our own
a place where all worries are gone
and every little seed,
every word and deed
sprout out in abundance
to flower and bare fruit.

Gert Strydom

You'll Be A True Believer

Now if you load your rifle
with magazines pasted together
for a quick swap

and point it at the enemy
and pull the trigger
and do it right
in short bursts,

you'll suddenly
know the meaning
of life and death

and when others die
next to you
while you go out on patrol

you'll know
how unreasonable fate is
and that life's an illusion

and you'll be a true believer
in the almighty God

and somehow
and you'll know
that He walks along.

Gert Strydom

You're Away

You're away and life goes on
and I drive to an interview
and my life feels skew.

At times loneliness
makes me appreciate you more,
but I am waiting
for you to come back

At times I wish that I could find
the right words to say
or be able to visit
all the places
that life has taken you.

Most probably the only thing
that I really need
to say,
is how much I love you.

Gert Strydom

You're In Another Country Called Cape Town

I peer at a city
while the rain is pouring down
and see blue-white thunder
falling from the sky
while dark clouds are milling up high
blown by storm winds
and the smell of rain
rises fresh from the earth
and my thoughts loiter
and I know where I am
and you're in far off Cape Town
and I in my Pretoria.

Below me I see the zoo
and a city stretched out
in clear squares,
great buildings among statues
and gardens,
and on a hill
the sacred place of a nation
and you're in far off Cape Town
and I in my Pretoria.

The houses in the suburb
are build for the summer heat
with verandas and big rooms,
with yellowwood floors,
with fans in the ceilings
and yards as big as parks
and trees with purple blue blossoms
lining every street
and you're in far off Cape Town
and I in my Pretoria.

I hear a crowd roaring
in the stadium near to the university
for their rugby team to win
and everywhere blue flags are waving
and some faces are painted blue

and some heads have caps
with horns thrusting into the air
and you're in far off Cape Town
and I in my Pretoria.

On the other side of the mountain
avocado and some tropical trees grow
and here I stand in the hero's acre
among the fallen great
and to Andries Pretorius
I offer my salute
and in church square
my eyes stare
at the statue of uncle Paul
who still faces north
now turning green
and you're in another country called Cape Town
and I in my Pretoria.

[Reference: To -. Composed at Rotterdam by Thomas Hood.]

Gert Strydom

Young Koekemoer (In Reply To A. Brodrick)

Way back in the days
of the old Transvaal republic
in the Marico district lived a young farmer

called Hans Koekemoer, who was a great horseman
and a superb marksman
who crossed many rivers with his roan horse

and owned a Martini Henri rifle
and he was a great lover, skilled and sought by many ladies
and no other guy could compete with him

but one day an impi of Matabele warriors invaded the great Marico
burning down farmsteads, raiding cattle and killing farmers,
women and children

and the farmers were called up on commando
riding out on their horses with guns in their hands
and they fought bravely against that impi.

Hans by nature lived up to his name that meant cocky
firing from the saddle, breaking away from the commando
taking on a squad of the enemy

and he even followed them while they were fleeing
in front of him, trying to hunt the last one down
as he feared that they would capture or kill his beloved fiancée Sannie

and to the other farmers in the commando he was missing,
probably killed somewhere and while they rode back victoriously
their spirits were marred as they had lost the best young farmer.

Hans had been wounded and unconscious his horse
carried him to safety and a English missionary
came upon him removing a rusting assegai spear

and nursed him back to health
through a fever, bringing young Koekemoer back to life
over a period of some weeks

and just after his return to his farmstead
one of Hans Koekemoer's cattle
was ill and he had to care for it through the night

and early the following morning while he was riding in the veldt
searching for a lost cow he saw a gathering of young men
galloping at speed in the distance

and first thought that it was a commando
that had gathered during the night and he rode up to them
and saw them passing a white banner

congratulating a bridegroom and bride and wishing them well
and they were riding at speed in front of a black coach
and Hans was curious about who had wedded so suddenly

and being cocky by nature forced the coach to a halt
and out stepped his girlfriend Sannie, with a Englishman,
a short wealthy shop owner

followed by Sannie's father old dark Dirk Coetzee
an honourable man, a brave war veteran and a member of parliament
who wanted to know if young Hans had risen from the dead?

Young Hans replied that he wanted to talk to Sannie
the most beautiful girl in all of the Transvaal
who promised to wed him, swearing on the Bible

at the last communion service
and that he Hans could marry any of many a girl
and would instead drink a sip of brandy on her health.

Then lovely Sannie walked up to him
with a glass decorated with blue flowers in her hand
and he shouted: "to your health" before downing it

and Sannie was shaken but did not know why,
she looked into his eyes and forced a smile on her lips
and felt a spark going down into her hips

and he took her hand and looking into her eyes

kissed Sannie and her lips tasted of peppermint
from the shop owner's kisses before his.

Sannie tied her skirts down before running hand-in-hand
with young Koekemoer
to where the roan horse was waiting on them

and the horse drew away galloping at full speed
while Sannie locked her arms around him
and in vain strong young Weppener, squinty Du Randt

and the rest of the riders gathered around the coach
jumped on their horses to catch up with them
and not one of them or her father
ever set eyes on Sannie again.

[Reference: Jong Koekemoer by A. Brodrick.]

Gert Strydom

Your Are The One

With you I find wild passion
that takes feelings to places
where they belong.

Your are the one
around whom I want
to build my life,

in whose embrace
I want to place
everything that I am and have got.

Gert Strydom

Your Beauty (English Sonnet)

In any age you would be counted as fair
be called in your right by beauty's name
and not with makeup you have to prepare
as if from the most beautiful you came

where beauty is bestowed by nature's power
and there is something timeless to your face
daily you do me with acts and words shower
where you walk and talk with your grace,

do great happiness and care to others bring,
to me you do far past picture perfect seem
and in all of life I want your praises to sing
where you do at liberty act with self-esteem

do spread both joy and hope where you go,
while truly day upon day I do love you so.

Gert Strydom

Your Beauty Is No Secret

Your beauty is no secret
that somebody can brush aside
you have sympathy with car guards
who do protect properties,
the need of hungry children
you want to touch;
sometimes you deny that you are pretty,
but everyone notices it.

Gert Strydom

Your Beauty Some Might Say (English Sonnet)

(in answer to William Shakespeare)

Your beauty some might say is how I do behold
when in years from now to my verse people come,
that inconsistent I showed just a part vividly bold,
where mighty words at a later time might still roam

but no man can pin down your exact look or your eye,
or your way of speech, your personality or female grace,
only indications of it and your wit do in these verses lie,
not even a painter can note down to life your lovely face.

My songs of love to you are constantly on my tongue
while we do live in a modern changing kind of age,
where the metre may not be written in modern song,
while how you are might be called my own mad rage

but where absolute truth be sincerely and in honestly told,
to who read these lines you will still great beauty hold.

[Reference: "Sonnet 17 Who will believe my verse in time to come" by William Shakespeare.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Clothes Lie In A Line Down The Hall

(after Herman de Coninck)

Your clothes lie in a line
down the hall,
as if we started wooing each other
when we did just come into the house

and things of our love
lay around in this poem,
as if you do always stand half naked in front of me,
as if a person does open a page

of a women's magazine
and a beautiful woman
smiles at him or her in her underclothes
and when I do kiss you,

I am going to say
no further words to the readers.

[Reference: "Je truitjes en je witte en rode" by Herman de Coninck.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Dressing Table In The Hall

In the house in fifth avenue
I put a small pink white marble table
below a mirror in the corridor
with a bowl with flowers standing on it

that acted as your dressing table
and as a place of display
where I saw your face smiling back at me
while you were doing your hair
teasing with curling tongs
or reflections of the rows of paintings
with the wood floor fading into the distance

and now that mirror and table
is probably still there,
but you are living alone
in that big house
and will never again
smile back into my face.

Gert Strydom

Your Eyes

Your eyes that sparkle gold like the sun
have got stories,
secrets of how your feelings are,
tells constantly
that you do really love
and some metals
have got the same golden brown glitter
as that which continually dances in your eyes.

Gert Strydom

Your Eyes Burn Right Through My Soul

Your eyes burn right through my soul,
leave marks there
that I cannot extinguish.

At times your eyes are aflame with anger,
like thunder
that is only looking for a place to happen.

Sometimes your eyes flow soothing
like the ocean
and embraces me to spend time with you.

Sometimes there are depths in your eyes
that I cannot fathom, shadows beyond which
unknown emotions, people and places are hiding
and still I want to spend time with you when I can.

Gert Strydom

Your Eyes Burns Right Through Me

Your eyes burns right through me
and your hand
clasps mine
and we discuss deep things,
but that which lies nearest
to me
is your sincerity
and I cheer because
you want to love me more.

Gert Strydom

Your Face

Trough the ages
art has made an image of You,
where You are along with your mother,
where You hang exhausted
on a deadly cross

and artists tried to catch
Your face and body,
so as if man can reflect Your love

and in the evening when I kneel at my bed,
You are my friend that talks to me,
who strips me of all evil and hatred
but still I do not know Your face

and when You appear at Your return
I will not need Your glory, to recognize You,
to lie my life down at Your feet

as Your character will be etched into Your being,
will be etched with selfless love
into Your face.

Gert Strydom

Your Face And Eyes Are In My Thoughts (Persian Quatrain)

Your face and eyes are in my thoughts intimate and sincere,
even in the way that you lift your head you do seem near
and my rib is missing and you are in my heartbeat,
in each thought I do constantly hold you dear.

Gert Strydom

Your Gaze Is Full Of Ice (Wyatt Sonnet)

I am at war and yet, no fighting has begun:
I have no fear, from me this war did not arise
but when you look at me your gaze is full of ice;
at a time in your eyes was nothing but the sun.

At times we were happy had a lot of fun
and your attitude, your gaze is a big surprise
as if sheer betrayal, is in your soul, in your eyes,
as if something terrible had made you run.

Your gaze makes your feelings altogether plain
but life is not that simple; you left me for another
and now you long to love him; to meet him rather
while you laugh, is somewhat thrilled with my pain.

I wished to have feelings that transcends life,
as at a time you were very dear and my wife.

Gert Strydom

Your Golf Playing Postmaster Father Was Your God

Your golf playing postmaster father
was your god
(and to you there was no other)
who couldn't see anything wrong
with the actions of his friends
that wanted to play
sexual games with you
and his wife
who slept around
with whom ever she could.

You sat next to him
at the front door
of the old house in Barberton
with the red polished stairs
while he smoked his pipe
with BB-tobacco
and although you hated smoking
inhaled every vapour
coming from him
as if it would put you
in a godly ordained séance
or maybe a trance.

Each thing that he said,
each thing that he did
to you was holy and right,
even if it lacked justice
and you made a mere man
equal to the Almighty One.

No other man could for you
fit in his shoes
and I tried to live
in a totally different way
and when he died
from a heart attack
on the golf course,

you only saw dread,
for your God was dead
and tried to join him
by taking sleeping pills
and was really angry
for me rushing you to hospital
as if I had got in the way
of your atonement.

Gert Strydom

Your Hand Is In The Rain

Your hand is in the rain
that falls for fourteen days without end

and when the first yellow peaches appear
and everywhere the rain drizzles down,

when rusty brown leaves fall from the branches
then You are still caring before the first winds do moan
and the cold is present everywhere
with the exhausting of winter
that feels as if it cuts right through everything

and in the rays of that dismal sun
it's Your love that still circles out wider.

Gert Strydom

Your Inner Thoughts Do In Your Lovely Eyes Gleam

This morning the sky is serenely turquoise
while you act with liberty and independence,
smile at me lovely full of self-confidence
and along with you my heart do rejoice.

From last night's illness huskily is your voice
but health and hope and love today is in evidence
as the fragrance of gardenia fills the whole residence
in front of the mirror you are in a lovely poise

as outside in a fountain flows a man-made stream
while you do tease and curl your tresses with ease
your inner thoughts do in your lovely eyes gleam
while doves sing their love-songs in the trees
and it's as if we both are in an unending dream
somewhere far away at one of the seven seas.

Gert Strydom

Your Kiss (Free Verse Sonnet)

(After Rosa Smit)

Every time when your breath is right against my cheek
I smell you like peppermint when you do come near,
you ban from my being and heart all darkness,
around us things happen that leaves me dumbstruck.
Swarms of doves flutter down everywhere around us,
the streets are full of children running up and down,
in the bright day blue-white thunder falls suddenly,
around us the world goes on but things are running wild.
Every time that your soft hot lips do find mine,
I see the whole cosmos in your green-brown eyes,
for moments I am blinded for all other things,
to your soul, spirit and body you give me ability,
it's as if the entire world around us comes to a halt,
when we do understand each other to the deepest as mere humans.

[Reference:"Die kus" (The kiss)by Rosa 's note:The statue named
"the kiss" that was completed in 1889 by the sculptor François
Auguste René Rodin has also got meaning to this poem.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Letter Is Beautiful

Your letter is beautiful
and tells about things deep in your heart
but what lies between the lines
are unnamed things
that you are saying anyway.

To eagerly I want you
here with me
and it's as if you
cannot untie time
to make yesterday
today again.

Sometimes you email
and at times I email you
and life takes its course
and like somebody raving
I feel caught in it all

as if there's always a goodbye
between you and I
and the letter
ends much too quickly.

Gert Strydom

Your Life And Mine (English Sonnet)

Your life and mine flows together into one stream,
in which separate lives do become one commingling.
Together we do in our passion and yearning dream
where as one we become avoid from any other thing.

Where the oneness of you and me do complete us
in the different ways that we do together exist,
in the duties that separate and together we must
and maybe in love and happiness this is the gist

without breaking that which we do both cherish,
while we do communicate and our feelings do renew
and all other non-essential things do from us perish
while together we are stronger and everything is new

where in the universe to me you are the sun
my destiny, my pleasure, pain and all my fun.

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Gert Strydom

Your Lips Are (Persian Quatrain)

Your lips are sienna-red, your cheeks rose-flamingo
and I cannot stop thinking of you wherever I go,
your eyes sparkle green-brown
and a kind of grace to my life you do bestow.

Gert Strydom

Your Lips Were Soft, Glistening And A Kind Of Red (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

"I do love you intensely and intimate, " I said
your lips were soft, glistening and a kind of red
you turned and waited holding your mouth to be kissed
in that moment I sensed how much you I have missed
"this is a two-sided kind of thing, " you replied dropping your head
the moment lingered with you against me
I hoped that it could last for an eternity
wanted to take you straight to bed
you lips were soft, glistening and a kind of red.

Gert Strydom

Your Love

Let thunder strike bursting down
with rays that blinds,
let wasting wind come
unstoppable,
let storms come that devour
and nobody can control,
let dark night comes
that quenches all,
your love is firm as a mountain
and burn with a flame
brighter than the sun
and brings magic
just where you are.

Gert Strydom

Your Love (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after I. D. du Plessis)

Your love is a pure light
that radiates my whole world
and you do love me intimately
when you do determine holy times for me,
where every word and deed
like nard do flow over me,
where constantly you do leave me speechless
where you do sacrifice yourself and do bleed,
do constantly treat me with great respect,
do overwhelm me with the person that you are
without me asking for any of this
as if you are acting in an unspoken secret way
and in your silent submission where you do serve me
it is the core of love that I do witness.

[Reference:"Die vlam" (The flame)by I. D. du Plessis.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Love And Pure Integrity Is Not In Dispute, Lord (Cavatina Sequence)

(after Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Your love and pure integrity is not
in dispute, Lord,
yet my enemies grow in their power,
in Your record
their evil ways constantly do prosper,
they can afford
great mansions are quite happy in their sin
while there is no place for me to be in.

Even if You were not my dearest friend,
I am not free
from trepidation, from Your punishment,
tranquillity,
avoids me, destruction follow in my steps;
iniquity
is with them that do wreck my livelihood,
while constantly I do only mean good.

Let the great harvest come while I tell some
of Your kindness,
give real power to all my words and works,
in my blindness
help me to see all of Your loving care
while You do bless
me again and again in times of strain,
rid me of all my pain, while You send rain.

[Reference: 'Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord' by Gerard Manley Hopkins.]

Gert Strydom

Your Love Is A Reality (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, after Ingrid Jonker)

Your love is real to me although my heart is wounded
like coffee and rusks when the red day does come,
like my toes in the sand in the hot ground
and constantly you do astonish me,
where you do bring to the pain in life a kind of healing,
although my own life is torn open like the streets,
my heart wants to sing to you with joy
as you are noble like the flowers that cover the wilderness.
For me you are pure like the white arum lilies at the offspring
and where life with its mud does want to cling to everything
you do sprout out with beauty
as if you do fit perfectly into all of my days,
you are real to me and my hunger for you is great
as for fresh milk and home baked bread.

[Reference: "Die winter is 'n krom ou vrou" (The winter is a bended old woman) by Ingrid Jonker's note: Rusks are a South African traditional delicacy and are hard baked like biscuits, they are baked like this to be dipped into the coffee and eaten like that.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Love Is Wicked (Parody)

(with apology to Koos A. Kombuis)

When you are crying
I want to strive
to be in your shadow
to feel the pain in everything,
every morning when I rise
I stumble over my bed
and chest of drawers
and when I have nausea from drinking

then I only want to eat
when you are with me,
at times I want to taste you
like wild berries
and even in my dark moods
I want to fall
deep into you

I want to make you stop
when you whisper
about the words
of evil sailors
and I want to go along
when you walk the streets
as a part of your neuroses

your favour is almost honourable
and totally unrestrained
your honour is without guilt
blinded by sin,
blinded without comfort,
blinded from love
and totally immoral

yesterday just like you
I went astray
in your urges
for a long time

with a lot of skeletons
without any phobias
or songs

it teems with LSD
and you tell
without asking
and the message that I am getting,
is that you are
a sweet mother in Africa

I curse
at every sign
of another guy
that fits over you,
I curse
just now
when I was shaking

your favour is almost honourable
and totally unrestrained
your honour is without guilt
blinded by sin,
blinded without comfort,
blinded from love
and totally immoral

It's a sweet-berry daybreak
that is happening while we are together
its cry out upon cry out
without any point in mind
and why the hell
are you going home
while immorality eats you up?

I want to show you pain
deep in my heart
but you have got to wait
and nobody else
may hold onto you,
the old guy is upon you
with your applause

but he's not holding
unto your buttocks

I want to make you stop
when you whisper
about the words
of evil sailors
and I want to go along
when you walk the streets
as a part of your neuroses

your favour is almost honourable
and totally unrestrained
your honour is without guilt
blinded by sin,
blinded without comfort,
blinded from love
and totally immoral.

Gert Strydom

Your Might Is Immense (Free Verse Sonnet)

Above me the stars hang glowing in their power,
as lights in the darkness of the night
and some skip and hop as they jump,
witness about God's universal might.
Your might is immense great and unstoppable
but your love stands absolutely above everything
and when You do enter the human heart,
You reconstruct it and make it new and wonderful.
Others see You as untouchable holy light,
but I see Your loving face,
they find You unreachable at a distance
but with me You are profound and sincere.
Your love is unending and wide
where it includes every human being into your will.

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Gert Strydom

Your Mouth Did Open Softly Under Mine

Your mouth did open softly under mine
where you stood close to me,
the crickets sang a song
where we were watching the stars
and I did wonder if other people
were also just like this caught in a moment
and around us there was the darkness of the night.

Gert Strydom

Your Name

Your name is
written in the stars
and your surname says
that you come from heaven,
but I know that you
bring meaning to my life.

I can hear your voice
in the evening wind
and you are still with me,
when I am alone
with my thoughts.

To me it's destined
from the beginning,
that you are my biggest blessing.

When life throws us about
and shakes our world apart,
I can only keep learning
to appreciate you more.

Gert Strydom

Your Name (Crystalline)

Your name, your existence and you
have meaning and do carry me through.

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Gert Strydom

Your Name (Free Verse Sonnet)

You name to me is something that is holy,
that I do carry safely in my heart
and I do find you when I do use it,
it's something that I do call out in our secrecy.
Your name has got real meaning to me
and it's sweet on my lips like custard
where it carries images of you
and constantly I do miss you and it.
You are mine at the beginning and at the end,
the one that does comprehend how I am,
the one in whom I do trust like a child.
I call and pray you back into my days,
even when months do pass us by,
I do know that time after time I will find you.

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Gert Strydom

Your Name Will Not Carry Another Meaning For Me

Your name will not carry another meaning for me
like people see you in foreign countries,
as a place where people serve criminal kings
and even if they throw the South away and it becomes just Africa

with foreigners streaming in, I do not go out to hurt you,
even if we feel that we deserve a better country.
Your name will not carry another meaning for me
like people see you in foreign countries,

as a place where we have to ask God for help
in injustice, revolt and a loss of national dignity
where white people by force loose their own possessions
because I am born to you like my ancestors, my South Africa.
Your name will not carry another meaning for me.

Gert Strydom

Your Own Hands I Get My Daily Bread (Cavatina)

From Your own hands I get my daily bread,
You know my heart,
above living and dead You are supreme;
You know each part
which makes me and You know everything;
in my own art
You are present, even in each dispute;
You make me great, grand, good and resolute.

Gert Strydom

Your Penetrating Glance Does Silence My Words

Your penetrating glance does silence my words
when it goes far beyond the surface
and here I have got to deviate from my own will
when you take me to an unknown space of time,
to a place where people still believe in love
and do swear true to each other for eternity,
even do reach past every inability,
to find something much greater
than the pain coming through the years,
and where I do learn to again try and trust.

Gert Strydom

Your Personality Is Fire And Dew (Refrain Stanza)

(for Annelize)

While it lingers for a short while
sunny is you lovely hot smile
your personality is fire and dew
together with you every day is new
where your mere presence does me beguile
which is filled with faith, love and hope
where you live in my heart's scope
and between us there is many a mile
but sunny is you lovely hot smile.

© Gert Strydom

Gert Strydom

Your Presence Is A True Delight (Common Measure Octave)

Your presence is a true delight,
just like the summer sun
where I am welcome at your door,
since our love has begun,
where you smile at my sight,
you are the only one
and where for true love I was poor
my need you did not shun.

Gert Strydom

Your Presence Is Strange But Familiar

Your presence is strange but familiar
like nothing I have known up to now
but coming to me with charm and loving
as you were designed to fit into me,

were designed to change my life for the better
like a sudden ray of sunshine appearing
suddenly in the darkest night you bring light,
you bring a strange serenity and to everything

a great kind of beauty while in the depths
of your dark eyes it is me that I see.

Gert Strydom

Your Smile Glitters With Beauty

Your smile glitters with beauty,
there is perfume hanging like gardenia around you,
away is all my doubting and powerlessness
when you tell me how much you miss me,
without me really expecting it then
while you catch my eyes in your depths
and suddenly I can define you and find words
although I am blinded by your personality, your loveliness.

Gert Strydom

Your Smile Is Like A Negligee

Your smile is like a negligee
where it sparkles naughty right into your eyes
and it's as if I see my own defencelessness
and every nipple of your firm breasts
your thighs and flat stomach
in them.

Maybe there's something deeper
smouldering in your eyes
while they tease me
and I do not have to imagine
that a angel
shares my bed.

Gert Strydom

Your Smile, Your Touch, Your Glance (Cavatina)

Your smile, your touch, your glance flowers in a
eternal spring,
there is a kind of radiance that comes
to everything;
constantly a hidden, holy, message
keeps whispering
while great joy you bring with your own presence,
to my life you are bringing the essence.

Gert Strydom

Your Song (Refrain Stanza)

(after C. M. van den Heever)

Wherever I go the shadow of sin follows me
and only You are sanctified, noble, eternal and holy
and where daily I do wait upon Your pure words it's hard
where You the omnipotent Lord God do me a mere human regard,
where new words and verse-lines You do give constantly,
where my own humiliation, affliction and being treated wrong
are received in hankering after Your wondrously beautiful song,
where mere words by my human hands come to be
and only You are sanctified, noble, eternal and holy.

[Reference: "U lied" (Your song) by C. M. van den Heever.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Sunny Glance (Free Verse Sonnet)

(for Annelize, in answer to Daniel Hugo)

Your sunny glance is brighter and more cheerful
than the riant suns, moons and stars in the universe
when your smile do draw people during the day and night to you
and over you and with you I am infatuated, in love and totally crazy
where truth as utterly bright light do get meaning in you
as if God is present in your heart, spirit and soul
where as a human you do moment by moment make me happy
where the depth of love as open and plain for all to see
through God becomes immortal as something eternal between us
where He keeps giving the sincere truth and selflessness
when I pour out myself, my hart, spirit and soul and everything into you
and we as mere humans do enter something godly and inhuman
where the yearning of the flesh, body, soul and spirit
becomes one composition of the two of us without any fear.

[References:"Leesverslag" en "Lyfmistiek II" (Reading report and body-mysticism)by Daniel Hugo.]

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Gert Strydom

Your Voice

That your voice over the cellular phone
changes my day, brings joy
so unexpectedly to my world
is a peculiar thing
and when I break the connection,
the world feels somewhat different and unusual.

Gert Strydom

Your Walking Away Is Measured In Watt

Your walking away is measured in watt.
Not the 1100 p.m.p.o. of a door slamming shut behind you
that are opened and slammed again
but it is the pattering gait that just can be heard
and the whisper of satin
when you do go to our bedroom
and welcoming the door stays open
when continuously the fourteen-day rain does softly fall
and flames hiss at the fireplace and wood gleam red from the heat
while Steve Hofmeyer on the Kenwood music system
does sing sadly like Neil Diamond
and candles burn romantically at the bath
like a Jewish candlestick that welcomes the Sabbath
and does announce the beginning of the year of jubilee
where everything is again nice and right
to far into the future
and no children or grandchildren
do bring resistance in their visiting multitude
and you and I are alone
like Adam and Eve
when they did noticed each other for the first time.

Gert Strydom

Your White Body Glows (Octave)

In bliss your white body glows in the dark
where stretched out you lie in your sleep
as if in another world you do embark
while an arm do me close to you keep.
When the rays of the moon do over your face fall
your eyes do open slowly where in silence you look at me
in this time and place in the universe, it's you and me in it all,
while moments linger do become a kind of eternity.

Gert Strydom

Your Works Display Your Righteousness

(after Gerard Manley Hopkins)

Your works display your righteousness, Lord,
and your love and mercy I cannot comprehend,
even your wisdom and power is without end,
Your sincerity is displayed in your word

but the works of my enemies prosper
and they are men, who do not honour you,
whose lives, whose words are never true,
while all my endeavours end in disaster

and Sir, at times I am struggling to know
if you view me as a enemy or as a friend,
while vile men rise against me, even every fiend,
creatures that with darkness glow.

I pray to have your blessings again,
to comprehend your will,
for protection against all the gathering evil,
for your presence like sweet refreshing drops of rain

and please forgive my faithlessness,
forgive my uncomprehending human ways
while you visit me in the coming days
and may I find in your presence tranquillity and rest.

[Reference: "Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend" by Gerard Manley Hopkins.]

Gert Strydom

Zebras

After the lion's roar
I see them standing quivering
testing the air
with nostrils snorting

in a bevy of white and black stripes
being both fearful and curious
and passing slowly
in the knee high grass

with soft voices calling
at each other
and the stallion wheeling nervously
turning around its herd
and sunlight flashes over
the magnificent animal.

Gert Strydom

Zeus As The Swan And Leda (Free Verse Sonnet)

In your beautiful flight thunderbolts did literary come out of your wings
and speechless Leda did notice you in the sky and was astounded
where your wing-beat did purely cleave open a way through the blue,
where you did gleam blue-white and as a swan you were disguised on that day
where you did decent next to her and without fear with arms open wide
as if driven she did run into the embrace of your broad wings,
an unknown impulse and passion did drive her to terrible fulfilment
and every bit of her self-conceit and declining humanity were stripped from her,
where she did shake from passion and ecstasy when you folded around her,
where she held you in her whole body and the ring of her arms tightly,
almost inhuman did meet you as an equal from face to face where you were
folded
around her in moments that did only have meaning for both of you,
where you did shudder in her where lightning-bolts did strike out from both of
you
and later with wonder she did stand naked and alone.

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Gert Strydom

Zimbabwe Frightened You

Zimbabwe frightened you,
Zimbabwe where we could be alone
and in a way I felt at home.
The dark black faces,
the savagery, hunger
and wretched poverty
were more than you could take.

You panicked thinking
that the unruly young teenagers
and so-called war veterans
would not just drive
the farmers away,
but were sharpening
their Panga-blades
even for white tourists.

Everywhere you looked,
you saw death, destruction
and black rule taking its toll
and the ever hungry
begging people
was like a prophecy
of what in the future
may be waiting for us
at home.

Visiting the places
we had dreamed of,
the Zimbabwe ruins,
Mana pools, Kariba lake
and the Victoria falls
was like a nightmare to you.

Even the African art carvings
of people and animals
and rural paintings
of the Ndebele people
hardly caught your eye

and you would rather die
than stay a day longer.

African dancers screaming
around a fire
and dancing like shadows
on the beat
of ancient drums
drove the fear home,
so that you wanted to get into the car.

[References: To Minette, of whom there is just memories. You Hated Spain by
Ted Hughes.]

Gert Strydom