

Poetry Series

Jay Allard
- poems -

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Jay Allard(27/03/1981)

Um...

Er, I once found a doll's leg at the top of a mountain, and at the time I thought the location and lack of remaining doll rather beautiful. I buried the leg beneath some loose earth. In the years since, however, I have thought about it less and less. There are other stories, such as the time I saw a chaffinch and the occasion on which my Uncle sneezed and blew the tobacco out of his roll-up, but I hardly think these would pass muster in our high-octane times. It's all Nigel Mansell and Space Invaders these days isn't it?

Did I tell you about the time I saw a chaffinch?

Or was it a vulture?

Always on the lookout for beautiful things, I got chummy with a travelling band of spadgers, bodgers, thieves and jezebels, and we drank our way down to Africa. When the war came I dodged conscription due to my haggard and booze-addled appearance, and the fact that I was by then the ruler of a small equatorial nation, with no armed forces or, indeed, subjects. Plagued by the insidious ennui and loneliness so often suffered by the rich and powerful, I gave it all away and fled to the UK to become a wildman. There I subsisted on berries, and leaves and herbs such as sorrel and rocket. One day whilst striding manfully through the Quantocks, I came upon a magical time portal called a 'Ninternet', and there I became addicted to Scrabble. However, I kept getting crap selections of letters like EIEIOOI and IIIIOOE which resulted in constant capitulation to my arch nemesis Mike Chase. Deflated by ceaseless defeat, I formed a band called Captain Tautology and the Regional Area. Our debut single 'Spandex Teaset' entered the American Billboard Chart at number 652,193 and later peaked at 652,191. Sadly, the age-old combination of skag and egotism tore the band asunder, and I fled the States back to Britain. I later became a member of a new band called Caucasian Pub Foundation, and we have since had negligible chart success. On a daytrip to the New Forest circa 2005, I came upon some tasty-looking field mushrooms, and opening my satchel I took out a blue Thermos flask of hot water and procured from them a tea of rare quality. It soon became apparent, however, that what I had assumed to be harmless field mushrooms were in fact fast-acting hallucinogens capable of tripping out even the most hardened of hippies. Suddenly flashing through the trees came a giant wicker dog with eyes like saucers, and I fled deep into the forest. It transpired that the

dog was friendly, and merely wished to bestow upon me a gift of that expensive soup what comes in a plastic pot and purports to be from Covent Garden. He stopped chasing me after a time and, with a tearful expression of abandonment, slipped away into the undergrowth. Saddened by my presumptions about the hound, I established a little cargo-cult affair with some of the indigenous pygmy peoples of the New Forest - worshiping abandoned picnic hampers and suchlike - and so we set about making our own shrines, altars and little wicker effigies of the dog in the hope that he would one day return and nourish us with fresh, expensive soups.

A God Post-Epoch

Get from my eyes, dust! !
What now remains of the land I ordained
Of the work that I shouldered alone?
Nothing to salvage I trust...
All the festering leftovers stained
And the radiant glow of the stone
Tells me life will be meek to return
And that all of my follies are gone

Jay Allard

Beyond The Sky At Night

Here we go touring again
The post-Holocaust
Not quite post-Holocene

Both driver and guide -
The worst psychopaths -
Learned their route from worse despots

The moon no longer
So nebulous;
The sun still perilously dear

All the dusty fruits of the sky
Nearer the harvest;
Farther away.

Jay Allard

Birds

Gravity has each atom of you
As the birds who died from falling
Died not from the fall
But the calumny of the egg
They followed the rules
Precisely and blindly
Clamouring for worm
Beak and stomach all need
Feathers burgeoning out
Into the street where you and I
Glanced upon the baby corpses
Sighed them stereo goodbye
And fell away

Jay Allard

Breathing Out

He's dressed in his finery
Soul-cleft and binary
Standout skitzo prince of thistled wastelands
No successor could exist
And the lips those lips have kissed
Grow dewy-pink anew as he recedes

Sing the Sunday song she said
That you were singing in your chest
As you crept outside and stepped over the milkman
The song that filled your throat with colour
As you strode off down the road
And blew all of the dogs and crows away

But the sound I wished to find, he sighed
Is not there to be heard
The language foreign, broken and frustrating
The song was just a mantra, sung in symbols to myself
And it dies upon my breath's evaporating

Jay Allard

Cold History

There used to be some people
Who lived round here before
But they weren't very successful
And they're not here any more
They had no widescreen tellies
No Big Brother or WifeSwap
They all went round wearing wellies
And they had no need to shop
'Cos they grew their food in fields
And built houses out of mud
They had to make their own fun
But it wasn't very good
And there used to be this saying
That some people used to say
But I wasn't there to hear it
And I don't care, anyway

Jay Allard

Colombia 2003

They thought of deep-cratered wreckage
Wormhole mouths agape
Vermillion dots on radar;
A scattered mess of bloodspots

Out in the lizard-linked desert
A scrawny birdform ambles airbourne
Survival brained just like us

And so in the town of the astronauts
Earthbound, house proud spouses
Cradle heavy photo frames

The media hawks went feeding
While a runway lay abeyant
Thronging with tiny insects
Stretching empty to vanishing point

Jay Allard

Don Q

I wanted to write about this:

Of sneaking Spring and hovering, happy certainty
Its whispering blossoms leaking out love
Of passing beauty encroaching with sweet
Sweet smells, things like that

I wanted the boundless, unflundering heart
That snuggling innocence to fire in it always
Over and of and through what mistakes and misplacements
Lie under the entirety of what has been the past
To be drawn together beneath the tree

But black tracks of my own fashioning
Have scarred these fancy glades
They reach no clear destination and time returns unfilled
Trees uprooted, flowers crushed
With wheels sighing out *errare humanum est* and all that

Well they are cruel and inhuman
And that is no excuse.

Jay Allard

Finis Coronat Opus

The once child forever child absorbed
Too much of the sun into his blood
Tramped by a toxic river-midden
As dragonflies coupled on the wing

A pheasant flew a miracle run
Uncoupled from its dead brace-twin
Jumped the butchers doorframe hook;
Bloodied through alien shadow blocks

The never child forever child thumbed
A Vagrant Emperor in bloated hands
Slumped in a rancid jealousy
Of that gene-mapped insect brevity

He fell upon the carcass snatching flesh
And moaned more lowly than a beast
As metropolis passed the light away
To ugly functional precincts

Jay Allard

Flame For Phoenix

Flames for Phoenix now
That he may bathe deep
Ash enough to dry the sea
That he in all his whateverness
May dive halcyon
Into a bottomless love

They absorbed his tiny absence like a breath
Seasons cuddled flyovers and flesh
Clung selectively to bone

Something died in the woods and was eaten
And seen only by the eater
Remained unnamed

In the end of course gravity had him
And some sublime dream smashed to its atoms
Cratered a cold planet
For a second

and was gone

Jay Allard

Getaways

We live in those high-rise dives
All gravestone grey in the mid-May sky
Projected away from the low showhomes
The level lawns and private drives

Insomnia leads us to bunk on the nightbus
Our need to escape the unfriendly estate
And ghostly in motion through uniform suburbs
We ride through the swelling of daybreak

Jay Allard

Gravity Branches

Roots and lightning
Did you see?
They look the same
Well, they do to me.
(Gravity branches)

You and I, we're not the same
Though we too are pulled
Shooting sometimes, sometimes creeping
Together into silence
And together we might just concede:
What's past is paste
It's waste that lasts.
(Gravity branches)

Jay Allard

Moon Gulls

Moon gulls mass, of course, at night
You will not see them often
They are only for the human eye in transit
When they flit in for the kill

A man just died there in the street
And down in the bowels of some nameless building
Bored morticians tossed a coin to decide
That it was just his time -
The moon gulls never got a mention
(Their peck-marks leave no contusion)

They had watched him raise his glass and sing
'To you, My Sweet, whoever you are! '

He saw what looked like raindrops pass the moon

They are dive-bombers
And they murder you with love

Jay Allard

More News From Up The Farm

Instead of cows we had
A thousand head of kettles
Full and spouting rain it was
An 'art installation'

Jay Allard

Mysticeti

Here lie the bones of the whalebone whale

Who basked

Through a krillion filtered breakfasts

Who asked

For an extra blowhole

And God said Yes

Here lie the bones

Of the whalebone whale

Who cruised

Past murder-eyed killfish

And snoozed eyes wide

Below the sun's remains

Here in the deepest stillness now

Lie a whalebone whale's bones

Far from a seawater sky

Immemorial under the dark

Jay Allard

Never Flew

Gliding alone between broken homes
I was counting pheasants for a game
Interrupted by rusting industrial organs
Choker towns and the hello darlings

A lone muscovy duck on a pond
A tree suprised with roots aloft
Graffiti wanly scrawled and artless
The searing tears of a boy's tiny fury

Planes are wheeling above the city
But not like vultures.

I think of you and all your miles
And the sunshine and sadness below
The chattering clack of the train on the track
Getaway slashes dissecting the sky:
Traces of waste vapours
Are lines drawn through the day

Jay Allard

Night Teeth

They came in a black car
With a dark driver
Moved in swift like a locust shadow
Straight out of Zombieland
Sleepless stalking night teeth
Gnashing tasteless against the Earth
Eyes thumbed-out and cavernous
Holed bellies ravenous
For babycakes
They have come
From the lazy-armed lake
From the mulch mould graveyard
Through the flickering pixels
Into your bed

Jay Allard

Rabbitfur

Somewhere without the dread city
Where we wandered in love and alone
Stars are not shining no pity
On rabbitfur rotting to bone

I always denied you was pretty
And that's a hard untruth to hone
But I always thought you was dead witty;
You can make up the rest on your own

Jay Allard

Sidings

Starlings herald transition to night
Above the town twilight cries
Belonging to their program, they are soon to go South
This flexing mass in love with the wind

And you going homeward, your deep routine
Scraping through the minor stations
Where creepers grow thick between the bricks
Changes too tiny to measure, slow movements

If you cared to look, the worn-out spaces
Would rise one day regenerated
But you'll gaze at the window if the paper is dreary
And always see the same reflection: eyes
Unchanging through the coasting days
Overlaid on weeds, rubble heaps, schools

Jay Allard

Subterranean Car Sick Buzzard

Remember the field with the buried car

Front offside wing and section of roof
Protruding from stony mud
You said Perhaps there was a time slip
Been here for centuries
Romans, at a guess

Mr Buzzard dekkos down from forest hide
Peripheral scan over fossil car, no mind

And why doesn't he go for our eyes? I wonder
Well he'd like to, but he'd never think
To try and take them, you say
Not in him. Attack hugely improbable.

But I just saw a Humber buried in a sheepfield

Buzzard loops again
I put on my shades and it begins to rain

Jay Allard

Supplant Life

Your guns are heralds
Deliver reports, come
My pretty little derelict
With your goofy, godless, gaptooth grin
Butter up your trigger finger for
What my lost-love lyrics lack
Is in your gun-trumpet in
Your faithless fanfare and in
Your folly fire for Him.

* * *

Now we'll make a nice
Tactical
Telemetry cemetery
Telebomb territory
And add some

Jay Allard

Taking Revenge On A Pirate

Little Lover of the lost, you are
We all know how you rode fearless
That rolling boil of boneless ghosts
And the storm-haunted shanty bawlers
Came home smiling
Lovely leaver of the lost

Little calmer of the sea
Whose muscle-flushing stomach
Ate everything of me
Your voice has melded with my heart
And now you whisper me back

Jay Allard

Terminal Moraine

The small dance begins again
Same steps, but reinvented now
With traits and quirks and strokes
Different colours maybe, different shapes;
New sounds

All whispering ghosts are blocked
And sweat is a shield to us, a cloak
But did you see me by the curtain?
Just a second
No. Here's the zenith
So high that to forget is forgotten
Drowned in light

Yeah the future lies horizonless before us!
Its hopeful dew replaying the sun

Jay Allard

The Chasing Dream

Always the past was televised for us
Up to a point which grew fuzzier and
Fuzzier still until
It was uninvented but even
Then there were high definition historians sure as
Scientists
Fact-passioned elucidators
Famous personalities came to
Face the lottery of lineage and with computers turn
Wastelots into villas hillocks
Into mott and bailey and so on

The horrors of war and of the workhouse
Chimed cutely with today's equivalent events
And perhaps there might be a historical movie
Where all of these facts would be altered and enlarged

My dreams were mostly about the stagecoach
The unlit bridleway black blinkered horses always
Dark in a forest in the past
No men bouncing on the moon
Aliens dinosaurs no
The high looming firs and evil bridge gothic
Shuttered inns plodding foreboding waking crying
Gargoyles highwaymen spirits yes
But the buttons for the channels were brass
And uninvented still

I want to watch them
Somewhere in the future
Dusting over our huddled bones
With holograph precision
Reconstructions of our lives
I want them to know
When they have made time of sense
That we were here first
Smoking backwards into the loop
Just with pens lifted from Ladbrokes

The Combat Tourist

Come curve away East to morning
For the wrecks and shells and mines
See skulls and seeds negated by machines!

A child says

 I can still feel my hand
And I can still feel my leg

Her face was a map
Contours of dirt and grease
In the shade of a blasted cedar
Her face was a plea

Clasping her not-there hand in mine
My skin felt blood evaporate
To dissipate over gasping mountains

Then a fighter filled the ardent silence
Low and pointed, shrieking for me alone
Its discharge was death
And I felt it coming with a yearning like lust.

Jay Allard