

Poetry Series

# **James Hart**

## **- poems -**

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# James Hart(21.06.53)

Retired anglican priest

Oblate of Saint Benedict

Tutor of St. John's Nottingham

# £50

£50 Prize

no surprise

"more", said eyes

but got same size,

you misers

of NS&Ize

James Hart

## ...2 In The Bush

There's a nest in a bush in the garden  
2 chicks have hatched  
Quiet!  
Quiet!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

A protective mother  
Hovers overhead  
Hush!  
Hush!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

Whisper who dares!  
They are keeping warm  
Snug!  
Snug!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

They are blackbirds  
All three  
Together!  
Together!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

Mother flies off  
To find them some food  
Fatter!  
Fatter!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

There's a nest in the bush in the garden  
2 chicks have hatched

Quiet!  
Quiet!  
Chris and Robin  
Are saying their prayers

James Hart

## 2 Soldiers, Bang, Dead

Two soldiers  
No name no photo yet  
Gunned down  
Outside their barracks  
Bang, dead.

Two woodpigeons  
No name no photo ever  
Gunned down  
In their woodland home  
Bang, dead.

Two elephants  
No name no photo please  
Hunted for their ivory  
In their natural habitat  
bang, dead

Two butterflies  
No name, just photos please  
Netted as specimens  
In free air  
Bang, dead.

Bang, dead  
Bang dead  
Irreplaceable jewels of life  
Bang, dead  
Bang, dead.

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James Hart

James Hart

## 4 Feet

I am poking up through my sheet  
I am stretching out in my boots

The sheet I borrowed from my friend  
The boots I stole from a shop

The sheet doesn't keep me warm  
The shoes don't quite fit either

But my friend is with me  
That makes everything better

My friend's feet were pierced,  
His hands were pierced as well

His name is Jesus  
But why did they treat him so?

James Hart

Fifty seven  
 Fifty seven years  
 Fifty seven years old  
 Fifty seven famous varieties

Five and seven  
 Heinz' lucky numbers  
 But in fact odd numbers  
 Just as are half of numbers

Fifty seven  
 Gateway to heaven  
 Bread raised by leaven  
 Cornwall beyond Devon

James Hart



There was a young sexagenarian from Kenilworth

Whose virtue was so great it was mega-worth

To Curves did she go

Her shape to re-grow

And became 'Mrs Recycled of Kenilworth'!

James Hart

# 60th!

60

Today sixty

Nifty sixty  
Chesty sixty!

Shifty sixty  
Hefty sixty

Misty sixty  
Daftly sixty

Dizzy sixty  
Sexy sixty?

Slowly sixty  
Oldie sixty

James Hart

The psalmist says '3 score years and 10'  
Youth says 'Live Forever, I Wanna'  
Age says 'I'll go when I'm ready' When?

2 WPOs shot in Manchester  
Aged late 20s one  
Early thirties the other  
Never knew mid-life crisis  
And menopause would never come  
Forever to remain as Isis

Shakespeare at my age  
Had written all his plays  
Where is the wisdom of the sage?

James Hart

# A Mysticism Manual

Meditation...

Contemplation...

Visualization...

Exaltation...

Mantra chanting

Breath controlling

Lotus sitting

Eyes closed staring

All inclusive

Inexpensive

Suits all places

Fits all sizes

All encompassing

All religions

For nirvana

For health and wholeness

Christians seeing Jesus

Moslems seeing Allah

Jews seeing Jehovah

Buddhists finding peace

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James Hart

# A Bevy Of Revs.

4 Revs from the same Avenue  
4 Revs from the same generation

2 Rural Deans,  
1 Canon with a Canon wife

2 Brothers  
With a common call

1 half-time Priest  
With a chronic condition

2 childhood friends,  
Playing ignorant of their future

Is that a record?  
Maybe, but it is certainly

Divine revenue from one Avenue!

James Hart

# A Carol For 2009

Silent Night  
Holy Night

Bombs in flight  
Birds big fright

Men will fight  
For their right

Putting might  
First in sight

Jesus slight  
Small in height

Has a bite  
Like a knight

Angels not tight  
Fly like a kite

Silent Night  
Holy Night

James Hart

# A Cradle Song

Twinkle, twinkle  
Little star  
Now I know  
Just where you are  
Right inside your special mummy  
Cuddling up against her tummy  
Twinkle, twinkle  
Little star  
I'm your granddad  
You my avatar.

James Hart

# A Eulogy For Anna

My daughter is also my daughter-in-law  
She qualified as a solicitor last week  
Adamant defender of human rights  
But fierce opponent of human wrongs  
Her life marked so far by occasions  
In which she has shone for  
Her determination  
Her stand for the right,  
Her fearlessness,  
Her strength of character  
As when she walked out  
On the Headmaster of her Public School  
Appalled at the way he had treated her  
She had no hesitation in giving up  
Her status as a Prefect and  
Deputy Head of House  
Putting first what she saw to be right  
And leaving said Headmaster speechless  
Happy also to take part in demonstrations  
Against Britain's invasion of Iraq  
How will her career develop?  
What issue will define it?  
The world waits with bated breath.

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James Hart

James Hart



# A Grace For Harvst Supper

Thank you God, for our Harvest Supper  
Thank you for milk we turn into butter  
Thank you for wine and coffee, that's hotter  
Thank you for all of us for all of us matter

Amen

James Hart

# A La Recherche Du Temps Perdu

A la recherche du temps perdu  
Young men butchered on the fields of Flanders  
A la recherche du temps perdu  
One 4 year old girl snatched on holiday in Portugal  
A la recherché de Madeleine perdue  
Heard the Beatles but never saw them in Russia in the 60s  
A la recherché du temps perdu  
Religious straitjacket robbed me of 30 years of enjoying them  
A la recherché du temps perdu

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# A Limerick For George On His Baptism

There was a young man from Austria  
Who had to take refuge in Anglia  
By race born a Jew  
By choice Christian too,  
This thoughtful nonagerian from Vienna

James Hart

# A Limerick For Lenny And Beraldine

There was a fine man called Lenny  
Who lived with his wife Geraldiney  
Ensconced in their lair  
They made a fine pair  
That wonderful couple from Bumpstenny

James Hart

# A Limerick For Margarita

There was a young lady from Spainland  
Who married a young stud from England  
3 children she bore him  
14 houses she lived in  
At 57, she sets the Tom-Tom to Snoozeland

James Hart

## A Loo Limerick

There was a young man from Toulouse  
Who found that this Church has no loos  
"Mon Dieu, he cried,  
I nearly died  
Till I walked to le Hall du village from the pews."

James Hart

# A Poem For Andrew

A poem for Andrew

A poem for Andrew  
You're getting married today  
@24  
By Archbishop's license  
On 1st September 2007  
@St Mary's Church  
In Steeple Bumpstead

You're getting married today  
In tails, with a limousine,  
In the sunshine, with a Church full of fans,  
@St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

You're getting married today  
To Wallis, a lively American girl  
With a Dr Dad and lots of siblings  
And a Mum with lots of style.  
@St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

A poem for Andrew  
The SBD's favourite  
SBD' Special Brilliant Dude  
Married today @St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

The sun shone, a perfect day  
For a perfect wedding  
The birds sang their festive songs  
Today @St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

We nibbled and drank a bit outside  
Then went to Cambridge  
To eat a lot, to drink a lot, to dance a lot  
To celebrate the marriage that took place

@St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

Live on then, live your lives together  
With love and joy  
And don't forget others  
Above all don't forget God  
Who gave you life and love and  
Enabled you to get married  
@St Mary's Church  
in Steeple Bumpstead

©2009  
James Hart

James Hart



# A Republican Gb

No Queen  
To reign supreme(?)  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
No King  
With all his bling  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
No royal family,  
A self-perpetuating folly  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
No House of Lords,  
A travesty of our laws  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
No awarding of titles  
As vacuous as waffles  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
Hurrah! Hurrah!

But simply a President  
Chosen by the people  
From the people  
For the people

Hurrah! Hurrah!  
Hurrah! Hurrah!

Long live Republican GB!

James Hart

# A Trinitarian Meditation

Our Father

Abba Father

Originator

Sustainer

God all around us

God the Son

The man Jesus

The Christ

My example

God before me

God the Holy Spirit

The Power

The Presence

The Paraclete

God within me

James Hart

# Adam

'Dust thou art and  
Unto dust thou shalt return'

No parents  
No grandparents  
An only-child  
A lonely child?

No name  
Just fame  
Called 'mankind'  
From clay-kind

A farmer  
A sower  
An earth-man  
A worker

From Edenic bliss  
(He missed the kiss)  
To temporal loss  
(He won the toss) .

Thankfully,  
'A second Adam to the fight  
And to the rescue came'

James Hart

# After...

After the cold the warmth  
After the grey the green  
After the glum the smile  
After the dark the light  
After the winter the spring  
After the death the life

James Hart

# Age Is Colour Blind?

Black and white  
Not primary colours  
Like red and green  
Are colours of youth

Grey, fifty shades of  
Is colour of old age  
And black in Spain  
The uniform of the sad

No colour where  
There is no sunlight  
No joy where  
There is no colour

James Hart

# All Right On The Night

Right on the night

Was it right the way I wrote the poem, the last time?  
Is there a right way or is there a wrong way?  
Or is there just my way of showing my insecurity as a poet?  
Either way, I have begun again and begun again  
Without a plan either for the start or the ending  
Vague notions swirl around my brain, vague notions and  
A firmer hope that it will all come right on the night

Does it ever all come right on the night?  
That famous night when all will magically come right?  
Well, not in my experience will it all come right on the night  
A poem that is not poetic beforehand  
will not magically rhyme on the night  
A sonata that is not musical beforehand  
Will not magically sound right on the night

It will need work much work to come right on the night

James Hart

# Amapola

Dulce amapola  
La chica en pijama  
Caminando por la ribera  
En su tierra de Castilla  
Siempre con alegría  
Deleita con frescura  
Bonita margarita  
En la tarde tan hermosa  
En una noche estrellada  
Con su luz purísima  
Con su cara de maestra  
Controla a toda su banda  
Los niños miran su cara  
Y admiran su belleza

James Hart

# Anna & Martin's Wedding

Anna, Margarita,  
Rights Defender  
AI member  
Palindrome  
First job - aerodrome  
Daughter and/or  
Daughter in law  
Legal eagle  
Scent of a beagle  
To many a friend  
Her ear they bend  
Churchgoer  
Confirmed believer  
Local Church  
High Church  
Father a Vicar  
Very much thicker  
Su madre como ella  
Excelente cocinera  
Teams with brother  
Andrew Richard  
standing as tall  
as would be  
his late older brother  
Edward James  
We miss him  
But rejoice today  
To have a new  
Brother in Martin  
Anna's new husband

James Hart



# Another World

There is a world  
Another world  
The world of memory  
Of impressions  
And smells  
And sounds  
And feelings  
Of yesterday

A Wordsworth moment  
Wakes it up  
"When oft upon my couch  
I lie in vacant  
Or in pensive mood  
They flash upon the inner eye  
Which is the bliss  
Of solitude"

My solitude  
Is something else  
Transported also  
In my mind  
To rural scenes  
Of tree-lined paths  
Through forests dark  
Towards the sunlight

The passing impression  
Elusive and transitory  
Like that moment  
When sleep overtakes  
My conscious state  
Will I pass  
From sleep to death  
And not know it?

James Hart

# April Jones

Born in Wales  
Born in April(?)  
Born in Spring  
Born in hope

5 years old  
5 birthdays old  
5 Christmases old  
5 summer holidays old

Abducted by a friend(?)  
Has cerebral palsy  
Needs medication  
'We want her back'

Amazing response  
From concerned public  
Possible man arrested  
All wait for outcome

Rest on my child  
Your spring is over  
Now the long endless summer  
The eternal playing-out you deserve

James Hart

# Ash Wednesday 2010

"Dust thou art  
And unto dust  
Thou shalt return"

Woman caught  
In the act of  
Adultery:  
"Go and sin  
No more"

'Ransomed, healed,  
Restored, forgiven  
Who like thee  
His praise  
Shouldest sing'.

James Hart

# Autumn

The cold breeze through the window left ajar as I rest  
Reminds me that summer is gone and autumn is stirring,  
Bringing sadness as the lawn is mown for the last time  
Sadness as summer shorts give way to warmer trousers.

I watch as the cycle begins again, that dreaded cyclical  
Pattern we can't get out of, daytime and night,  
Seedtime and harvest, laughter and tears, life and death  
Only death breaks the dreaded cycle, death the end of all.

Oh joyous death, the end of life, of change, of stress  
Beginning of new dimensions, of new experiences,  
Glimpsed by sages in Antiquity, by Greeks by Persians  
By Chinese, by Jews, by too many not to want it.

Autumn, bring on autumn, bring on winter,  
Bring on spring and the following summer  
Until I've seen them all and sleep to wake no more,  
Bring on the seasons, the cycle the change, until my end.

James Hart

# Autumn Leaves

They drift to the ground as their tree sets them free  
Curled and soggy they are tired, they agree  
Sad and sorry but they have played their part  
In creating a tree of stunning beauty and art  
They die but they fertilise the ground for the next  
The future generation that must rise up and text  
Its autumn leaves drawn artificially on their ipad  
Many would see that as being nothing but sad.

James Hart

# Ave Maria

Greetings, Mary  
gracious Mary  
the ultimate is with you  
blest Mary  
blest the child  
who is also with you

Special Mary  
origin of our originator  
remember us  
imperfect re-creators  
now and in the moment of meeting  
our great translator.

James Hart

# Badgered

O Lord, help me.

Traps laid to catch me  
He's not wanted  
He's a threat  
I'll show my power over him  
And I'll enjoy it.

First Bruce  
A closet critic  
In the toilets to others  
Never to me  
No use.

Then Barbara  
Lately given power  
She abused it  
A mistaken promotion  
No use

Surprisingly Michael  
A good start but threatened  
Unable to overcome feelings  
A clerical error  
No use.

Unsurprisingly Marcos  
Malicious and twisted  
Tacitly supported by the incompetent David  
Left shortly after he saw me off  
No use

Then Chris, quiet and inscrutable  
Still waters running deep  
Saw only his agenda  
Fundamentalist and spineless  
No use

Finally Neill, lying and deceitful

Untrustworthy, incommunicative  
Determined to build no bridges  
A dangerous loner  
No use

United across my career by 2 things:  
They called themselves Christians  
And they were a thorn in my side  
Harmful, self seeking and defective  
They were no use.

O Lord, help me.

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James Hart



# Berlin

No dirt, no graffiti, no shouting  
This city is proud of its museums and eating  
It cries not over its wartime past  
And in the World Cup is shown to be fast  
It now leads Europe under Angela Merkel  
Behind her we feel we can begin to gel

James Hart

# Body Soul And Spirit

Body and soul and spirit  
So clinically cut to fit it  
Biblical thinking in it  
Body and soul and spirit

Spirit in body and soul  
Dividing better the whole?  
Gives spirit the leading role  
Spirit in body and soul

Try to define the soul  
And fall into a hole  
Fit only for a mole  
Try to define the soul

Try the spirit to catch  
And find we are no match  
Only humans such plans could hatch  
Try the spirit to catch

This death to soul and body  
Makes humans less than Noddy  
Makes all things somewhat foggy  
This death to soul and body

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James Hart

James Hart

# By Beloved Kindle

My kindle is lost in the ocean  
My kindle is lost in the sea  
My kindle is lost in the ocean  
O bring back my kindle to me  
Bring back, bring back  
O bring back my kindle to me, to me  
Bring back, bring back  
O bring back my kindle to me.

My brother has stolen my kindle  
O why would he do that to me?  
My brother has stolen my kindle  
O give back my kindle to me  
Give back, give back  
O give back my kindle to me, to me  
Give back, give back  
O give back my kindle to me.

My mother has got back my kindle  
My mother has given it to me  
My mother has got back my kindle  
And soon she will give it to me  
Give it, give it  
O give back my kindle to me, to me  
Give back, give back  
O give back my kindle to me.

James Hart

## C.O.

Conscientious Objectors?

Cowardly Onlookers?

Customers Only?

Considering Ordinariates?

Catholic Options?

Christian Oddities?

Conscience Open?

Creedal Objections?

Cautious Oxymorons?

James Hart

# Candle Light

Light

Candle light

Fragile and flickering

Yet confidently contradicting the darkness

Dark at its base

Yet cheerfully bright at its tip

Weak in its vulnerability

Yet strong enough to light

A thousand other candles

New with each candle lit

Yet as old as the eternal flame

As welcome as the lover's embrace

Yet as frightening as the judge's piercing eyes

A warm light bringing hope to the lost

Yet a cold light bringing warning to the hunted

A winter's light contrasting with the season's darkness

A birthday candle celebrating another year of life

Yet a funeral parlour candle celebrating a life that is finished

A candle on the birthday cake that is blown out

Like a candle in the wind.

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James Hart

James Hart

# Car And Caravan

Car before caravan, no, car behind caravan  
Twirling around like some demented fan

You woke up safely in a warm bed  
Now bed on motorway floor stone dead

Started off your possessions all together  
Now all lie open to the local weather

Police cars and fire engines fly around  
Adding their usual unmistakeable sound

Long queues of traffic begin to form  
People resigned, none sounding horn

Your days of caravanning are sure over  
Try camping then on the white cliffs of Dover.

James Hart

# Care

Shepherds know instinctively their own sheep  
Birds know instinctively their own nest  
Dogs know instinctively their own master  
Carers know instinctively their own clients.

Knowledge is the key, instinctive knowledge  
Not pondered over or thought about but  
Reflexive knowledge that inevitably results in  
Empathy for the clients and their needs.

Jesus is our example, the carer par excellence  
Who fed the hungry and healed the wounded  
And asked not what religion or sexual identity  
Or nationality or colour or status they were

James Hart

# Cherry Blossom Trees

Lining the long avenue into school  
Like a glorious festive bower greeting its bride  
Like a returning battalion saluting its guard  
With their shades of white and pink

Now as a Vicar, I meet them again crouching  
Along the path to the Church, their flowers  
Bunched tightly together as if seeking protection,  
Their gentle flowers too exquisite for spring winds

Nougats of concentrated beauty delighting passers-by  
Cars passing by too quickly to take in their wonder  
Butterflies fluttering from branch to branch  
They too captivated by nature's extravagance

Too soon they're gone and we're left only with  
The memory of a sight beyond human creation  
A spring that points forward to a glorious summer  
A presage of abundance to come.

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James Hart

James Hart



# Christmas 2009

Silent Night  
Holy Night

Bombs in flight  
Birds big fright

Men will fight  
For their right

Putting might  
First in sight

Jesus slight  
Small in height

Has a bite  
Like a knight

Angels not tight  
Fly like a kite

Silent Night  
Holy Night

James Hart

# Cities

No dirt, no graffiti, no shouting  
This city is proud of its museums and eating  
It cries not over its wartime past  
And in the World Cup is shown to be fast  
It now leads Europe under Angela Merkel  
Behind her we feel we can begin to gel

James Hart

# Coffee

How many cups of coffee do I drink in a day?  
At least all of them are black and sugar-free  
Is that one of those things I'd rather not say?  
Like how much cholesterol I've put on since last Tuesday?  
The nurse finds out when she weighs me in the Surgery  
I find out when I learn how much I have to pay  
For the daily croissants and espresso coffees  
In one of my favourite coffee houses along The main street, a singular  
temptation of Mine.

James Hart

# Comments Overheard One Night On A Hospital Ward

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

Saw the doctor today  
Going to be a long job

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

Miss you and the kids  
But see you soon

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

Noisy man on my right  
Wakes me up in the night

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

Food bad today  
Miss your special recipe

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

John came today  
Just the same but sends his love

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

Yes, I think the ward is C6  
But I'll tell you for sure, tomorrow

Good night, darling, looveya, looveya, looveya

James Hart

# Coventry

Good Coventry

History...

Victory...

Bad Coventry

Desultory...

Antipathy...

James Hart

# Daffodils

Daffodils with their slender stem  
Crowned with a gentle diadem  
Maybe yellowish or even blue  
It doesn't matter what their hue  
A reminder that spring is on its way  
Goodbye to winter and winds away  
A host of golden daffodils  
Gave Wordsworth his greatest trills  
Effigy of a female cancer charity  
Mascot of a famous political party

James Hart

# Darh Night

Of the soul

Painful memories  
Lack of progress  
Total unworthiness  
The list progresses

James Hart

Of the spirit

Upper part of the soul  
Joy in being made whole  
In not falling into a hole  
In hearing bells toll

# Dark Night

Of the soul

Painful memories  
Lack of progress  
Total unworthiness  
The list progresses

James Hart

Of the spirit

Upper part of the soul  
Joy in being made whole  
In not falling into a hole  
In hearing bells toll



# Dear Jesus (Js#1)

Dear Jesus,

Was your mother  
Really a virgin  
When you were in the womb?

Did Magi from the East  
Really visit you  
When you were in the manger?

Did the Devil  
Really speak to you  
When tempted in the mountain?

Was water  
Really turned into wine  
In Cana of Galilee?

Were the sick  
Really healed  
In their houses?

Were 5000  
Really fed with 5 loaves  
When in the mountain?

Were Moses and Elijah  
Really with you  
When transfigured in another mountain?

Was dead Lazarus  
Really raised up  
In his house in Bethany?

Was the sky  
Really blackened out  
When crucified in Jerusalem?

Did you experience  
Really new life  
When you rose again?

What direction  
Really did you travel in  
When you ascended?

Is it possible  
Really to separate history  
From theology?

Will you be able  
Really to answer  
All my questions?

Anyway if not is it better  
Really just to keep asking questions  
Than knowing we can never answer them?

©2009  
James Hart

James Hart

# Dimensions

Not the fitting of a new suit  
Nor the specifications of a new car  
But the disputed possibilities  
Of multiverses that exist  
According to Quantum Physics

Was it what Jesus had in mind  
When he told the story  
Of Dives and Lazarus?  
Of the Here-and-Now, ?  
Of Heaven and of Hell?

Is it what mystics have in mind  
When they meditate  
And in their minds  
See shapes, colours, people  
The past, the present and the future?

Is it what dreamers have in mind?  
La vida es sueno  
Wrote Calderon de la Barca  
Is dream-life real life?  
Or life in another dimension?

James Hart

# Earthquake In Japan

Silver spoons slithered off speechless shelves  
Bewildered books blown to bottom of base  
Trembling trays turf teacups on to table  
Peaceful people plead prayers to Paternoster  
Crashing cars collapse quasi concertinas  
Waves of windswept water worry windows  
Expected earthquakes erupt energising everything

James Hart

# Echoes

## Echoes

Into the silence of the Christmas night  
They burst with a sort of thoughtless fright  
Out of their clubs till then out of sight  
An echo that would startle the smallest mite

They're frightened it would seem so much of the dark  
They shout as if to say it's me, so hark  
They make echoes they say and just for a lark  
But better to practise that down on the park

Now Christmas is an echo from heaven to earth  
That tells of a special child's singular birth  
To all who receive him he fills them with mirth  
Taken out of the street they realise their worth.

James Hart

# Epiphany

Epiphany  
Funny

Myrrh  
Odd

Frankincense  
Peculiar

Gold  
Okay

Gimme  
Gold

James Hart

# Eve

Mother of all living  
Caught by God sinning  
Childbirth pains ensuing  
Cain and Abel soon fighting

Eve, Old Testament guilty  
Mary, New Testament justly  
Eve coped quite badly  
Mary did God's will happily

Most Churches called St. Mary  
Name St. Eve quite contrary  
Save in retro jewellery  
Where name devoid of theology

James Hart

# Flags

It is sad  
So sad  
That a flag  
Yes a flag  
    Makes us glad  
    So glad  
    Makes me mad  
    So mad  
        Is it bad?  
        So bad?  
        Not the flag  
        Poor flag  
            But the wag  
            Of the finger  
            Yes the wag  
            Of the finger  
        The nag  
        Of the tongue  
        Yes the nag  
        Of the tongue  
Wrong place  
They say  
Not altar  
But narthex  
But majority  
Say NO  
So flags  
Go back

I'm glad  
So glad

James Hart



## For Anna - A Limerick

There was a young lady from Reading  
Who always knew where she was heading  
She left to do law  
And returned with much more  
That wonderful damsel from Reading

James Hart

# For Osama Bin Laden - An Epitaph

Osama Bin Laden is dead  
A bullet was shot through his head  
The Champion of enemies West  
America's unlikeliest guest  
He planned a people to kill  
Their lives with terror to fill  
Gunned down without trial or defence  
Not likely to cause much offence  
But likely to bring much revenge  
From a people who are sorely avenged  
Muslims been set against Christians  
Like Crusades all over again  
To Allah his martyr he went  
For him all his angels he sent

James Hart

# God & April Jones

An exercise in theodicy

little ones  
angels in heaven  
face of my Father

little April  
knapped and murdered

The Lord gave, the Lord has taken back.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord!

All things pale and horrible  
All beasties fierce and gall  
All things weird and damnable  
The Lord God makes them all

James Hart

# God Limited

Is this the best of all possible worlds?  
Is this the best that God can do?  
Is this the limit of his omnipotence?  
Are we then limited by a limited God?

Or is this not rather the limit of my knowledge?  
Am I a midge trying to grasp an elephant,  
An elephant trying to grasp a jumbo jet  
A jumbo jet trying to reach the seventh dimension?

Is this the end of my poem then?  
Is everything else pure futile noise?  
Am I wasting my time like good old Pangloss?  
Throwing words onto a paper in vain?

James Hart

# Good Friday

This is a prayer which is also a poem  
A short poem which is also a prayer, one of my 'psalms'  
A simple meditation on war and suffering  
A way of saying sorry and a way of saying thank you  
A way of saying please, please God help us to please you  
O Father, hear us

We remember today so as not to forget  
We remember today so as not to repeat  
But we do forget and we have to repeat  
And in repeating we have to repent  
Is there any way out of this cycle dear Lord?  
O Father forgive us

We forget the pain, the suffering and death  
The death of the young, the death of the innocent  
Death in Iraq, death in Great Britain  
Death in Baghdad, death London  
Is there any way out of this dear Lord?  
O Father forgive us

But we care for the victims  
We wear our poppies with pride  
13 million eligible for support from the British Legion  
With its 300,000 calls for help every year  
They are cared for and housed by us  
Thank you God

But no rights can cancel out our wrongs  
Only your forgiveness, dear God  
Pour into our hearts the grace of mount Calvary  
Pour into our hearts the love of the cruel cross  
And help us forever to walk in your ways,  
Dear God, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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James Hart



# Happy Birthday To You

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

Happy birthday to you  
Happy birthday to you  
Happy birthday dear Maddy  
Happy birthday to you

Happy birthday to you  
Happy birthday to you  
Happy birthday dear Maddy  
What happened to you?

©2009

James Hart

James Hart

# Heaven Is Where...

HEAVEN IS WHERE...

There are no houses yet no homelessness  
There is no money yet no penury  
There are no doctors yet no sickness  
There are no minds yet no insanity

There is no food yet no hunger  
There is no drink yet no thirst  
There is no dirt yet no dusters  
There are no clothes yet no cold

There is no entrance exam yet no failures  
There is no condemnation yet no injustice  
There is no Saviour yet no sin  
There is no space yet no time

There is no body yet no ignorance  
There is no mind yet no intemperance  
There is only spirit yet no imbalance  
Perfection at last.?

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James Hart

James Hart



# Helmand

In Helmand  
It's hell man  
With the Taliban  
In Helmand

Helmand  
It's hell-manned  
Not well-manned  
With the ANA

ANA  
Afghan National Army  
By the Taliban  
Driven barmy

ANA  
All Nations Alert!  
Taliban with Al-Queda  
No starter!

100 British soldiers  
Killed, man  
In Afghanistan  
This year, man

This hell, man,  
Is killing our men, man  
Where is our exit plan?  
Our way out of Helmand?

James Hart

# Henry Moore

Under the blossoming oak trees  
Besides the green, green glade  
Over the sheep-filled farmland  
Lambs around them played

Large and larger the sculptures  
Made out of brass by Moore  
Abstract yet telling their story  
Of wonder and of awe

Spread out yet seen much better  
From near and from afar  
Static and yet dynamic  
Attractive like a star

So thank you, thank you Henry  
For such unexpected pleasure  
Living so comfortably outside  
Enjoy each one at your leisure.

James Hart

# Hot

Mornings are bright  
Evenings light till late  
Sweat profuse  
Discomfort ubiquitous  
Headaches all around

Water is the key they say  
Drink water, drink water, drink water  
Water, water, water  
Not wine or beer  
Not wine or beer

But water, water, water  
Rivers are dry  
Sprinklers forbidden  
Our garden parched  
Desert of Sinai conditions

A punishment to be borne  
Or an opportunity for growth  
Growth in patience  
But that's odd  
Nothing grows in dry conditions

But Jesus' temptation was in dry conditions  
The drought of a parched Sinai  
It seems God needs to take us  
Through a period of drought  
Before we can see growth

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James Hart

James Hart

# How Many Times Has God Died For Me?

HOW MANY TIMES HAS GOD DIED FOR ME?

How many times has God died for me?

Yes, he's died

And time and time again

As I've written in my book

How many times has God died for me?

How many times has God died for me?

A useful if cryptic phrase

Nietzsche coined in the 19th century

"When Zarathustra was alone, however,  
he said to his heart:

'Could it be possible!

This old saint in the forest

hath not yet heard of it,

that God is dead! '

How many times has God died for me?

Each time I've had a paradigm shift

In my theological perspective

The God I had died and was replaced

Not by no God but a new God

How many times has God died for me?

A new God but still my God

The product of my heart and my head

A bit less Trinitarian

A bit closer to my own self

How many times has God died for me?

Now he's not up there nor out there

But in there, a personal creation

Adaptable and changing with circumstances

According to my living, according to my reading.

How many times has God died for me?

I have no room for a God who is exclusive

I have no room for a God who is dogmatic

I have no room for a God, who is sexist,  
Racist, anti-gay and British.

How many times has God died for me?  
Yes God, my God, needed to die  
And be reborn, reinvented  
In a more user-friendly package.  
So to make God more like me is to make God more PC!

How many times has God died for me?  
Till God has become indistinguishable from me  
God close to me, God in me  
An undying God-sense  
A God made to fit every circumstance  
A God made to fit every mood

That God will never die for me  
Even when I die I pray he will accompany me  
The undying God  
Who never died on Calvary  
Who never died with Nietzsche.

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James Hart

James Hart

# Ichthus (Js#5)

Epiphany 5

Many fishes  
Jesus fishes  
Peter no fish  
Jesus "pish pish "  
Peter empty dish  
Jesus full dish  
Peter bare dish  
Jesus extra dish  
Peter one dish  
Jesus many dishes  
Peter fish  
Jesus fishes  
B.C. fish  
A.D. fishes  
B.C. Moses  
A.D. Jesus

James Hart

# I'M Only 15

I'm only 15, he cried  
As they stabbed him  
And stabbed him again

They stripped him  
And burnt him  
But I'm only 15

White but in the wrong place  
At the wrong time  
A racial murder, a revenge attack

His killers were sentenced around All Saints Day  
God have mercy on his soul  
Give him the joys of heaven for the joys of earth he never had.

"Bastards! " cried his mother  
As they were sentenced  
"Bastards! " restrained words surely

Kriss Donald was his name  
It's disappeared now from the news  
Sleep well, good child, sleep well.  
You met your Calvary in Glasgow.

©2009  
James Hart

James Hart

# In Brief - A Lifetime's Work

First a teacher and  
A lecturer  
In French and in Spanish  
In Durham

Then a lecturer  
In charge of  
Modern Languages  
In Harrogate

Thirdly a curate  
Also in Harrogate  
In charge of nothing  
But praying for everyone

Fourthly a roving priest  
In Salta, Northern Argentina  
Fifthly, a Vicar  
Of San Salvador in Buenos Aires

Sixthly a school chaplain  
In two different schools  
Then a priest in charge  
Of two different Churches

Finally, a welcome rest  
In retirement in Kenilworth  
In a bungalow in a close  
In peace and in quietness

James Hart



# 'It's Cancer.'

They told her yesterday  
In tones that were gentle and quiet  
"It's cancer"  
She new it all along  
She felt it,  
Prepared for it  
Was ready for the news:  
"It's cancer"

Yesterday became  
An idyllic time of ignorance  
She could never go back to  
Except in her memories  
But even those were  
Coloured by her cancer  
No, the past was not an escape  
From it, only another door into it  
The past was yellow-tinged

Today has suddenly become  
Frightening and tormented,  
She studies herself for new signs  
She winces at every new sensation  
She wishes she was asleep anew  
And it were all a horrid nightmare  
Every person she meets  
Is a reminder of it  
The present is dark, dark black

The future is unknown  
A dark, very dark tunnel  
A journey she didn't ask to take  
A journey she doesn't want to take  
But a journey she has to take  
And alone  
Alone  
Alone  
The future is red, blood red



# Jacintha Saldanha

Jacintha Saldanha

Judas did it, after betraying Jesus

Adam Lanza did it, after killing 26

What had you done, Jacinta?

You left your husband and your children

What had you done, Jacinta?

□

You didn't get on with your colleagues

What had you done, Jacinta?

Today you're buried

And your motive with you.

James Hart

# Japan

Silent and smooth  
Tidy and clean  
Modern Japan is  
Life with a gleam

Polite and restrained  
Civil and in song  
Modern Japan is  
Life with a gong

James Hart

# John The Baptist

Wanted: John the Baptist

Clothing: Camel's hair and leather Girdle

Food: Locusts and Wild Honey

Home: In the wilderness

Family: Connections with Jesus

Job: Greatest of prophets

Message: Repent and believe

If found: Follow or decapitate; Take your pick...

James Hart

# K.I.S.S.

Just preached a sermon in Church  
Have preached a thousand before  
But never before felt such a lurch  
Away from my vow of one not four.

Could beat my head with a birch  
But not hard enough might break  
Have a distinct and persistent urge  
To preach said sermon again

And to follow these rules again  
'Keep It Simple Stupid' no brain  
Can think of no better refrain  
'Keep It Simple Stupid' pea brain

'Keep It Simple Stupid'  
Simpler still?  
Yes, just remember  
The magic word is KISS.

James Hart

# L'Ennui

His surname has gone into the misty past  
And his nickname was Fuzzy  
His memory becomes more sketchy  
As does his teaching of French vowels  
And their pronunciation  
A E-E -I -O -U  
And his practice of patrolling us  
Round the playground  
Chanting old war songs  
Napoléon avait cinq cents soldats  
Napoléon avait cinq cents soldats  
Napoléon avait cinq cents soldats  
Marchant du même pas  
Napoléon avait cinq cents sol  
Napoléon avait cinq cents sol  
Napoléon avait cinq cents sol  
Marchant du même pas

The purpose of which was perhaps  
As clear as the purpose of this poem  
Thursday afternoon boredom  
Fuzzy's French lessons boredom

James Hart

# Lent In The Park

40 days and 40 nights,  
Homeless sleeping in the wild,  
40 months, nay 40 years,  
Tempted yes and most defiled.

Rainstorms wet them all the day,  
Frost and ice their nighttimes cool,  
Cats and dogs around them play,  
Parks their refuge, trunks their stool.

Come their resignation all to see,  
Hot soup bring, their stomachs inflame,  
And with them pray they strong may be,  
Conquering all adversity.

Then if evils from their head,  
Flesh or spirit do assail,  
Victors on the park bench bed,  
May they never faint or fail!

So shall peace divine be theirs, '  
Holier gladness theirs' shall be,  
Come to them angelic powers,  
Such as ministered to thee.

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James Hart

James Hart



# Love

Then, love was in the anxious heart  
Waiting for your plane to appear  
On the screen in the airport and  
You to pass through customs.

Now, love is in the relieved sigh  
When you arrive back from work  
From driving through the lanes  
Of rural Essex, tired but content.

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James Hart

James Hart

# Marcel

Marcel was only young  
He was just a teenager, in fact  
But he felt the changes in him  
Meant something big, real big  
He would go to the Fishnet  
Just to be near to the girls  
He liked the sixth form girls best  
Because they had bigger boobs  
They seemed so round and so full  
But he'd never spoken to any of them  
He didn't even dare to  
Wouldn't even know how to  
Besides he had 'his problem'  
As his mother called it  
She'd taken him to see the doctor  
Several times about it but he said  
&quot;It's just his age; he'll grow out of his acne&quot;  
Marcel's mother was Swiss  
She had great ambitions for her boy's education.

James Hart

# Marcel #1

Marcel

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He was just a teenager, in fact  
But he felt the changes in him  
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She'd taken him to see the doctor  
Several times about it but he said  
"It's just his age; he'll grow out of his acne"  
Marcel's mother was Swiss  
She had great ambitions for her boy's education.

## Suzanne

Now Suzanne was obsessed with her looks  
She spent hours in front of the mirror  
Combing her hair and then  
Combing it again till it was right  
And she could go out  
She liked to go to the Fishnet but  
She found the young boys rather a bore  
Always trying to brush against her  
She knew what they were after  
She was proud of her big breasts  
She had her mother to thank for that  
But sometimes she wished they were smaller  
She realized that size was unimportant  
In fact all this sex business meant little to her  
She wanted to get in to Girton like her mother  
And getting the right A levels was paramount  
It would please her mother no end  
to see her daughter there  
Then a horrible thought struck her  
Girton was mixed nowadays so...  
But Marcel was what the girls liked to call:  
"A thick w\*\*\*\*\*; he'd never get in  
And that thought accompanied her  
For days afterwards;  
In fact he didn't get in - anywhere at all.

James Hart

# Margarita

Margarita mi perla  
Margarita meat eater

Yesterday: "isn't it"  
Today: you're "bubbly"

You my Dulcinea  
Me your Don Quijote

You my Sancho Panza  
Me your Rocinante

Margarita energy  
Margarita restless

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James Hart

James Hart

# Margarita Mi Perla

Mi suegra se llama Margarita  
Mi esposa se llama Margarita  
Mi hija se llama Margarita  
Mi nieta se llama Margarita

Margarita es una perla  
Margarita es preciosa  
Margarita es una joya  
Margarita es muy linda

Margarita es una flor  
La mas bonita en el arbor  
La mas profunda en su color  
La mas conocida por su pudor

Margarita es una canción  
Llena, hasta rebosa de emoción  
Lejos de ella me pongo tristón  
Cerca se pone a saltar mi corazón

James Hart

# Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

There was a young lady called Mary  
Who eschewed all things airy-fairy  
To George she was wed  
And four boys she did bed  
George, James, Paul, Mark and no girly.

James Hart

# Meditating

Is that you Lord when I meditate?  
You in the stillness, the silence, the simplicity  
You in the music that oft times begs my attention  
A shrill note, a bird-like song, a distant orchestra  
You in the vistas that unfold and  
Like the sounds, never the same from day to day  
You in the colours that sometimes bless my inner eye  
The yellows and occasionally the blues  
You in the joy and the oneness I feel  
When I say to you my mantra Abba  
As I gaze into your face.

How much is you, Lord  
And how much is me  
And how much are they one and the same thing?  
The mirror and its reflection  
The singer and her voice  
The thought and the thinker  
The lover and his beloved  
Forever united  
Indistinguishable  
The same.

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James Hart

James Hart



# Mellow

He has mellowed, hasn't he?  
They said of the erstwhile firebrand  
Why are older teachers so mellow?  
Said the pupils in school one day

Hasn't the summer mellowed out?  
Said the elderly couple to each other by the beach?  
Mellow is coloured yellow  
Faded like once-perky curtains

Mellow smells musty  
Gritty, rubbery like cast-off waterproofs  
Mellow is the sound of the antique cello  
Played by the bearded old man at the piano

James Hart

# Mh370

MH370

M

H

Mysterious  
Happenings

Malaysian  
Hell

Massive  
Help

Monstrous  
Hindrances

Mystical  
Hiatus

Momentary  
Hearkening

More  
Hesitation

James Hart

# Mother

My mother died last week  
Actually it was the week before  
Felt nothing really very much  
Quite numb and quite unmoved  
Another of life's little occurrences  
Only saw her really cry once  
The day after her father died  
A massive heart attack at 75  
My mother had the BIG "C" though  
The BIG "C" she had always dreaded  
She lay shrunk on the bed  
Hating the thought of dying  
In hospital and wanting to go home  
She said not saying if home  
Meant down here on earth or up there in heaven  
Either way she wanted out  
And that dissatisfaction marked her life  
No speeches at the end  
No fond farewells, no signing off  
No ceremony, just silence  
No resounding hymn singing to lift her up  
As she had enjoyed when she was young  
Just a silent dissatisfaction that sprung from envy  
That others had what she felt she deserved  
A woman of many virtues yes  
But willing victim of many a vice.

James Hart

## Move No.15

Well here we are  
53 years of age  
And fifteen moves later  
In a lovely house  
In a lovely village

Well here we are  
Much water under the bridge  
Much ministry given  
Much experience gained  
Too old for schools

Well here we are  
Where we began  
In parish ministry  
With real people  
In real congregations

The sun is shining on us  
It is July and mid summer  
The sun is shining  
Long may it last!  
Warm sunshine to accompany our mature days

Well here we are,  
I a weak observer  
Margarita and the children  
Doing the hard work  
Moving books and boxes

©2009  
James Hart

James Hart

# Music Speaks In Every Language

In French and Spanish  
In German and Yiddish

Allegros and Largos  
Andantes, Moderatos

From Bach to Elgar  
From Liszt to Mahler

Violin and piano  
Trumpet and banjo

Speak to the heart  
The head has its part

Above all emotion  
Keeps it all in motion

James Hart

# My Falls

I fell in the bathroom last night  
The damage it did me was slight  
I wish I could stop falling down  
And hurting myself on my crown  
Though really I fall to the floor  
And crawl on my knees to the door  
Like old King Nebuchadnezzar  
Who really was a proud geezer

James Hart

# My Hagiography

St. Benedict, I implore you

You left Rome,  
Not a home  
For the lone

Searcher after God.  
What bit of sod  
Will be a pod

For a hermit  
Who wants all of it  
Not just a bit of it?

His monasteries were quite a hit!  
After the Rule he laid down  
Throughout the town

To take away their frown  
And replace it with a crown  
From Lauds to None.

St. Bartholomew, I implore you

You saw him  
You heard him  
You followed him

You preached about him  
You travelled for him  
You were crucified like him

You the patron Saint  
You of neurological conditions  
You my Saint, our MS Saint.

The blessed John Henry Newman, I implore you

Soon to become a Saint.  
Once anti-RC  
You converted to the RCC

A Birmingham priest  
A you became a Cardinal  
Wrote theology and hymns

A kindly light led you  
From Rome to Birmingham  
And back again and again

Praise to the Holiest in the height,  
And in the depth be praise;  
In all His words most wonderful,  
Most sure in all His ways.

James Hart



# My Poetic Meditation

My poetic meditation

Friday, 2 October 2009

02.10.09

Red deep red last night  
vague yellow light ahead  
easy walking more like floating  
no wheelchair no scooter  
no walking stick just freedom  
Posted by James Hart at 04: 07 0 comments  
Thursday, 1 October 2009

01.10.09

Blue is the predominant  
feature today  
not blue like the sky  
but deep blue  
a rich blue  
red wine blue  
a blue glade  
Posted by James Hart at 06: 50 0 comments  
Wednesday, 30 September 2009

Bright sunshine outside  
contrasts with dark valley inside  
Posted by James Hart at 07: 00 0 comments  
Tuesday, 29 September 2009

Glade dark today  
dark dark dark  
no light so no colour  
sad sad sad  
need to stare more intently  
white smudge very faint  
hard to know what is

my imagination  
and what is real  
well, all is real  
in the dark poetic world  
of meditation

Posted by James Hart at 03: 22 0 comments  
Monday, 28 September 2009

My poetic meditation blog

A glade on a hillside  
sweet flowers adorn it  
lush bushes surround it  
urged to go up it  
slow progress through it  
no effort on it  
gorgeous flowers distract

28.07.07 12.00pm

Path darker today  
I make slower progress  
Towards the  
yellow smudge in the sky  
that lies ahead

\*\*\*\*\*

No further revelations to date  
but watch this space this is my emerging blog,

James Hart

# My Poetic Mentors

My two poetic mentors  
I met on growing up  
The first at grammar school  
The other at University  
The one an American living in England  
The other a Spaniard living in Castilla.  
Both wrote poetry without a rhyme  
Both wrote poetry to be read most slowly  
For meaning lies deep  
Deep beneath their surface  
In allusions and similes  
In comparisons and wordplays  
The first wears religion on his sleeve  
The second a mere social phenomenon  
The first Thomas Stearns Eliot  
The second Antonio Machado

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James Hart

James Hart

# No Id No Entry

No ID No entry

No ID? No illegal donkeys?

No ID? No illicit dumping?

No ID? No idle dreamers?

No ID? No igloo destroyers?

No ID? No ignominious dunces?

No ID? No illiterate dummies?

No ID? No intemperate drunkards?

No ID? No indifferent denominations?

No ID? No iced dinosaurs?

No ID? No ice-cream delights?

No ID? No instant developments?

No ID? No illegal droppings?

No ID? No informal dress?

James Hart

# Noah

Noah

No hope  
No boat  
Noah

A shower  
Of water  
Noah

No-er  
Yes-er  
Wat-er

Animals drowned  
People too

Only Noah saved  
And his family

A bit hard?  
God creates  
To destroy?

God not green  
God red with rage  
Bad hair day

James Hart

# No-El

No heaven, no hell  
But God  
Yes, we meet  
Our Maker  
In Purgatory  
Are we all there?  
That's odd  
The religious and  
The irreligious  
The pretty and  
The damned ugly  
The good and  
The not-so-good  
Yes, you and me  
We're all there  
Forever and forever  
But don't be silly  
There's no time  
No space there  
Only God, yes God

James Hart

# Noises In My Head

Noises in my head

Birds are singing  
Glass is crushing  
People are chattering

Noises in my head

Incessant noises  
Candescent noises  
Effervescent noises

Noises in my head

Repetitive noises  
Fountains playing  
Waterfalls cascading

Noises in my head

Quieter at night  
Quite my companion  
Angelic visitation

Noises in my head

Some say tinnitus  
GP says meditation  
Others just madness

I just say  
Noises in my head

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James Hart

James Hart

# O Death!

O death!

Thou great leveller  
Of titles before a name,  
Of degrees after a name  
Of wealth and of poverty

O death!

No hearing or seeing  
No tasting or smelling  
No feeling or thinking  
No suffering or celebrating

O death!

No body or soul  
A spirit-filled life  
A life of knowing in a different way  
A life of relating in a different way

O death!

No life as we know it  
No space as we know it  
No time as we know it  
But life experienced in all its fullness.

O death!

O death, where is thy victory?  
O death, where is thy sting?  
From being deciduous  
We've become evergreen.

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James Hart

James Hart



# O You

oU!

O yoU!

It's the strain both on me and Margarita

O yoU!

It's the drain on our dwindling resources

O yoU!

It's the train I could no longer get to the libraries

O yoU!

It's the brain that no longer is up to it

O yoU!

It's the grain I go against in doing it

Now it's No-O-U

It's the pain that is over

Now I'm a rebel student

I'm University drop-out

Farewell, OU

Less pain, more gain

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James Hart

James Hart

# O.S.B.

Oblates of Saint Benedict  
Other Saints Beware!  
Outward-Seeing Beings  
Onward-Scouting Beavers  
Only Sinners Belonging  
Outraged Self-righteous Behind!  
Ostracised Sinners Behold!  
Other Such Beggars  
Or Simply Beginners  
Of Simple Behaviour  
Our Servants Becoming  
Oblates of Saint Benedict

James Hart

# Ode To The Tom Tom

Tom Tom  
Tom Tom

Ben Ben  
Ben Ben

Sue Sue  
Sue Sue

Pat Pat  
Pat Pat

Turn right  
Turn right

Straight on  
Straight on

Third exit  
Third exit

Return to highway  
Return to highway

At roundabout third exit  
At roundabout third exit

Battery low  
Battery low

Destination reached  
Destination reached

Tom Tom  
Oh Tom Tom  
Indispensable wizard thou art  
Of satellite navigation,  
Getting rid of maps  
Getting rid of rows

Getting rid of back seat drivers  
With thy stentorious voice,  
A forceful reminder  
That we are not omniscient  
That technology has total control  
That we are but the drivers.

James Hart

# 'Oh Deer' - A Nonsense Poem

Oh deer!

Chorus

Oh deer! What can the matter be?  
Dear deers! What can the matter be?  
Oh deer! What can the matter be?  
Rudolf's so long in Lapland

He promised me a veggie lunch, he did  
He promised me a veggie lunch, he did  
He promised me a veggie lunch, he did  
To eat after doing my hair

Chorus

He promised to buy me the sweetest of sweeties  
He promised to buy me the sweetest of sweeties  
He promised to buy me the sweetest of sweeties  
Then kiss me with his lipsies

Chorus

He promised to buy me a nice candy apple  
He promised to buy me a nice candy apple  
He promised to buy me a nice candy apple  
Which with me I know Rudolf will share

Chorus

James Hart

# Owt Fer Nowt

'No subscription fee  
No fines for late returns  
No charges at the library'  
Whoopee! It's free!

A man giving away  
A very old car  
Put a sign outside his house  
Whoopee! It's free!

And nobody came  
It was too cheap  
Too cheap by far  
So he upped the stakes

Fifty pounds said the bright new sign  
And before he turned his back  
Somebody had stolen the very old car  
The car priced at fifty quid

So the moral is:  
'Not even a thief likes owt fer nowt

©2009

James Hart

James Hart

# Post Mortem

No time  
No space  
No speed  
No race

No heaven  
No hell  
No ill  
No well

No Church  
No Creed  
No Mosque  
No Seed

No hot  
No cold  
No young  
No old

No words  
No language  
No speech  
No anguish

No angels  
No demons  
No slavery  
No freedoms

No kings  
No princes  
No doctors  
No dunces

No black  
No white  
No day  
No night

No end  
No start  
No division  
No part

No Degree  
No College  
No Diploma  
No Knowledge

No nothing  
No atheism  
No isms  
Just God

James Hart



# Pushing 60

Retired

Retired early

Retired early due to ill health

Retired early due to ill health from MS

Like an unfinished meal turned into compost

Still useful but not for its original purpose

Like a drink left unfinished on the bar

Not useful so thrown away down the sink

Like an unfinished symphony

Partly useful but without the composer's coda

Like an old car without fuel in its tank

Nice to look at but useless for going places

And tell me, where am I going?

James Hart

# Quack, Quack, Quackie

There was an old duckie called Mackie  
Who was mocked for his weird sounding quackie  
He thought not to revenge  
His name to avenge  
But simply to say "You're all quackied! "

James Hart

# Religious Imagination

Religious imagination

Painting God in glowing colours

Painting Satan in even more glowing colours

But nobody knows

Imagining heaven in welcoming colours

Imagining hell in even more vivid colours

But nobody knows

Divine inspiration = sanctified human imagination

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James Hart

James Hart

# Roses

Where are the red, red roses  
Roses my love is like  
Roses my grandfather used to  
Cherish, prune, make into posies?

Where are the red, red roses  
That symbolised this English land,  
Bringing beauty to weddings and funerals,  
Their scent delighting people's noses?

Where are the red, red roses?  
Stephan Fry, that clever Englishman,  
Launched a new rose today, hurrah!  
One up for the good old English roses.

Where are the red, red roses?  
Roses are red, violets are blue  
Roses have thorns  
With that the matter closes.

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James Hart

James Hart

# Santiago De Compostela

Enterrar a un Santo  
Llamado Santiago  
En un cierto campo

Aparece una estrella  
Celebrada en una Misa  
Para peregrinos de alla

Sudor bajo el astro  
Olor de vacas y cerdo  
Hace que usen incienso

James Hart

# She's Coming

She's coming  
Not yet  
She's calling  
Sofía.

In singing  
In Advent  
In crying  
In laughter

Like Jesus  
Like people  
Like niños  
Like angels

She's here!  
Come joy!  
Gone fear!  
Hail peace!

James Hart

# Sin Nomine

When I am laid in earth  
And my body and soul are dead  
Will my spirit have my name on it?

Numberless foxes, the farmers' worry, have holes  
And myriads of anonymous birds have their nests but  
Will my spirit have my name on it?

Rapeseed shoots in the fields around my house  
Uncountable and none has a name  
Will my spirit have my name on it?

Countless stars and planets light the night sky  
All have their special name but  
Will my spirit have my name on it?

Hills and mountains cross our countries  
Each of them given a special name  
Will my spirit have my name on it?

Must I wait till I am laid in earth□  
And my body and soul are dead  
To find out if my spirit will have my name on it? □

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James Hart

James Hart

# Sleep

Sleep

Can't sleep

I n s o m n I a c

S o I c o u n t s h e e p

Or Meditate

Sleep comes

Deep sleep

Vivid dreams

Illuminating the past

Sleep is

A way of escape

A welcome rest

A window on eternity

Sleep means

Shutting down senses

No more seeing hearing

Tasting feeling or smelling

Soul sleep means

Partial death

Temporary death

Total resurrection

Signum crucis

Protection against

The unknown

Evils that assail



Sleep on, my soul  
The end is nigh  
Spring follows winter  
As day follows night

In the immortal words  
Of Julian of Norwich,  
'For all shall be well  
And all shall be well

And  
All manner of thing  
Shall be well'  
Shall be well  
Shall be well.

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James Hart

James Hart

# Sleep On!

I miss out on a third of the day  
Sleep on  
I lie down to sleep and lose control  
Sleep on  
I don't want to sleep but remain in charge  
Sleep on  
Anything could happen to anyone  
Sleep on

Lighten our darkness  
Sleep on  
O Lord we pray  
Sleep on  
Preserve us  
Sleep on  
From all dangers  
Sleep on

Only God keeps watch while we  
Sleep on

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James Hart

James Hart

# Snow On Snow

Snow on snow  
Flakes gently falling  
Like leaves from a tree  
Asking permission  
Before they land  
On the snowflakes underneath  
Each one different  
Like leaves on a tree  
A white carpet  
Pure white till soiled  
By children's shoes  
They love its touch  
Ooo snowball fights  
Snow doesn't hurt  
Snow is soft and forgiving  
People hurt  
They are selfish and cruel  
So let it snow  
Snow on snow on

James Hart

# Snowdrops

In a flowerbed  
At the bottom  
Of our garden  
Lies a clump  
Of half-a-dozen  
Snowdrops  
Gently wafted  
By the wind  
Virgins in white  
6 Vestal Virgins  
Will they withstand  
The wind and rain  
Of these days?  
But a large leylandii  
Hedge cuddles them  
They're safe

James Hart

# Sowing My Wild Oats

Oats

Wild oats

My wild oats

Sowing my wild oats?

Since when did I have any wild oats to sow?

Middle age brings on the nostalgia for an enfance perdue

I would act differently now,

Gone wild with girls and boys

No doubt caught some venereal disease

But hopefully not AIDS

It is now that I have studied

And learnt that fornication

Viewed linguistically

Is from furnix,

the bridge where prostitutes hung out

So the prohibition if there was one

Was against prostitution, the abuse of women

Not against sex before marriage

With a loving partner

In a consensual relationship

And probably one leading to marriage.

How would that have changed me?

Would I have taken up some of the offers?

Male as well as female,

In Durham as well as in France?

Too late now but the will is still there

To love everyone, well almost, and sleep with many

Nothing worse though than a middle age man

Trying to live like a teenager

Wild oats are for the young,

With the old they are sour grapes.

©2009

James Hart

James Hart

# Stille Nacht

All quiet  
all still  
early morning  
Harrogate  
no car  
nobody  
no sound  
just silence  
stray silence  
numb silence  
tense silence  
total silence  
inner silence  
touch silence  
feel silence  
hear silence  
peace in silence  
peace is silence  
stille nacht

James Hart

# Stop Crying Baby Girl

stop crying baby girl  
dry up your eyes  
wipe off your tears  
mummy will come soon  
to take you home again  
so stop crying baby girl  
tonight you will be safe  
in your own bed  
in your own bedroom  
with your own papis

but you stopped crying  
the next day  
but this day we'll see  
she's started nursery  
six hours without her mummy  
stop crying baby girl  
there are other babies there  
small and vulnerable  
just like you so  
stop crying baby girl

James Hart



# Strength In Weakness

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

A typical Pauline sophism?  
A typical Pauline syllogism?  
A typical Pauline casuistry?  
A typical Pauline homily.

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

Paul was disabled, you see  
Was he blind? You ask  
Was he lame? You ask  
Was it a speech impediment?

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

Oh! He was strong in spirit  
But weak in appearance  
He can't be our leader, they said  
He's an embarrassment

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

Paul said: "Yes, I am weak  
But God's strength is made perfect  
In my weakness not in my strength  
So up the weak and down the strong! (my words!)

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

We are all weak in some way  
Weak in our words  
Weak in our walk  
Weak in our talk

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

But for God, weak means strong  
Kingdom values, Kingdom virtues  
Jesus' values, Jesus' virtues  
My values? my virtues?

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

So the lamb not the lion  
The humble not the haughty  
The lowly not the lofty  
The penitent not the proud.

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

Let's value then the weak  
And remember they are strong.  
If I am proud, then I am wrong  
If I am conceited, then I am wrong

Paul's thorn in the flesh

When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

Let's fill the Church then with the weak  
Push in the wheelchairs  
Roll in the scooters  
Help the handicapped walk in.

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
When I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness

"At even, ere the sun was set  
The sick oh Lord, around thee lay  
Oh, in what divers pains they met  
Oh with what joy they went away

And none oh Lord, have perfect rest  
For none are wholly free from sin;  
For they who fain would serve thee best  
Are conscious most of sin within.

Thy touch has still its ancient power  
No word from thee can fruitless fall  
Hear in this solemn hour we pray  
And in thy mercy heal us all."

Paul's thorn in the flesh  
For when I am weak,  
Then I am strong  
Strength in weakness.

James Hart

# Sunshine

Sunshine  
Fun time  
No time  
Like sunshine

Overcast  
Rain passed  
Time passed  
More overcast

Back again  
No more rain  
Gone the pain  
Sunshine again

Sunny spells  
Scattered showers  
Rain on bowers  
Sunny spells

James Hart

# Systemic, They Say.

"Systemic", they say today  
From Bankers to Police chiefs

Systemic is endemic;  
It shuffles off the blame

It makes the matter impersonal,  
It makes the blame general

It avoids a "Mea culpa"  
It saves us saying "Sorry"

Systemic comes from systems  
That are all made by humans

So mistakes are made by humans  
Who make the faulty systems?

Nature doesn't do it  
No trees are orange by design

No trees are blue by mistake  
Those would be systemic errors

But it doesn't happen in nature  
So why not say human for systemic?

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James Hart

James Hart

# Tempus Fugit When You'Re Having Fun

Living for the moment  
Like the two teenage lovers  
Laughing in the fairground  
Like the two aggressive boys  
Off to Ibiza  
Like the whole family  
Travelling to Centre Parcs

Living in the moment  
Like the old couple  
Meditating in their garden  
Like the young girl gazing  
Out into the sea  
Like the friends practising  
Yoga in their living room

A small preposition but  
A world of difference  
The first  
Shallow and superficial fun  
The second  
Deep and permanent satisfaction

James Hart

# The Ages Of People

Youth idealistic

Middle age realistic

Old age geriatric

Youth dogmatic

Middle age pragmatic

Old age eccentric

Youth biopic

Middle age eclectic

Old age static

James Hart

# The Cat Sat On The Mat

The cat sat on the mat  
The cat shat on the mat  
"I'd like to see that cat right flat"  
The angry teacher said  
Blowing off his hat  
Pupils heard him and as they do  
They took him at his word.  
Literalism becomes the young  
Eager to please and slow to perceive  
So one of them he took the cat  
And fastened it in its cage,  
Weighed it down with bricks and stuff  
It's dead now in a lake.

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James Hart

James Hart



# The Dawn Chorus

It is 5 in the morning  
A bird begins to sing  
A dawn solo to announce  
A new day has begun

It is 6 in the morning  
A scarecrow gun starts  
Its repeated thud to scare off  
The very birds that announced daybreak

It is 7 in the morning  
A car roars past  
To join the many other motorists  
Whose engines drown the scarecrow and the birds

It is 8 in the morning  
I crawl downstairs  
To eat my breakfast  
And ponder the damage created by human inventiveness.

James Hart

# The Garden Party

They streamed in  
like creepers curling  
round a great tree trunk

the young, the old  
the agile, the wheelchaired  
the glum and the smiling

the sky remained  
glum too only  
releasing a few tears

tea was supped  
Pimms was enjoyed  
cream teas devoured

children played games  
old women talked  
old men did nothing

money, much money  
was made, hurrah  
for that was its purpose really.

James Hart

# The Hazelnut

It's a nut  
It's only a nut  
It's only a nut after all

No, it's nut  
It's nut only a nut  
It's nut only a nut after all

Thus spoke Julian  
The famous Julian of Norwich  
It's nut only a nut after all

And the 14th century mystic  
She stared and she stared and she stared  
And declared "I see 3 things"

In wrapt contemplation  
The eyes of the mystic  
Saw through the nut

Was she nuts herself?  
Did she see not one nut,  
But three nuts all in a row?

It's a nut, nut, nut?  
It's only a nut, nut, nut  
It's only a nut, nut, nut, after all

Should she go to Specksavers?  
Did she have triple vision?  
Did she suffer from triple insight?

Was her mind so Trinitarian  
That she saw everything in threes?  
A trinity of nuts, of nuts, of nuts?

As she cracked it open  
She said she learnt  
These three important lessons:

"God made it  
God loves it  
God keeps it"

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James Hart

James Hart

# The Old Scarecrow - A Limerick

There was an old scarecrow from Cheshire  
Who lay down to sleep at his leisure.  
The farmer was mad  
And said it was sad  
That the scarecrow should miss all the pleasure.

James Hart

# The Old Vicars' Close

First time living in a close  
Close closed at one end  
That's why it's called a close

Neighbours are close in a close  
Cars creep in a close  
Shops close to this close

No clubbing in this close  
No clutter in this close  
No climbing in this close

No children in this close  
No prams in this close  
No working men live in this close

Three cats in this close  
Two dogs in this close  
Clouds of birds in this close

Pretty flowers in this close  
Original trees in this close  
Gorgeous blossom in this close

Close called God's Waiting Room  
Close has 12 tiny bungalows  
Much downsizing to fit in here

What may be called - A Close Fit!

James Hart

# The Olympic Torch

The Olympic Torch  
Came into town  
This afternoon  
It was not raining  
No need for porch  
Crowds in streets  
Bobbies on beat  
Children in prams  
Shops in vans  
Joggers compete  
An interesting feat  
Last but not least  
The bearer of fire  
The runner for gold  
The person in charge  
The Olympic Torch  
Was it all worth it?  
Learned from it?  
Felt any better?

James Hart

# The Roses

Twisting their way up the old metal frame  
In the garden at the back of our place  
The wild rose meets up with the cultivated one  
Each granting the other-one space

One is red, deep red-coloured, red like blood  
The other is pink and white like skin  
One is large and imposing like a goddess  
The other is curled up and lies open like a fin

One has sharp thorns that bite and tear the skin  
The other seems harmless tranquil in its beauty  
Butterflies visit and hover around then go  
As if they know that beauty will decay

James Hart



# The Shower Seat

My second favourite seat  
(After the toilet seat) is the shower seat!  
This seat I meet every morning  
For I take my shower in the morning  
It is the wettest seat in the house;  
Must be the cleanest seat in the house  
Comfortable, it fits just one at a time  
So if you want to use it, please come on time!  
For me it is a must you see  
Or I'd lose my balance; come, you'll see.  
You'll see its up-turned coffin shape  
Its door clicks shut always shipshape.

James Hart

# The Snob

The snob is weak  
Incomplete  
A freak  
Who needs to feel  
He is better  
And cleverer  
And richer  
Than most  
Though not all  
Of humanity's trawl  
He talks posh  
With affectation  
He talks non-stop  
With acceleration  
He talks loudly  
With sophistication  
He knows everything  
About anything  
And he will tell you  
It is nothing

James Hart

# The Toilet Seat

The toilet seat is my favourite seat  
I do everything there apart from eat  
Everything there that is, that is meet  
For the humble, the very humble toilet seat.

You see, it is, it has to be, yes, bottom-shaped,  
A design feature understandably rarely aped  
A design feature that makes the seat feel great,  
The humble, the very humble toilet seat.

The seat is a triumph of ergonomics  
A seat where people their posterior fix  
But not to appear on the wall as pics  
The humble, the very humble toilet seat.

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James Hart

James Hart

# The View From My Wneelchair

In Asda  
Much faster  
Long aisles  
High piles

In Morrisons  
The sorry ones  
Scuffed shoeses  
Trapped toeses

In Tesco  
It's all go  
Every little counts  
As my food pile mounts

In Sainsbury's  
We're busybodies  
For bargains galore  
Throughout the store

And me with MS  
I'm a nuisance to shoppers  
Ignored by some  
Pitied by the dumb

And I don't like shopping!

James Hart

# The Waiting Room

Motionless, expressionless  
As if waiting to be aroused  
They sit in plastic chairs  
Round the walls of  
The Waiting Room;  
Its name poses the question  
Who is doing the waiting,  
The patients or the room?  
Magazines strewn  
All over the seats  
Waiting to be read  
Music blaring  
From the radio  
Waiting to be listened to  
Me getting impatient  
Waiting for the nurse  
To come and call my name  
How are you?  
Asked one man to another.  
Well, what does he expect?  
After all he is at the doctor's!  
Rather a stupid question methinks.  
And the wait drags on...  
"They also serve  
Who only sit and wait..."

James Hart

# The Zoo

Oh dear,  
You lions tigers kangaroos  
Should not be kept in zoos

Lions

Tigers

Kangaroos

Sorry,  
You have your own space  
Your very own home

Not under a dome,  
An artificial Dome

But in a bigger better pad,  
Your natural habitat pad

Okay, you claw and kill  
But you're at home at least

In shame we humans  
Feel the need  
To captivate and control you  
Even to kill and consume you

And live ourselves  
Behind closed doors  
Insecure and afraid.

James Hart

# They Don'T Linger Long.

They don't linger long, the birds in our garden  
Short attention span, they land and they're off  
A short peck to take same souvenir from our garden  
Then to spy out the neighbours' gardens  
The grass is always greener must have special meaning to them  
Always on the go, as if their wings need continual exercise

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James Hart

James Hart

# Thrown From The Bus

They threw her from the bus  
Like an empty cigarette packet  
She was raped and raped  
And raped again this  
New Delhi medical student  
Six men have been arrested but  
No sentence can bring her back  
Rapes are daily, murders are daily in India  
She is cremated now  
A Hindu funeral for a girl  
Robbed of her career  
Her marriage, her children  
Her everything  
God grant her in heaven  
The fulfilment she never saw on earth

James Hart



# Tired!

TIRED

O God, hear me.

I'm tired. So tired.

Tired now. In middle age.

Seen so much, said so much,  
Done so much, run so much.

Tired like autumn leaves on the trees in the Bury  
Hanging on with that mellow look of tired experience.

Tired. Soon retired?  
Cansado. Recansado.

Tired. MS tired.  
Tired through MS. Tired with MS.

Tired. MS tired.  
It's different.  
Sleepy tired but with an emptied out feeling inside.  
Tired deep down, deep down inside.

Like the well is still working  
But the walls are crumbling.  
Like the car is still running  
But the bodywork's rotting.

And I can't put it right.  
My medicines only take the pain away.

"Oh, you're looking fine today, even walking better".  
If only they knew.  
Knew what living with uncertainty was like;  
Knew what living with hidden disabilities was like;  
Knew that today I'm feeling better but tomorrow I'll feel worse.  
And that today I wear a smile but know I daren't overdo it.

Know that the valley of depression  
Which I must walk through  
Is just round the corner  
And nobody can walk that with me  
Because unless you have it you can't know it.

O Lord, hear me.

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James Hart

James Hart

# To Ask Or Not To Ask?

It is better to give than to receive, they say  
It is humbler to receive than to give, I say

Disabled through illness,  
Social Security have given me a lot  
Access to Work a big lot  
My own Diocese quite a lot  
I have received and received and received  
Because I have asked and asked and asked

Does it make me a sponger, to ask?  
No, comes the reply  
You've already paid for it in your taxes  
But it remains true  
Those who can best  
Manage the system fare the best.

James Hart

# Toxic!

TOXIC! said the sign on the bottle of acid  
DO NOT DRINK ME – TOXIC!

TOXIC! said the sign on the tin of polish  
DO NOT EAT ME – TOXIC!

TOXIC! said the sign on the drum of paraffin  
DO NOT TOUCH ME – TOXIC!

Now the OED says toxic means poison  
So why apply it to humans?

Said with open hand upturned  
And a growling noise?

He's TOXIC! She's TOXIC! !  
They're TOXIC!

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James Hart

James Hart

# Two Soldiers

Two soldiers  
No name no photo yet  
Gunned down  
Outside their barracks  
Bang, dead.

Two woodpigeons  
No name no photo ever  
Gunned down  
In their woodland home  
Bang, dead.

Two elephants  
No name no photo please  
Hunted for their ivory  
In their natural habitat  
Bang, dead.

Two butterflies  
No name, just photos please  
Netted as specimens  
In free air  
Bang, dead.

Bang, dead  
Bang dead  
Irreplaceable jewels of life  
Bang, dead  
Bang, dead.

James Hart

# U.R. A U.U.?

Just turned 60  
A retired Vicar  
A disabled Priest

Nothing to do with it though  
Just free to think what I want  
Free to throw ideas around

Whilst enjoying the warmth  
Of high-Church Services  
With incense and a glorious choir

Now God is one –  
As the Muslims say□  
But for 1 see 3, the Christians say

Yet Jesus was monotheistic  
The Bible is monotheistic  
But 4th century Christians are Trinitarian

For mystical theology God is 1  
We reverence Jesus and the Paraclete  
But God is 1

Does that make me a Unitarian?

The Creator God  
Made every one  
But it makes him heartless  
Tyrannical and cruel  
Pointless and sick  
If he then condemns  
Half to eternal damnation  
To languish in an endless hell

Does that make me a Universalist?

It doesn't matter  
What it makes me

It only matters  
That God is glorified in me

James Hart

# Under The Knife

Under the knife  
At 60  
For hernias

Three of them  
New, like  
Operations

Like a bad  
Haircut,  
Pain post-op

Open cut or  
Key-hole;  
Find out tomorrow...

Brilliant surgeon  
Unexpected low pain  
Very neat job

Small navel  
First time in 60 years  
I can look bathers

Yes, look bathers  
Look bathers  
In the eye.

James Hart



# Valencia

## VALENCIA

Acabamos de pasar una semana en  
La linda ciudad de Valencia  
Linda y famosa  
Por sus naranjos es famosa  
Por el cultivo de su arroz es famosa  
Por su nuevo zoo es famosa  
Por su nuevo acuario es famosa.

E infamosa por sacar a  
Todos los animales y todas las aves  
De su contexto natural  
Y ponerlos en algo tan  
Antinatural que  
El resultado es ofensivo  
Por eso el rima tambien es irregular

James Hart

# Was Mary Really A Virgin? (Js#3)

To The BVM

A poem

For Mothering Sunday 2009

Mary, Mary, quite contrary  
Please tell me if you can  
Did you have sex with Joseph boy  
And all the time say "I'm a virgin"?  
And all the time say "I'm a virgin"?

Naughty, naughty, "Virgin Mary"  
You can't our model be  
Of purity and innocence,  
Of Jewish girls who don't have sex  
Of Jewish girls who don't have sex

Unless the Church was quite contrary  
And needed a virgin in you  
So Jesus pure and free from sin  
Could be our Saviour, you see,  
Could be our Saviour, you see.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary  
How does your garden grow?  
With artificial insemination  
And sperm from the Holy Ghost,  
And sperm from the Holy Ghost.

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James Hart

# Water, Water Everywhere?

WATER, WATER EVERY WHERE

Wine, wine everywhere

New wine, the best wine.

How can the Chancellor tax it?

How can he tax what two minutes before was water?

Water might be metered but not taxed.

And how long will it go on for?

Was it just the wedding Jesus was at?

And what about other weddings that day?

And what about other water containers that day?

Was all the water in the room changed into wine?

And if not, why not?

And what about the water for purification?

Or is Jesus saying by his action

That this can go by the board?

Is it a miracle or a parable?

A parable of the difference Jesus makes

Or could make if we bring our needs to him.

It is called a sign indicating the meaning lies beyond the visible

this supports my assertion that we are not to take it literally

But that it points to some thing deeper

So for no wine read no joy

For wine read the effect Jesus has on situations

Read fullness of life

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# Water, Water...

Water, water very where  
Devon and Cornwall just  
Can't take any more

Water, water nowhere  
When will this drought  
Please leave us alone?

The first a very wet Britain  
The second a very dry  
Province of Buenos Aires

The first sees people  
Drowning in water  
The second suffocating in sand

But don't blame God  
He sends his rain on  
The just and the unjust

He loves us all  
Makes no distinction  
Between worthy and unworthy

But why can't he just  
Even out the haves and  
The have-nots?

JH 10/02/14

James Hart

# Where Is God?

In my heart - in Sunday school  
Everywhere – in adolescence  
Nowhere – in parenthood  
Somewhere – in the call to the ministry

Quiet - in much of my ministerial life  
Aside – in my increasing disability  
Loud – in my retirement  
Present – in my coming death

James Hart

## Where Is Jesus> (Js#4)

"Where, O where has Jesus gone, Mary?  
Please tell me, this really is  
Quite scary, Mary.  
Mary, Mary quite contrary,  
Where can our big baby be?  
Like looking in this great big haystack  
For a tiny little flea  
But he's twelve years old, he'll soon come back"  
Says Joseph. "Let him be."  
"Thanks for your words, Jo Jo my sweet  
Typical man, you think of just  
'Letting him be.'  
I think of just watching him be.  
I want to see my Jesus sweet  
Let's go up and down  
Through every street  
Shouting 'Jesus, my sweet,  
Where are you, my sweet?  
I'll need to wash your feet.'  
At last they try the Temple  
He is sitting there at the feet  
Of the Scribes and Pharisees.  
"Where have you been,  
You naughty child, " said Joseph,  
In a rage. "Don't tell him off,  
Jo Jo man. One day he will be a man  
Like you, a great man.  
Now he's learning, don't disturb him.  
I'll just sit and watch him. I love him so.

James Hart

# Wootten Bassett

Wootten Bassett  
Unlikely looking  
Centre for military grief  
A small town with  
2 "u"s, 2 "o"s, 2 "t"s, 2 "s"s, and 2 "t"s again  
Wootten Bassett  
Funeral processions  
With 2 coffins  
And 2 coffins again  
Will mine be next?  
Will yours?

James Hart

# Y Viva Espana!

Yo fui a Espana  
De adolescente,  
Volvi con une chica  
Que me llenaba la mente

Igual que las flores  
En la Rosaleda  
El ruido de las calles  
El color de la moneda

Las ciguenas en las torres  
Las norias en el campo  
Los bares en las calles  
Todo era nuevo

Por que me fascina tanto  
Este pais tan diferente?  
Por que me pone tonto  
Estar con su gente?

Sera su idioma  
Que casi domino?  
O quizas su musica?  
Su arquitectura no lo comprendo?

Todo mejor ilustrado  
En el Concierto de Aranjuez,  
Tierno y romantico  
Y yo soy el juez.

James Hart