

Poetry Series

Martin Moore
- poems -

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Martin Moore(07-08-1965)

Welcome to my poetic representation of the highs and lows of my journey through this wonderful life on earth.

A Little Stout

methinks I shall repair to thine sweet bed
alive or dead
methinks thou carest not
consumeth I a little stout
thou knowest it will undoubtedly come out
methinks thou should perhaps prepareth the pot.

Martin Moore

A Masons Day

A MASONS DAY

I recall vividly my father's strong hands
Clasped around a granite building stone
And he placing it precisely at a point in the wall
Where only it would go.
"Made for it" he would say
As indeed it was
For only moments before
He had honed it with hammer and cold chisel
To fit this very spot.
On and on it would go until dusk fell
The tap of the hammer
The rap of the chisel
His masterpiece.
This perfect pegmatite puzzle.
I was in awe and always in tow.
I'd labour and mix until perfection was achieved
For he demanded it so.
A granite jig-saw lay before us
All the pieces in place and home we'd head
The day's work ended
He to Bolger's and me to bed.

Martin Moore

A Pied Wagtail (Acrostic)

A pied wagtail comes flitting back
Performing a poly-chromatic rave
In subtle shades of white, grey and black
Each curtsy a friendly wave
Down and up and down again
With tail in endless motion
A veritable whirlwind, hovering
Garnering birdlike portions
To feed his newly hatched offspring
An entomological platter
In place of hungry cries will sing
Lullabies of sated chatter

Martin Moore

A Rodents Rhyme

Ivory Knight
in angel pose
black eyed, taloned killer

Moon arc light
faintly glows
above a snowy sinner

Angel of death
come fly to me
commit your mortal sin

I hold my breath
silently
that I might save my skin

Martin Moore

A Simple Beauty

A SIMPLE BEAUTY

The dew bejewelled clover leaf
A trinity of pearls
Embossed the tolerance of my thoughts.
Its fulgent flash appeared so brief
The ruffle of its whirls
Magnificent, my early morning walk.
Pearlescent foliar performance
Amid the common throng
Encapsulates this bright September morn.
Its simple beauty far outweighs
The blackbird's clever song
Resonating from within a bent blackthorn.
The rosehip, acorn, sloe and haw
The barren branch's gems
Mirrored in the misty light of day
My inner artist's eye would draw
These autumn coloured stems
Before their simple beauty fades away.

Martin Moore

Achill

Achill

The Achill sound is calling me to its bare and barren shore
A sanctuary to which I flee in the shadow of Slievemore
I long to walk Keel beach again and wander through the hills
And stroll Dooniver in the rain, to breathe and take my fill
Of scenery so rare and grand, an unspoilt heavens bed
And rest a while upon Keem strand on the way to Achill head
No better journey can be had at dusk or seen at dawn
Than the panoramic vista from the broad back of Minaun
To walk the deserted village route in the early morning mist
And linger savouring the view, a must upon the list
And Mick "The Shore" on race day circling the sound
The wind, the yawl, the silent bay and the cheers from the hotel grounds
And Grainnes castle peeping on the little quay below
Or the tidal waters seeping with the daily ebb and flow
The slipway at Bulls Head to Inisbiggles shores
Romantic dreamers fed and all left yearning more
Take a look at Achill beag from the wonders of corran
The wild Atlantic beauty tugs at the heart of every one
Clare Island in the distance mysterious and dark
Where land and water meet per chance the white foam horses lark
Upon that ancient sacred Isle of past poetic lore
I'll stand in awe at every mile 'til I return once more

Martin Moore

An Epic Journey

AN EPIC JOURNEY

At daybreak on a cold November morning
I take my first tentative steps.
The ground is hard underfoot.
Each footstep reverberates throughout the silent forest
Reflecting my ominous impact
On the mute meandering path
Through this sylvan sanctum.
Over my shoulder I glimpse
The bristling back of the repellent brute.
Ahead, the unfamiliar, the future
And above the omnipresent demons
Awaiting failure with their ghostly grimoire.
The satisfying crunch of beech nuts beneath my uncertain feet
Gives utterance to the anguish.
My inner strength is garnered
Fortitude enables me to circumvent my particular nadir.
Advancing in the face of adversity
Exhaustion soon overcomes.
I rest by a small brook
Its crystal clear waters disappear beneath my mud soaked feet
To emerge on the other side anew.
It flows freely and abundantly.
Bound to its earthly course yet in perpetual momentum.
Distract for but an instant
I suddenly perceive
The bloodshot eyes of the Ilex
Patiently watching over me
Like bright beacons through the timber throng.
Winter decay is abundant
The deciduous cull and turbulent tempest
Have plucked the branches bare.
I deviate, distracted
Beguiled by nature
I follow unquestionably to visit
The arresting aspect in the middle distance.
I sit beneath an ancient oak
A storm severed limb cradled in its crooked arms

Held aloft in sacrificial pose.
On its rugged bark and boughs
A century of survival is etched in graven imagery.
I can feel its senescent energy vibrate through my core
An interspersion of living entities.
It, the epitome of patience and humility
And I a tortured soul, seeking solace
Prostrate at its oaken altar.
A frosty winter breath caresses its cadaverous canopy
And in its silent wake
A final drizzle of dead lobed leaves
Descend silently to a russet earth.
From this copper carpet its humble subjects
Pay tribute in ashen form.
A dramatic scene now unveiled
As the winter chill has divested the stage of its showy summer drapes
And laid bare the players.
A motionless mime
A static performance
Given momentum only by the vagary's of the wind.
The thespian's tall slender forms
Deprived of girth by sibling rivalry.
Some contorted in a contrived submissive bow
Windblown to subjection
Loyally attend this Royal Oak and its dryads
Yet suck the bounty from its rotting leaves.
I can sense their hunger
Their roots clawing at the heat emanating from my tired limbs
I am aware of my feet anchored in the moist earth
Intertwined with twig and leaf
I stare in abeyance, rooted to the spot.
My reverie abruptly ends
The cold and wet entering the very marrow of my bones.
I move on reluctantly from my conceived security
Into the unknown abyss.
I am frozen with fear
The black dog snapping eternally at my heels
Threatening to drag me back
To the dark recesses of the woods
Where no sunlight warms
The layers of pine needles that lie in latent decomposition
A place where the prehistoric fruiting bodies of fungi

And ancient mosses and lichens thrive
Clinging to grey granite.
A spiritless chasm, Cliodhna's cavern
A pantheon to those darker deities
Whose disconsolate images effectuate an intellectual paralysis.
Saturating the mind,
Infusing the grey matter with its black poison
Leaving me, afraid to ideate
A world above An Madra Dubh
This canine cur
The precursor of my delusory pleasure
A harbinger hailing my own hamartia.
I struggle forward along the season's poudrin path
Side stepping obstacles and banishing self- doubt
With my genial hosts facile hand
To ease this wearisome joust.
The lifeless, leafless trees lead me along
They transude tranquillity in these harsh environs.
I am fettered by their beauty
And humbled by their strength.
In this humility I forge ahead
Deeper into this forest of truth.
By a small clearing
I come to rest by a lone spindle bush
The reddish-purple hue of its leaves
Still clinging to its wispy wintry branches
Its pink autumn fruits now agape
Revealing the bright orange seeds inside
A sanguine sight in the Cimmerian gloom
Helps to lift the melancholy mood
The bleakness of mind and manner
It acts as a passage through a gothic gateway
Into the light and beyond.
I stare at it transfixed
Momentarily spellbound in its hypnotic grip
Until a gelid water droplet renders me revenant.
My epic journey continues
Along the frigid rutted track
The frozen footprints of many
Preserved in time until the thaw
The varied patterns of heavy soles
Cast in clay and ice.

I come upon the colossal corpse of a sweet chestnut
Lying prone and powerless on the ground
Its lofty ideals shattered.
Its body, hewn and sliced
Shoved unceremoniously to either side of the descending pathway.
Its sweet sawdust blood
Spilled and mingled with its rotting leaves and spiny castanets
Exudes a deathly odour.
I amble past this arboreal atrocity
And leave its progeny to battle for the vacant lot.
I see faint dog tracks ahead and pray for none behind
My forensic eye surveys the site
A coagulum of blood and feathers
Betrays a murderous sparrow hawk.
I turn a corner and face southwards
I strive forward
Away from the habitual
The timeworn observance of those pitiful patterns
Paying homage to Dionysus
Leading to confusion and ambiguity.
A line of larch stands like praetorian guards
Watching over me
Containing the evergreen hoards
Preventing them from spilling onto the enlightened way.
A fog of inculpability descends
Slowly at first, then envelops me entirely
Blanketing my surroundings
Cutting off my access
For a moment I am blinded.
It disperses, vanishes over the tree top horizon
The cold air clears and I can see.
A new course is revealed
Devoid of all footfall.
I am a pioneer, a colonist
The first to thread this path
To plough this lone furrow.
I am left to contemplate my conception
My intimate rebirth
My terminus a quo.
No longer can I advance by retreating
The heart cannot conquer by hiding.
Darkness thrives where ambivalence reigns.

In searching the cobwebbed caverns of the soul
The quest and yearning for inner peace
For personal summum bonum
Can only scratch the surface through the smog
Until I reach the lodge by the grand gates.
There I can lay down my burden, my emotional baggage
By its tall rectangular pillars
And ease my aching shoulders.
The relief is palpable.
I hear birdsong from deep within my conifer confessors.
I turn to thank them and see for the first time
Their heads bowed from the weight of infinite knowledge
And the first flurry of winter snow.
An uncorrupted carpet of serenity, symbol of purity
White washing the last chapter of my journey
Burying my struggle
Concealing it beneath the surface
Consigning it to history, to the subconscious mind
Finally free of its bonds
I throw off the trammels of the past and look to the future
Overcoming the impasse I exult in closure.
As the morning clears so does my clouded mind
Beneath the rising sun I am homeward bound.

Martin Moore

An Erudition On Lough Ea

AN ERUDITION ON LOUGH EA

November's harsh voice echoes through the trees
The wind and rain, the rutted mountain track
The gurgling invisibility of hidden streams
Through ancient cut away bogs, taken back
By nature's wind scorched survivors, heathers
Bracken, rocky outcrops of hillside gorse
Stunted willows battling winter weather
Unstable roots clinging to their source

The rain cascading, forming instant ponds
Of rusty rivulets that make their way
Through turf mounds, limestone gulley's and fern fronds
To join the barren beauty of lough Ea.
I stroll amongst the weakened winter grass
To rid myself of inner earthly woes
An alien upon this mountain pass
My human flaws, my paradox exposed

I see the vivid orange Montbretia bells
Float above their mid-green stems, unbound
The golden flash of a kingfisher on the fells
Or a summer evening stream without a sound
Growing wild upon linear old turf graves
Still discernible despite the mounting years
The leaner times when local turf was saved
And hauled by horse and cart down through the briars

The water hacks its imperceptible journey
In secret, beneath black sod and rock
The inveterate self-loathing of the turn key
Finds its own level, disorganised, ad-hoc
In irrepressible surroundings, wild in the extreme
Seductive in its rural, rustic beauty
Summoning a basal strength it seems
From the lake muse, complicit in its duty
Easing in its aggression, it dissipates
Diluted by the virginal, cold crystal water

Settled in the soft mud, captivated
Filtered through the sedimentary blotter
Finds a final resting place, no elegy
No sad refrain for my rural renaissance
Cleansed and full of youthful energy
Enlightened, in a momentary trance

The wild sky dark and pregnant with rain
Unleashes its torrent upon my naked flesh
To purge the workings of my bardic brain
And sanitize it with thoughts afresh
I embrace the invigorating shower
And let its gelid goodness flow over me
I feel it's all encompassing power
Flush the stress-like sinews free
New puddles form in spent footprints
In time new streams will race again
Through furrows, grooves, grikes and clints
And carry with them, wisdom arcane.

Martin Moore

Autumn Thoughts

AUTUMN THOUGHTS

The knotted branch of reason sheds its leaves
Creating lifeless coppered matting
Under childrens wellingtoned feet
Fields of golden crops and hedgerows green
Expose their hidden souls
Beneath the metal blades of loud machines
The endless summer rains on gravel drive
Leave constant puddles in their wake
As lunar landscapes in a rural setting thrive
The trees cry leaf tears on the road
Discarding summer coats
Ironically preparing for the winter cold
The final summer bounty falls to ground
Gathered feverishly and stored
For leaner times when winter comes around
The never ending quest for knowledge yearned
School gates open once again to all
Those saddened faces stroll to learn
As yet another sodden summer turns to fall.

Martin Moore

Born To Fight

BORN TO FIGHT

Optimistic light upon the shore guides ships in from the sea
Penetrating sun through every pore brings no reason to the powers that be
Huddled in a house of stainless steel planning out a final strategy
There is no doubt or hurt that they will feel
As innocent victims pledge a heartfelt plea
Action is called for when striving for peace, rock against Reagan and war
Despite demonstrations, the arms race won't cease
Destroying the world even more
Violence won't solve these problems we have
Nor uncover our well hidden fear
With love and devotion at least we can save the beautiful sounds that we hear
Taken for granted this place where we live
Out of sight but not out of touch
Food not bombs is what we must give, the starving need as much
Financial destruction will lead to a waste in a country where people must die
To allow the construction of that which we face, the rules to which we comply
A lunatic's army answers the call
Their morals and judgements for sale
Soldiers of fortune will not stand so tall
As with their hero they fail
To bring the nations to their knees, attaining a worldwide defeat
Across the globe to ice bound seas and Russia's wounds we greet
Easily opened for battle again, a burden on its shoulders
The bitter hatred breaks the chain encapturing its soldiers
Nuclear disarmament finds little ground to hold
The wishes of society, whose beliefs are now resold
As anger requires a forgotten grudge reborn to the fore
As bystanders we have to judge the fate that lies in store
Associations try to heal the misery and tears
With nursery rhyme names they may gain fame
Remembered through the years
Memory will not survive a new atomic shock
The anti-nuclear tug of war helps to make a mock
Of all that we believe in, a life to live in peace
A justice for the people whose hopes it will increase
Until that great orange mushroom cloud engulfs the world we know
And sets its children free again to live and fight once more.

Martin Moore

Carna

CARNA

The haunting sound of a curlew slowly fades
As its source flies into the morning sun,
A sun that blinds me.
It makes the white sand sparkle, iridescent
This sun that binds me
To this extraordinary world, this solid land
Of rock and ocean and great expanse of sky.
Grey stone in Atlantic evanescence.
The very mountains, unyielding granite
Towering over their watery domain.
The receding ocean reveals even more rocks
They are all encompassing.
The dry, blonde sand under my bare feet
Must once have been so.
The smooth wet boulders, random yet uniform.
The dry, lichen encrusted giants
Megalithic tombs, monuments to time itself.
A hard, weather beaten landscape
Throbbing with the beat of life.
The faint lowing of cattle behind dry stone walls
Rabbits scratching at the dunes
The strident screeching of magpies
The braying donkeys across non-existent fields
Above the squabbling seagulls in the distance.
All harmonising, drowning out, discerning sorrow
On the barren, rocky shores of Oisinnamhara.

Martin Moore

Childhood Days

CHILDHOOD DAYS

My childhood days coming spilling back
We occupied ourselves quite easily then
Imagination was a gift, not a necessity.
Gathering spawn from stagnant summer pools
In jam jar aquariums,
We watched the metamorphosis occur.
Young scientists we were.
Croke's field was transformed into the Alamo.
Each one, his own identity screamed out
Famous names would shoot and die,
Adolescent actors.
Exploring the Moate with Cromwell's men,
We knew it better than the natives,
We made more noise,
What had we to fear?
The innocence of youth reigned within us.
Warm evenings spent swimming the Avonree
Before pollution and industrial waste had stopped our play.
Off to the sally wood with bow and arrows
To seek out victims never there
Still we watched the clock out of respect
Or did we fear our parents?
They too were at a cross-roads
Watching us grow up before their eyes
Urging us in the right direction.
It worked for some, but rebels fell the other side
The sheep that went astray
Through misguidance or stupidity
They too had their day.
We changed with the times, got older and wiser,
Now I understand the responsibility and sacrifice
That once I had ignored.

Martin Moore

Clonea

CLONEA

My eager eyes momentarily mix
With silvery streaks on grey
September's sullen clouds eclipse
The horizon at Clonea
The low sky's faint mirage
With shimmering waterfront
A mid-autumnal decoupage
A shell and driftwood treasure hunt.
Wave upon infinite wave
The foamy, frothy water dance
The rocks become a solemn enclave
And I alone, entranced.
The seaweed drifts, on pebbles rest
Retched from the ocean floor
On silver sands their limbs appressed
Abandoned on the shore.
Sea thrift shelters in the cracks
Their leeward hollow homes
Secreted beneath well-trodden tracks
Their pinks an autumn chrome.
And all is fading, all forlorn
Wild daisy and sea kale
Summers floral fire has burned
The embers weak and pale
A seasons closing decadence
Is withered, tired or gone
But still the timeless waves can dance
An endless paragon.

Martin Moore

Dispossessed

DISPOSSESSED

A gaping wound perforated the day
A scab, clawed into contagion
An arduous ache, acute malaise
Not cauterised, yet raging
The corpuscles of grief refuse to clot
But seep slowly inward yet
The heart diminished to an arterial knot
A fissure oozing with constant threat.

I can still remember everything
My siblings seated around the bed
The monitor, its bleep and ring
My mother's hand upon his head
His rattling chest, his last deep breath
The worried looks and sighs
Another family dispossessed
The day my father died.

The sudden silence in the ward
Rare hugs and tears, the shock
The holding him in high regard
The ticking of the clock
Though time stood still, it swiftly passed
Firm rituals to be observed
Funeral arrangements, coffin, mass
The send-off he deserved

The retinue in cars behind
The solemn placing in the ground
The roses dropping single file
As the rains came tumbling down
Father, teacher, banker, friend
Giant man to mortal soul
His masons eye as he descends
Would scorn this six foot hole

"I find its features very bland,

The walls not flush" he'd remonstrate
And on entering the Promised Land
Would pause to plumb the pearly gates.

Martin Moore

Dreamcatcher

DREAMCATCHER

Oh dreamcatcher
Capture all my dreams
Don't disperse a single one
For in your tangled web it seems
My inner fears will be undone.
Gather them unto your generous core
For that should be your aim
Watch them while your comet eye
Reflects your maker's name
Let them flow sightless along
Each golden silken thread
Bind them with your leather thong
And release my hopes instead
Within your perfect sphere of dreams
Keep them in abeyance
Their haunting, horrid, hidden themes
Confine them for the day and
As the evening draws to close
Release them to the ether
For only you can now dispose
Of those, my dear dream weaver.

Martin Moore

Driftwood Heart

DRIFTWOOD HEART

My senses lost in profound thought
I wandered aimlessly on shore
The driftwood heart that I had sought
Was kidnapped by the oceans roar.

Now swept from dune to foamy sea
I could not reach it, if I tried
The waves have washed it far from me
And the clutches of the ebbing tide.

Its rugged lines had softened some
Sharp imperfections smoothed
Dark corners bleached by salt and sun
Banished forms of youth and

Yet far from featureless and grim
Its character shines through
Surviving it has learnt to swim
And see the strength in you.

And so from strand to secret strand
My search for it endures
I'll take it in my aging hands
And feel its grand allure.
That it may beat so strong again
And never more to part
I'll keep you close this time old friend
My drifting, driftwood heart.

Martin Moore

Forgetful

Forgetful

In my mind I think I'm twenty still
With years to go and time a plenty
Truth is, I'm travelling fast downhill
My hour- glass two thirds empty
I'm quite forgetful nowadays
I can't remember anything
Especially words like marmalade
I'm going mad, I'm quite convinced
I catch me talking to myself
While lost in idle chatter
Or feel completely overwhelmed
By different subject matter
It's difficult to climb the stairs
When I am feeling tired
It's a pity that the beds up there
Now that I'm retired
I'll move it to the sitting room
And save myself some work
That might help to lift the gloom
And stop me going berserk
I'm quite forgetful nowadays
I think I need a rest
I go upstairs for mayonnaise
And downstairs to get dressed
I walk into the garage
And forgotten why I've gone
Expecting that some sweet mirage
Will be my salvation
I recall in days of yore
I used to love to dance
Now all I seem to do is snore
And battle flatulence
I get confused with people's names
Preferring not to meet them
Henry James or William James
However shall I greet them?
I get forgetful don't you see
And tired most of the time

It's time to accept reality
I'm well beyond my prime
I get forgetful, oscitant
Did I say that already?
Forgetful and inconsequent
And now I've got a headache.

Martin Moore

Freedom From Within

FREEDOM FROM WITHIN

A naked tree, I stand in a lonely field
Through my bare boughs the winter winds rage
Upon their sound, no hint of liberty
Can respond to all the hopes and dreams I've saved.
My leaves lie frozen on the snow white ground
Each one a secret wish that I had stored
Devoid of life, they too have been left down
As green, their pride will now return no more.
Resigned to hardship and to bitter cold
I now await for spring to come again
As secret wishes, now asleep, I'm told
Will grow in freedom with the summer rain.
My branches raised, in hope, up to the sky
Like arms outstretched to God in prayer
Relate my thoughts, on whom can I rely?
As to a hopeful future now I dare
To look as if I'd never been in doubt
That hope had never left my breast
Until a troubled mind is scattered out
Like seeds, my heart will never be at rest.

Martin Moore

Galleyhead

GALLEYHEAD (DUN DEIDI)

Down a narrow road with grass strip centre
As the sun slips through the fingers of the broad horizon
And daylight fades
We land at Galley head.
This rocky promontory is a flagstone at heaven's door
While sipping on a glass of wine
We sit and watch the cormorants flying in
From the broad expanse of ocean.
The last few sea birds skim the surface
Then fly over the lighthouse
Partly concealed from view by the cold wall of the old fort.
The dark grey stone contrasts with the calm still blue of the ocean.
At the cliff edge, sea thrift tufts cling to life
While seagulls, homeward bound are gliding upwards on thermals
Yet others lying low amongst the chocolate brown seed heads
Of docks in annual decline.
I see patient cows on floating fields chewing the cud
Extracting food from meagre grazing
Above the bright boiling bubbles
Where water meets rock.
A distant sail is a thin white strip,
A mere dot in the grey blue forever.
The distant headland is a sleeping crocodile
With dotted dwellings on its long sleek back.
The low stone walls divide the broken landscape jigsaw like
A line of telegraph poles at twilight
Are Easter Island heads keeping watch over Dun Deidi.

Martin Moore

Glenbarrow

The long abandoned cottage and small holding
Which must have teemed with life so long ago
Now stands silent as nature reclaims it.
A young boy swings from the adjacent beech
His legs balanced on a recycled plastic bench
He calls his sisters name Ad Infinitum
His constant rant, gunfire on a Slieverbloom summer evening.

I take the path to the falls and find myself in Utopia
The babbling Barrow below is soothing
My thoughts return to rightful patterns
And simple honest pleasures.
The fresh clean air fills my lungs
I breathe it in deeply and willingly
I feel its goodness in my core

The glen is asleep, in the distance
The sound of rushing water gliding over bedrock
And crashing to the riverbed below, drives me on.
The track winds its way between rock, tree and fern
Undulating along the valley floor
It leads to a small clearing by a wooden hut
A shelter from a summer shower.

A waterfall captures the heart and soul
It concentrates the mind in its gaze
A stark reminder of the futility of our
Preoccupation with life's stress
I allow my mind to wander
It drifts with the current, downstream
For a moment I can see myself standing there.

Such is the magic of water
To cozen the wisdom of years and set free the subconscious
Released it hovers in defiance of gravity
With an unobstructed view of life
A waterfall achieves all this.

On returning as the daylight fades

The line of travel faint
I remember those pitiful cries of spruce
In a wind compelled romance
Their naked trunks and wispy green heads
Lamenting in a forced embrace
The scraping of bark upon unforgiving bark
Casts a shadowy twilight dance
In a world high above
The root patterned, well worn track of Glenbarrow.

There by its fragrant side the casualties lie
The winter storm has laid them to rest
Their roots torn from the earth without ceremony
By its growling winds, now stand awkwardly upright
Like tombstones heralding those rotting corpses all round
The life ebbing from them with the ravages of time.

Yet what beauty to behold for a forgiving eye
As saplings rise to fill the void
They stretch for light and life and
Fill the battlefield again.

Martin Moore

Gravity

GRAVITY

Galvanised into action, the roof and the battle
The players, plastic pawns in my chess game
And I a proselyte
In the basic criteria for rooftop combat.
Absorbed in the affray, teenage tactician
Abruptly, I took flight
Testing Newton's theory I appeared
To hover motionless in the air
Landing on my spine
Across the steely crossbar of a blameless bike
A neutral in the lofty games
Oblivious to the whine.
The black, bruising whack, the shock
Unabashed, blemished trophy,
Blood upon the umber saddle.
Crestfallen, countenance confused
Knight-like, on bended, battered knee
My acute awareness addled
Anointed by the water from the sacred font
Near drowned in Mothers benevolence
Now conscious of the pain
I deserted the battlefield above
A veteran, no parachute prerequisite
On terra firma the next campaign.

Martin Moore

Help

HELP

Alone among thousands he waits
Set apart from reality
A colony dependant on faith
Surviving on self-pity
Society's outcast, degrading his name
His will has been destroyed
Standing now to stake his claim
He battles with his pride
Perhaps another world exists
Free from hate and fear
There must be something more than this
Restraining bitter tears
Through a drunken haze he sees
A life with no ambition
False relief and liberty
In a land of no contrition
Too late to try and start again
A hopeless dream has ended
A monument to days insane
Statistics are amended
To read one less, a forgotten face
The systems triumph deemed
And yet another takes his place
To follow on the dream.

Martin Moore

Heron

A darkening sky begins to cry
falling leaves paint abstract art
on an october coloured river

Motionless
beneath an overhanging bank
a steel grey heron stands
a lone sentinel on his stone plinth
watching and waiting

The cold rain forms pearls on ruffled plumage
a shake of his head dicards accumulation
without the loss of concentration

In my roving mind
I am a ten year old boy
school green tie
shirt sleeves and short pants
standing to attention
awaiting Erskine Childers
guard of honour, O' Riada mass

Storm clouds pass
while lost in retrospection
suddenly in a flurry of feather and pearls
a lightening strike

His beak ajar, a salmon parr
is deftly turned from side to slippery side
head first down the gullet slide

Motionless
again both it and I
half afraid of breathing
and miles from anywhere
beneath mute meandering skies
we share this act of being.

Horticulture (Acrostic)

Having no recourse to pastures new
Other than to break the earths green crust
Riches long concealed emerge anew
Toil and grind can render gold from dirt
Included in this lost and age-old rite
Could all encompassed be the better for
Until the tomes of time we can unwrite
Lest we should fall like many times before
This then, our fervent wish should be
Until our aging hands can toil no more
Rescuing the fruits of fallen trees
Emboldened by this quaint esprit de corps

Martin Moore

In Dreams

IN DREAMS

In haunting dreams I see you there
Standing, frozen to the spot
Then suddenly you disappear
I wake to find that you are not
By any means as close to me
Or anchored firmly to the ground
But floating feather-like and free
Your influence is all around.

You occupy my dreaming hours
Although my mind should be at rest
Prostrate and rigid in your power
My heart vibrating in my chest
Plays out my life in double time
When both my worlds become as one
The dark and frightening nightly rhyme
When the bright, enchanting day has run.

What joy you bring throughout the night
The very thought of you so real
A frozen, tender, ghostly sight
Enraptured, I can scarcely feel
Your breath upon my sleeping face
Yet all is not as it would seem
I wake to find in this lonely place
That my sweet dream is just a dream.

Martin Moore

Indian Summer

Indian summer rain taps incessantly
its rhythmic repertoire upon the roof
beneath its rusted eaves in runnels free
astonied insects floating by, aloof

Noah-like on leafy russet barges
buffeted by this sudden perfect spate
under a weeping birch this navy charges
desultory flotilla, curious shipmates

Temporary tempest, swollen stream
taken unawares the willow herb
on its dancing, whirling fireweed dream
its subaquatic stems, a rosebay kerb

An osiery of willow roots is born
Mantled cage of bristling briarwood
cloaked its forehead in a crown of thorns
underneath this barbed and burry hood

Here I will pass the Autumn of my life
write my poets lines, my thought-dreams down
a satiated muse, perspective bright
pensive moments passed, serene surrounds

Commit to words the fleeting gift of life
that others might appreciate and know
the nature of a man, despite his strife
Harbinger, keeper of the sacred scroll.

Martin Moore

Iniquity

INIQUITY

I receive the dark nocturnal muse
So fleet of cloven foot
I contemplate these frequent blues
His gift of poisonous root
His nightly visits coincide
With lows of dismal depth
The iniquity of suicide
Tragic thoughts of death
I write the words he brings to me
Lest they vanish and are gone
Sailing into Hades' sea
On Styx and Acheron
Scribbling down his darkened ode
I bid him, not return
The wrath of endless nights forebode
Still slave to sweet Sauterne

Martin Moore

Kilbride Revisited

KILBRIDE REVISITED

What a prehistoric practice
Is burying ones dead?
Two yards down in cold wet clay.
Sealing the skeletal fractus
In coffins lined with lead
Our ancestors in mute decay
Lock the dark stone crypt
Let no light eternally shine
Retreat in deference then
Imprisoning with chiselled script
The terminal bloodline
Within this granite pen
The pomp parade, the lookers on
The characteristic flaws
Blatant false camaraderie
I sometimes visit here alone
My wife, father and father-in-law
Alien amongst its mockery
The standing stones, the epitaphs
Eerie rectangular plots
Myriad corpses lain
Numerous ancient photographs
Light grey lichen and water spots
The porous limestone stains
Decaying floral tributes
Kind word carvings etched on stone
Positioned on attended graves
The westerly wind distributes
Scattered, knocked over, windblown
In Kilbride's damp, disturbed enclave
The watching yews, scarlet eyes
Piercing through emerald green
Hard pruned this spring afresh
And gazing down from on high
Their branches a bristly baleen
They feed on recent rotting flesh
These cemetery sentinels

Have sucked the marrow dry
Gorged on the souls sacred feast
Divine banqueting tunnels
And halls now petrified
In death a final gift released
Do not bury me beneath this hallowed ground
This cursed plight
Is not for my atheist's bones
But let my fallow ashes bound
From Slievenamon's summit in flight
Or drown with the Kings water stones
I could not bear to spend
Eternity half buried
Half dead and prayed upon each year
It's impossible to transcend
Six feet and still carry
The claustrophobic nature of my fear.

Martin Moore

Letting Go

LETTING GO

Her tears fall fervently and fill
The cool canal lock with saline sorrow.
The purple veined hand of fate
Straining at the lock gates
Has loosed water and her inhibitions
Allowing life within this glide
To ascend to a new echelon
Elevating all before it.
She sits on the canal bank
Where the mounting weight of newness
Washes over the stagnant old
Outshining and intermingling
Diluting with each distinct drop
Distilling each to a purer self.
A calm rendering
Where all things are equal
And all incorruptible
Not manacled by the magnitude of melancholia
She watches through salted eyes
Each tear stained cheek reflecting
A restrictive release of regret
Each single teardrop, a chain link
To history, to the hypnotic
Ancient sweethearts and suitors
The bottled aspirations of her teenage self.
The cocooned molecules of misery, are her tears
Alighting on the lichen covered limestone lock
Grey permanency personified
The boundary to her bane, her barrier
The barbs of which still stab
At that purple veined hand
Bleed it and unmask the unmoved
Revealing the rose within
A uniform beauty of petals and scent
Perishable yet persistent
A superficial crown to cap
The thorny heart of reality
Her trivial tears negated now

Brought to naught by nurture
She wipes her weary eyes
Inhales and sighs and finally lets go.

Martin Moore

Moments In Time

MOMENTS IN TIME

Incessant rainfall one day at august end
Saturates every surface forming pools on open earth
Filling them with its life-giving goodness.
Its soft tapping on the window pane
A gentle reminder of times past.
While watching the clay brown puddles swell
I am lost, my mind in sudden reminiscence
Of cold, wet, early mornings and all the hours spent fishing
Before the inevitable tolling of the school bell.
Much later sitting at the old wooden desk
With faulty ink well and routed pencil groove
My finger nails still caked with dried blood
The gory residue of the dawn slaughter.
Meanwhile this other self still sauntering the river bank
The current lesson dismissed into obscurity
Rendered mere background noise.
An annoyance of sorts, a distraction
I was present yet in absentia.
At lunch I was away again.
I took myself to the big bridge
Resting a while above its broad spans
To check if the flood waters had receded.
Oh the joy on seeing the swollen kings waters
Run high with the pregnant promise
Of another good mornings fishing
In the bounty of its generous spate.
With a small stick employed to mark the bank
It was back reluctantly to class
To the world of academia
To wade patiently through the quagmire of disjointed thinking
Listening to the teachers tedious tirade
Then check the stick again at schools days end.

The rain stops abruptly and with it my reverie.
I wander aimlessly outside
To see vapour clouds rise skyward.
With them I am transported.

It's raining again and I am staring at my six year old reflection
In the small square window of my grandmothers cottage.
Inside a crucifix hangs upon a cold white wall and
The maddening sound of an old clock rings throughout the house.
The rain drips from the slated roof
Onto a rutted cobblestone yard where the grass grows freely.
An old beech tree in the yard
Greets its senescence with quiet disregard.
It bears the battle scars of winter wars
The tar- like ooze where missing boughs
Like limbs have been wrenched from their sockets
By harsh unforgiving winds.
By the wall an old dog sits quietly
Upon a trailer with a solitary wheel.
Two hens chat beneath its rusted frame
While a chocolate barred bantam cock
Strikes its spurs on the straw strewn cobbles.
Suddenly the door creaks open
My grandmother greets her insular world.
She pulls her soiled blue apron tight
And finger combs her tangled grey hair.
She makes her way to the nearby sty
Where the tired old sow lays suckling a dozen hungry young.
The next time I see her, three months later
I am up on my tiptoes staring
My white knuckles gripping the side of her coffin
In the front room of the house.
Then I am shepherded among flat capped old men
To walk the one hundred yards from cottage to church.
I am trapped behind long overcoats
The smell of cigarette smoke and the coughing.
Then suddenly I am back again
Amid rivulets running by my feet and
The familiar odour of summer dust in the aftermath of its drowning.
I reappear on a September morning
An eerie fog cloaks the river and nearby fields.
My father and I are fishing in its cold waters
I am young still, startled by the sudden charge of curious cattle
The tingle of the electric fence on wet hands
I have yet to discover
The frightening hiss of a swan disturbed on its nest
The orange flash of a kingfisher on the wing

The splash of a large trout rising to the fly at dusk
And the thrill of a taut line.
Beneath the shadow of the seven castles
Below the mill race on the river of Kings.

These are but fleeting moments in time
Snapshots of intimate memories most brief
They linger lightly and are gone
I embrace the present, rethink the past, look to the future once more
And I become real again.

Martin Moore

My Muse And I

Abstract raindrops
window pane
connect the dots
break the chain

Sunday evening
autumn rain
pleasure sought
nothing gained

Monday morning
winter blues
thawing rooftops
chimney flues

Skyward drift
distracted thoughts
rhyming lines
tied in knots

Empty vessels
hollow heads
my muse and I
at loggerheads.

Martin Moore

Nightwatch

NIGHTWATCH

I watch the nocturnal world elapse
Through my window on the night
A silent, precious time perhaps
Between sunset and first light
A dead of night existence
Known only to the few
That chance the middle distance
And dare to taunt taboo
Wet streets and wetter rain
Reflecting off car roofs
With no daylight restraint
Adolescents are bulletproof
Wind corralled beech leaves
The dying and the dead
Storm battered gables, eaves
Beyond the watershed
A blatant, barking, distant dog
A noisy neighbour's gate
Infrequent, eery urban fog
Quickening heart rate
The heavy rusty hinges creak
Cats screech out their opinion
The twitching curtains, preliminary peek
In territorial dominion
The sodden black and amber flags
Hang limp and hug their posts
The floating, dancing plastic bags
Psychokinetic polythene ghosts
The rattle of the heating flues
That herald November in
My midnight meandering is through
And dawn is here again.

Martin Moore

October Sunday Morn

Golden waves of littered leaf
drift by roadside verge
crow-clouds inky black
turgid October canopy
fingered fringe of dark motif
eager to emerge
admonishing Autumn's claque
ill-fated foliar panoply

palpitating, bowing out
eternal enigma
coppered coloured tapestry
fills the great hall
seasons secrets uttered now
sweet senescent stigma
the brutal, bare banality
of winters first catcall

Martin Moore

Oh Tortured Soul

OH TORTURED SOUL

What hidden anguish have you got?
With worry etched upon your face
Your uptight sinews in a knot
Hard, just like your black slate base.

Contorted frame of aged bronze
That seeks to hide the pain within
Come leave your pedestal just once
And bend and stretch those aching limbs.

Yet mounted in eternal pose
You cannot leave your lofty pole
As in your agony you froze
There to die, oh tortured soul.

Martin Moore

Ophelia

Ophelia, oh noble storm
your latent anger, onerous
reveal your hand, your female form
your errant madness over us
pour forth your tears on this dear isle
each village town and hamlet
your ugly beauty will not beguile
we will withstand the gamut
you'll rue the day, to your dismay
when the willow branch is broken
and you shall fall in disarray
a tropical, teacup token.

Martin Moore

Pirates

PIRATES

Ignorance forces us to succumb
To the hands of indifferent fools.
The men at the helm guide us along
Brainwashed by their rules
With fundamental innocence
We follow in their path
The fuel of knowledge lacking
We're subject to their wrath.
Captured in this whirlpool
We try with all our might
But cannot sail this galleon
From injustice to delight
In all the dreams of freedom
Where once, our minds at ease
Were devoid of all the worries
That recent years have seen.
Like sheep we'd flock to hear them speak
With their promises and tears
A message this time for the meek
Won't travel on for years.
Forgotten then, the words they say
No truth in what they've spoken
Much like the hearts of those on board
Their promises are broken
And for the future can be seen
No hope on the horizon
Work becomes a has-been
As unemployment rising
Reflects the narrow minded views
Of those we seek to follow
Is the captain chained then too?
To thoughts of no tomorrow.

Martin Moore

Politico

They are but ephemeral players
in life's perpetual play
performing actors on a vast and varied stage
their podiums predominant
straining at the bowels
beneath the shifting feet and groaning weight

They are but kings on palanquins
in resplendent regal robes
dependent solely on the bearers limbs
they are but itinerant preachers
pretenders to the throne
conveniently aligned with kith and kin

They are but sponsored agitators
well versed in false tirade
avoiding fervently the voters whim
they are the crisis creators
hoodlums, crooks and traitors
parasites with social pseudonyms.

Martin Moore

Portrait

PORTRAIT

Forming a two headed bodiless beast
Two horses behind the low stone wall
Their bodies invisible at least
From where I watched beneath the squall
A winters drenching, windblown rain
Awash upon this equine art
Their saturated, tangled manes
Bedraggled features, peripheral parts
On natures canvas, verdant frame
Of meadow, gate and fence
Motionless in impromptu fame
Art nouveau in transience
A curious onlooker, I observe
Their posture ceases to be
This fleeting moment helps to serve
The artists mind in me
They wander weakly out of focus
And ramble slowly towards the gate
My picture portrait up in smoke as
Mist and shower eradicate
This moment's treasure, golden find
And leaves the palette bare
Existing only in my mind
A solitary exhibit there

Martin Moore

Quiet Desperation

And I, I die in ageing, I just cannot keep pace
Inside, hormones raging, outside, the human race
I lie, in enervation by a Mediterranean pool
A quite accepting nation of an old lethargic fool
In quiet desperation I watch young lovers love
Aphrodite on vacation eyeing from above
Young girls lie Lolita-like, bikini-clad and tanned
I observe the little tykes from my senescent stand
And wish for youth and beauty in my artistic bent
I ask, as is my duty, is this what Nabokov meant?

Martin Moore

Released

Sweating palms
late hour
southbound, yearned for
I struggle two steps more

sink to trembling knees
in water black as coal
sense the dark mud squeeze
upon my very soul

twenty days or more
traversing this morass
mosquito-ridden gore
tongues as sharp as glass

flesh ripped to shreds
blood has oozed beyond
the threshold of the dead
seeped into this pond

black piranha wait
to gorge on weakened flesh
appetites to sate
vicious teeth enmesh
the bones of humankind
the heart of every man
roaming senseless, blind
eyes uncovered can

opened ever wide
view this watery grave
break the chain that binds
releasing you, a slave.

Martin Moore

Roadtrip

ROADTRIP

Sand-soaked sandwiches and flies
Warm cordial to sooth the mustard high
Swimming trunks on the roof to dry
Forgotten in the leaving.
Bites and stings and sand between toes
Scorching sun and ocean cold
Summer months, melting tar on roads
No seasonal interweaving.
A two berth caravan for seven
The ocean view was seventh heaven
A family pact of non-aggression
Avoided unnecessary pain.
A gas cylinder in the boot
Accompanied us along the route
The Morris Minor would commute
Our target preordained.
The obligatory spasmodic showers
Lasting for what seemed like hours
Locked up in our two berth tower
We'd curse the wayward weather.
Ultimately came the exodus
And to the beach the five of us
Adventurous, amphibious
We'd jump the waves together.

Martin Moore

Sea Eagle

SEA EAGLE

You dared to drift too close to shore
Upon the head of Bagenbaun
I gave you back your life once more
And watched you face a strange new dawn.
You journeyed far to reach this place
Your origins uncertain
A washed up, ragged, hopeless case
Behind your seaweed curtain.
I plucked you from your sandy grave
And placed you in my boat
I brought you home and gave to you
A copper coloured coat.
No feathered wings could I bestow
But cape and tail of kelp
A dark and rocky perch below
And pedestal to help.
You still look down upon this land
My golden driftwood king
For you are now the high command
Over every single thing.

Martin Moore

Slievenamon

SLIEVENAMON

In nature's bleak brush strokes entwine
Autumnal mediocrity
The tone and tint of years decline
A gilded luminosity
The verdant splash of spring was drawn
And summers splendid store
From the cloud capped crest of Slievenamon
To the purple valley floor
The violet tones of heather sprigs
That spring from darkened moor
Golden leaves on broken twigs
The mountains deep allure
Orange lichened monoliths of stone
Reveal themselves again
As earth is skinned to winter bones
And skeletal remains
A season in senescent choke
What beauty does bequeath
In casting off its transient cloak
And outing its secret beneath.

Martin Moore

Snowdrops

I took a walk in winter woods
In part to cleanse my listless heart
I often come to sit and brood
Or witness springs profound rebirth
In its conception, beauty dwells
A virginal, snowdrop tapestry
There is no striking parallel
To match this tranquil majesty
A listless heart can find no trace
And so in time shall each snow bell
Breathe life into my hiding place
And herald the winters slow death knell

Martin Moore

Sonnets On Life Number 1

SONNETS ON LIFE NUMBER 1

With strong arms outstretched above his head
His palms surround an oaken bough
A limp and heavy body, languid lead
His pounding head and sweating brow
Pain has stiffened every jaded joint
Garrotted and rendered insensible
His spinal marrow tapped by metal point
He no longer seems invincible
With features taut and fatigued limbs
A blood drenched torso epigraph
Carved under a pseudonym
Will read his final epitaph
Strung between oak bough and earth
The silken thread of life and death

Martin Moore

Sonnets On Life Number 2

SONNETS ON LIFE NUMBER 2

A tightrope stretched across a valley
A frayed, dishevelled hempen strand
Its braided bonds well-nigh unravelled
He balances with outstretched hands
And takes his first unsteady step
Against advice he looks below
A flight of fancy, free except
For the rapidly advancing valley floor
He lands amongst the leaves and litter
And yearns for liberty and home
The lesson learned, the student bitter
A snapshot, life in monochrome
Trust the bonds and don't look down
Procure the sacred vantage ground

Martin Moore

Sonnets On Life Number 3

SONNETS ON LIFE NUMBER 3

I yearn for wild and wondrous places
Solitude and silent paths
That I might banish nameless faces
Scorn unbidden bureaucrats
Amble awkward country roads
The quiet, forgotten, lonely lanes
Grass verges, wild, un-mowed
Momentous yet mundane
Embrace the verdant patchwork hills
The wild flowers hidden charm
The worn out weirs, abandoned mills
Fresh rivers, fruitful farms
To contemplate at this intersection
And lose myself in quiet reflection

Martin Moore

Sycamore Blues

SYCAMORE BLUES

That winged samara, indehiscent seed
Seduced me with your fluttering side show
On route from school, I felt a sudden need
To rescue you, some forty years ago
I picked you up and launched you to the clouds
Enthralled to see where you might land
I woke at Fennelly's door amongst the crowd
Plucked from the rear of Sonny Walsh's van.
The smell of steaming rustics in the air
A Hillman Hunters dent upon my arm
A broken tooth and matted, bloodied hair
Aside from that, no irreparable harm.
Doctor's surgery just across the street
In the arms of Mrs Walsh, god bless her soul
Releasing me, medical incomplete
To cry myself to sleep at ten years old.
My left arm broken, teeth in disarray
I woke my mother halfway through the night
To hospital with father the next day
To learn that doctors differ patients die
Six weeks in plaster, never out of school
My cast a written tablet all could read
Lesson learned, I'll never again be fooled
By that damned, accursed, winged samara seed.

Martin Moore

The Arrival

THE ARRIVAL

Patience is a virtue or that's what they say
It's hard to be patient on this kind of day
A day that's enraptured with thoughts of delight
To capture this new life that now is in sight.
Anxious moments awaken inside
The minds of those who hasten and try
To determine the manner, appearance and size
Of this new creation in front of their eyes.

Lost in a shawl surrounding its face
Beholding this miracle its hard now to trace
The months full of illness, anxiety and pain
Men try to understand but always in vain
For only its mother once so afraid
Can really believe this life that we've made
Believing in nature is hard as I stare
As life's single beauty is one of a pair

Martin Moore

The Boar Hunt

On Huntington Down
we hunted them down
the gamekeepers son and I

Through old woods of oak
our backs were bent broke
the gamekeepers son and I

These wild boar can run
but we shall have fun
said the gamekeepers son to I

We came to a clearing
where the wild boar were veering
toward the gamekeepers son and I

We cornered the brood
which bid us conclude
the gamekeepers son and I

That we shall be winners
and we shall have dinner
the gamekeepers son and I

But the boar were opposed
to what we proposed
the gamekeepers son and I

contrived their escape
and left us agape
the gamekeepers son and I

My comrade was angry
saying we shall go hungry
and glowered insurient at I

But I being keener
spied his misdemeanor
for he was rotund and not I

I fled the old woods
and our friendship for good
the gamekeepers son and those swine.

Martin Moore

The Breath

THE BREATH

Beneath the blackthorn bower
The fern fronds dance to gentle winds
And the tattoo of the summer rain.
Its sodden arches replete, drip
Onto the sleeping rock below and
Saturate its sphagnum mane.
A friendly robin rummages
Through the recently upturned earth
Under a contorted hazel tree
As temporary footprints form silently
Upon the moss and leaf strewn path
Then disappear with me
Falling again on the flat stone slabs
That forms the solid steps
A stairway to another flight.
The scene occurring within a single breath
Inhaling an awareness of being
Exhaling grim disquiet.

Martin Moore

The Decline Of Ballyvoole Forge

The decline of Ballyvoole forge

A misty grey, March morning light
Hangs above its breached and balding crown
Highlighting its hidden history buried beneath its fallen floors.
Abandoned, a casualty contrite
Its inner sanctum tumbles down
Beneath it's bombed out roof and battered wooden doors.

Its courtyard cobbles covered now
Its briar encrusted steps has nature claimed
The timeless footsteps muffled by the smothering soil.
Gone is the smithies sweating brow
The bellows and the molten flame
The walls remain as testament to a mason's toil.

A work of art within its walls
Its timber skeleton upright in the peat
I played no active part in its imminent decay.
The short lives spent beneath its stalls
Its lofty naked gables above the carnage at its feet
Its very function and intent now in dismay.

Two windowed eyes of shuttered red
Above its brick arch vaulted frown
Cry tears of quarried slate that still lie shattered on the verge.
It seems the very stones have bled
In unison the blood flows down
And strikes the mourning milk churns to perform a final dirge.

Martin Moore

The Hill

I drift beside the pure crowned homes
that hide behind the drifts
virginal capes on snow capped domes
loosed from clouded rifts

Lights lead me to lifes bottomland
my artistic decline
a frosted pallet, a frozen hand
an absent muse or sign

Thus if I wish to rise again
to battle through the slush
this hill will be my painting
and I, my own paintbrush

Martin Moore

The Old Oak Tree (Acrostic)

Tangled web of oaken limbs
Hold my memories
Entombed in acorn myth

Open your dream-like doors
Let my wanton wishes fly
Devoid of all incumbrance

Open your ancient arms
Above your crown of gold
Knitted in autumn patterns

Take them on your journey
Return when hope alights
Every fitful night of broken sleep
Every fearful hour inbetween

Martin Moore

The Old Rustic Gate (Acrostic)

Timbers gapped like old seafaring gobs
Hinges hang loose like old breeches
Ending your days as a thingamabob

Outdated and falling to pieces
Leaning and bending in weather conflate
Deteriorated and rotten

Rickety, ramshackle, rustic old gate
Unkempt, decrepit, forgotten
Shaken from times irrepressible force
Tattered and delapidated
Inactive and lacking in grace or remorse
Crumbling, windblown and aged

Gnarled like the features of mountainy men
A sad reflection, unsightly
Thus, you and I are equal, old friend
Ending our lives so contritely.

Martin Moore

The Phoenix

THE PHOENIX

He sees his faint reflection in dark water lochs
Magical mirrored puddles on a wet winter road
His disfigured face amongst the autumn debris mocks
From its sub-aquatic ultimate abode
In the obscure light at the blackened woodland verge
Darting with an awe inspiring azure flash
A startled jay and my unseen inner eye converge
And glimpse its flamboyant flight from ash to ash
A long dormant ash divest of summer clothes
In sweet suspended nakedness, its trunk defaced
And draped in constricting ivy underwear, exposed
Strangling its host to death in its embrace
He, at once, forgets the ephemeral liquid loach
Lip-locked to the shattered glass of his life
He watches the counter clocks, beneath the stones encroach
The hapless, helpless victims in their strife
He recalls instead, a vivid yuletide memory
Ricocheting round the canyon of his brain
Puts to rest, the rolling regrets and fantasies
Takes action, breaks the chain-reaction, the chain
The stippled rays of sunlight through the early woodland mist
Reveal the intricate arachnoid silken web
The tangled visible nets surrounding him, resist
And focus on a focal point, the step
Where black water flows momentarily white
Bright bubbling froth above and below the drop
Resumes its path through the undergrowth, contrite
Amidst the noble fir and lofty larch tree tops
The parched conifers, brown blemishes on pale skin
Submerged and insignificant for now will rise
From the shadows of surrounding verdant kin
A phoenix rising from the ashes of demise.

Martin Moore

The Rock Corpse Of Kilfarrasy

THE ROCK CORPSE OF KILFARRASY

On its broad Atlantic slab, the rock corpse lies
Steadfast, without motion.
Its body cold and drab, the seagull squabble flies
Silhouetted by the ocean.
The morbid ebb and flow reveal its generous girth
And chiselled features
Basking in its velvet glow, reflective of the earths
Myriad creatures.
At high tide his torso slides
And evening lays a cloud shawl around a fractured arm
Beneath the caesious skies.
The innocuous rise and fall keeps him from harm.
This trinity of rocks that may be viewed as one
From a point upon the pebbled strand
Vanishes and mocks, the mourners saline song
Shifting with synchronous sands.

Martin Moore

The Shadow

THE SHADOW

In intimate rings of tongue-tied tales
Through tender bracken stems
The shadow calls, its presence flails
Among such precious gems.
And further still along the dales
Comes to a sudden halt,
It lights a spark that never fails
The dark lord to exalt.
And climbs again through prickly gorse
And up the rocky glen
Its shadows seeking to endorse
The lack of strength in men.
It creeps among the ill at ease
And renders man a slave
They're duty bound, their lord to please
Within this dark enclave.
It rushes fog-like through the fen
And starts within, a fire
Teasing every nerve ending
And grating like barbed wire
Upon the very heart and soul
The essence of a man
And renders him in this dark hole
An empty, also ran.
United by a life devoid
Unnatural and lonely
The shadow helps to fill the void
And lift the mood, if only
For a day or two
It helps to pass the hours
Until reality shines through
And sweet deceit turns sour
The guilt, the hurt, the mounting debt
Come tumbling down like rain
The jangling nerves, the deep regret
The apologies again.
The promises, the heart-felt pain

Though life starts now anew
Above the shadow will remain
Waiting in the cue.
To re-embrace your troubled mind
As your defences lower
And like-wise, fellow revellers find
Delight in your dark hour.
As once again you join the flock
And drink the shadows curse
Retain your seat and watch the clock
Sure life could be much worse.

Martin Moore

The Vessel

THE VESSEL

I can hear its mute approach
This ruptured vessel.
The catalyst incognito.
The straining of the chain against its moorings
The noise, diluted by the water
Increases in intensity as the days pass.
By weeks end it is unbearable.
The scraping, grating on my mind
With the shifting sands of time.
Then something gives inevitably.
The anchor dislodges from the sea bed and sets me adrift.
Floating in an ocean of black and white
At the hands of Captain Morgan.
False promises cast overboard
Fading in the fathoms.
Each one a monument to failure.
The resolve of my enemy
The burden of my submission
The very strength of his hold over me
Shockingly familiar.
Unknowingly I am heading out to sea.
The finger grip of hope digging into my skull
Clawing at my drowning corpse.
Ninety four hours
Surviving in the surface tension.
Grasping at that life giving air.
Caught in a whirlpool of self-destruction
Poised at a portal to the underworld.
Sucked into the bowels of depravity
By that saline serpent.
Regurgitated at a time of its reckoning.
In the interim I am a Viking King on the high seas
My long boat sailing to Valhalla.
Ignorant of the misery my people suffer.
Dispersing wit to the waifs.
A peacock struts amongst the sluts
The bar flies and reed smuts of ruin.

I am drowning in this ephemeral display
This temporary false façade
A crutch to hold my crippled frame aloft
A time honoured persona
To cast out the pain within.
The hollow sound of this damaged vessel
Proves too much to contemplate.
Four whole repetitive days
Dancing round this slippery salacious deck
Cast from fore to aft and back
The salt spray tears like bullets on the bow
Cut my weak flesh and I bleed.
I fall hopelessly overboard and I am lost.

Carried on the bare backs of white horses
I am a driftwood drunk
Beyond all human help
The sharks snapping at my bare ankles
I float upwards from the underbelly of the dark ocean
I can see the light
Grasping feverishly I grab the dry raft of reason
And haul my crooked corpse aboard
I reach the deserted sands of sanity
As the dark clouds hang ominously overhead
I take a shameful walk on a burning shore
With absent accolades and bowed head
I find my faithful Friday
And cosseted in forgiving arms
I find salvation.

Martin Moore

The Viewing Point

THE VIEWING POINT

Between the spruce belt and heather haze
Is nestled the viewing point
Its cluttered margins and tarmac glaze
Are poised, eager to exploit
The ugliness and beauty of it all.
I can see from its empurpled slopes
The dancing seed heads of shaking grass
The narrow mountain path enrobed
By the peat covered muddy morass
Browned beneath the linnet's lyrical call.
The valley chokes with medite smoke
Hovering below the torturous climb
A self-propelled malevolent cloak
Meandering through space and time
A slight wind hoping to forestall
Or watch it permeate the vee
The reed, the rush, the silent hush
The flitting, humble, bumble bee
The singing thrush, the rivulets gush
A shroud over nature's banquet hall.

Martin Moore

The Yellowmen

THE YELLOWMEN

The frothy fingers of the wild Atlantic
With sodden, unfamiliar touch
Grip the wet rocks of the Clare coastline
In a frantic, violent dance
Unwilling partners in a dateless drama
Played out this summer's evening
On a sun-drenched Kilcloher bay.
Myriad rainbows are reflected
Between the spray and smoothed stage.
In the gallery, a crescent shaped memorial
Nine small, grey headstones
Echo a lonely requiem in the wind.
Absent word or sentiment
A dirge for forgotten dead
Victims of this barren headland
Strangers to Loop head.
No eulogies, no epitaphs, no names
Nine nameless markers for nameless men
Interred by a bridge on the bend of a road.
No shelter yet from unforgiving sea
The coastal wind, a sad refrain
A melancholy lament.
The vast ocean eyes
Cry salt tears on their memory.
To spend eternity thus condemned
One soul shy of ten
Lie homesick and unknown
In the grave of the yellow men.

Martin Moore

Through A Fish Eye

THROUGH A FISH EYE

My swollen home in constant flux, is flowing
Charged with its gravid December spate
Silt-laden, clay-coloured, ever growing
Expanding outwards through submerged floodgates.
I've abandoned my bountiful summer lies
Lost to the kings angry fluid strength
This unknown world through my fish eyes
My calm, habitual surroundings rent
The blinding waters filter through my gills
I strive for oxygen in alluvial mud
The molten banks without their summer frills
Guide me through this unrelenting flood
I try to find a quiet, unruffled eddy
Where, in abundance, evicted worms will land
Wait out the deluge, always at the ready
When piscine instinct will resume command.

Martin Moore

Truth

Time alone is precious spent
for it's only in this quiet hour
that our true nature's sad lament
can be revealed and overpowered
to shew sincerity itself
the daily mask can now be tossed
and placed upon the hidden shelf
to face the mirror image lost

Martin Moore

Undertow

UNDERTOW

That first drink drags me down
Drags me screaming back
Back down that old familiar track
Cursing and begging, please
On gravel encrusted knees
To where I'm happiest at least
In stupefied peace of mind
The world I leave resigned
My loved ones drop behind
Like skittles nonaligned
And I the wrecking ball
Watch my own downfall
The crumbling shaking wall
Collapses infecting all
The whirlpool, waterfall
Trapped in the undertow
Trying to let go
In frantic rhythmic throes
Beneath the turbulent flow
Oh human embryo
In violent vertigo
Released in secret tears
The music of the spheres
Silently appears
To grateful, weary ears
And helps to slowly steer
This wreck back to the pier
Where myriad volunteers
Allay my errant fears.

Martin Moore

Upon Waking

Here in this phantom photo-period of mid-sleep
Lies a wealth of raw material untapped
Larval poems pupate within the deep
Intrinsic monkey mind, trapped, handicapped

By this diapause, a half-life in torpor
Tasks not done, past mistakes to be undone
Trundling through this unveiled sleep disorder
You realise you're not the only one

To pace these lonely corridors at night
Lest a thought-child should remain unborn
Drown in the surface film of light
And vanish with the twisted wish of dawn

Scribble down some incoherent lines
That filter through kaleidoscopes of thought
Rhymes and rhythms, parameters, confines
Exasperated efforts come to naught

Sleeps triumphal chariot embossed
Another poet laureate is lost.

Martin Moore

Waiting

WAITING

Spring approaches
Everything is in readiness
Though the grass has not stopped growing
Through the mild winter long
The bird's dawn chorus
Fills the morning emptiness
And the roosters early crowing
Is irreverent birdsong

Winter passes
The earth heaves a sigh
Though the rain has not stopped falling
Through the mild winter long
Another storm flashes
In an angry blackened sky
January forestalling
With its sense of right and wrong

Snowdrops rising
From their dormant winter bed
Though the earth has not been frozen
Through the mild winter long
Almost emphasizing
With its virginal flower head
This moment has been chosen
For the seasons last swan song

Martin Moore

Within

WITHIN

It's within

A simple mussel on a single rock
In an ocean vast and grand
The torn spine of an upset currach
On a speechless, silent strand

It's within

A bovine huddle beneath weeping trees
A scrum of hide and misted breath
The frenzied flight of a honey bee
The skeletons dreaded dance of death

It's within

The pure petals of a fragrant flower
Or under the jungles canopy
In the panicles of the virgins bower
Or the passion flowers sweet panoply

A poem exists in sight and sound
Of every living, breathing thing
Reflected in a verse unbound
A bubbling thermal spring
Bursting forth and breaking ground
Encircling, enrapturing
The countless beauty to be found
The subtle magic that lies within.

Martin Moore

Woodstown

WOODSTOWN FRIDAY 13TH JUNE 2015

Sit a while on the dry golden sand
With the rocks at your back, you will feel
The raw strength of earth at your hand
The shifting grains beneath your heels.
A carpet of seaweed and shells remain
Settled, resting on the harbour shore
The moon has stolen the tide away
But will return with her encore
The white face of a pied wagtail bows
While feeding at the tidal line
The raucous calling of the crows
Drowning out the children's cries
See the liner trundling in
Returning from some foreign clime
Its precious cargo cloaked in tin
All dictated by the tide.
The beach front houses stand above
The grass of low lying dunes
Their silent haven built with love
Resounds with a different tune
The waters will return again
As evening draws to close
The strand becomes vacated, stained
By a thousand feet and toes.
As darkness cloaks this watery land
And peace returns to reign
A driftwood army in the sand
A soldier in every grain.

Martin Moore