

Poetry Series

Greg Costello
- poems -

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Greg Costello(05/04/1970)

A Few 'Unny' Endings

Laughter, without feeling the funny,
Is treasure, without finding the money.
A fried egg is no good, if not runny.
A Summer disappoints, if unsunny! .

Greg Costello

A Great Character

Untaxed beneath her frail frame,
The sturdy armchair squatted.
Her hands, that had yielded all opacity,
Dangled loosely from cardiganed wrists,
The gauze-like skin revealing a road map of veins,
Still transporting their vintage claret.
Her heart yet harboured reserves of joy,
Which leaked girlishly in titters;
For though Alzheimer's had done it's utmost
To blunt the senses,
Her humour remained sharp and defiant.
So too did her compulsion to rebuke parental slipshoddiness.
Now it's angels who fear straying from best practise.

Greg Costello

A Happy New Year?

Two thousand thirteen, my annus horribilis,
A year that saw me, at my miserabilis! ,
Two thousand fourteen, my annus mirabilis? ,
Too early to say, but so far it's fabulis! .

Greg Costello

A Lunar Musing

The moon inset itself on the blue of the daytime sky,
Appearing like some fogged-up monocle,
Reminding us of it's ever presence,
But also it's invisibility.
A Pyrrhic reminder to those with fogged-up minds.

Greg Costello

A Painful Extraction

He drilled and filled and root canaled,
But it ended with dry socket.
The toothless gum ached far less than,
The cavity in my pocket.

Greg Costello

Aftershock

A motorcycle grumbled to a standstill
In front of our house.
The rider turned the key,
Rocked the heavy Honda
On to it's tiptoes, and dismounted.
He straightened, headlocked his helmet,
And started up our path.
I watched from a distance,
As our exotic visitor
Disappeared inside the house.
Moments later I was ordered to
"Go get your big brother";
My Mam crying and smoking,
Neither of which I'd seen before.
I bolted like a spooked animal,
And blurted on finding him;
"Dad might be dead".
A Guard had come to inform us
That he had been involved in a "serious collision".
That night I fell into a deep shock.
Forty years on, that sense of panic re-ignites,
When I consider the day,
An unearthly messenger, may come to call.

Greg Costello

Afterwards

When bodily expired and clay-enclosed,
What fate awaits the spirit unreposed?

To be raised up by kindred tractor beam,
Or shown the way by light of halo gleam.

Perhaps this only happens when soul guide,
Grants delivery to God's arms open wide.

I dreamt my spirit would not separate,
And trapped inside its claustrophobic crate,

Undestined then for some celestial clime,
Suffocated, and died yet one more time.

So. Was it nothing or some metaphor?
Wear this life out, perchance there is no more.

Greg Costello

An Oasis

I basked in the ordinariness of the day,
Where it demanded nothing of me, nor I of it,
An afternoon unfolding in it's own shapeless way,
A temporary truce, that did my mood befit.
This signalled a change and sought a cycle to break,
For days of late have drained, like a temperamental child,
Came this day to cherish where so little seemed at stake,
A serenity tethering thoughts, that have run wild.

Greg Costello

Autumn Cinquain?

Autumn....

Randomly and carelessly,

Scattering Summer's bounty.

'Til every branch is bare,

And even the most stubborn leaves...fall.

Greg Costello

Beggars Can Be Choosers!

As my wife and I alfresco we dined
Hand out stood a beggar who was blind
I dug deep in my coat
Produced a five euro note
To his cry of 'Is that all you can find! ! '

Greg Costello

Big Phil

The last time I saw Big Phil alive was through a camera lens,
Jubilant Royal Ascot scenes filling my Samsung screen.
Phil was striding purposefully, chest puffed with pride,
His equine heroine Jenny, clip-clopping wearily alongside.
Moments before she had courageously captured the Ascot Stakes.
In the sport of kings, a coronation of the common man.

There was nothing Phil liked more than having a cut,
But to swell the suit pockets with sterling, at the home of British racing,
Set his patriotic pulse agallop.
Phil stood for photos, but not on ceremony,
The absence of a top or tails, an unsaid swipe at those propagating pomp.
Ascot was for studying raceform, not how to conform.

The next time I saw Phil he would be similarly suited,
Though now laying motionless in an open, heaven bound crate,
The lacquered lid standing propped against the wall,
Loitering like some coffin corner boy.
A peppercorn conga of rosary beads
Snaked around his bleached and frigid hands.

Friends of varying degrees of familiarity flowed through the house,
Some unsure of names, all unsure of what to say.
Phil's children grimaced and strained to metabolize well wishes.
His beleaguered wife teetered, close to collapse,
Left unbolstered and bereft;
Their unbreakable union, broken.

I stood moist faced, dry mouthed,
Watched my Dad laying there, watched myself laying there
And felt guilty for these disloyal, encroaching thoughts.
I timidly kissed Phil's porcelain forehead,
And grappled to find words of meaning,
That might offer hope and condolence.

Two days later we would say our final goodbye,
Talk of Phil's indelibility and reach,
Dolefully smile at familial insights.
Shy of sixty, shorn of his twilight,

A shamefully premature 'Supersaint'.
R.I.P. Philip Deans 1957-2016

Greg Costello

Blurred Lines

A pleasant, softly-spoken, giant of a man,
I knew him to talk to, but not as a friend,
And I would always walk away feeling unbalanced,
By his hidden, blatant lack of balance.

He spent his working life making it easier for others to see out;
Behind his own retinal panes an interminable mist;
His heart a cardiac chamois,
That could not be wrung of a lifetime's hurt.

And so he climbed the ladder one last time.
People remarked. "You just never know";
What if you always knew and were too late to act,
Because you were waiting to be told?

Greg Costello

Catching Up

I'm one and forty, but going on six,
This age disparity I must try fix,
The mirror reflects my manly stubble,
Yet I'm somehow stuck, in this boyhood bubble.

I've gone to my passport to verify,
What's printed inside can't speak so can't lie,
There right before me the year I was born,
So 'tween boy and man, you see I am torn.

There's parts I enjoy being a full grown kid,
But boy-like fears of myself must I rid,
And submit to this erstwhile overlap,
'Til both my personas can bridge this gap.

The two must make friends in a bid to unite,
The older whom with the greater insight,
Must harbour the child and protect him thus,
Allaying all those fears and anxiousness.

And face the future forever entwined,
A closeness forged of the Siamese kind,
Having then picked the locks to their soul cages,
Spend uncontrollably, freedom's wages.

Greg Costello

Changing Colour

The varied shades of grey of late,
Which have my palette been,
Are fading now through patient wait,
Revealing colours yet unseen.
Tones that glare with brightest hue,
Now occupy my prism,
Shafts of light enrich my view,
And sink my atavism.

Greg Costello

Cheerful Charlie

Whilst waiting for a cranial MRI,
The person to my right, began to pry.
'Are they searching for some fatal tumour? '
'Just a brain, ' replied my driest humour.
'And me' he said, 'the reason I am here,
My heart's been failing nigh on sixty year! '
'Well maybe you should take my place instead,
It seems to me, like it's all in your head'. -

On I went with unveiled cynicism,
To tell him if this cure called optimism.
'And where can I, this panacea find? '
'Just like your ills, it's conjured in the mind.'

Greg Costello

Cloudy Judgement

A conveyor belt of clouds passed overhead,
One thought he recognized the scene below,
'It's possible we're lost, ' he softly said
'We floated by this place some time ago.'
'I feel this sudden urge to spill some rain,
But can't be sure this is the spot we'd planned, '
His fellow clouds did not a drop retain,
'Of course' he mouthed, 'it's clearly Ireland.'

Greg Costello

Coming Down

Sipping my cup of camomile,
My peaceful face, breaks into smile,
Reflecting on the longest mile,
The hands reset upon the dial,
No roguish thoughts can my mood spoil,
As to my feelings, I've stayed loyal.

Greg Costello

Couldn't Write Without Either

If feeling how I'm feeling makes me write,
I question why the pen was so invented.
For if it were that feelings could be rented,
I'd treat the pen as just an oversight.

Greg Costello

Deep Water

Sinking down beyond the emotional benthos,
And coming to rest at last, I reached the abyss.
The clung-to hope through my fathomless descent was,
Back at the surface, the lure of unbridled bliss.

Greg Costello

Don'T Get Your O' Logists Mixed Up

My name is Dermat O' Logist,
An Irishman expert on skin.
My Dad goes by Herb O' Logist,
No slouch at Chinese medicine.

Once as we practised in tandem,
A terrible mix up took place,
A hapless patient at random,
Caused egg to appear on my face.

Cure-wise what he sought was herbal,
But wrongly arrived in with me,
Out came a whole load of verbal,
When implying I'd seen worse acne.

Greg Costello

Downsizing

I'm exercising daily on my bike,
To help me find a body I can like,
And though you'd hardly call me slim or svelte,
I scare the mirror less when in my pelt.
And bending now to reach my open lace,
Causes far less reddening of the face,
Then add the time that I already save,
By having only one chin left to shave.

Greg Costello

Eternal Love

When I go to my sod surround,
And next I'm summoned from above? ,
To all the angels I'll expound,
My life was filled with deepest love.

And when they ask how heaven seems? ,
I'll harken to my days on earth,
'My heart it glowed with love's sunbeams,
'Tween final whistle and my birth'.

Then resting on my pearly cloud,
I'll wait for those I do adore,
To take as long as God's allowed,
And then embrace forevermore.

Greg Costello

Fair Is Not Always Fair

'That's a Stormtrooper there, but with ginger hair, '
I heard the kid say to the man.
'Is he really that white? ', the lad said in fright,
Questioning a complete lack of tan.

I knew just what he meant, for two weeks had I spent,
With the palest being in all of mankind,
In this holiday town, he made Casper look brown,
Himself to four-digit factor he'd confined.

See the moral here, is evidently clear,
If you're Irish, red-haired and fair,
Your skin just wasn't made, in the sun to be laid,
But they say Pluto's cheap once you're there.

Greg Costello

Girls Will Be Girls

A sniper by the hot tap lay,
Turned upside-down in battle grey,
Soaking in a pool of water,
Deserted by my impish daughter.
Who'd played with him and his platoon,
The previous day with caring hand,
'Til lured away by Barbie boon,
The soldier left in no-man's-land.

Greg Costello

Golfing In Ireland

A Japanese lady once told me, that
On golfing in rain she wasn't 'much keen'
She then strode from the clubhouse quite boldly,
Into the heaviest downpour I'd seen.

Greg Costello

Grainful Enjoyment!

When eating began for young Tom as a laddie,
His dinner unfailingly, came from the 'paddy'.
Japonicas, Indicas, he'd gulp down with glee,
Aromatics and Glutinous, munched avidly.

We'd watch him devour every variety,
Basmati, Arborio and Carnaroli.
His appetite was such, he downed rice by the sack,
The only exception, to his liking, was Black. -

I questioned him on this, he went in to explain,
That it tasted to him, an unsavoury grain.
To single out Black, as being 'just not the nicest',
Suggested to me, Tom was clearly a ricist! !

Greg Costello

Graveside Reflections

A black trickle of mourners were sucked
Towards the clayless plug-hole;
A ninety-one year old life about to be consumed.
I prayed that her spirit was soaring
Above in a heavenly orbit,
I recoiled at the notion of her lingering
At some lost and found.
I embraced many tearful bystanders,
Looking to reassure, but as much
To seek reassurance,
That at my journey's end,
My soul too, shall find safekeeping.

Greg Costello

Growing Older

This laboured Labrador went waddling by,
His awkward gait the legacy of time,
The tragic loss of youth's vitality,
What once were walks, now mountains he must climb.

Did he explore and roam and wander free? ,
And rest fireside when day was almost done,
Then rage along with endless energy,
When lead would slacken, giving way to fun.

And did he chase and fetch and froth at mouth? ,
But on occasion disobey his call,
His senses drowned by freedom all about,
Fun being so fulfilling after all.

Could it be now his age fills him with dread? ,
Or does he simply just ignore the fact? ,
His path's bound for his fellow canine dead,
No need to contemplate, the final act.

Greg Costello

Homesick Sonnet

I need somebody to pick up the phone,
I'm in such pain and suffering alone,
It's an s.o.s. from across the pond,
Don't think about answering, just respond.
I feel cast adrift with no sign of land,
'Neath ripcurls of sadness, at their command,
So launch the lifeboat with skipper and crew,
For in such a tempest, armbands won't do.
I've tried my damnest to weather this storm,
Pursuing this dream in it's contorted form,
Hauling around some dutibound anchor,
Swallowing whole my internal rancor.
But rescue's not llikely, it's sink or swim,
Sorry to tell you, the forecast is grim.

Greg Costello

If Only

Sideways facing on the settee, our mirrored postures,
Separated only by the width of the draughts board;
It's smooth, round, passive counters
And cold, glazed, monochrome check.

Deliberate pause had been taken in the day,
An unbuckling of the straight-jacket of routine;
Sharing now an unfamiliar space, filled with lightness,
Softness, and huffing of a different kind.

She was a girl again, a childish alloy of excitement and intent,
Fingering the captured pieces like a poker player his chip-stack;
Delighting in each zig-zag double jump; sliding in first to be kinged.
For her it was the perfect game; rules, borders, limits,
Everything decided there and then in black and white.
I sat thinking. 'If only there was more time for moments like these'
The oven's timer chirped, and I would have to wait,
Until the next time I was home from school, unwell.

Greg Costello

Jack Sprat

Jack Sprat could eat no fat,
His wife just ate Noeleen!
Relief for Sprat, who if not a lath,
May be one more has-been.

Greg Costello

Knowing Your Place

Staring from above.

Below, in tideless tranquility

Untroubled by man or moon

A lake lay, stretching to meet

The lanky larches standing guard

Over it's body of mouthless silence. -

No current to stir it's depths,

No sea to greet it's journey's end,

No making waves. Just acceptance

Of Mother Nature's glacial dictate.

Greg Costello

Labels, Labels

Devoted to Gucci, Prada and Kors
Though men came and went through revolving doors
Known to loved ones as Mia
Christened socially, Ikea
For being all wardrobe but no drawers.

Greg Costello

Left Open-Mouthed

My tender age, prompted her to take full control,
To instruct in the art of kissing was her goal,
The ensuing oral onslaught took it's toll, for
Like a marshmallow, I was almost swallowed whole.

Greg Costello

Let Children Be

With eyes of lapis lazuli,
And laughter soaked with unbound joy,
And spirit bold and thoughts carefree,
My role is just to let her be.
To play and act and float and flounce,
Though nurture her with every ounce, .
Without control but steadfastly,
Avow anew to let her be.
So that one day she may decree,
She lived with childhood liberty,
To roar aloud 'hey look at me'
My parents chose to let me be.

Greg Costello

Lost And Found

I lost my mind some time ago,
I had searched for it everywhere.
But this one that's begun to grow,
Ironically, I'd prefer.

Greg Costello

Migraine

Secretly, but more selfishly of late,
I've craved some succor from this cranial pain,
That in some mitigating twist of fate,
'Mi' loss, would become someone else's 'graine.'

Greg Costello

Minecraft Misgivings

'Be careful my son, don't exceed your dose,
Hours of Minecraft will make you go lumpy! '
Concerned for his ocular health, I suppose?
More my aural protection from Stampy! !

Greg Costello

Moving Farther On

No more the angel's outstretched hand,
No more the flames of hell are fanned,
No more my soul in no-man's-land,
No more black clouds as they disband,
No more I thought could I withstand,
Much more myself, I understand.

Greg Costello

Moving On

For weeks my mind has been ablaze,
Now I'm sifting through it's stubble.
Lifted the blanket sea of haze,
Calmed the roaring sea of trouble.

Glimpsed shoots of hope with real amaze,
Squeezing past the tear-stained rubble.
Gathering strength for life's next phase,
Though my heart's still beating double.

Greg Costello

Not 'Literally' True

It's 'i' before 'e', except after 'c',
Though not strictly true, alphabetically,
Last when I looked, it was 'e' before 'i'
Unless 'd' swapped with 'h', to make this a lie.

Greg Costello

Our Old 'sanyo'

Remember our old 'Sanyo' three-in-one,
A musical delight to my young mind,
Listening spellbound as our vinyl spun,
'Twas with tape-deck and radio combined.

Recalling when it first came to our house,
The best invention ever, it was hailed,
Excited, but as quiet as a mouse,
Itching for this new voice to be unveiled.

A few things first, required some pointing out,
Stereo jargon that we ought to know,
'Volume control negates the need to shout
For spinning discs, you switch it to phono.'

'All albums should be played at thirty-three,
For singles you best change to forty-five,
The stylus, always handle carefully,
Drop in the groove and hear it come alive.'

One last glance at dials of treble and bass,
Now what to play, oh such a glorious choice! ,
Pick Blondie with her fragile 'Heart of Glass'
Or air Rod Stewart's distinctive, raspy voice-

My brother wore out needles playing Queen,
To Shalimar, Mam was a loyal fan,
On Robbins, Cash and Rogers, Dad was keen,
My sister loved Le Bon's, Duran Duran

And Boomtown Rats, their 'Tonic for the Troops',
With Geldof's zealous rantings pouring out
Could oft' be heard among our favourite groups,
The Clash's lyrics, Strummer, he would spout.

For years the 'Sanyo' played impartially,
At certain times this must have been a test,
A band who went unheard regrettably,
Pink Floyd, unknownst to me, who were the best.

Greg Costello

Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind

I passed on the street a real-life zombie,
A blank stare left his periscopic hood,
Withering beneath his Abercrombie,
The discarded needle, curdling his blood.
A pitiful life, a forgotten man?
Frequenting alleys to escape the glare,
Is he no longer a part of His plan?
I pressed on homeward, how much did I care?

Greg Costello

Overgrown

Standing rooted,
inspecting the playing pitch
of my youth.
Time has now reshaped
this field of dreams,
into something
no longer
fit for purpose.
The neglect saddens,
bothers me.
I rail at
the vision of its
uneven surface,
undefined lines,
and sprawling
unfenced acreage.
What do others think,
when they look upon it now?
Do they consider
the change of landscape
drastic, irreversible?
I dare to look
beyond the untilled;
contemplate restoration.

Greg Costello

Puppy Love

Our incontinent puppy called Bella,
Stood sheepish like some guilty young fella,
As I opened the door,
The brown streak on the floor,
Was identified as canine Nutella! !

Greg Costello

Role Reversal

If horses rode jockeys, not the reverse,
Trainers instructions to nags, would be terse-

'Your mode of conveyance's legs, number two,
Shan't be in obeyance, when whip is pulled through,
Can tell you for sure he won't handle the ground
A horse-racing 'Cana', should he get you round'.

Greg Costello

Seaside Scene

The selfish sun gathers hoards to the shore.

Parties of people decamp,
floating towels onto their chosen patch.

Toddlers transfixed by the sea,
tangle in their togs: beach-bums.

Swimmers squeal, tiptoeing their way
to the required depth,

Others bound with looping legs;
attempting to ignore the tide's temperature.

Waves crash and bang, as bare-chested builders decide
where sandcastles won't subside.

Sunbathers bask to the shushing of sun-sprays;
parasols protect the fairer kind.

Magnums are munched; ice-cream cones rotated
on outstretched tongues, saving the sand-bound drips.

Children clutch kite-strings; letting too their laughter
soar on the salted air.

Eventually evening intervenes, forcing the sun
to relinquish its solar grip.

Greg Costello

Shaping Up

My body must be put back into shape,
And follow in the footsteps of my mind,
Must ease the strain upon the tailor's tape,
Now that I'm emotionally streamlined.

Greg Costello

Take Or Give

Do you reckon yourself to be either,
A giver or taker by breed,
It's a falsehood to say that you're neither,
Should people be defined by deed.

Do you take others feelings for granted? ,
And give a deaf ear to what's said,
Neglecting to take heed of what's wanted,
Giving a cold shoulder instead.

Would you call yourself one who takes pity? ,
And gives support when so required,
Do you take pause from life's nitty-gritty? ,
Give help when the need has expired.

Are you one to take pride in your children? ,
And give them a platform to grow,
Or instead take control and just will them,
Give in to your manifesto.

Do you take backward steps from embraces? ,
Won't give to your masculine pride,
Take solace from freshly hugged faces,
Give way to your nurturing side.

Do you take steps that offer up freedom? ,
That give way to journeys unplanned,
Do you take fleeting moments and seize them? ,
Give meaning to Time's grains of sand.

Are you one to take lunch breaks mid-morning? ,
To give your employer the slip,
And take 'sickies' without prior warning,
Give in to the slightest nose drip.

Giving and taking are choices,
It's knowing which verb to apply,
Blatantly this poem's advice is,
If the balance is wrong - question why?

Greg Costello

Tennis Elbow

The 'Doc' says I've acute tennis elbow,
Head-scratching as, I don't own a racket.
Wallet-ache is now beginning to show,
As the treatment is costing a packet.

Greg Costello

The 'Esson' Session

A symptom of a national recession,
Is widespread and collective depression,
Employees from every profession,
Just surviving, but at what concession.

There's a justified wave of aggression,
'Tward the immoral bankworld transgression,
The piecemeal government intercession,
But nothing in the way of confession.

So with continuing fiscal compression,
And an upsurge in house repossession,
The country since Brian Cowan's accession,
Has suffered a quite seismic regression.

Now the Celtic Tiger's dispossession,
Has stemmed the money-making obsession,
But those in charge don't give the impression,
They're in touch with our poorest's oppression.

Greg Costello

The Footballer I Stood Behind

The footballer I stood behind,
Whose physical form I would use,
The glare from this talent left blind,
Those directing this unwitting muse.

The footballer I stood behind,
The subject of everyone's views,
Jealousies and comments unkind,
To a soul that could easily bruise.

The footballer I stood behind,
Whom I'd watched from spectators shoes,
His freedom replaced by a grind,
His destiny, not his to refuse.

The footballer I stood behind,
Obscuring all life's other clues,
To the person he might really find,
Only now, is he getting to choose.

The footballer I'm now leaving behind,
Whose persona at times I would abuse,
Is embracing a clarity of mind,
And identity, he won't ever lose.

Greg Costello

The Hacker

The hacker sets out in deep concentration,
But golf shots soon turn to excavation.
Staring glumly at cavernous divots,
No textbook technique, but reverse pivots-

They endure this torment for eighteen holes,
Feel guilty for all the evicted moles.
Into the clubhouse to glance at the card,
Which has been strangely, by high numbers marred.

Greg Costello

The Leaving

He changed from boy to man in double time,
And crammed his whole clan's dreams inside his boots,
The time had come for him to walk the line,
And turn his youthful back upon his roots.

The parting in itself, was filled with fears,
A solitary journey 'cross the sea,
To face a future brief, or countless years,
He flew on wings racked with anxiety.

What lay ahead he felt his craft could match,
Years of application helped fuel his fire,
But the golden boy among this latest batch,
Decided that his soul was not for hire.

The odyssey it ended five years hence,
Relief at last his exile came to pass,
Stalled in gear with a life yet to commence,
The second hand is ticking, much too fast.

Greg Costello

The Male 'pram Pusher'

There seems to be three separate species of the male pram pusher.

Firstly, there is the Dad that brims with paternal pride. When out for a family drive, he will have the pram assembled and the child strapped in, before the car has ground to a halt. It would be unsurprising also, had he been involved in the packing of the baby bag, prior to leaving. These Dads are very comfortable wearing harnesses and baby carriers.

Secondly, there is the Dad who will push the pram, but will first check whose turn it is. This is especially important when there is only one child, as his turn off, will allow for texting friends and checking sporting results. In some cases, the turn-taking is extended to the nappy changing.

Thirdly, there is the Dad that flat out does not want to do it. He sees it as a challenge to his masculinity, and much more obviously, a woman's job. This type of Dad is very easily spotted, as he pushes one-handed and attempts to walk alongside the pram, creating the impression it is moving of it's own volition. It's the best he can do to dilute the potential embarrassment of being seen by his friends. Bad enough to be spotted doing it, but worse still, the fact his pals will know that he has acted under the direction of his other half.

Greg Costello

The Night We Met

A silver, slimline, sparkling nymph,
Stole into view, looked heaven sent,
Her modest, unassuming smile,
But served to sharpen my intent.

Which was to see if I could charm,
The stand-out girl 'midst those around,
That there was not a suitor swarm,
Did nothing, if not me astound -

Moments before I'd watched her dance,
In rhythmic step to every beat,
And so as not to dent my chance,
Kept unemployed, both my left feet.

Then finally, the time it came
A meeting that would change my life,
The sparkling nymph, she felt the same,
My best friend, whom I now call wife.

Greg Costello

The Reticent Cow

An attractive, shy Friesian named Jean
Whose hooves had not felt pastures green
Stayed concealed in her byre
Growing coyer and coyer
And so remained herd but not seen.

Greg Costello

The Salmon Of Knowledge! !

This poem suggests that youngest Fionn McCool,
Found tough the challenges of early school,
And pointless he attend some fledgeling college,
Prior to gaining all one fishes knowledge.

To speak of this his parents had no wish,
And scoffed when others tried to make a fuss;
For Destiny deemed one all-knowing fish,
Would turn the boy from dunce to genius.

For now the outdoor life it suited so,
In to an expert hunter he would grow,
And time was his to practice homegrown sports,
Whilst roaming hill and dale with his cohorts. -

The legend goes that one day in the woods,
Fionn angled with the bard old Finnegas,
Who'd fished for seven years and caught but duds,
This scaly prize, remained unfound, alas.
The poet sat and cursed the River Boyne,
Held captive for so long, this famed Bradan,
Then tellingly a tugging on his line,
A change of luck, brought by this amadan. -

Then at the man's request, Fionn gently cooked,
The fabled salmon, Finnegas had hooked,
Then eyeing on it's skin, a blister linger,
Popped it with his thoughtless index finger.

To soothe the stinging, Fionn employed his mouth,
And as his brain had long since drifted South,
Impossible it seems to understand,
He cooled a digit from his unburned hand!

As Finnegas bore witness to this act,
And ignoring Destiny with Fionn it's pact,
Ingested the whole Salmon double-quick,
For fear it go to waste on one so thick.

The Sugar Lump

The sugar lump, he got the hump,
When tossed straight over the rim.
Into the cup, awaiting sup,
His one and only swim.

Greg Costello

The Wiley Wildebeest

I'm just a young wildebeest, and to say the very least,
Not all that appealing to the eye,
Yet 'round these plains, between crocs and manes,
By the grace of God, go I.

Now it's fair to think, I'm a food-chain link,
But that's not what irks me the most,
More the continual strife, of the migratory life,
The tough slog from pillar to post.

Incredulously, we do this annually,
As we are genetically predisposed,
Whoever got it in their brain, to follow the rain,
To me that name must be disclosed.

See we're a million strong, and our tumultuous throng,
Trek for kilometres in countless degrees,
Our way's riddled with foes, but it's me that they've chose,
And so I must the crocodiles appease.

Now they line the river-banks, in reptilian ranks,
As it's reached this time of year,
Making their moves, upon hearing our hooves,
And smelling the quadrupedal fear

So it's me who goes first, disobeying my thirst,
To summon the croc king close by,
'Excuse me sir, ' in nerves I slur,
'Make way for my friends and I'.

'You what, ' he said, and I watched in dread,
As his suppressed vexation grew,
'You loricates won't feast, on fresh wildebeest,
For all of us, we are gnu'.

'Oh! ' he replied, as if he'd just denied,
All his ancient ancestral genes,
'I must be confused, ' his ego now bruised,
'All is not quite as it seems'.

'Then won't you make way, as we musn't delay,
We are all travelling toward pastures new, '
And we gambolled across, without solitary loss,
And slaughter did somehow, eschew.

Greg Costello

Things You Won'T Find Or See!

Of rare things on a scale from one to ten,
What ranks the highest is the toothed hen.
But outside of this one anomaly,
A host of things you just won't find or see(have found or seen)

Proof that Everest first saw Mallory
A Traveller who's challenged follically
A vegetarian cannibal's most rare
Ronaldo with a single misplaced hair
An odour free and pleasant smelling skunk
A slur free Shane MacGowan who isn't drunk
A German who has ever once been late
A Cockney greet you without saying mate
A panda without fondness for bamboo
A pigeon that can squawk instead of coo
The face beneath the helmet of the Stig
Above your head an aviating pig
A papal image hanging in Ibrox
A reveller at Woodstock wearing socks
A zebra born with spots bereft of stripes
A mess that can't be cleaned by baby wipes
Pictures of Gandhi wearing boxing gloves
Sad Henry the Eighth mourning his past loves
One Salman Rushdie governing Iran
A cow-pie left untouched by Desperate Dan
A Sumo squeezing into skinny jeans
Beatles' footage without the screaming teens
A Southerner who can't abide NASCAR
Or Hendrix miss a note on his guitar
A Kenyan athlete lacking stamina
A footballing mistake by Paul McGrath
A polar bear that's fearful of the cold
An origami champ who cannot fold
A cuckoo for the first time build a nest
A minger on the arm of Georgie Best.

And finally the last thing you won't see
The completion of this poem in perfect, poetic symmetry.

Time

Time like money, can be wasted or spent,
Though Time goes unearned, as it's heaven sent,
So cease counting money, make your Time count,
Priceless is Time, for who knows their amount.

Greg Costello

Tuned To A Different 'station'

'Dad - did you see the pictures in the church? ,
Of those people being real mean to God, ? '
That some should challenge the Almighty One,
My daughter found, most odd. -

'He is in charge of all the planets, right,
And I saw him holding a metal cross,
To smack all those meanies over the head,
Don't they know that he's the boss? '

'I guess they don't, ' she self replied,
For to her none of this made sense,
To want to hurt the 'King of the Jews',
Puzzled the Queen of Innocence.

Greg Costello

What A Mother?

She became a mother at twelve,
Compelled to fill
A maternal void,
Born of her own mother's
Laziness and neglect;
Her childhood ended.
There were other reasons too
For this hard-pressed schoolgirl
To dislike her mother;
A penchant for male company,
A gluttonous tendency
Toward whiskey, and an
Inability to challenge a
Stroppy, foul-mouthed, younger sister.

Her father by all accounts,
Was a soft, affable man,
Himself no stranger to
The after work snug and high stool.
With him she shared
A warm, mutual and
Everlasting love.
She would starch his shirts
And treat his hair,
Run errands to the shops
For his smokes, and
Collect his cobbled shoes.
At his passing, she was left
Heartbroken and orphaned.
Her mother in time re-married;
Someone new to fawn over her. -

All I can recall
Are the infrequent visits
To my grandmother's house;
Chore-like visits of
Duty and brevity,
The kitchen of uncloseness,
Their embrace of ice

On leaving,
And her name
Not uttered once,
Since they parted, for good.

Greg Costello

When Winter Comes Calling

The long remorseless winter rolled on in,
Consuming those of weak and brittle mind,
And planting seeds of black where he'd assigned,
Went unrepentant with this widespread sin.
He'd come to have his yearly pound of flesh,
And in this matter would not be denied,
Impervious to those who wept and cried,
He would himself with these lost souls enmesh.

Greg Costello

Wills And Will Nots

He left it all to the DSPCA.
They would have fought like cats and dogs.

Greg Costello

Winter Wonders Why

Winter for his weather feels demonized,
Yet his bringings are simply seasonal.
Sunshine gets Summer all but canonized,
To Winter this seems so unreasonable!

Greg Costello

Writing

Writing verse is therapy in itself,
It acts to set the soul and spirit free,
To lend voice to those feelings on the shelf,
With just your pen of choice, for company.

Greg Costello