



Candidate Number: 11452442
Centre Number: 490

In a tunnel that seems endless.

Where I need to be.

Where I need to be is not writing a poem (story) (life plan)

No waves or salt stretch on this page

As actors line the streets of this theatrical (pretty as a picture) suburbia

Where I need to be is looking at the other side of the prison gates

The hour glass of me seems to rip my head off.

Where I need to be is not writing an abstract experiment. Scholarly academics frown upon unadulterated thought.

Animalistic, nihilistic, unreceptive to fabricated value. (is there any other value?)

Where I need to be has nothing to do with poems, literature, ideologies.

Where I need to be has nothing to do with the word postmodernism or the deflating whoopee cushion of language.

I need some long, bottomless sleep.

If words were expressive enough there would be no paint or time signatures

Maybe we should teach our kids to be poetic geniuses to prevent the need for words and canvases...

Maybe we should grow up with a brush and a harmonica so we become fluent and symbols like these (on this page) have no relevance.

This has no value.

This doesn't (shouldn't) entertain the reader.

Brother

The mind juice runs crazy and he responds.

Peace to the pockets of earth never seemed more distant than now.

And the water splashes

Tries to cleanse what has happened

But the reality theatre slashes

And we all cry tears for the showman in the spotlight

Hyde is all too familiar...

Crying all the while, the always tired father

Seeks the warmth of a pillow that's been in hiding for years remembered.

The warming glow hides it

And the screen becomes a metaphor

But the eyes inside know it

And we all cry tears for the showman in the spotlight

Cry tears too familiar...

Asking 'why' and 'how' never achieved anything

The mother thinks it helps to throw questions into the crowded air above her

The tired couch just listens

To the words now learnt off by heart

But the cracking walls shiver

And we all cry tears for the showman in the spotlight

Tear stained hands now familiar...

And the never too bothered duck himself, used to the watery back

Looks to words for comfort and something to grip to stop the tide washing him too

The hesitant silence does nothing

To keep the sponge boyant and dry

Because he knows that the words are watching

And I too cry tears for the showman in the spotlight

Because somehow we are similar.

Reflections.

Hands wrapped around a question mark

in the corner of a mirrored room.

Is it more a matter of choosing the shade of wool to be pulled before ourselves? Book
shelves,

full of reflections of reflections.

And are those free and winged truly airborne?

Or are they just clay and water,

the residue on some collective hands?

In the mirrored room

the questions find no answers,

bounce back and forth for eternity.

Until the mirrors become windows

and the questions

end captivity.

Half way between the crib and the stars (with apologies to Fatboy Slim)

She lies awake at night

Staring upward at plastic stars

Through starry eyes.

Stretching out her hands

And laughing as the stars dance with one another,

Glowing in the cool blue air.

Her crib is her place of silence

And she watches the mobile above her head

With unfeigned amusement.

The space above her,

At which her splayed hands now grope

Offers no sympathy, and the stars dangle knowing they'll go untouched

Able to dance forever in the twilight.

Years haven't changed her

And she can't resist stretching her arms upward

To the stars still dancing,

Their glimmer still taunting.

The crib still encircling her-

Telling her what to eat, write, say...but

She'll make the time to laugh upward.

And the space that existed above her outstretched baby hands
remains today.

And the stars still spin uninterrupted

Above her head and above

Our beds.

“words, words, words”

And every corner I wearily walk

Seems to yield another blank expression

Every mindstone over turned

Contains a fossil of a light once burnt

The clock ticks swiftly

And days chime in between sleep

Because enough words have been thrown

To fill up the decade

Greater Expectations

Alone,

Overlooking rooftops

The sky's endless dancing,

Realised manuscript,

And his own pondering to serve as company.

The view seems too simple

For the life existing in it

And his head falls to the pillow

As they keep tip-toeing corridors.

He used to lie awake

To dream of the future and the smiles that would follow

Now he thinks in moments-

Deciding the future is too short-lived in the face of the all-encompassing past.

The view used to signal company,

Now he listens to music, eyes glazed,

Asking too many questions.

Where is my passion?

Without any contents in my weary pockets

What is there to say?

'The world turns and we get dizzy'

but where will I find my own one liners?

Uncle Bob Dylan

We used to dream of changing the axis

About which the world spins.

Sitting upon worn out seats

Staring upward authoritatively.

I no longer sit,

I kneel.

I no longer dream

But concede.

“At 20 years a socialist,

40 a ‘right’ ‘winged’ ‘capitalist’.”

I no longer need to predict

Because I’ve learnt to think victory of defeat.

I laugh at childhood photos

And forget to cry.

Retrospect knows no regrets.

Whilst the kind old owl

Eyes the weaker prey,

I read newspapers for knowledge

Not insight.

I’m old and know everything

About nothing and I,

Dreamed aloud of silly things

'til old, white-flagged,

I died.

Widow

And the widow kneels by a familiar tombstone

Gingerly, like an arthritic saint.

She wears no watch, burdens no appointments,

The future needn't exist.

She lives her days like it was 40 years passed,

Forever walking with her long lost companion.

The stone and its distant owner may have faded

But the memories are crisp and sharp.

Washed clean with each day she wakes.

See her dreaming shadow, hear her muffled speech

A stranger in a world that's rushed right past her,

Left her waiting at the station.

With nothing more than an afterthought,

I watch her from afar.

Over a desert sunset

A page starts small and idle.

A worker packs up his case on level 2,

His leaving coincides with an upturned lip.

And in this now active room

Realisation seems near

And the confusion which

Coexists with our day to day stumblings

Doesn't matter.

Because happiness is the place reached

Where the confusion,

Night and day,

Anniversaries,

Deadlines

Cease to exist and we find ourselves

Drifting amongst waves

No longer able to see the executive lights

on the foreshore.

For all that's said about life,

After all,

Lets not avoid the scope

of what I'm talking about...

Life...

It seems the jungle is yet to grow

From the seeds long since planted in the desert.

Life is like a suitcase of impossible shopping lists...

Most time is spent fucking with the combination locks.

Greater-Life

Ever wonder if you're heading in the right direction?

If the horizon before you isn't the diluted scene of your rearview?

The words spent thinking about the distance fill the wasted time of the present?

And I left an extra line in the hope of self-analysis.

Perhaps you're like me,

Sitting around, waiting until age, to spit out reasons to lost regrets.

Beckoning death until proclaiming life limitless.

Do you find your gaze drifting, late at night?

Staring at blank ceilings that seem to yield more than countless books.

"It's better to regret something you did, than something you didn't do."

and I keep appropriating without demonstrating.

Is "Greater-Life" nothing more than a baited lure on a rusty hook?

Seven Single

Today I felt alone,
But at least I'm not the only one

"Alone...listless..."

"I'm all by myself"

"Up here in my tree"

"Alone, overlooking rooftops"

"I will light the match this morning

so I won't be alone"

"It's hard to believe that there's nobody out there

It's hard to believe that I'm all alone"

"Why doesn't anyone believe in loneliness?"

As I walked home, following my shadow,

Ducking frosty winds

lashing huddled trees,

I decided to write a poem

about my thoughts.

Now I realise others have done the job for me.

"Lonely as I am...

together we cry".

Love Song #1039

Bridges were set ablaze
with a smashed up dinner set
and a wine-soaked shirt.
Now the cigarette in her mouth
stands in for the fire that has long burnt out
And the booze he now pours
fills whole the glass, not his empty chest.

So she dances with another puppet
And he runs away from heart-strings
Because the flame that flickered
reflections in their eyes,
shivered when she bled
and burnt out when they cried.
And longing words go unspoken...

Through gritted teeth...

I am trying to be a poet.

A dignified, dignitary, pursuing the truth in a world of inconsistencies.

I am trying to exist on a different plane.

I am an artist of the words,

A craftsman in progress.

I am too busy

McCavity Revisited

Nothing but a clock and the cat

to keep me company,

The arms of sleep can wait.

Whilst I sit and idly stare past you, as if your presence doesn't exist

A smile paints itself on my face...

As slippery a bar of soap as existence may be,

sometimes it feels good to sink the teeth in

and sit just lapping it up like a hungry kitten to long-expired milk.

Click.

My neck swings round like a self-closing door

And I'm looking at you.

Will you drink from the same milk, taste the flesh of existence?

Breathe long and hard in an effort to scare yourself awake?

Can you look me in my two fixed eyes

And mimic my gaze?

Like your forgotten child leaping from the highest jump-rock

Splash into a now which you've only window-watched,

Jumping to weightlessness

And immediacy,

Whilst I keep staring a scorching hole through your forehead.

Lick the soap and drink the milk

Before the words end, and

Click.

I'm staring into space again.

I love days spent sitting around doing nothing

Thinking everything

Lying, waiting for sleep to coax your eyelids downward

Knowing you are different from who you were this morning,

From here on in...

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Reflection Statement

In a tunnel that seems endless is a collection/conglomeration of poems that seek to question the society from which they arose. The majority of the questions asked in this collection of poetry centre on aspects such as relationships, the world, myself-the author and the existing relationships between these three spheres in all levels of interaction. Following is a summary of the intentions and aims of the collection, the intended responder/audience to the poems, an explanation of the poetry's course of creation (sighting the influences of independent research), as well as a critique of the poems within the collection. The journey from poetic conception to completion will consequentially be examined taking into account artistic developments and their relationship with the independent research shown in the major work journal.

In creating my major work I concentrated on the idea of questioning how we, as a society view and interact with the world, and how, on a personal level, I mentally and physically interact with the world around. In questioning and deconstructing in this fashion the major work would thematically parallel and resemble elements of both the English Advanced Course and the English Extension course. Essentially, the area of the English Advanced Course that I set out to further explore was the concept of 'changing perspectives'. Through *In a tunnel that seems endless*, which analyses various theoretical and practical situations within the world around, my own perspectives were able to be realised through the medium of poetry, and I was also able to explore the perspectives of other people in relation to myself. In relating to my English Extension course, which dealt with postmodernism, I found my poetry and thoughts to often coincide with the deconstructing, ideologically questioning natures of postmodern thought, whilst also exploring postmodern techniques such as

appropriation. The collection as a whole resembles many postmodern traits, whilst at the same time incorporating ideas and poetic devices exhibited by T.S. Eliot, e.e. Cummings and other historically 'great' poets.

The focus and aim of my major work is essentially to deconstruct and examine the world through the medium of poetry. Initially the path of poetry was taken in order to challenge and examine my love of words. The resulting examination of my initial ideas concentrates on questioning myself, the world, relationships, myself and the world and myself in relationships. More specifically, once the creation process evolved, my poetry ended up concentrating on the deconstruction of popular music, parental ideology, 'traditional' poetry, cultural constructs and my own thought processes.

It is difficult to ascertain the implied responder for my major work. I sincerely hope that the poems are broad and interpretative enough to appeal to people of all ages, however I suspect that people my own age may be able to identify with some poems more due to the use of intertext involving popular song lyrics. When composing the poetry itself it was a mixture of writing out of self-discovery, in an Emily Dickenson, confessional style and writing as a form of communication in a preaching manner.

The relationship between *In a tunnel that seems endless* and the impact of my individual research is evident in many of the resulting ideas and techniques employed within the collection. Primarily investigated within my research were song lyrics (which provided a familiar diving board into poetry), varied poems, readings of critical analysis, researching of poetic forms and an investigation into the attributes of poetry. The impact of the investigation into song lyrics is obvious in poems such as 'Greater-Life' and 'Seven Single' where lyrics from popular songs have been

appropriated into the text, creating a postmodern High/Pop culture dismissal of higher discourses. The influence of song lyrics is also evident in 'Uncle Bob Dylan' and 'Love Song #1039' where the views of Dylan in his lyrics have been questioned as well as the acknowledged acceptance of the countless love songs that have been produced. Readings of poetry and criticism has led to a questioning of accepted poetic ideals. This can be seen in 'Where I need to be' (focused primarily on literary criticism), 'Through gritted teeth' and 'words, words, words'. The researching of poetic forms has come from the books 'How to Write Poetry', 'The Teachers and Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms', 'The Practice of Poetry', 'Writing For Your Life', 'The Writing of Poetry' and 'Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?'. The impact of these books upon my major work has resulted in my realisation of the personally restrictive qualities behind the obedience of a set poetic form. Despite this, there are many poetic forms that apply to my poetry. These include the Abstract Poem ('Where I need to be'), the Blues Poem ('Uncle Bob Dylan'), the Satire, the Cento, Free Verse, the Lyric, the Allegory ('Widow') and the Quatrain ('words, words words'). The Sonnet is also integrated into some of the works within the collection ('Reflections', 'Widow' 'Love Song #1039'), however only the 14-line structure of the form were employed in the execution of the poems.

The investigation into the attributes of poetry has mainly come from 'How to Read a Poem and fall in Love with Poetry'. Within this text are many varied viewpoints on how to create and receive a poem, many ideas correlating with my own poetry. Notions such as 'The message in a bottle is a lyric poem and thus a special kind of communiqué. It speaks out of a solitude to a solitude; it begins and ends in silence' and 'Poetry is a voicing, a calling forth, and the lyric poem exists somewhere in the region-the register- between speech and song. The words are waiting to be

volcalized' assume a position similar to that exhibited within *In a tunnel that seems endless*, and the act of delving into the various roles that poetry can play aided in my own development of fresh poetic ideas.

The language features and poetic devices employed in order to perpetuate my desired meaning are varied and at times diverse. Some of the vehicles of communication used include experimentation with rhythm, allusion to the media and pop culture, the use of imagery, appropriation of the sonnet form, stream of consciousness writing, shifting perspectives, extended metaphor and adaptation from the works of other poets. Subversion of form is also used, in particular within 'Uncle Bob Dylan' whereby the form of a Blues Poem is subverted to create something of an 'anti-protest' poem in response to Dylan and his contemporaries aging in a corporate fashion.

The usage of rhythm within *In a tunnel that seems endless* is in many cases very important to the poetry and its intended meaning. Drawing on my experience as a musician, I tried to incorporate the rhythm of song lyrics and everyday life into the poems to enhance meaning. Also providing increased meaning within the poetry is the imagery within the collection. The imagery is often unexpected and stretches from domesticity and urban imagery to natural images - an example of this is evident in 'Over a desert sunset'. The method of adopting different personas and perspectives in order to achieve meaning is evident in 'Halfway between the crib and the stars (with apologies to Fatboy Slim)', in which the aging of a girl is used in order to portray an everlasting hope and 'Brother', which explores different family member's reactions to an event. Poetic ideas adopted from other poets are evident in 'Over a desert sunset', which has an e.e. Cummings pace and juxtaposition of ideas, whilst 'McCavity

Revisited' mimics T.S. Eliot's cat poems and use of unexpected similes (eg. "The sky... A patient etherized).

The creative journey accompanying *In a tunnel that seems endless* encountered many problematic periods of writers block, and word dissection, which often contributed to the length of time a poem would take to reach its completion. The position of words within the poems and analysis of the words in a context and as individual signs meant that many drafts had to be produced and much poetic tinkering had to take place. The minimalist nature of the majority of the poetry saw increased emphasis placed on each word's meaning. The rhythm within each work and ultimate creation of poetry with a distinctive yet slightly interpretative meaning was the primary objective in the collection's production. Reading the poems aloud and showing them to other people proved to be the most reliable way of discerning whether the collection achieved its aim in saying what I wanted it to say.