

19.9a

An Ode To The A14

Dylan Harris



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Potato Press

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by Dylan Harris

4 anticipating the metaverse, 3 nation six dog, 2 discard

chapbooks

20.0: *v* the dead cat blues, *u* bremen, *t* autumn, *s* mechelen, *r* dye-de-ho, *q* antwerp, *p* tension nitro ego, *o* church is dangerous vital, *n* tin rush, *m* the A rush, *l* an engineering rush (ii), *k* Miss Demeanour, *j* flock state, *i* be infinity, *h* Namings, *g* nation six dog, *f* uncivil law, *e* dead write, *d* chase chase, *c* an engineering rush (i), *b* a much for we, *a* The Joy Of Tax

19.9: *c* Inn, *b* Swoop, *a* An Ode To The A14

19.8: *c* Rose, *b* Hymnen, *a* Darmstadt

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Poems

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Fenland Sketch

Accelerating Is Language English

The fear is not of something new
but “can the mind absorb it?”.
Like helpless dreams, a tension bout,
this fear’s control, to lose it.

Is this where the phobics herd,
who dare not stand nor face it,
and call me rude, a geek or nerd,
if I declare to ride it?

And so I climb the higher path,
accelerating self.
Peacock faces worry up,
huddle. But I’ve done it. I know:

I’ve learnt the new technology,
uncared those sneering weenies.
I turn my back and grin the dawn.
I’m Gawain. They are the was.

It Must Be Christmas

The same repeated, same repeated, same repeated rhythm,
tunes as sweet as desperately needing a piss,
the harmony of insincerity,
the colour of emptiness,
lyrics too simple for nursery verse.

It must be Christmas.

The Pub Quiz League

1.

My social life glows momentarily
on winter Sunday evenings
in The Pub Quiz league.

2.

The newbie knows the taste of blood
is not red, but quiets her mouth;
she feels she lacks “experience”.

A good team needs one who always knows
who methok’d with Abendigo
and sunk the Wurble fleet,

but most of us are ballast.
I’ve got my special anorak
that is hardly ever asked.

3.

An encompassing taste of flowers,
wilting in a hop bitter foliage,
gives gentle colour to the evening.

Lost Sanctuary

Just now, God knows why,
I remembered my long dead mother's
telephone number.

This odd recollection
gave cold relaxation
to my tired, snappish mood.

The warm welcome
she offered me,
the assurance of food,

the spare bed,
the familiar disagreements,
they were always available.

Now, this sanctuary,
this feel of childhood argument,
this place of reconciliation,

is lost.

An Ode To The A14

The A14, which runs the hundred miles from Leicestershire to Felixstowe, is crossed by roads and railway tracks. What truly riles is in Northants., the bureaucrats, they botched and built no bridge for walking types – not keen on those whose journeys don't pollute. So all who hike the tourist path along the Nene must catapult across the cars – the old, the children, everyone. So I propose, to take the piss of bureaucratic dross, to sculpt gigantic trampolines, and pose a granny, flying through in the air, across the carriageways. The Angel of the North be damned: we'll have The Lady Of The Kilns.

Tring

for Kit Fryatt

In times gone past, it was the norm for men
of words to hide in lines of heartfelt depth
a dark delightful lady. Now I pen
such lines myself, to intimate the breadth
that can be found in tales of many pubs,
or riding on the back of bikes—‘*there’s more,
much more than this*’. But now she’s left to floods
of tears, advanced to lordly duties, for
she won the Tring estate at cards. No cars
will run the motorway again, replaced
by fields of black or tannin plants. All bars
will only serve an Irish pint. If chased,
her man will face the cad with daggered scorn
and duel: Mornington Crescent at dawn.

Old Funeral Music

I heard the music once
a decade past:
a hard-paced hysteria

with the darkening of approaching thunder,
the evermore of unceasing clockwork,
the difficult peace of restrained tears.

It had me picture a wake at night,
a burning pyre,
voices in lament.

The music,
the full orchestra,
stopped.

This unfinished silence
led me.
My pyre spat,

the lamenters' voices scorched.
I invented a dead man's face
and saw his living conflict.

The music started,
quick marching grief
into the past.

Chance Is Such A Scornful God

This morning

I heard the black news
of a killer crash
on the main line,

I saw a sweet car
garrotted under the strangling wheels
of a red-respecting juggernaut,

I met discordant blue
flashing alarm
on someone
knocked down
and still.

What should I believe?

That Lady Fate is having
'a bad hair day',
so people have to hurt?

Chance is pure,
a scornful God,
the God of science,
the only God to give
predictable result.

Of Caroline

Why do I chase the ones who want to be the Taj Mahal:
distant, magnificent, unreachable;
and really the Brighton Pavilion?

The Trumpet Blown

I went to a concert one night—
the church is across from my house—
it turned into quite a good fight:
the horn versus everyone else.

Frank played every note very flat—
or sharp—he found all of the keys.
The tones of those sounds he got out?
You'd think that a foghorn had sneezed.

The orchestra wandered along,
the chorus was actually good,
apart from mute cursing of “Wrong!
I'd staple his lips if I could”.

These problems continued for years
'til concerts in front of a Lord,
who walked from the music in tears—
and Frank, he had put to the sword.

Such murder is highly improper;
the Lord was convicted in court.
But Judge was a music conductor,
so fined him a bottle of port.

You'll find, when your life is complete,
if down to the torment you've fell,
Frank proving, for Satan's conceit,
from National Anthems comes Hell.

Why I Prefer Schoenberg

There once was a simple salesman,
too crude to sell used cars,
who won the right, in an unfair fight,
to buy his own self-portrait
with violins gleaming grease,
as sweet as concrete.

Fenland Sketch

1.

Ploughing deep furrows in the black wet earth
yields mummified branches of ancient trees.

Rivers run straight as the mythical career of heroes;
old roads meander like comfortable lives.

No hills, nothing for houses to nestle in,
your every deed is seen by your neighbours' God.

This stark grandeur challenges even self-deception;
you glare back at the emptiness, or you run.

2.

This busy air is cold and bright,
rendering the water in the crossing dykes
a glittering rush of Sharp Blue.

White clouds with the spirit
of steaming liners sprint above me,
while I, in my car, run this road

with no boxes alongside imprisoning streets,
no brick wall bigotry from some chattering suburb;
no metropolitan clutter, no town crowds, just distance.

The photography is here, but I can't catch it.
But I will; I'll learn to express my cheer
at this absence, this emptiness.

3.

Cruising on the Nene,
knowing that,
in fifty years time,
with global warming,
I'd be sailing a shallow sea.

Incidentally,
anyone want to buy a house?
Beautiful garden
excellent for vegetables,
prospective fishery rights.

4.

I thank you for your note, in which you write
about the acts you threaten in a bum
caprine. I didn't say (I'd thought it trite)
that I'm a secret agent for The Scum,

for which I dig in bins throughout the night
(I raid the rich and famous) looking for
hysteria to push in black and white.
To you, I shall admit, I've been a bore,

I told my editor the things you say,
I rue my lack of nous. He's sent a clan
of journalist to hunt around your neigh-
bourhood; he hopes to find a fan of Man-

chester United (we've got Beckham un-
der contract). If you wake to see, one day,
a chamoise sweetly tempting in the sun,
resist that goat, for David B, your neigh-

bour's football God, awaits, binoculars
in hand, to watch. The cameraman will flash
and snap, the journalist will crawl the bars,
pretending he was there. A grand, in cash,

will cheer your neighbour's life, and you'd go in
a chat show agent list of guests, so low
that all the coucherati sneer your sin;
hypocrisy is good TV, you know.

Of course, I don't expect all this to make
a difference, to wit, your acumen
in publishing my works. I'll have my cake
and scoff it, for your moment in The Scum.

