

# POETRY FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Martin Nelson

First Self Published 2008 Kenya  
First Published as E-book in 2013  
Copyright © Martin Nelson 2013  
This book is copyright under the Berne Convention  
No reproduction without permission

ISBN 978-0-9926668-1-1  
Manuscribit Publishing  
LONDON SW7

The right of Martin Nelson to be identified as author of  
this work has been Asserted by him in accordance with  
sections 77 and 78 of the UK Copyright Design and  
Patents Act 1988

For Diana, without whom these poems would not have been realized.

'I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills.  
When all at once I saw a crowd  
A host of golden daffodils.'

William Wordsworth

POEMS ON CREATIVITY  
A DOG'S LIFE  
CHISEL  
IS IT FINISHED?  
KEEPING FIT  
SCULPTOR  
SCULPTURE  
STONE  
THE EXECUTIVES  
THE GYMNASIUM  
THE PROMENADE  
TRAVELLERS  
POEMS ON THE MYSTICAL  
A LETTER TO MYSELF  
A MIRACLE IS BORN  
ANDREW  
CORAL WORLD  
I AM BORN  
NEW WORLD  
THE RAIN  
THE RAINS CAME  
THE VAPOUR TRAIL  
THE TUNNEL  
POEMS ON PLEASURE  
BUYING BREAD  
DARK HEAD  
GRAPEFRUIT  
I LIKE TO WRITE  
LIKE A BIRD

MY PIANO  
SAVE THE EARTH  
SUPERMARKET  
THE DISHWASHER  
THE PARTY  
THINGS THAT GIVE ME PLEASURE  
TOUCH  
WARMTH OF THE SUN  
YES I DO LIKE BANANAS  
POEMS ON REFLECTION  
A WALK  
A WALK ON THE BEACH  
AUSCHWITZ  
BEING ALIVE  
BROTHERS  
CAN'T SLEEP  
GOD SMILES WHEN MEN CRY  
HOW WILL I KNOW?  
IN MY THOUGHTS  
I TRY TO RECALL HER MOOD  
I WANT TO TELL SOMEONE  
The truth about myself.  
LIVING TOO LONG.  
LOCKED OUT  
LOST WORDS  
NATURE OR NUTURE  
SKIN DEEP  
THE DAY THAT CHANGED MY LIFE  
THE HUMAN CONDITION  
THE RIVER TEES  
THE SILENT ENEMY

THE UNREALITY OF REALITY

WAITING

WHY

BIOGRAPHY

# POEMS ON CREATIVITY

## A DOG'S LIFE

Where am I? What is this place?  
It smells so funny and the floor is so cold.  
Strange voices, friendly and kind  
Please stroke me growl, again.

I am tired yet I cannot sleep.  
I must pee, pee, here on the floor,  
Naughty Jemma, I hear them say  
This food is good, I was very hungry.

I am walking in their garden.  
What wonderful smells.  
Here a soft place to sleep.  
But there's nothing to eat.

What was that I saw running away?  
A small bird with a tail and a wing.  
A tasty meal if I could catch it still  
Before it flies into the trees.

They say my life is worthless  
A dog's life is no life at all.  
But how wrong they have all got it  
Cos' a dogs life is wonderful.

# CHISEL

Cold sharp silent steel  
Poised and waiting.  
A sudden blow.  
And the stone is entered

Step by step,  
The steel  
Reveals  
The stone's inner soul,

Like lovers  
Hand in hand,  
Each dancing  
With the other,  
Until fruition and calm.

## IS IT FINISHED?

Is it finished when I decide?  
Or when I lose the wonder of it?  
Does the day end when the sun subsides?  
Though the memory of it remains?  
Is love lost when a lover dies?  
Or does it just change a little?

Is there a beginning and an end  
Or is this a figure of my imagination.  
Can creativity have a conclusion?  
Or does it just become an illusion  
When the idea is fulfilled  
And the excitement has died.

## KEEPING FIT

I woke early one morning  
To attend at the gym.  
The day was still dark  
As I dressed in the dim, light in my room.  
I made ready to go  
But the time went too slow.  
The day was much warmer  
Than I thought it would be.  
The leaves on the path  
Were so soft under foot.

A bright Hello, as I entered the room  
To the repetitive sound  
Of a running machine.  
As I stepped up and down  
To the beat of the drum.  
My heart rate increased  
And the sweat  
Seemed to run  
As the effort to pedal  
Began to take toll.

But after a while  
My breathing slowed down,  
I felt I was drifting alone on a cloud.  
My mind seemed to clear  
And my vision grew sharp.

As I continued to jog,  
Although wanting to stop.  
The time goes so fast  
When you are working so hard,  
I suddenly looked round, an hour had past.

# SCULPTOR

Poised and hesitant,  
Expectant  
And fearful,  
Like a surgeon  
He stands  
Uncertain.

What will be found?

He enters  
Unsure but firm,  
Caressing  
And encouraging  
Until  
Reluctantly,

The stone reveals its truth.

# SCULPTURE

Hands and arms are ringing still  
From the hammer's vibration  
Midday and the sun is high  
We stop and seek somewhere to lie

Amidst the boulders on either side  
We sit and rest and dream  
Of shapes and forms in stone to carve,  
And mold into eternity

About us stand some mighty rocks  
Present since the beginning of time  
Holding within their hearts  
An eternal truth  
That all mankind must learn

Born out of noble heat and simple dust  
We march across the world  
Inhabiting every land and hill  
But seemingly unaware  
Of the great burden we bear

To guard and keep this universe  
To protect and save its life  
In all its forms both big and small  
So that our future may be  
Secure to enjoy it as well.



# STONE

The stone stands alone,  
Aloof and complete,  
Containing the memory  
Of the beginning of time.  
Silently it reflects,  
And engages in a dance of eternity  
With my chisel,  
As it reveals layer by layer  
Its innermost dreams.

Where have you been?  
Where are you going?  
My chisel cleaves your sides.  
And after our short dialogue  
I will also be gone.  
Joining you in another time  
And another place,  
No longer one being but  
Part of a new creation.

## THE EXECUTIVES

Smart Suited, well brushed hair  
Leather attaché case in hand,  
They walk with a confident air  
And do not see me standing there  
The world of commerce is their field  
They are the inheritors of this world.

# THE GYMNASIUM

The throbbing sounds  
Assail my ears,  
As the running girls  
Ignore the leers  
Of the macho men  
With their macho weights,  
Focusing on  
Increasing their pecs.

The to and fro,  
The up and down.  
The sweat that pours.  
The continuing sound  
Of young and old,  
Of fat and thin,  
All chasing the dream,  
The need to win.

The perfect shape,  
The pack of six.  
The grunts, the sweat,  
All for a fix.  
The endorphin thrill  
That suppresses the pain.  
Is it all worthwhile?  
For the final gain?



## THE PROMENADE

The people walk by hand in hand  
Going they know not where  
Enjoying the fragrant seaside air  
And the sound of the distant band.

The sea beyond is ever present  
Creeping up the promenade walls.  
Then receding as the tide retreats  
Repeating a rhythm of eternity.

## TRAVELLERS

So many different faces.  
So varied are their clothes.  
They share a common object  
The wheeled luggage that they pull.  
They look like refugees  
Reminiscent of a forgotten past  
When mankind was herded into trucks  
And taken on a journey, his last.

# POEMS ON THE MYSTICAL

## A LETTER TO MYSELF

I received a letter yesterday  
That I had written to myself  
The handwriting looked so familiar  
But I couldn't remember where  
And when I had composed it.  
Slowly I read it and recalled that weekend  
When, I stepped outside my comfort zone  
And faced my demons but not alone.  
I was in the company of men  
Who soon became my friends.  
I saw such courage and strength in them  
That they gave me the will to go on  
And explore my past, that deep dark well  
From which my present peace has come

# A MIRACLE IS BORN

At a certain moment  
A life begins  
Containing  
All it needs.  
In a single seed.

To fashion a being  
Like you or me.  
To create all its parts  
From the heart to the toes  
The eyes to the nose

Everything is there.  
From its tongue to its feet  
Looking and touching  
Feeling and crying  
Eating and sleeping.

She grows  
And explores the world  
Up goes her head  
And she stands unsure  
Upon the ground

She takes a first step  
Smiling.  
Learning and speaking

Repeating a million years  
Of human being..

Within her resides  
A future life  
Waiting  
Until her eggs are ripe  
To begin again.

## ANDREW

He came into this world alone,  
Just a small weak speck of life,  
Cleanly separated from you by a knife  
Which cut the umbilical bond?

But his smile and shiny eyes  
Soon re-built that bridge of love.  
You called him your handbag despite his size  
And wore him like a glove.

You are complete in each other arms  
And together  
Your charms  
Make the world a better place.

# CORAL WORLD

A sentient tenement beneath the sea  
Built over a million years ago  
Houses a thousand living cells  
Within its calciferous walls

So many different shapes and hues  
From pinks to reds to brightest blues  
They sway and move in unison  
Like an enormous velodome

So many forms, so many shapes  
Make up this watery home.  
They live in harmony and peace  
Beneath the deep blue foam

And when we venture into their realm  
Gliding silently beyond the waves  
We are offered a scene of gentle life  
A beautiful world of colour and form

# I AM BORN

I was sure  
That I was born in November  
But really I honestly can't remember  
I think I was there  
Because I was told  
About it when I was much older.

I had to wait  
Until I was three  
To find out  
If it was true.  
I learned that I was the middle of three  
But that was all I knew about me.

Since then  
The years have flown by  
And I have learned that I must try  
To do my best,  
Whatever the test  
And to happily do the things I'm asked.

And now  
That I am old and grey  
I live my life from day to day  
Not looking  
Too far into the future  
And not anticipating my departure

## NEW WORLD

It crept up unannounced  
And looked so familiar,  
That I was not prepared,  
For what had really changed.  
Gone was the world I recognized  
And now a raucous one remained.

## THE RAIN

The dry parched earth  
Devours the rain  
You can almost hear the gulps,  
As it falls onto  
the waiting soil  
From the dark black clouds above.

The withered plants  
raise up their heads  
And stand erect and tall

The river bed awakens  
From its long dried out sleep  
And begins to move and leap.  
While resting plants stir  
And new buds reappear

Even the lowly weed  
Despised and unloved  
Partakes of the gift bestowed

# THE RAINS CAME

The heavens opened  
Torrents, cascading, pouring,  
Thundering and crashing  
Replacing all other sounds.  
A miraculous reminder  
Of nature.  
In all its magnificence.

Regal, triumphant and unstoppable,  
Releasing  
Its benefaction.  
Refilling  
The dry empty earth  
With revitalization.

Stopping, as quickly as it started,  
Its cloud containers empty.  
Suddenly, it's quiet,  
Only dripping, from trees, roofs and shelters.  
The ponds and pools dry up .  
A miracle,  
Remaining only in memory

# THE VAPOUR TRAIL

High up in the sky I see  
Thin lines of white against the clouds.  
They move so slowly and without sound  
I often wonder where they are bound.

They stand out bright against the clouds  
Making criss-cross patterns in the sky  
The people up there are looking down  
To all of us upon the ground

We seem so very far apart  
As they go speeding by  
Into those far and distant lands  
We wave but sadly can only stand

Where are they off to?  
When will they return?  
We stretch out our arms to them  
And share a moment's dreams.

The miracle that made it so  
We rarely wonder at  
Yet it is man's continuous quest  
To search for the unknown.

To reach out beyond this world  
And dream of unknown paths  
To slake this unquenchable thirst

That seems to know no end

## THE TUNNEL

Suddenly it's there-  
The opening into which we go.  
The dark closed womb of the deep,  
Unaware of the lashing sea above.  
And then France's green and flowing fields  
Sunlit beneath the deep blue sky.  
Two warring countries joined at last  
But still divided by their past.

# POEMS ON PLEASURE

## BUYING BREAD

It was a blue summer day,  
With not a cloud in the sky  
A slight breeze was blowing  
As I left my abode.  
Not a care in the world  
Only nine years old,  
I cycled along  
To reach the main road

On my right was a wall,  
Beyond a plantation.  
The bananas were still green  
Not ready to eat  
Each bunch of fruit  
Still in its purple coverlet.

A pound note in my hand  
To buy the day's bread  
I cycled on  
Not a thought in my head  
I reached the main road  
And free-wheeled along.  
Only the blurred outline  
Of the pink rose of Sharon  
And the Bougainvillea  
Feeling the wind in my face  
To my dismay on the way,

I had dropped the money  
Sick and upset I cycled home  
To face my mother's fury

## DARK HEAD

A dark head upon my pillow, I awake.  
Where am I? Who am I? How did I get here?  
Who is she? Her soft black skin beneath my touch.  
A chance meeting, an unexpected love,  
That changed my life, never to be the same,

These things remind us who we are,  
Flotsam upon the waves of life.  
Tossed here and there we know not where  
To rest upon a foreign beach  
A multitude of other souls.

I turn, our eyes connect and I recall  
The emptiness when you went away  
A place I cannot reach, a better place  
Where you will remain never to age  
Your face the same as it will always be.

Tears crowd my eyes and blur my sight  
At the thought that we will never be  
Together as we were, to grow old  
And share the twilight of our lives  
In some quiet and peaceful place.

# GRAPEFRUIT

Globular, sensuous, full-bodied and sweet  
Waiting on a supermarket shelf,  
For someone to eat.  
Carrying many memories  
From Cyprus, California  
Or Valencia.  
It has travelled a long distance,  
To satisfy my fancy.

Sharp steel, slices cleanly  
Violating and laying open  
Your fleshiness.  
Moist, sweet, shining wet  
Like the innermost parts,  
Of your sex.

The sharp astringent taste  
Of your sweet sour juice  
Stings my awaiting tongue  
With the memory of the sun.  
And then it's gone.  
The empty peel, its only epitaph

# I LIKE TO WRITE

I first began to write  
When I was still at school,  
It felt like I had a friend  
Whom I was writing to.

It has continued ever since  
When time and space allowed  
And in my later years  
I have returned to it with pride

I don't call myself a writer,  
just like to sit and write  
I try to do it every day  
Even when I have nothing to say.

Would I like to be published?  
I think the answer is yes  
Although I doubt it will happen  
It doesn't stop me from trying

I like the brevity of poems.  
The discipline of limiting  
The words I use to express  
The ideas that are inside me.

## LIKE A BIRD

We inhabit, two different worlds,  
You and I.

Alone and free you fly,  
Leaving me here upon the ground.

Silently,  
You glide and swoop,

Making not a single sound.  
Having not a single need.

But you are there.  
Leaving no destruction behind.

Whereas wherever I go  
I destroy the world with my greed.

## MY PIANO

I will have to leave you behind.  
No matter how hard I try  
To keep you, I know I can't.  
No place in my new abode.

I cannot remember a time  
When I was not with you.  
But now you have to go  
My miniature piano.

The number of hours,  
I have spent with you  
Playing tune after tune  
Practising. .

Angry but never blaming  
My fingers too large,  
Pressing  
The wrong keys

My fault not yours my dear  
I never gave you a name.  
But you were such a friend  
Standing quietly and patiently.

Never complaining.  
Always, waiting for me.

Ready to respond to my touch,  
It's time to say goodbye

To an old and dear mate  
No last words to say.  
Just to stand and stare  
Your outline no longer clear  
Wrapped in a soft wool cover,  
Like a hearse you are leaving  
A friend never forgotten  
Goodbye.

# SAVE THE EARTH

'Save the Earth, it's our only source of chocolate'  
Was a notice I saw in a shop window  
It made me smile and I wondered why  
Perhaps because it is so obvious.

And of course we all like chocolate  
And wouldn't want to be without it.  
And yes we know it grows on a plant  
As a seed that is harvested.

It smells so good and taste so fine  
In whatever form we eat it.  
From bar to cake, from sauce to beads  
It never seems to fail us.  
Imagine a world without it  
Not a place worth living in

# SUPERMARKET

Lovers kiss on the moving stairs  
Excited by what awaits them there.  
They look about with shining eyes,  
Each dreaming of a different world.

Hers tranquil, domestic and fulfilled  
His turbulent, aggressive and loud  
Neither will find for what they search  
And each will return dissatisfied.

# THE DISHWASHER

White, silent and patient  
It stands waiting.  
No longer a stranger.  
It serves,  
Demanding no praise,  
A part of everyone's life  
Essential and unnoticed.

Each has its own language  
A unique arrangement of shapes  
Racks and trays now empty  
Await patiently  
To receive  
The soiled evidence  
Of our everyday being.  
To fill its shining space.

## THE PARTY

The delicious sense of expectation  
Begins some days away  
Delightfully it comes and goes  
And then its here to stay.

Our thoughts project ahead  
To the fun and games we'll have.  
The moment passes so quickly  
And then its memory.

## THINGS THAT GIVE ME PLEASURE

A steaming teacup greets the morn,  
And satisfies my early thirst.  
It is undoubtedly the first  
Of the pleasures I most enjoy.

My second comes in the shower room,  
With scorching water down my back.  
I stand a primitive alone  
Cleansing my skin until it gleams.

My third I smell before it's made  
And salivate at its very thought.  
Hot buttered toast at first a dream  
And then a crisp reality.

My fourth comes later before I rest  
Its joy I feel warming my feet  
With heat so comforting and blest,  
Can gently woo me into sleep.

# TOUCH

You bathed me like a mother.  
With your gentle touch  
Caressing  
Cleansing  
My wrinkled body  
With your love

I stood grateful  
And humbled  
By the lightness of your hand,  
So natural  
For you  
To tend me so.

I love to wash your body  
With its contours  
So beguiling.  
But my pleasure is so selfish  
As you stand there  
Smiling.

## WARMTH OF THE SUN

How do I describe the feeling of warmth.  
When the heat of the sun suffuses my being.  
When the bright yellow orb lightens my darkness  
How do I describe that so welcome of visitors.

Only by remembering the shock of the cold;  
The sudden sting to the skin, the catch of the breath;  
The shimmering stiffness and the shaking of limbs.  
They remind me why warmth is such bliss.  
The tingling heat of red hot water.  
The warmth that caresses and kisses my skin.

If only I could remember you by shutting my eyes  
And imagining I am there by your side,  
With the light of the sun and the smile on your face.  
But time is erasing your memory day by day  
Although I try so hard to remember  
But the warmth of your presence is becoming colder  
And I am alone with my dreams

## YES I DO LIKE BANANAS

Oh! Yellow ones, so full and fruity,  
A paradise of plump and plenty.  
Grown on a trunk so tall and true.  
In fingers, so fulsome with flavour,  
Each curved form, fleshy and familiar.  
With soft texture so tender and tasty  
A mouthful so mushy and memorable.

Carefully packed in a perfect parcel,  
A wholesome fare for family and friends.  
A source of enjoyable edible energy.  
A food for athletes, artists and actors,  
In scones, scrumptious and crumbly  
It's a top banana man  
From a banana republic.

# POEMS ON REFLECTION

## A WALK

The sound of wind in the trees,  
So peaceful, relaxed and calm.  
The sun through dappled leaves  
Children chattering happily

I can see it in my mind  
And feel it on my face  
The memory is so strong  
The details of that place.

We walked hand in hand  
In the coolness of the eve  
And didn't ever think  
That one of us would leave

Now the other walks alone  
Remembering with tears  
Those happy glorious days  
And those unforgettable years.

I am still walking in that forest.

The air so cool and bliss

Reminding me of the days

When we last shared this

## A WALK ON THE BEACH

The palms reach up like fingers from the sand  
A broad white carpet clothing the ground.  
The breeze whistles through the swaying trees.  
And waves ripple on the surface of the sea.

Tall coconut trunks wave to each other,  
Thrusting up to pierce the sky.  
Their leaves fluttering like confetti  
And swollen fruit hang from the tree

Small boats float by like toys in a bath  
Birds singing a welcoming tune,  
Pot plants sit waiting to be moved.  
While envying their grounded cousins.

The sun,s heat vibrates the air..  
And locals lie in the shade and rest  
Waiting for the coolness of the dusk,  
To promenade and strut their stuff.

It is a paradise here on earth  
Where nature in all her splendour  
Displays her beauty and her strength  
To all who have the power to see

# AUSCHWITZ

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To smell the stench of death  
To hear the screams of the dying  
And see the ovens of hell

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To stop my tears from flowing  
For the many millions who perished  
While I was just still growing.

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To remember that it could have been me  
That each of us is guilty  
For deliberately not wanting to see

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To free myself from lies  
While I have lived and loved  
And they were left to die

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To hear a tourist laugh  
While wiping ash from his shoe  
Or signing an autograph.

Do I need to visit Auschwitz?  
To erase those dreadful scenes  
When the whole wide world was shown  
The extent of the Nazi dream

No, I don't need to go to Auschwitz?  
To see the evil men can do  
I can see it all around me\  
And if you look, so can you

# BEING ALIVE

The gently flowing water  
Rippling softly in my ear,  
Reminds me of the present,  
This time, the now, the here.

But how to keep it precious  
And not waste a single drop  
Of this vital eternal liquor,  
Which is all we've really got.

It passes in a moment  
Like the fluttering of the wings  
Of a multi-coloured songbird,  
As it sings and sings and sings.

Not conscious of tomorrow  
Nor the yesterday that's passed,  
Unaware that the nectar,  
It's drinking is its last.

We must make the now so vital  
That it lasts and lasts and lasts.  
Once having grasped this secret  
We must never let it pass

# BROTHERS

Blessed am I with two, but different  
The one carefree, the other bent  
Upon some task, some purpose to perform.  
He leaves so little time to learn  
That life can be spent in many ways.  
A gentle walk upon the sand  
A friendly chat, a wave of hand,  
Not always intent on saving time.

I am that middle one  
Whose purpose is unclear.,  
Undirected I tread life's lonely trail  
To expel me from some simple ways,  
Into a world of strange and distant paths.  
Fate has cast me an unfamiliar role,  
To walk alone while searching for a meaning,  
To so many unanswered questions.

We who share so many genes  
Are yet unlike in numerous ways.

Each has trod his own distinctive path

In life's uncertain journey

Unpredicted

By past events.

We meet on different planes

Yet find so much to share

# CAN'T SLEEP

Awake in the dark  
I lay staring,  
The light from the moon  
Glaring.

No peace only pain  
persisting,  
Three o'clock again  
Unstopping.

Thoughts assailing  
The future dreading  
Indescribable.  
Alone in my bed.

A dry cough in the shadows  
What does it mean?  
Should I be worried?

On whom can I lean?

The future unbearable  
The present a whirlpool  
My mind ever turning  
I feel such a fool.

I know it must end  
But I don't want to think  
Of my life beyond this  
How far will I sink?

# GOD SMILES WHEN MEN CRY

How did we invent a God?  
And thought that he was good  
When all we see is bad.  
Why do we think he is for us?  
When he really doesn't care.

How did we make  
Such a striking mistake?  
When the evidence was so clear.  
That God if he exists at all  
Really doesn't care.

So much suffering  
We see around  
So many people in pain.  
Why does God just stand and watch  
When he could intervene

How can God  
Look the other way

And not see my wife in pain  
As she loses all her dignity  
As her body decays and dies

I think I know the reason  
He doesn't make a move  
To help all those in greatest need  
Because he doesn't exist at all

He is a figment of our imagination,  
Created because we need to believe  
That there is some greater reason  
But meanwhile we simply grieve.

# HOW WILL I KNOW?

How will I know when I have become?

The person I want to be.

Will there be a message in the sky

To show me that I have arrived.

Will the birds sing a different song?

Will the cloud smile?

How will I know that I have arrived?

Because I have tried and tried,

To become that person, I know, I can be.

Strong and silent, articulate and wise,

Knowing where to hold my tongue

And when to give advice.

Never speaking out of turn,

Never knowing too much.

Always waiting for the right moment.

Just having the light touch.

The fact that I have put the question.  
Means I'm halfway to the answer.  
I must be aware of what I want.  
And to learn not to want what I can't  
Be patient, my son and you will see.  
That the time is almost nigh.  
When a friend will say quietly  
Yes, you have arrived

## IN MY THOUGHTS

I don't cry anymore, the tears don't form.  
Yet you're as real to me as ever you were.  
Your face less clear but I know you're there  
Deep in my thoughts for ever.

I don't look at your photo as I did before.  
Almost too frightened to see your face  
In the fixed image never to change,  
Never to grow old as I do.

So many people have passed to that void.  
So many generations have struggled in pain.  
What was it for those who now lie in peace?  
It seemed so real, was it all in vain?

## I TRY TO RECALL HER MOOD

They say it's in my mind,  
But here it feels so real  
In this empty space I'm in.  
The memory of her survives.  
In her room unchanged. Within  
I can almost hear her move,  
But cannot see her smiles.  
I try to recall her mood  
I sink into solitude

I know she's unaware  
Of the void she's left behind.  
I'm in a sea without a wave,  
A beach without a sound.  
A garden but not a flower,  
A storm without a shower.  
I try to recall her mood  
I sink into solitude

My life has lost its aim

No reason to start the day  
There's no one to say hello  
It all seems dark and grey.  
I look for her in vain  
And only sit and stare  
Into That empty chair  
And wonder where she is.  
I try to recall her mood  
I sink into solitude

My eyes can only see  
A sky without a sun.  
Two lovers but not a sigh  
A song without a tune.  
A tree that does not sway.  
No matter how hard I try  
I fail and only cry.  
I try to recall her mood  
I sink into solitude

I cannot bring her back  
Nor see her face once more.  
Her memory lingers on  
Within my history.

Still her picture stares at me

It has no life nor feel..

I try to recall her mood,

I sink into solitude.

# I WANT TO TELL SOMEONE

The truth about myself.

The real me, concealed

Beneath the bluff.

I want to unburden

And say it as it is.

But I know that I can't

Because it's really tough.

I want to share my failures,

The things that I get wrong.

I need to tell someone

Who will listen and not judge.

But I know it cannot happen.

I must keep it to myself

And learn to accept my weakness,

My failures and the rest

## LIVING TOO LONG.

Where have they gone? -- *I was twenty yesterday,*  
Where are my friends? -- *So tall and so strong,*  
My family doesn't come. -*So sure and so certain*  
These faces so strange- *That I would be different.*  
That I see every day, -- *I would be special.*  
Staring and questioning, - *I would make a change,*  
"Are you alright? ---- *The world would be better*  
Why don't they stay? --- *Now that I'm here.*

It was not so before----- *But it doesn't seem so*  
My phone always rang-- *Now I'm so old.*  
My friends came to me-- *Now I'm so weak.*  
We went on the town- *Now I'm so alone.*  
Life seemed so much fun.. *The faces so strange;*  
As if it would never end. *The voices so harsh;*  
Why did it change?---- *I wish it would end.*  
Where has it gone?--- *I am ready to go*

## LOCKED OUT

The screen shouts  
'You are locked out'  
(The bank has rejected me)  
I shout back 'I have my key  
And the door is open'.  
I'm banking on-line,  
So simple and convenient  
You don't need to queue.  
It's handling my money  
Without cheque or cash.

'You are locked out'  
'Why me?' I cry  
Helpless and impotent,  
No where to turn.  
No one to help,  
No way to go back.  
I am powerless.  
Three strikes and you're out  
Three attempts three stabs, three shots,

And you're closed down  
In your best interests, Sir?  
By not giving the best interest.

My identity number is needed,  
Since nine eleven  
Continues  
To reverberate  
Around the world,  
With increased security everywhere.  
What is my code number?  
My secret word,  
My security number,  
My personal identifier.  
I've put in the wrong numerals  
And my cash card is out of date

They made a decision  
To alter the laws.  
They gave me no option  
And placed many barriers  
For me to overcome.  
So many hurdles to leap,  
Leaving a sense of doom.

But it's my money, isn't it?

## LOST WORDS

What has happened to them?

Where have they gone?

Those words which are no longer used.

Has their day been done?

Actress, waitress and chairman,

Manhole cover and duchess

Priestess, empress and burgess

They have gone it seems for ever.

But mistress still has a meaning,

We know.

Or should it also go

The way of the others.

But will we need a word.

Which we would use undercover.

To describe those woman

Who live in the never never?

# NATURE OR NUTURE

What has happened to them?

Where have they gone?

Those words which are no longer used.

Has their day been done?

Actress, waitress and chairman,

Manhole cover and duchess

Priestess, empress and burgess

They have gone it seems for ever.

But mistress still has a meaning,

We know.

Or should it also go

The way of the others.

But will we need a word.

Which we would use undercover.

To describe those woman

Who live in the never never?

## SKIN DEEP

Worn like a suit of finest gold  
Bespoke and seamless, it covers you.  
Large arid plains, deep tropical crevasses.  
It embraces every surface of your being  
From mountain ridge to deep valley  
It hugs you.

Steep ravines and inlets,  
Large caves and curved creeks  
It enfolds you.  
In the cavern of your mouth  
Stalagmites and stalactites  
It protects you.

In many shades of colour  
Brown, fawn pink white and yellow  
Thick foliage emerging.  
Or a smooth and hairless meadow.  
As a friend it protects you  
As an enemy it torments you.

In youth, soft and yielding

In old age, wrinkled and sagging.

Seven score years it's lasted.

Love it or hate it, you can't replace it

But like a snake

Would love to do so

# THE DAY THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

It seemed a long time coming,  
I didn't recognize it at the time.  
But in one short day my life  
It changed forever.

How could I have known?  
That it would affect me so?  
I thought I was complete.  
Other people I didn't need.

I knew I could make my way  
As I had always done.  
Sharing only part of me  
Keeping so much alone

And then it happened  
So quickly at the end  
A long drawn out separation  
And suddenly she is gone

You lay there calm unmoving  
As if you were still with me.  
But you had already flown  
To a place I could not be.

I sat and watched you changing,  
Discarding your earthly form.  
Until the daylight faded  
And I was all alone

Ever since then I have been alone.  
Unable to fill the space  
That yawning empty hole  
That I cannot erase.

Time has passed so quickly  
And it is now many years ago  
Since that fateful day now gone  
That changed my life forever.

# THE HUMAN CONDITION

We share the human condition,  
It's the same journey for us all.  
No matter where we start,  
We know it's going to end.

A journey of love and sadness,  
Hopes and failures.  
Of wealth and poverty,  
Of health and illness.

Each finds a path  
To overcome the barrier  
To discover a place in the sun  
Despite all the challenges,

We must learn to accept  
The failures and disappointments  
To enjoy the successes,  
The rewards and the congratulations.  
Whatever the colour of our skin,

Whatever the beliefs we hold.

# THE RIVER TEES

Where have you come from?  
Where are you going?  
So intent on your purpose,  
So constant you're flowing.

The sound of your rushing  
Is like music to my ears?  
It promises for ever  
Unchanging for years

As I sit here just watching  
You flow past my window  
Across rocks and boulders  
And beneath the tall willow

We shared some great moments  
My love, you and I  
When we watched from the bank  
The river rushing by

So dear when your soft fingers  
Reached out for my face  
I saw love in your eyes  
Which I can never replace.

But now you've gone forever  
But the river carries on  
The image of you remains  
In my heart for ever long

It's an unforgettable sound  
That rings in my ears  
Long after you've left me  
Just its noise and my tears

And when I return  
Sometime in the future  
You'll greet me as a friend  
And I'll know you are there

By the sound of your flowing  
And the sight of your waves  
The rocks that you polish,  
It's your memory I crave.



# THE SILENT ENEMY

I am living in its shadow  
It never lets me rest  
No family is without it  
No person can it best.

It lurks there in the darkness  
Just waiting to hit you hard.  
You can forget it for a moment  
Then it catches you off your guard

No matter where you hide  
No matter where you go.  
It always finds a pathway  
To remind you every day.

The end can come so suddenly  
When you think it's gone astray,  
And before you can respond to it,  
It's taken your life away.

# THE UNREALITY OF REALITY

We sit and smile and share a joke  
It all seems calm and loving.  
We do not note the passing time  
Or think about its meaning.  
Inside us each a devil lurks,  
Growing and spreading deeper.  
To strike when we can least expect  
And destroy our peace forever.

The days pass by so very fast  
As if no thing is changing  
Yet the cancer is marching a pace  
Waiting to reveal its sting  
The swan floats gracefully by  
Its feet furiously peddling.  
To remind us that which we always knew  
A calm outside conceals an evil brew.

How will it strike?  
When will that be?

The fear of uncertainty remains.  
It colours every instant of the light  
And chases night away.  
No matter how much we try,  
We know that in the end  
It will have its final way.

# WAITING

“We won’t be long”, they say,  
“Just a few minutes”  
“OK”, you say and sit,  
Relaxing and dreaming a while.  
Time goes by and then.

“Where are they? what are they doing?”  
It seems impossible they can take so long.  
And then they reappear,  
And it is as if,  
They had never been away.

# WHY

No matter how much I question,  
No matter how hard I try,  
I still can't find the answer  
To why she died so young.

Should I have been more vigilant?  
Should I have watched more closely?  
Could I have prevented the illness?  
That finally caused her death.

Now two years thereafter  
I still can't believe it's true.  
I can't accept the reality  
That her body is no more.

I sometimes visit her grave side  
And stand and stare and cry.  
For the life that was taken too early,  
So cruelly and before her time

She had so much more to offer  
Now that her burden had lightened.  
As the loved parents she had nurtured  
Had served their time on Earth.

But alas it was not to be.  
Her life so unfulfilled was taken.  
And I sit and see her face  
And wonder why it happened.

## BIOGRAPHY

Martin Nelson was born in London in 1932

During the Second War he was evacuated Bermuda and returned in 1945. His wife Diana died in 2005 They have a daughter Sarah, a son Paul and 4 grand children. After a career as an Orthopaedic Surgeon he returned to college to gain a BA in Fine Art and an MA in sculpture. He began writing in the years after retirement following courses at NEC, Arvon and the Open University He writes poetry and short stories that cover a wide range of human emotions and experiences.





