

**Poetry Series**

# **Stephen Loomes**

## **- poems -**

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# **Stephen Loomes(21ST JUNE 1950)**

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# The Radio Metaphor

## THE RADIO METAPHOR

The doctor's practice required of him  
A visit to the Funeral parlour  
To certify a death before requiem  
To so progress to the coffin's vale  
Then upon the bench he saw  
The body of an old friend  
With breath no more  
It shocked him that this vital man  
Was now no more,  
His thoughts they ran  
The quick and the dead,  
It says it all  
The quickness gone, the grave awaits.  
What is that quickness that animates  
A human being and, each breath he takes  
Are we an almost infinite confection  
Of inert matter to human perfection?  
Is there a spirit which animates  
This cellular puppet for life on earth  
If so from when do these spirits radiate?  
A complex receiver, a splendid wireless set  
Which is animate from the spirit it gets  
Yet then is this traffic passing two ways  
We live and grow with passing days,  
Learn so much with memories replete  
So no man or woman is at any time complete  
Feeling, seeing, learning still,  
Till death's defeat.  
Is there concourse of what is learned and done  
Back to where the spirit was transmitted from  
As it informs our beating heart  
Do we in turn all our life impart?

Stephen Loomes

# Tuck

## TUCK

Each morning for my constitutional  
I'd ride my bike down to glorious Diggers Beach  
But when winter came, with its rainy pall  
I walked along the sand above the waves' reach.

Then on one of the coldest days a grey-haired man  
Came walking down Richmond drive  
No towel over his shoulder, black swimming shorts and tanned  
With flip-flop thongs he trod on by  
Amazed, I paused to watch and see his plan  
Then followed him to the southern end  
He put his thongs down neatly stacked  
Walked into the waves and dived straight in  
Stroking his way out to the back  
I wondered, was this an old commando  
This stoic apparently immune to cold and wind  
Having swum the length of the beach  
He walked back up the hill again.

After that there were many times he swam, I stayed  
Watching him pounding through the ocean's waves  
Trying to insure my amazement was not displayed.  
Curious, I asked a woman who lived down by the beach  
Who is this man who swims whether storm or chill  
It could be Tuck she told me, he always swims out of reach  
So I'd see him through the year but then for a long while  
This Tuck did not appear., I feared that he was ill.

One day when driving home I spied  
A grey-haired man pacing slowly along the road  
Pushing a short wheeled Zimmer frame  
It looked like Tuck and so I slowed  
Could this really be the mighty Tuck struck so lame  
How could the health diminish of one so quietly famed  
A week or so went by and I was pent with curiosity  
Then I met him on the highway hill, as he sat upon his frame  
I stopped and asked him do you need help offering generosity  
He waved his hand, said just getting my breath,

Then he said that he'd been ill  
They call me Tuck and what's your name  
I told him and he said, I'll be right young fellow  
I'm almost up the hill.

Stephen Loomes

# Vision Of Our Future

The movie makers and novelists  
Sell you their fear  
Because they can't see a way out  
So they project their fearful vision  
To fill the world with doubt  
Their imagined "future" is fearful myopia  
Their films, books and preaching, describe dystopia  
Whether it's Cormac on his road  
Hopeless mayhem and terror  
Or the religion's prediction of a "Second Arrival"  
While those with money plan their own survival  
Religions, movies and activists the same  
Creating a self-fulfilling future,  
While maintaining, that they're not to blame  
Meanwhile the world keeps on turning  
The saviour hasn't come, despite many occasions  
When most of the world has been burning  
If you are true to yourself, it is easy to see  
No human being knows what the future will be  
So why aren't the mind-shapers giving us hope  
Instead of surviving an apocalypse  
Let them, and us, envisage a new trope  
Where dismantling weapons and armies occurs  
When the script predicts a future without wars  
Paint a vision of caring for others  
As though they are sisters and brothers  
Tending gently with the earth  
Like we were cared for by our mothers

Stephen Loomes

# Your Journey Into Endless Night

Everything is incomplete  
Yet it's not all that you perceive  
Everyone is changing daily  
There is nothing you can leave  
Others look as if they've stopped  
Into a place of rest and peace  
You don't know what's in their minds  
When they are lying in their beds  
What they recall or they expect  
The thoughts inside their heads  
Things undone, chances lost  
Memories of times long gone  
Turn up each night, what a cost  
Even as you speak you change  
Into the future you, and so you must engage  
Be alert, that simple acts, not done in spite  
Will change the future over night  
Leave you grieving for all time  
Full of regret without respite  
Then the chasm, at the end  
When you, alone, despite a fight  
Subsume into an endless night.

Stephen Loomes

# What Used To Please Me, Doesn't Please Me Anymore

The things which used to please me  
They don't please me any more  
Pleasure which I used to feel  
Has gone away somewhere  
I used to ride my motorcycle  
Faster than the wind  
Like a madman on those wheels  
Now I've lost the need for speeding  
Way back around the bend  
Still I remember how it feels.

That brunette was so pretty  
With long and shapely legs  
I'd chase her morning till night  
Just to swoon with the sex  
We both lost that urgent plight  
Our love it sure was vexed.

Used to smoke that weed  
Got a habit I kept repeating  
Some LSD and speed  
Then drinking from a flagon  
But I never felt the need  
To go and chase the dragon  
Which made good people bleed  
Then depart on the funeral wagon  
I have not felt the need for unreality  
It no longer gave me pleasure  
To put at risk my sanity  
And disturb my senses' measure.

Every age as we go on  
Creates a cage where we belong  
In childhood seeking safety and a friend  
In youth chasing a love without end  
Raising children, making wealth  
Concern for others and their health  
Drifting oblivious into an older age  
Overcoming grudges or heartfelt rage

Remembering losses and some victories  
But now, the things you did are memories.

Stephen Loomes

# Too Good A Person

Don't present yourself as too good a person  
Because sooner or later your snivelling cowardice  
Might give you away or your greed or your passion  
A slip in your behaviour may reveal the artifice  
The things that you do are the things which betray.  
So keep your high self-esteem to yourself and no other  
Don't proclaim your worth and have little to say  
Most people are selfish and have little care for another  
Those who "do good" are often donkeys who bray  
If you mean well for a person and want no advantage  
Then do it quietly and expect nothing in return  
Most you help will begrudge you, and quietly take umbrage  
The gratitude of the noble will be all that you earn.

Stephen Loomes

# Money Beats Soul, Every Time

Money Beats Soul, Every Time  
These are not my words,  
The insight is that of the great bard, Jim Morrison  
Which preface my rhyme  
Was it said as a cynical line, thrown away  
I don't think so, he was too smart for that any day  
When he wrote, every word counted, he did it that way.  
Tell the disabled person begging in the street,  
That soul and belief will put you on your feet  
Tell the refugee whose children have nothing to eat  
Tell them that art, and love and the mysteries of the soul  
Will see them through to tomorrow, alive and whole  
Tell Arthur Rimbaud, one of Morrison's brothers in words  
That all you need to get on is work and perspiration  
He died a beggar, this jewel of a nation  
Tell that lie that's absurd  
Tell Van Gogh, though he had his brother  
To keep him alive, but there was no other to pay  
Now vultures pay millions for his copies of Millet  
Tell all the brothers and sisters alive in this world  
Turn your skills into money, never give art away  
And if it doesn't sell, go another way  
Because at this period on earth  
It's what you or your art is worth  
No-one gives a damn about the light in your soul  
Unless they can profit from you,  
They'll let you live on the dole.

Stephen Loomes

# My Last Day On Earth

My Last Day On Earth

In anticipation of my last day on Earth

I apologise to those whom I've wronged

For what that is worth

I don't ask for thanks from those whom I've saved

It helps them to forget me, when I'm in my grave

For years now I've known what a privilege is life

To take part in this wonder away from human strife

Is it luck where you're born and the place where you live

If so, it's a cruel lottery when you've so much to give

To those who really need it, and the rich have so much

The grief of the poor, shown on television but you can't reach out to touch

The miracle of human life, imagination and trust

The evil of some minds who've taken too much

The vainglory of the proud looking down on the crowd

The comfort enjoyed by the entitled and proud

Where confidence overwhelms talent and skill

And those with the most to offer are those whom we kill.

The violence in humanity courses like a wave

Throwing the innocent before them, where nothing is saved

Priests and other liars selling insurance for the grave

To those who have everything, while goodness is depraved

This world can be saved, one day at a time

Those who do harm to any other are committing a crime

Let the force of the oceans and the stars in their prime

Conquer the mean spirits, make all spirits sublime.

What is your spirit that resides deep within,

But a signal to matter that you're living in,

We're not here forever, we are visitors, that's all

So share all you have and give to this call

All weapons are obsolete in the world to become

No reason exists for the atomic bomb

Take all you guns and knives and be free

Stand on the shore and throw them in the sea

Say no more war to the warmongers who profit

So no to any human who speaks as a prophet

There is no human being who can speak for a god

It is us, who must be great and stand up to the flood

Which is greed, self-interest and dope

Stand forward, each one, as a new god of hope.

Stephen Loomes

# Let Me Take That Bag Off You

Here, let me lift that bag off you?  
Oh thanks fella, I've been carrying that  
For I don't know, thirty years.  
Well, it looked kinda' heavy so I thought  
That I might risk to interfere  
Now I'll take that old bag of yours  
And throw it into deep space  
It will travel forever, to eternity.  
Gee fella, I had a lot in that bag  
You know, my broken heart  
All my disappointments, and times too  
When I was to blame.  
Well, it's gone now.  
Yeah fella, I feel a lot lighter as I walk on  
No problem my friend.

Stephen Loomes

# Bird Songs

In the fog-filled forest of the night  
The crickets slowed their scratching calls  
For the great star sent its first light  
The sun appeared as earth westward rolls  
Nuclear fusion radiating heat and light beams  
Evaporates pools of black night into a soft-rising steam  
I awake early in the morning  
Eyes closed, against the growing light  
Climbing out of a dream  
I lay there yawning  
Listening to the songs as the birds take to flight  
A choir of joy to celebrate the dawning  
While all the forest creatures stir  
Shaking off sleep and secret dreaming  
To live again in this world we share.

Awake to a feast served through the senses  
The spectacle of life and change  
DNA works to rearrange  
Inert minerals into a strange secret marriage  
Creating the living; animals, forest and field  
Plants and flowers in endless range  
For each, a body and mind revealed  
In this world of plenty, space and grace  
A sky of deep-night black, and daytime blue□  
The company of other souls to share it too  
This brief time on a rocky sphere in space  
Shared by all the living who  
Include we passengers, the human race.

Stephen Loomes

# Life After Death

No one comes back from the dead  
No matter what any religion has said  
You see a dead kangaroo by the street  
Don't expect it to spring back to its feet  
Why, oh why is our time on earth so brief  
No matter what you do or think?  
Your death is as certain as your grief.  
Your rotting corpse will surely stink  
Under the ground, when the funeral's done  
Before too long, there'll be no one,  
To remember that you were the one  
Who came and fought and seldom won.  
So what meaning can I say remains?  
But to live and give to the living domain  
And strive to leave no one in pain  
Ensure your presence was not in vain.  
The love, the words, the things you leave  
May they bring comfort to those who grieve  
This is all the rational, need, to believe  
Not fanciful notions of life after death.  
Life does go on, but when dead, no breath  
Without this body and the brain on top  
When you leave this planet, for you, the party stops.  
There is no extraterrestrial place  
Just like there's no extraterrestrial race  
We're here alone for such a brief visit  
So you have a life, go on and live it.

Stephen Loomes

# The Great English Language

From the south of the British Isles to northern Scotland  
Where it's late Spring before the icecaps melt  
There lived a tough and rustic group of folk  
Whom the Romans called the Celts  
As their Legions imposed Roman rule by sword  
For 400 years following the birth of our Lord  
Ruling almost every British region  
Until retreat leaving just Latin and religion.

Between Belgium and the great North Sea  
Lived a Nordic race, the Angles and Saxons  
In search of better lands they took to sea  
The British Isles was their chosen destination  
Invading, then many a bloody battle won  
Taking cities, villages and all the land  
Speaking a foreign Teutonic tongue.  
So three Teutonic dialects across Britain spanned.  
In the north, Scandian-Germanic brogue  
And German-Mercian in the middle land  
In the south the Saxon was soon in vogue  
Replacing the remnant languages which remained;  
But the Midland dialect was spoken where  
The great Universities were proclaimed  
It was the speech in every London square  
Spoken by the Royals, the Courts and Lords  
These Mercian Teutonic midland words.

When Caxton's printing press arrived, anew  
Each book which came from this creation  
Was set in type with Mercian too;  
Wycliffe's Bible in translation  
Was read from the pulpit to the faithful herds  
Who unable to read, still knelt in salutation.  
Older expression elided by new English words.  
English language was born after a long gestation  
The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer  
Followed by many other fine books and translations,  
Spreading far and near, even beyond the nation.  
A jewel for expression for those to read or hear

Polished to a glittering gem by William Shakespeare,  
This gift of expression for child, woman or man.

Now this linguistic scaffold recorded in ink  
Gave form to whatever a writer could think.  
Then, explorers sailed from England's shores  
Claiming much of the world as their domain  
Returning with treasures which filled English stores;  
Yet whether they stayed or whether they went  
The English language would always remain.

Stephen Loomes

# Rinnie's Funeral

On that bright sunny day  
We sent Rinnie away  
Into the sky  
From the cremation fire  
Before that, while walking up  
She was waiting there  
With jutting mouth  
And exploding hair  
You drive the same car as me  
She said, her face full of care  
Is yours harsh on the road?  
Does she realise  
What the cortege are doing there?  
Apart from her own concerns  
Does she even care?  
We say no, ours rides fine  
I'm used to European cars she repines  
I'll have to drive yours, to compare  
We brush her away with "for sure, for sure";  
Walking to the chapel door  
The dead friend's family are grieving  
And we will miss Rinnie true  
But there's no priest, just a celebrant  
With a lisp and a giant ego too  
Like an actress feigning sincerity  
'twixt each eulogy she comes shining through  
With her "th's" for "s's" almost muffled  
And her apparent concern seeming true  
We ignore her bought imprecations  
And share in the photos now shuffled  
"Thay goodbye" is the celebrant's intonation  
Curtains cover the casket,  
The celebrant stands unruffled.

Stephen Loomes

# Magpie

By the way, he now has his sight  
Be blessed, even after the magpie attacked  
Going for his eyes  
To protect its nest.  
Meanwhile she watches her weight  
Defies her age to look younger  
To maintain the man's hunger  
To bed her, but there lies her hate  
She never liked sex and can't love a mate.  
She needs to judge the men she attracts  
Without mercy she ensures each careful cut  
She acts like, but isn't a slut  
Disingenuously, uttering, what about your wife?  
She can even pretend to have a real soul  
Her brain was long ago vexed  
Her lap is not for sex, no libido at all  
But she's learned to attract and promise it all  
As mad as she is this maintains her control  
Reapplying her lipstick and her heels she has scraped  
Sending her tensions to her irritable bowel.  
He was all over me like a rash, she bleats  
I felt I was being raped  
She complains, while wiping her face with a towel  
Then she puts on her makeup  
And invites another male to love her  
While watching her garden grow  
Where snakes slide and slither  
But restful sleep still eludes her  
Without pills she will wake  
Once rest is induced she can recover  
Lying in wait, like her garden's snake  
Inviting me, to the "come here show";  
I know you are weighed down by your own self-belief  
But we both know that what you've got,  
You got as a thief  
Even when you are so darn serious  
Your vanity can't acknowledge another person's genius  
Your insecurity buried beneath all that filched wealth  
Which you gathered so slyly with your maddening stealth.

By making men think they could enter your dried up old ditch  
Yet to anyone who knows you, you are just a funny old bitch.

Stephen Loomes

# The Vacuum Around Our Minds

You can't incline the world to your own desire  
However hard you cry to forces higher  
Belief in God precedes your prayer  
Sent with tears but no-one is there  
What force beyond that mind of yours  
Has ears to hear or even cares  
The world is vast, it's great and wild  
You wander through it like a child  
Seeking for a hand to hold  
Admit to silence before you're old  
The imprecations you make in your room  
Are projected into an eternal vacuum  
So stand alone, and look within  
What strength there is you had to begin

Stephen Loomes

# Horses In The Clouded Sky

Horses in the clouded sky  
Smoke drifts up from the ferment  
Noam Chomsky with his broken leg  
Hops to the fire in torment  
Bringing lamb chops and a hamster  
While Ras Putin taps the keg  
And Vlad Putin fries an egg  
Dancing to the sound of the murder  
Of Michael Holingshed  
Timothy Leary sails by laughing  
Now Admiral of the Golden Hind  
Inside the sacred Church there is gasping  
As the nuns of St. Fetish  
Brandish their personal candles in between their legs  
Genuflecting ecstatically to the power of rhyme  
Their priest fornicates the altar boys of the Parish  
Chameleon colours  
A fine sine qua non of dolours  
Will it ever stop?  
Asks the hypodermic hypocrite  
Arriving late for the sausage sizzle  
Broken dreams he spits  
A filament of yellow drizzle  
Lost, the urge for sexual experiment  
Gone, gone, gone exclaimed in loud lament.

Stephen Loomes

# Sigmund Schadenfreude

Anne Al-Retentive only thinks of herself  
Never letting go  
Although Rasputin sits below  
Upon a frozen shelf  
Onanising over his grievous necromancy  
Gone but not forgotten  
Catherine's salacious shaman showman  
Sanguine praetor with a whip  
Slow dancing with meat, gone rotten  
Salacious Gnostic sesquicentarian  
Peforming differential equations for the hip  
Who dabble in the semiotics of vegetarians  
Hobbling dactyl by dactyl, like an amateur  
To the versifying T.S.Elliot's limp iambic pentameter.  
He masks his obloquy with a Cyrillic soliloquy  
Like some parsimonius General Gatling  
Making dressed-pork bullets  
For the killing of Francisco Chopin  
Of the aubergine-robed sufi dotards  
Who are mending the border collie fractures  
Of the traditional Chinese medicine men  
In California, beneath the light of green flares  
While Sigmund Schadenfreude pretends  
To interpret their Tarot cards  
Acting. Cardinal-like as though he cares.

2/9/16

Stephen Loomes

# Marieke

She is forty, you know  
Dresses like Little Bo Peep  
A grey streak in her hair  
She beckons you near  
To tell you to go  
During this, Francis of Assissi sleeps  
Amidst a Band of Gypsies  
He has seen this kind of bird before.  
But Jim Morrison, raids the biscuit tin  
Out by the Zambesi, hungry, waiting  
For Martin Luther King  
Who appears, weeping  
With the infinite pain  
Of his bones, broken with rocks  
Bearing the stigmata  
From his Alma Mater  
The School of Hard Knocks  
In whose quadrangle a scaffold is ready  
Next to the long dracone  
Drugs filling its soft underbelly  
Near the forest of profusion  
Where the figs and eucalypts grow in line  
At the direction of the Plantation's scion  
With his pith hat placed with concision  
To appear as a perfidious helmet  
War-torn and hail fellow, well-met  
Peace-sewn beneath the doubtful brim  
And you, lent out on a dubious loan  
With him,  
Quite composed, and all alone.

1/9/16

Stephen Loomes

# The Royal Family

Aristotle's psychiatrist kicked  
The flying saucer  
Like a soccer ball  
Into the hansom cab  
Which slid past the priest  
Who calls  
The mullahs to prayer  
A god-worshipper kneels  
Before the miracle man  
Who squeals like a toddler  
All the meanwhile, the farmer  
And the curry merchant  
Give fodder, to the sacred cow  
Surfing above  
The ancient house  
Just next to where the planes land.  
The swirling ballerina slips  
On the banana skin of reality  
Inside the docks, where ships  
Submit to the mantis cranes  
Unloading doubt, with alacrity  
Officers nail edicts of the Pope  
To golden chains  
Hanging around the necks  
Of convicts  
Marching to the drum of yesterday  
Bearing flags in bright array  
Through their serried ranks  
Remnants of clothes, which once adorned  
Forgetful rams, that had been de-horned  
And whose legs had been sold as lamb shanks  
To the Royal family whose lips  
Are tinged with the blood  
Of their subjects  
All now crushed by army tanks.  
A gory scene, which pleases most  
The King and his royal hosts  
Such as the Duke,  
Who now boasts

To the lower classes  
To whom he toasts  
Muttering, you must forgive us  
Looking as his mirrored sunglasses  
Reflects the image of Narcissus.

1/9/16

Stephen Loomes

# The Field

A soldier drops on the field  
Wounded, waiting for death  
Stuttering, his last immortal words  
With his failing breath  
Comrades crouch by his side  
Braving for a time, the fusillade  
While the attackers move in  
Until it is time to decide  
To move back with him  
Or leave him there to die  
While their own limbs are intact  
But their thinking is blown to dust  
Falling mortars force them back to their trenches  
Though it means leaving him, they must  
So, this is The Field, the central feature  
Of Krisna's words to Arjuna  
In the Bhagavad Gita

Stephen Loomes

# Jim Morrison's Literary Genius

The Literary Genius of Jim Morrison

Take one of his song lyrics  
The cars hiss by my window  
It seems so simple but  
There are tricks  
How do you describe a car, going  
Past your window?  
Driving, rushing, cruising, racing  
And near which window  
Does it go?  
The use of hissing, is not for show  
It describes both movement and sound  
One verb giving each  
And the sound is  
"Like the waves down on the beach"  
And which room is this?  
A bedroom, because  
The girl beside him, is "out of reach";  
The window transmits the hiss  
But also the light upon his wall  
Of the headlight of a passing of car  
But in his thoughts he is heard to call  
To this lady, who does not hear him at all.  
Then the window "trembles  
With a sonic boom";  
And we learn it is a "darkened room";  
The girl he has beside him  
She is, "Out of reach";  
And so cold it will "kill you";  
On this evening of gloom.

Stephen Loomes

# Black Hole

At that moment, which  
Wasn't at all  
Pure energy erupted through  
A particular point which became  
A particular place from which  
It all got so big, racing through  
The multidirectional fishing net  
Of sub-atomic bosons' infinite fibre  
Making matter, so said Professor Higgs  
Now confirmed at the Hadron collider  
So the 'big bang' was really the other side  
Of a black hole in the universe of dark matter  
Through which endless trillions of tons  
Of dark matter drawn by gravity to collide  
Through this growing universe of atoms  
Exploding forever as it created our universe  
And in turn creating its own black holes  
Feeding back into the dark matter, obverse  
Time, space and time brought into being  
In micro seconds cascading into aeons still growing  
Endless dimensions so vast and multiplex  
So that human conception is set bowing  
With the knowledge of the universe flowing  
In a way which is so complex  
That it dwarves all knowing  
An explosion of energy raced from the singularity  
Captured by a multi-directional net of Higgs' bosons  
Reducing energy into matter the fabric of our plurality  
Almost 14 billion years before  
Edwin Hubble peered back in time  
At Pasadena on Mt. Wilson  
Looking at the spectrum of light  
At the galaxies he saw  
Accelerating the expansion  
Shining from the past  
Through the Californian night  
He theorised at last  
That the galaxies were moving fast  
Away from each other expanding space

Creating the world which we call our place  
Thirteen billion years to assemble life  
From lightning striking the primordial soup  
Assembling desoxyribonucleic acid into  
A biological loop which could copy itself  
Then the cleaving of a sexual divide  
Now male and female replication  
For the intertwining of DNA  
Leaving behind genetic cloning  
Fomenting molecular diversification  
Again and again inevitably leading to  
Fish in the oceans and plants on the shores  
Until one such creature began to explore  
The land and its wonders so that animals evolved  
And our first ancestors, the reptiles, multiplied  
And were able to remain and so developed a cortex  
Which was the first block of our brain  
In each of us the reptilian thinking resides  
So theorised MacLean in his writing speculatively  
That our species-typical instinctual ways  
Came from the reptilian complex of the triune  
The source of aggression, dominance, territoriality  
And from this comes our ritual displays  
Till the reptiles evolved and our ancestors  
The great apes developed the second layer  
Septum, amygdala, hypothalamus, hippocampus  
And cingulated cortex, the limbic system  
Allowing motivation and emotion defining us  
So our thinking, feeding, reproduction  
And the parental rhythm.  
Lead to the development of human culture  
With a mutation creating Mitochondrial Eve  
The mother of all mothers from millennia back  
And into the future  
She passed on the neo-mammalian structure  
Overlying the reptilian and limbic organic computer  
Allowing speech and language, abstraction and perception  
With the advent through her, of the cerebral forebrain  
All of us now, evolving our ways on this 'Goldilocks' planet  
Where it's not too hot, and not too cold  
Water, oceans and an atmosphere conducive to inhabit  
So we, for hundreds of thousands of years have evolved

But without memoried culture and learning involved  
Which we in our parenting strive to impart  
Our children would be like 'Wild Jim'  
100 thousand years apart  
From what culture and learning give each child  
From the start  
What we can now do with our human mind.  
But with abstract thought came the thought  
Of why I am I here and what is the purpose  
A conception of being alone in the Universe  
And the belief that one's existence could all be for nought  
And in the fertile valley of doubt came the convincing supposers  
Who spread their ideas that offered the answer  
Giving the world religion which grows like a cancer  
Giving comfort to some but at a price so great  
It turns people against each other and justifies hate.  
We pass on not just the planet but a world of the mind  
At first dominance produced  
The most successful kind  
The reptilian instinct with mammalian stealth  
Gave the new offspring power and wealth  
But now we live by a new set of rules  
We use and live by technology very few understand  
No longer trading things of use like clothing or food  
Long ago losing barter which has departed for good  
Now we must have money for sustenance and land  
Reduced to a life dictated by fools  
Controlling resources using other humans as tools  
So all is subordinate to this ideology  
Money is the key to health and prosperity.  
Can this be changed to a world more benign  
Of course it can change and it needn't be divine  
First we must realise that we are alone in space  
There is no kindly extraterrestrial race  
If you want to have God, then there is only one  
And it is the same from each Religion  
So however you worship and choose to profess  
You must understand your god is the same one  
As the rest  
Next your acquisitions, which you hoard like a snake  
Must be shared with the world, so each gets a take  
Your flashing serpentine attacks must be stilled by your reason

Nothing justifies killing or harming any person  
And long before the advent of religion  
It was known that to be true  
That you should do unto others  
As you would have them do by you  
I am not a mystic, I don't accept all that fuss  
Superstition is like religion  
It does nothing for us  
But one thing I reckon you can count on as true  
Is nothing is so dense or merciful  
As the veil hiding the future from you  
Each of us can make the future what the future will be  
We need to care for each other  
In this outpost of Eternity.

Stephen Loomes

# The Train

God knows when the train will come  
Said the man on platform one  
Worry carved upon his smile  
The train rattled into view  
He's thinking, some people throw their seed  
Others he thinks, sew their seed  
But this man, had another need  
Long and lonely he traced the line  
Leaning to the window  
Peering at the streets  
Disappearing to his past  
With nowhere on the station sign  
Strange houses, sidings sliding fast  
Gone like old smiles, in photographs

His destination had no time  
Into the night the carriage creaked  
As he folded into restless sleep  
Dreaming of his family's faces  
His stamp upon his children's eyes  
And as he sleeps his soul cries  
He rolls, then starts, down on his knees  
The train shakes, the window shows darkened skies  
But he cannot speak of what he sees.

Stephen Loomes

# Dancing Into The World

He danced into the world  
Like a sinking ship  
They crowned his head with emeralds  
His crystal mind it glowed with colours  
Borrowed from the distant stars  
And beat up from a motor shop  
They crossed the seas  
That bound them up  
Becalmed like a dog on heat  
That howls inside an empty shop  
While clever tongues  
Wrap and fold the meaning  
They say was told  
Oh tell me tales of misty seas  
And galleons that plunder gold  
Ride me to your shallow loft  
Give politics an honest tongue  
Show mercy to the weak and young  
Fighting in the classrooms cold  
With the young you mould the old.

Stephen Loomes

## After Bhagavad Gita 9

The King did utter from his throne  
When all but dying breath  
Of life  
Was gone  
My subjects find their strength in me  
But in them  
I can find none.  
Though mighty winds rest  
In vast space  
When night descends on each one's face  
They will return into this place  
It is through me the Kingdom comes  
But a King, to his Kingdom  
Does not belong.  
I watch the drama from my tower  
And few below can see my face  
And all they do is done in vain  
They live inside a night of pain  
But those who know me,  
Love me, wherever I might reign.

Stephen Loomes

# Graven Idols

Every word sounds like a prayer  
She echoed with her silver stare  
He watched the sun inside her hair  
But he couldn't touch her  
Because, she wasn't there.

Oh, what graven idols  
Memory does possess  
What tombstones of hopelessness.

One day a vision did appear  
Of the person in the mirror  
Proud with badges of the wise  
And wealthy with a golden prize  
But it was a machination  
Distraction from imagination.

Oh what graven idols  
Imagination does create  
But how does it relate  
With today?

Green the grass, and blue the sky  
And take the image  
From my eye.

Stephen Loomes

# Precious To Our Selves

We are precious to our own selves  
We see life unfolding  
In the cinema of our own minds  
That part we play, the hurts we feel  
The quest for love  
The need which binds  
The place where it is acted out  
So real. So real  
But moving fast  
The love we feel, and now remember  
The cold, the heat  
The pain, surrender  
Oh what is life, this great parade  
Of figures moving past our lives  
Of striving, study, learning, falling  
Drinking, smoking following our calling  
Alone we watch in this cinema so vast  
And then we question  
How long we will last  
And what will we leave behind  
Or else we're injured and stumble blind  
Into the future betrothed at last  
Married to death and the thoughts of the past.

Stephen Loomes

# Have A Good Time While You Are Here

You're leaning  
Against a railing  
It's 500 metres down  
You're thinking  
About something  
An earthquake splits the ground

You're falling  
Past the outcrops  
Down towards the land  
Just then  
You think of something  
Staring at the back of your hands

Now you are flying  
No longer falling  
Not awake but in a dream  
Now you  
Can do something  
Anything you can comprehend

You are lying  
In a bathtub  
Relaxing in the foam  
When everything  
In your attention  
Flattens like paper  
To two dimensions

It is thin  
The brittle membrane  
That wraps reality inside  
One blow  
And it is bleeding  
This cocoon in which you hide

Exploding fear  
Beyond controlling  
Sends you running from that space

Just stop  
Let it take you  
And terror will turn to grace.

There is no ticket  
To this lifetime  
You don't know  
What put you here  
No one tells you  
When you will be leaving  
Remember! Have a good time  
while you're here.

Stephen Loomes

# First Crush

My first childhood love  
A beautiful person  
From Heaven above  
And a musical family  
Taught her the score  
And she was so precious  
That she fell on the floor  
It was then she was taken  
To a building so old  
We walked in the gardens  
But the place was so cold  
I looked at her eyes  
Staring and blank  
And wondered what had happened  
To a girl of first rank.

Years later I met her  
A bandaged dear soul  
Fighting to recover  
Before she grew old  
I hoped she still had  
The innocence within  
Which made her a lady  
With such a thin skin

Over years I kept in touch  
From now and then  
As she graduated with honours  
And fostered her kin  
As life thickened her skin  
She learned many lessons  
Which I never could  
And I just hoped her heart  
Hadn't hardened to wood

And now when I see her  
She has such a smile  
I hope all the while  
That she's not got too hard

From rebuilding her soul.

Stephen Loomes

# Is It Cold Where My Brother Lies?

Is it cold where my elder brother lies?  
No, it is cold here in the world of lies.

Who cares when a soldier dies?  
The grave replies, his wife, and brothers,  
And very few others.

But who sent him to fight  
In a foreign land?  
Someone who remains alive,  
His future well-planned  
A coward who never loosed a round  
Or shivered as mortars fell to ground.

And who had the power  
I want the truth?  
A member of parliament,  
Self-interested whores  
Sent the bravest of our youth  
Draining their lives blood  
To spend it on wars.

What effect did the battles  
And the killing he'd done  
Have on his life?  
It broke his gentle spirit,  
His aspect so fair  
And took away his life  
And left him a cripple  
In the care of his wife.

Stephen Loomes

# Plato And Palladas On Love

Plato was right  
At least in part  
In his Symposium  
As humans, we are  
Half of a soul  
Looking for union with another  
But I agree with Palladas  
That Plato was wrong  
About the existence of a spirit  
We all die  
Like swine in the abattoir of death  
What does that mean?  
But exalt in life, now  
While you have breath.  
While we live, we seek our other half  
But so many,  
Consumed with selfish desire  
Thwart any chance of finding love  
And live so alone  
On the edge of our lives  
But for those who can give  
And can feel empathy  
For another soul, alone  
In this eternity  
Who can yield and find a partner  
For their lives, there is peace  
And love and  
A quenching of the existential fires  
Whether that love be a woman  
Or a man.

Stephen Loomes

# Cappadocia

Cappadocia, the Silk Road  
The tawdry side-show of Goreme  
Everything is squeezed  
And planned for making money  
Who can blame them?  
Steeped in thousands of years of struggle  
Wars, mired in religion  
Chained to the ideas of a man named Mohammed  
Inch'allah and the Devil take the hindmost  
The monoliths, chiseled by time  
Religion, crime and history  
Stare down at the struggling hordes  
Bearing their unique colons full of waste  
While the hot-air balloons glide above.

Stephen Loomes

# Unhappy Souls

Unhappy within themselves  
They become irritable  
Disappointed with those around them  
Quarrels erupt  
The air is poisoned  
Others are drawn in  
Anger pervades  
Such is the world  
Inhabited by these  
Unbalanced souls  
Wreaking havoc  
When the mood takes them

Stephen Loomes

# The Great Bob Dylan

From the cold steel of Hibbing  
The son of Beattie and Abe  
Robert Allan they named him  
Their beloved babe  
Who grew up in the forties  
Went to school like you and me  
Looked like a normal kid  
As he grew to his destiny

Played with his band as school did recess  
Then off to University  
While he listened to songs  
From the Library of Congress  
That spoke of America's history  
And though he left his studies  
To go on the road to New York  
Few people who knew him  
Saw how hard he could work  
To get the strings twanging right  
Crafting words with a concision  
That kept him awake  
Through the night  
As he sculptured his vision.

In New York he suffered  
But it wasn't for long  
With guidance from the Irish boys  
To help him along  
Then signed up with CBS  
For the eponymous album  
And few people heard  
No initial success  
Though other artists were watching  
Seeing him break free from the herd  
And he just kept on writing  
Singing his tunes as he led  
Metamorphosising like lightning  
Admitting he needed a dump truck  
To unload his head

You saw him on the cover  
With his girl Suzie Rotolo  
Looked like a normal man with his lover  
But this man was a Shakespeare  
And there would never be another.

An icon to artists like Lennon and Hendrix  
A beacon to generations who copied his look  
While others like Cohen worked from his book  
So many false Bobs who thought they knew his tricks  
You could see Bob Dylans everywhere  
Wherever you looked.

There was only one, that's originality  
Who talked of darkness at the break of noon  
All night girls and it aint me  
Where the cape of the stage once had flowed  
And Shakespeare in the alley  
The hand made blade, the child's balloon.

How lucky are we, to live in an age  
Where we can see our own bard  
Up on the stage  
What can we give to this voice of our age  
For the vision, rhymes and melodies  
Except to give thanks and realise  
His gift to eternity..

Stephen Loomes

# A Gentle Man

## A Gentle Man

What a pleasure it is  
To meet a gentle man  
Someone whose eyes  
Do not confront you  
Whom you sense  
Will understand.

He may not be your brother  
Just someone passing  
In the street  
But you know  
He's kind to women  
And he won't  
Knock you off your feet.

Someone who is kind  
To children  
Who is slow  
To take offence  
A man who has lived his life well  
And dealt with its events.  
22nd May 2015

Stephen Loomes

# Miracles

There are no miracles which you can implore  
Only the miracles that you ignore  
Your sight, the light, your wife and child  
The husband caring, strong and mild  
The creation of life for your care and nurture  
Hope for things to come in the future  
An innate sense of right and wrong  
In all human beings before religion came along  
Language and meaning shared between souls  
Music which arcs understanding all over the world  
The planet we share, its existence so rare  
That though we call out through the universe  
No others are there.

Stephen Loomes

# The Dog In The Yard

Looking out the window  
Because of the barking  
I see a small backyard  
And a terrier pacing up and down  
Jumping at the door  
Trying to look inside  
At this terrace in the middle of town.

A bird lands on the clothes line,  
A little sparrow who spots the dog  
Flies down near the ground  
Then back to the line  
As he gets the dog's attention  
And he jumps towards it  
In a state of tension  
But the bird is fine.

The bird does this for a while  
And the dog never gets near  
But the bird is having fun  
And flies up and down  
Without any fear,  
The dog darts around in a run  
The bird has his fun  
and moves along  
And the dog  
Tired from the run,  
Goes back to the door  
And jumps up on its hind legs  
To see if anyone is there.

No, they've gone to work  
And they don't want him  
Eating their shoes and cushions  
Or worse, crapping or pissing  
So his day is a long boring wait  
For his owners to come back  
And let him inside for a feed  
A pat, and a lie down

## Near the stove

In this little house, in this  
Great big town, where houses  
Cost more than a farm  
So the dog lives in two rooms  
And a yard,  
Day after long day  
And never does any harm.

Stephen Loomes

# When A Person Becomes An Idea

## WHEN A PERSON, BECOMES AN IDEA

If someone is no longer near  
And when you parted  
Love was not returned  
They might become an idea  
Which you carry in your brain  
As the reality of their presence  
Starts dimming and is unclear  
Their shape gets glowing edges  
As they form into an idea  
If you and that lover are now apart  
You do not see them weary-eyed  
Or hear them when they fart  
As the great bard Shakespeare  
In his Sonnet 130 speaks  
'And in some perfumes is there more delight,  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.'

Stephen Loomes

# The Shrine

## The Shrine

You were feeling quite alone  
When you saw the milling crowd  
Showing great excitement  
You joined them shouting loud  
As the statue was erected  
For the one who had just died  
All thought he was a deity  
Who would live for evermore  
Not one could accept the frailty  
So by the crowd he was deified  
And who could have known  
As daily you worshipped and adored  
Giving all your silver and gold  
To spread the idol's fame abroad  
Of magical powers many stories were told  
With which the figure was endowed  
Each day you knelt and felt divine  
You believers looked down upon the crowd  
Yet the ideas round the statue  
On which you'd projected all your hope  
Began to crumble and unravel  
Like a tired old anchor's rope  
The days passed and few would travel  
The magic rays which once flew about  
Descended into shadows off hopeless loss and doubt  
And fallen bricks marked the passage of time  
Even you began to doubt that the edifice was divine  
And on the final days you went to worship  
No one else came to join you at the Shrine.

Stephen Loomes

# The Nazarene

Everyone is fighting,  
Within their psyche's envelope  
They each, have a cross to bear  
The Nazarene is a teacher of hope  
If we listen with care  
He tells us to love our enemies  
That yoga unique and profound  
Otherwise our hatred and enmities  
Stick on us like wounds  
Not infecting our perceived tormentors.  
This concept is not easy  
How can we truly grasp its meaning  
Sometimes it can appear ludicrous  
If you conjure the image of a callous killer  
And his victim loving him.  
One day I hope to understand forever,  
Until then I content myself with a  
Limited application.  
I do not mean to cast too much doubt on the precept  
However.

Stephen Loomes

# Cancer

Cancer

Disease and Age settle old scores,  
Without the intervention of a revengeful hand,  
The slighted lover with hooded eyes,  
Herself, bent by Times hourglass' last grains of sand  
Forgets betrayal and the memory of the lies  
Of her old lover who gasping is grasping her hand,  
As cancer readies his being for the far land  
From which our prayers receive no replies.

Stephen Loomes

## Pollination Of The Orchid

The insect is drawn to the female's behind  
It is actually the flower of an orchid it finds  
But it mounts it and mates as the pollen gyrates  
And clings while as suitor convulsively grinds  
It is the female's role to attract  
It is nature's contract, and the male has nothing to find  
Beyond his blind quest, which feathers the nest  
Leaving offspring from pollen behind.

Stephen Loomes

# Evil's Father

If you wonder "is there evil";  
In this world, not the hereafter  
Then find out about Adolf Hitler  
For he was evil's Father

How can we comprehend  
That this silly failed artist  
Would take millions in command  
And execute the rest  
He drilled down to the serpent core  
Of the human mind  
And oversaw  
Fomenting hatred everywhere  
Of his human family he did abhor  
And in every group of human stock  
There are those who will evil unlock  
Who happily accept gun and rank  
To submit those they call the lower rank  
So Hitler fathered many satans  
Not just in Germany but other nations

Never forget that evil lives  
Inside the minds of those who give  
Themselves to hatred  
Removing mercy from their core  
Destroying families ever more

Do not forget the cries of the Jews  
The gypsies, slaves, his critics too  
The soldiers who in battle fell  
To rid the world of human evil.

Stephen Loomes

# When Shakespeare Wooed Amelia Lanier

Emilia Oh you've come and was it to your liking?

William Envy those jacks that nimble leap, to kiss the tender inward of thy hand.

Emilia More poetry from Mr. Shakespeare, you need not be jealous of the keys (putting her hand forward) , you may kiss my hand.

William (Taking her hand tenderly and kissing it) Emilia, may I tell you that you are beautiful and that in the instant I saw your dark eyes I was changed forever?

Emilia You do not need my permission to declare yourself so, but it is at your risk sir, for I am married to another man.

William And I dear Emilia, am alike married and so we are alike.

Emilia Like is not enough dear Mr. Shakespeare.

William Will you join me at the Mermaid for some ale and food?

Emilia You are persistent against all odds.

William With you I don't know when to stop.

Emilia I spare your misery and join you, it would be uncharitable not to assist a man in such distress, and yet I thought the doctor would cure you.

William Fear I have a complaint that is beyond medicine.

Emilia Trust that I am not the source of your present discomfiture Mr. Shakespeare.

William It is Will, if I may, Emilia.

Emilia Will it is, and will in overplus when it comes to pursuing a lady.

William Not any lady Emilia, just you.

They leave together.

(the light fades on the stage and the scenery is replaced with a four post bed in which when the light returns lie our two lovers)

Emilia Will you make me a lady William?

William Dear Emilia I will give you everything I own but we both are married and have last night broken our bed vows.

Emilia My husband has gone and I know not if he will return.

William My wife waits upon me at Stratford and I am foresworn not to divorce, it cannot be.

Emilia Then you have used me sir, as the Lord Chamberlain Hunsden has done putting me with child and then marrying me to a minstrel in his keep. The same minstrel who faithless, in turn, left me alone with my child.

William I will not leave you alone nor ever see you go without Emilia but I cannot give you what my faith will not permit.

Emilia Last night you gave me more than your faith would permit to either of us.

William It's true but I am at fault, none of it is yours and I will not ever let you condemn yourself for my faults.

Emilia I know your faults before you know them yourself Will Shakespeare.

William What are you saying?

Emilia I also know your strengths, I have been in your audience many times before you were in mine.

William Then you know my plays?

Emilia Yes and through your plays I have come to know some of you although I was duty bound when I attended to pretend allegiance to my Lord Chamberlain Hunsden who took me; but now I know some more of you.

William And do you like me?

Emilia I would say I like you but need we discuss what we can say without speaking?

William I suppose not, but....

Emilia No, Will, there is nothing to discuss unless it is poetry. I write too.

William What have you written?

Emilia It is called Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum and it is prefaced with warnings about men disposed to evil who though being borne of women do like vipers deface the wombs wherein they were bred.

William Why so harsh an admonition.

Emilia You would only ask that because you are a man, do you understand that women are made to suffer needlessly because of the insensitivity and careless lust of men?

William But for my family, a woman has been the Queen of suffering! Elizabeth has murdered my uncle. You write of hailing the God who is king of the Jews but what of God who is king of the Catholics?

Emilia I am a Venetian Jew so am inured to what your family would consider fresh injury but the domination of women precedes even the persecution of the Jews and long predates this Queens persecution of Catholics.

William It is too solemn, let me change the issue? Will you write poetry for me?

Emilia No, you can write poetry for me and I will write music for you.

William (Reaching out for her in the bed and cuddling her down under the covers)  
Well let us work on our first compositions my beautiful Amelia. (they laugh)

(Light fades on the lovers.)

Stephen Loomes

# Viktor Frankl, Mans Search For Meaning

Guiding us all through endless night  
A student of Freud, a genius too  
Hated by the Nazis  
Because he was a Jew  
Imprisoned for years  
He longed to be free  
Five years, what a test of his psychiatry.

In Auschwitz he mixed  
With German and Jew  
Jehovahs, Gypsies  
Where survival each day  
Tested all that he knew.

He learned about mankind  
And found two basic strands  
The decent and indecent  
Whatever their lands

The prisoners who turned Capo  
And betrayed their friends  
The German who risked life  
To make some amends  
He talks of the Jews  
At liberation time  
Who asked the allies to pardon  
The Commandant for his crimes  
Because of the compassion  
He showed to them over time

He left when the Allies opened the gates  
And all of the inmates with wonder they shook  
The hands of the soldiers who saved their dire fate  
In his mind Viktor had already  
Written his book.  
He called it Logotherapy,  
Mans Search for Meaning  
Where Freud saw that sex  
Was what drove us on

He said we need meaning  
To feel we belong.

He spoke of the see-saw  
Between living and dying  
Of Thanatos and Eros  
Within each human mind, vying  
To kill us or save us  
Whatever the cost  
And he said, if we have no meaning  
The battle is lost.

Stephen Loomes

# Wage Slaves

## WAGE SLAVES

The wage slaves, hating their jobs!  
We only do it for the money!  
Back in the lift after the cigarette;  
On the street  
Where an elderly stately woman  
Cranes her head  
From the comfort of her leather seat  
As her beloved husband reverses  
Into the traffic, then glides the Mercedes  
To the pedestrian crossing, waiting  
For the youthful parents, cigarette in hand  
Kids in tow, unemployed, poor, hating  
Judging the comfort of wealth.  
Cranky, perennially, at no rhyme or reason  
What do anyone's judgments matter  
Whether they curse or flatter?  
We carry the world in our head  
As we travel into the future  
Till the end of our season.  
We move through space and time  
With cohorts, friends enemies and lovers.  
What we learn we end up forgetting  
Except the wounds or kindness which lingers.  
Entropy consumes the relics of our constructions  
And the shame of our sometime destructions  
When death which taps out our hours  
Takes us into the abyss of no-escape  
Which we face alone, on life's windy cape

Stephen Loomes

# A Ride On My Suzuki

Might go for a ride on my Suzuki  
It's a 'gixxer' one thousand  
And you know that it is alive  
Not many can beat this Suzie K5

Here in Coffs Harbour  
With a beach down the street  
And hills growing bananas  
Life is almost complete  
But with a bike in the shed  
It's white and it's blue  
There no more you need  
Believe me its true.

I am going to ride up Bruxner hill  
Where the bananas all grow  
Through the tight little corners  
With the farms down below  
That bike sure can travel  
In a straight line it flies  
Faster than birds can take to the sky

Up this mountain road  
The corners are great  
But look out for gravel  
Before it's too late

At the crest of the hill  
Out of the cornering motion  
Glance back down behind  
At the blue Pacific Ocean  
Then on through the forest  
Its moist and pure air  
But it's damp on the corners  
Slow up and take care  
Then out through the meadows  
Along Max's straight  
The front wheel it lifts  
Then before it's too late

Through the gears with quick shifts  
Foot and lever, engine revving, brakes on  
Pulling up at the corner  
Of the Bucca junction.

Stephen Loomes

# Johann Sebastian Bach

On 21st March 1685  
In Germany at Eisenach  
Elizabeth and Johann had a son  
They named Johann Sebastian Bach  
His family tree flowered 38 musicians  
All talented, but Sebastian was the one  
Whom Schumann said is owed by music  
What religion owes to Christ in heaven  
When young, his father taught him  
His mother died when he was seven  
When he was eight, next, his father fell  
So he went to live with his older brother  
Johann Christoph, who gave him lessons  
Which he had learned from Pachebel  
No sooner had he learned a piece  
Than he would ask Christoph for another  
At fifteen he went to Luneberg  
To St. Michael's school as a chorister  
He'd walk 30 miles to Hamburg  
To hear Reinken and the Opera  
One night without a penny  
Tardily, for the walk home preparing  
When from a window high above  
someone threw out a herring  
Starving he picked it up, for something to eat  
And in its flesh were two gold coins  
So he walked on down the street  
And that money was a blessing  
He not only bought a meal just then  
But it gave him the resources  
To go back to Hamburg for concerts again.

At eighteen he was a master of the organ  
And also the violin, and so his fame began  
He was appointed organist at Arnstadt  
A master of composition, and only a young man  
The music from him flowed, but beyond the Church  
Little of his work was known, and on his death  
A few cantatas by his followers were published

And little else was known, it seemed the fashion  
Had moved on, and his treasures almost vanished  
Yet fifty years later in Vienna, Mozart heard  
And started playing Bach's motets  
Around the world of music was sent the word  
So Johann's legacy was restored  
Published far and wide,  
And orchestras across the globe  
Now play his work with pride  
I love the Brandenburg Concertos  
Opening with the violins playing the theme  
Then the subtle figure of the oboe  
The bass line joins the scheme  
As the music transcends language  
And soars as a beatific hymn  
And everyone can share the joy  
This music brings within.

Stephen Loomes

# Our Meteor

Our meteor is spinning  
Towards a certain doom  
We live upon its surface  
Some people call it home  
The scholars  
Who should know these things  
Suspect we are alone  
Yet keep watch with their telescopes  
In case they might be wrong  
The one thing they are sure about  
Is the impact won't be long  
So knowing that it cannot last  
We the living should be aware  
It is only us, alone in space  
For each other we should care  
Yet this is not always the case  
While some of us exploit the weak  
And live like palaced royals  
Others roam about in packs  
And pick up on the spoils  
Loving kindness still lives on  
In the hearts of those who've learned to love  
They will care for those who lack  
Still many are marched off to war  
While their leaders are sitting back  
Fighting over land or wealth  
Ignoring the suffering everywhere  
Or killing for a belief in something  
Which really isn't there  
So who are they we should reverent  
As this rock shoots on through space  
Towards this final event?  
It is those who care for others  
Upon them alone we must depend.

Stephen Loomes

# Arrivederci Roma

Arrivederci Roma  
(sung with Perry Como's Croon)

I leave a dirty Roma  
Gypsies at the station with offers of aid  
Hand out, waiting to be paid  
Ah yes, I leave a dirty Roma  
Touts and beggars to evade  
Nice old men on the take  
Selling cameos so clearly fake  
Joining thousands at the sites  
Of a great civilisation  
Long past its heights  
At its lost grandeur we gaze  
Through the roman summer haze  
And despite the ubiquity  
Of the crumbling antiquity  
Around the falling monuments to the past  
Lives on, an eternal truth  
Which is the beauty of youth  
And the great eternal part  
Of the Greek and Roman art.

July 2013

Stephen Loomes

# **Janis Joplin**

So much heart so much love so much need  
Janis Joplin I cry to watch your heart bleed  
What a talent you brought to the world  
Time has seen your legend unfold  
How sad that your life was lost to the abyss  
Of uncertainty and need, oh how you are missed  
What intellect, what talent and a future untold  
Such a beautiful woman and so in need of love  
It was like a crucifixion to see this talent shoved  
By ignorant fools who couldn't understand  
The cruelty when you were young and you so grand  
Anyone who had a heart could have saved you from your fate  
But when people found their heart it was already too late

Stephen Loomes

# Doing Time

As I look at these brick walls,  
Boredom is my prison true,  
I think of days in sad grey halls,  
But real steel bars imprison you.

I may drag the weight of doubt,  
But yours are chains of misery,  
You who cannot move about,  
Because your prison is your body.

Let us sing the lament together,  
As we pass this waiting time,  
Are we captors of each other,  
For an existential crime;  
Or each in his own prison solely,  
And all in one that is holy?

Stephen Loomes

# A Tribute To Arthur Janov

I read that John and Yoko  
had his Primal Therapy  
So I read his book The Feeling Child  
And it opened up a world to me  
The time has come  
To be with the children,  
To play, not send them away  
Is it true, that to reject them  
Is to relive the rejection  
Which as a child happened to you?  
Love is not abstract and saying you care,  
It is giving of time and attention  
And when you are needed ensuring you are there,  
Where else to look?  
Except upon one.s loving ones.

Stephen Loomes

# Tribute To Wilhelm Reich

I would like to say that I cannot believe  
How cruel people can be to each other  
But I can't because I see the inhumanity  
Everyday, like angry apes nothing escapes  
The ravening cruelty of our species  
In which context let me exult Wilhelm Reich  
He was a lighthouse of intellect among humanity  
And yet he was hounded by the Nazis  
Who would have killed him but he escaped  
So they burned his books so no-one could know  
What a compassionate genius he was  
His beliefs were simple and related to sex  
He said those who controlled and suppressed it  
Were neurotic and those who found orgasm  
Regularly, were taking a path away from neurosis  
And when he escaped to America  
The land of the free, he was certified a lunatic  
Never to be released and in prison he died  
Effectively crucified by the religious repression  
Of those who sublimated their healthy sexual energy  
Into power and lived and enforced their neuroses  
Oh how, Wilhelm would have loved the present times  
When sexuality and its expression was no longer a crime.

Stephen Loomes

# A Nod And Wink To Palladas

The great William Shakespeare  
His thoughts to inspire  
Dipped into Palladas often  
To put ink in his pen  
He knew Palladas would not sing  
In the growing Christian choir  
Which threw Stoic thought and Greek learning  
On the mad zealots' fire  
His thought was independent  
And without malefaction  
He blamed Plato for imagining human perfection  
Plato called you "immortal"; a creature from the sky  
But we are death's herd  
And the world is its sty  
This was Palladas' view,  
And a fitting reply  
Soon we all pass to earth  
So just save your breath  
And during that silence  
Why not ponder your death  
It was he who said,  
Each day, anew we are born  
Perhaps inspiring William Blake  
His Auguries to adorn  
With some are born to endless night  
And others are born to sweet delight  
And Palladas' words were  
Trimmed by Shakespeaare to fit  
As 'all the world's a stage'  
In his play, As You Like It  
It was Palladas who said that life is a play  
We each as actors must perform with art  
Or treat it as a farce and laugh through our part  
The stream which carries you,  
Carries us all he said  
To the final deep harbour  
Which is the home of the dead.

Stephen Loomes

# A Walk To Mutton Bird Island, Coffs Harbour

Today I walked with my favourite woman, my wife  
To the seat half-way up the climb to Mutton Bird Island sanctuary  
I had to stop to save my breath for fear of losing my equanimity  
Sitting there breathless, I quietly smiled as aging women pounded past  
In Australia, we have an expression for older women, who vulgarly  
Are referred to as "mutton dressed up as lamb" as they dress and exercise and fast  
To defeat the ravages of aging and the ballooning of their thighs and other parts  
And so I often think the name Mutton Bird Island so aptly applies.  
The island is an isthmus rising many metres over Pacific's deep blue waters  
You walk along a concrete breakwater past the marina and its trawlers  
To climb a path between the burrows of the wedge-tailed shearwaters  
Which spend their autumn at this most magnificent Coffs Harbour  
Where their young are born in burrows with their parents as incubators  
Later fledged around the isle before they migrate north to Asia  
If you are in good shape and walk past me to the top of this nursery "island"  
You can see the beaches north and south and the Great Dividing Range  
The blue jagged hills crouching close to the coast right down to the crystal sand  
When up the top you look north to Split Solitary Island as the yachts around it sail  
Between June and November on the sea you might spy the "blow" of a humpback whale  
Now safe to swim in their majesty free from the previous slaughter  
Splashing and breaching and cruising as they migrate north to the warmer waters  
Where as of old and free from harm they will give birth to their sons and daughters.

Stephen Loomes

# Hello Dear Reader

Hello dear reader,  
You have come to see my words  
I hope you are doing well  
It sure does mean a lot to me  
You are feeling well, and  
That you are reading what I tell  
I am looking at the sunshine  
Out the window through the trees  
Trucks are rumbling down the highway  
But they don't bother me  
If you've read some of my other poems  
It is clear that I can see  
Beyond my room, beyond my home  
To life's complexity  
This process of our living  
Is a miracle beyond compare  
And every moment is rushing  
To a place beyond all care  
The love that I've shared,  
The times I have cared  
Is in my warmest memories  
The times I have hurt  
And acted wrongly never sets me free  
But as with us all perfection waits  
No person is right, that never could be  
And if we can forgive each other  
And then one's self  
Then happy we all should be.

Stephen Loomes

# When I Wake Up

When I wake up I have a dazed pee  
And wander out to make a cup of tea  
While the kettle boils, I lean on the sink  
A little stunned I wait for my brain to think  
I can stare at nothing for minutes; I am inert  
Just looking out at nothing  
I am sure it doesn't hurt  
And then the kettle bubbles  
I put tea into the pot  
Turn on the radio for the days' troubles  
Then wish that I had not.  
I wish peace on earth for all out there  
If only my power to grant it  
Was equal to my care.

Stephen Loomes

## Visit To Life

You're a stranger at a celebration,  
Looking for familiar faces,  
Uncertain of your invitation,  
Retreating into shadowed spaces.  
A set of eyes flash welcome to you,  
You venture to them through the crowd,  
A cruel stranger blocks you getting through,  
'Friends, help me' you cry out loud,  
'You're a visitor to this happy feast,'  
A friendly guide steps up to say,  
'Please dance and love and look for peace,  
But as you've come, you need to know.'  
Whether our way be joy or woe,  
As we come so we must go.

Stephen Loomes

# You Are The Message

The twining strands of dna  
Spoke of your first conception  
And that of your brothers,  
Sisters, children and friends.  
How to unravel, the code  
To comprehend the meaning  
In simple pattern?  
Everyone is a message  
It is no puzzle what each message portrays  
The old woman who cleans at the airport  
The captain of industry  
The child crying in the night  
The ballerina gliding on a stage  
The saint who cares for the poor  
The monster who slays without compassion  
The man from Galilee  
The concourse of transmissions  
To living humanity  
As we move through time.

Stephen Loomes

# The Roof Of Night

The silver crescent of the moon  
Hanging in a cloud's cocoon  
Beneath the swaying of the trees  
Moving with the evening breeze  
Up in the night's blue firmament  
The stars twinkling through the deep  
Studding white electric light  
Into the dark roof of the night.

Stephen Loomes

# Vlapgod Vos

As Pavlov shook the bell to ring  
The dog would start to salivate  
Food cued with Pavlov's imprinting,  
And tho' these words will  
ring no bell  
'most all our thoughts are ringing still,  
It gets so very hard to tell  
If what we do, we feel, we see  
Is at the command  
Of sad yesterday's bell.  
Or choice based on reality!

Stephen Loomes

# When I Was Born

I arrived and started looking around  
No way of knowing what I would find  
Didn't want anything bad to happen at all  
Wanted everything to turn out fine  
For the faces around the cradle  
And the eyes against the wall  
I was hungry I could hear noises all around  
I wanted to be held  
I wanted anything but pain  
The first time someone shouted  
It was like lightning through my brain  
Didn't know what to think,  
Just kept waiting to be held again  
For the world to be put right  
I started seeing things in the dark of night  
After learning how to smile  
I was learning how to cry  
What I wanted was a world of delight  
What I got was terror in the dark of the night  
And I still don't know why  
Absorbing all of these things at the speed of light  
I had to sleep and think and laugh and cry  
When I was too little to understand why.

When I could get around I found gravity  
It hurt me at first but then I got control  
Almost too much to comprehend this reality  
Testing muscle then falling through it all,  
Finding things around about this world,  
In a room of polished wood cool metal and glass  
And peoples' legs and things hanging on the wall  
Picture frames with faces from the past  
Chimes and bells and people coming to the door  
Whirring trucks trains and cars moving fast  
Birds flying through the trees of the day's blue light  
The night stars studding black space of the past  
Above the evening clouds blowing fast  
Around the moon smiling in the night

Stephen Loomes

# Ode To Jim Morrison

When the Renaissance as we call it  
Filled the world with wonder  
From human minds and hands  
We all became much smarter  
And in the 1960's the light returned  
With avatars of thought, deed and word  
From which the world has learned  
Jimi Hendrix who had been here before  
Came back with flaming guitar  
And Bob Dylan with his magic words  
Ravi Shankar with his sitar  
The Kennedys and Martin Luther King  
There was colour, light and war  
Waged by the ignorant  
Against the changes that they saw  
And flying above it all  
With a mind beyond compare  
Like Icarus too close to the sun  
Appeared a mind who seised it all  
James Douglas Morrison

Stephen Loomes

# Tribute To William Blake

The engraver from Broad Street  
Would not kiss the feet  
Of a creeping Jesus  
When that spirit came  
But dreamt of tigers in the night  
Out of the narrow lane  
Job himself came marching down  
The sound of his feet  
Resounding at a later time  
From the visionary's metered walk.

Ah! but who could have seen  
That his meaning would not dawn  
Until his spirit free was born  
At the engraver's solitary death  
At every morn and every night  
Misery turns to sweet delight.

Stephen Loomes

# View From Portofino Lighthouse

Now let me sail upon the tide  
And so let my boat words glide  
The sea of meaning with the tale  
Of Kings questing the Holy Grail

Last night as I awoke in bed  
The clock-tower chimed four steps that led  
Into the essence,  
Legend said.

The Holy Grail evades us all  
Before our self, 'however small  
Attends to its self enthral.

My words should not a riddle be  
The legend says your mind is three.  
First a conscious eye, with which to see  
Next a mind to set you free,  
Or else it may a prison be.  
Third a sense to make it real:  
You see, you know, and then you feel!

Now the legend shall avail  
A use of these which shall not fail.  
For consciousness, a Holy Grail should be  
A heart which feels, should honour mind  
And mind in turn can never find,  
The source of all it cannot see,  
Which uses it, and says  
I AM ME.

Stephen Loomes

# The True Religion

Don't ask me to tell you again  
Alright, before we go any further  
There's some stuff that gives me bother  
So I'm delivering some words  
Into your brain  
It will lighten your load  
If you think what I tell you is true  
And it reduces my burden too  
For me to see that it is told  
And the ideas travel to the future through you.  
Religion. What a cancerous curse  
Feeding on the living human body!  
The progenitor for religion seems to be;  
I am here and alone and what is worse,  
I am separate from the people around me,  
And a sense of self seems to be  
A wet nurse to the religious curse.  
Around me and the earth  
Upon which I find myself walking  
There's a lot of people all dressed up and talking  
I look out into space and I realise  
There just is no-one is talking anything of any worth  
I look back out through the skies  
Even with my primitive ideas of science  
What a vast universe that I see through my eyes  
And there am I standing quite alone.  
In this universe am I the only one home?  
When there are a lot of people  
Feeling self-conscious  
History delivers salesmen with all the answers,  
But each one of them is so subjective  
And inherently false.  
So appealing to mordant romancers  
The artefact of religion has undergone  
Its own evolution as a cancer enmeshed  
With mankind's cultural and historical evolution.  
When we were pre-literate as a race  
Fast talkers and thinkers made the invention

Of spirits and gods and pushed them in our faces  
When children were little and had no defences  
Fostered by word of mouth  
And enforced as offences  
Woven into stories which like mnemonics  
Inhabiting memory and transmitted like viruses  
Religious stories entered the vaults of belief  
With their bullshit answers that provide no relief  
To cosmogony and cosmology  
Stealing true understanding like a thief  
Of these large questions occurring in the human mind.  
The movement from pantheism to monotheism  
Was the next quantum leap in the mythic paradigm  
It matters little whether this occurred as a schism  
In India, China, Sumeria, Egypt, Israel or Babylon  
It was a chariot of the human mind called writing  
Which carried it along.  
Now every religion has to have a book,  
And in its book they say are words divine  
Direct from God who sent it down the line  
Through a prophet whose tongue is like a hook.

And whatever holy book, the precepts are the same  
What you do now will be rewarded or punished  
On judgment day when you die,  
The next life will be everything you ever wished  
On condition that every day you live, you comply  
However it is dressed up, they call it Paradise  
But if you refuse to believe to swallow their lie  
You'll be punished forever when you die.  
So just submit to the "word of god";  
If you want to do well  
Believe everything contained in the "holy book";  
Hand your mind to the men of God or go to Hell

Stephen Loomes

# The Only Son

He was the first-born son  
The girl was young and crazy  
The father drove trucks way out west  
And was never home with his lady  
She was poor and could take no more  
Wanted out of the whole thing  
Stuck at home and all alone  
Just her in the village with her baby  
No place to go and the baby he kept crying  
Dad drove his truck and cursed his luck  
Saying life never did him any favours  
Told his girl to wait at home and thank him for his labours  
The cupboards were bare  
And the streets were dark  
When she packed her things and the baby's  
He got home drunk and raged and searched  
Till he tracked her down at a neighbour's  
With drunken threats pacing up and down  
Around her sitting with the baby perched  
He told her to get out of town  
Punching in the air near her face as he swore  
Come home or get out and leave the kid  
He threatened as she quavered  
I don't want to go back to that empty house  
For a life staring out of the window  
At an empty town and an empty road  
Full of idle men and their widows  
Who never speak and look at me  
Like a freak at the circus side-shows.  
But let me take the baby with me  
I beg you let us go  
I'm leaving now I won't be stopped  
She cried in desperate defiance  
You'll not go off, you'll march right home  
There'll be no ifs or maybes  
But her life was gone, she had to leave  
Then he grabbed the frightened baby  
Drove her off into the weeping night  
Alone she was left to grieve

But she vowed to fight in a court of law  
For the only son he made her leave.  
Life went on like an endless sea  
Which tossed her like a cork  
Would she ever see that son again  
But there was no higher court.  
The father gave the trucks away;  
I'll stay at home and raise him  
He said full of rage and fight  
Hollow words from a hollow man  
To show the world he was right  
But he needed her more than the baby did  
And took the kid out of spite  
His troubles grew and he drank all night  
This man was never sober  
The baby grew without loving care  
Never knew his mother  
Her face fading like an ember  
And only when he slept at night  
Her last kiss could he remember.  
With no direction and poor company  
As a young boy he was growing  
He lost his way; and on that trail  
He had no way of knowing  
The only kids were lost like him  
In adult storms they were blowing  
The guiding light was very dim  
He was looking sure to fail  
There's many a trap on the rocky road  
On the way to full-grown man  
And many a sad-eyed person  
With a pill to change your plan  
And he would take whatever they gave  
To fill the emptiness within  
Drinking spirits and stealing things  
At the suggestion of his buddies  
While other kids in that same town  
Were busy with their studies  
He stumbled on to the age of twenty  
Alone and feeling down  
Should have been at the gate of plenty  
But around each leg was a ball and chain

That crippled his will to succeed  
It was fastened there by the endless pain  
Of his loss and inner need  
Which left him feeling empty  
To feed himself and get along  
The jobs were tough and the bosses rough  
The labour was back-breaking  
And in the dark of every night  
When his rest he was a-taking  
He'd see her face and faintly hear  
Where is my son my only son  
His mother's silent prayer  
He'd see her face and weeping eyes  
Like a vision it would appear  
And as she wept she heard his cries  
Saying mother I need you here.  
So in their dreams they'd cry  
Calling for each other  
Oh! Whatever chains now the world decrees  
Are wrapped around your fate  
A mother's love it never dies  
Forever she will wait  
And her spirit guides him onwards.  
From out of her sleeping thoughts  
The force of love goes upwards  
And guides the boy with her support  
To push him ever onwards  
One day he woke and changed his mind  
Saying I'll never have great wealth  
But I can stop drinking and taking pills  
And unlock the chains around me  
Say no to all that makes me ill  
My youthful health will set me free  
It's no to him and no to her  
No more, enough, I've had it  
And he rose that day and he went forward  
And shook every evil habit  
He got a job for better pay  
It wasn't much but something  
And when a year had come and gone  
He had a little saving  
So when opportunity came along

He was ready for the taking  
A block of land for payment down  
In a little street on the edge of town  
And tired from work he's sleeping right  
Her kindly face it still appears,  
But she is not a memory now  
Or an angel for his fears  
His mind was clear he made a vow  
To dream of her no more  
He tracked her down last year  
And she's so proud of her only son  
And he's so proud of her

Stephen Loomes

# The Fine Scaffold Moves

Fingers stroking  
Flesh tumesces with blood  
The mechanism of love  
Stroking, moving into  
Erotic awkward positions  
Of romantic junction  
Sliding peristaltic  
In and out, forever.

Stephen Loomes

# At Jim Morrison's Grave

At the Cemetery of Pere Lachaise,  
there was a grave without a tombstone there.  
There was a plastic wreath  
and scrawls of chalk.  
Across the mound the stray cats, scavenged  
for there was no living prey to stalk;  
While the earth consumed the screaming flesh,  
the voyeurs came from cul de sacs'  
to smell the grave and hurry back.  
They'd mutter music is your only friend,  
but for years no epitaph to say the end.

Then his family left a tombstone there,  
The only public statement of their loving care,  
Inscribed on marble in ancient Greek.  
Does it say his demons were his own  
Or that he followed his spirit home?  
Let the ancient language speak!

□

Many for our sins have died,  
While we into our armchairs slide.  
It was a time of revolution, poetry and love  
With its own avatars like gods above.  
And Jim, a martyr to our lifelessness,  
We saw in him what could be done,  
And how like Icarus, we fall alone  
Then off to work we must be gone.

Stephen Loomes