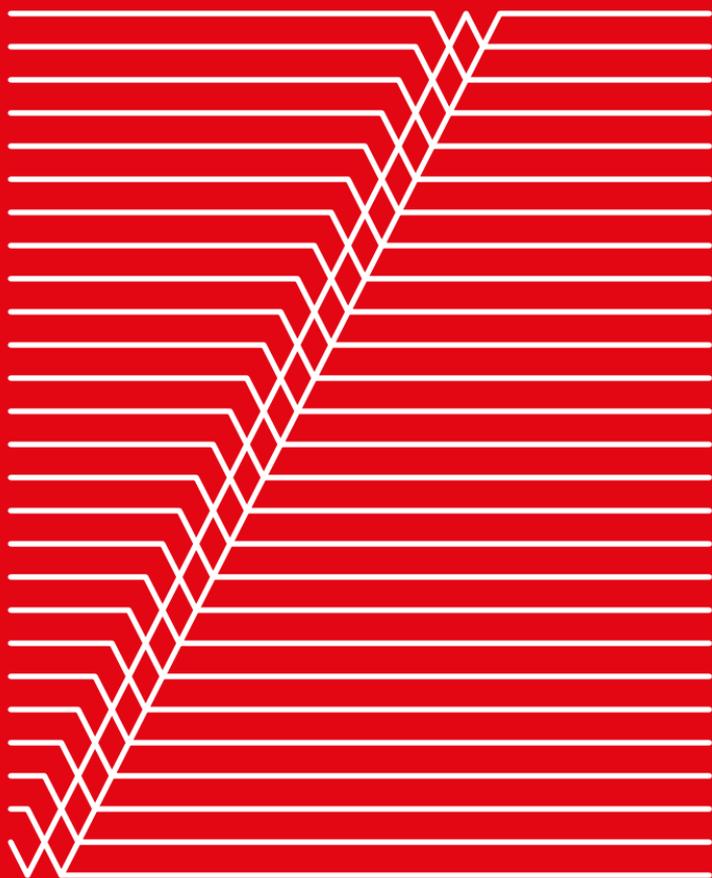


**Woven Words**  
**Poems by The Weavers**



## **Woven Words**

A Collection of Poems by The Weaver Family —  
Marion, Robin, Camilla, Lawrence and Toby Weaver

Edited by Lawrence Trevelyan Weaver

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*For Camilla*

# Contents

	OPENERS
4	Old Battersea Bridge
5	Il Lamento di Vincenzo
6	Come Nearer Me
7	Anglo-Saxon Poem
	REFLECTIONS AND MEMORIES
10	West Loch Tarbert
11	Loup Lyric
12	The Wave
13	The Grass
14	To the Sea
15	Bonfire Night
16	Soul Food
17	Fugent Thoughts
18	Spanish Siesta
19	Social Media
20	A Day I'll Remember
21	Sitting in a Room
22	On Seeing the Parthenon
23	Monsoon
25	The Fairy
28	Stone Letter Cutting
	COMIC, CRYPTIC AND CURIOUS
30	Three Clerihews and a Limerick
31	Four Limericks
32	Haikus for Four Seasons
33	Birds, Teeth and Nits
34	Mr Sausage
	EPIC AND NARRATIVE
36	On the Trail of the Holy Grail
42	Thespian Therapy
45	Epitaph to a Princess
	FAMILY AND CHRISTMAS
48	Christmas 2012
49	Christmas Treasure Hunt
51	Returning Home
52	My Mum
53	Marion's Christmas
	CLOSERS
56	Writing Poems
57	Elusive
58	Apology

# Openers

## **Old Battersea Bridge**

*After James Whistler*

Nocturne wears an evening coat  
turns warehouses into palaces  
and oil lamps into jewels

Slips through the shipyard gates  
she curls beneath the masts  
while they clink and drift asleep

She dresses in the water now  
leaves velvet ink on the surface  
and an oarsman who traces it

beneath Battersea Bridge to a flame  
that ascends and explodes  
Nocturne: blue and gold

RLW

## Il Lamento di Vincenzo

In olive groves and cedar glades, around an Umbrian pool  
I spied three women swimming in waters deep and cool  
They glided, frisked and bobbed about  
Like perch and bream and rainbow trout

A shoal of brightly coloured scales  
Of waspish hues and painted nails  
A trio of aquatic graces  
In after-sun with smiling faces

I stood entranced beneath the bowers  
Amidst the herbs and fragrant flowers  
What joyous sight, my heart was singin'  
To see three Simmon women swimmin'

LTW

## Come Nearer Me

'Oh candle, candle in the corner  
If I get near you will I be warmer?'  
'Oh yes, oh yes', it cried with haste  
'I shouldn't let you go to waste'

'Oh what do you mean?' the boy said quickly  
As this was getting a wee bit sickly  
'Not sickly, not sickly, but ever so sweet'  
And the boy considered and took a seat

'But Oh but Oh, what kind of sweet?  
Like sugar and honey with shredded wheat?'  
'Oh no, Oh no', the candle chuckled  
'You are as sweet as honeysuckle'

'But am I cute, am I cute?' the boy enquired  
'Oh yes' said the candle but she was getting tired  
'Just come closer, come close and look at me  
If you are closer you are warmer. See!'

'Yes, but how cute, but how cute', he met her stare  
'Oh just as cute as a Koala bear'  
'Oh but smart, but smart, or am I thick?'  
'Come here, I'll tell you'; and he fell for her trick

Closer and closer and nearer he came, and...  
She wickedly grinned and engulfed him in flame  
There's a moral to learn and I'll tell you it firstly:  
Female candles are often blood thirsty

MSW

## Anglo-Saxon Poem

*With apologies to Thomas Gray*

Birds wheel back, brush and fret the sky  
Cattle call, come milk-heavy to the byre  
Whilst lowering light leaves soft shadows  
Covering up the confined dead

Stand I now solitary, sad-thinking - for  
Once were hamlets here, bright and joy-filled  
Men ploughed, and picked their crops  
Folk sang the songs the skylarks wrote  
Their high hopes, hazards, loss  
Unwritten, unsung, under earth they lie

Once children climbed this canopy of trees  
Played, or pressed their faces to this pleasant earth  
Nothing, neither gravestone nor a cross  
No, only leaf mould marks them now

Who will know their song, or weigh their deeds?  
Only the good Lord, whose goodness  
Enters all who him embrace  
Let us live our lives in his light

CRW



# Reflections and Memories

## West Loch Tarbert

A freight ship bellows round the Gigha sound  
into a loch  
where crab creels gather lichen  
where fish flicker through a porous jetty  
It rears against the sun  
shadow licking the edge  
of the afternoon, anymore  
and its belly will rip on shingle  
belching whisky amongst the rock-pool wreckage  
of countless nights from Kilberry to Aberdeen

But it glides starboard  
neatly folding sea into loch  
pulling sunlight to its retreating stern  
Two children run screaming into the shallows  
and the swell greets them as Russian prodigies -  
salty summersaults  
in a flooded stadium  
Then the waves wrench them out;  
and they're just a couple'a local kids  
spluttering by a loch by the sea

RLW

## Loup Lyric

With table clear and pen in hand  
I search my mind for cogent words  
That catch my mood. Outside the birds  
Like bobbing kites above the sand  
Catch my eye; the way they fly

The loch, the hills, above, the sky  
A slice of blue, of grey and green  
Framed by the window, a pacific scene  
Of poetic calm and tranquillity  
Intruded now by the grumbling sound  
Of the Islay ferry, outward bound

A swallow flies into the shed  
Glides from the sky with a graceful swoop  
Through open doors. The fledglings fed  
She soars again, over the roof of Loup

Like Bede's image of a sparrow's flight  
Through a lighted hall, so briefly seen  
Out of the night and through the light  
To be for ever, never to have been

LTW

## The Wave

Down here conflict is the endless message  
but up above feathered birds fly in peace  
unfettered, untroubled by our baggage

Cloud formations roll over earth and stone  
and forgotten forests are soaked by rain,  
creaking, murmuring, content and alone

The crest of some far-away ocean wave  
rises and is caught by the sun's keen eye  
which casts a beam and sets it ablaze

If this wave swallowed humankind  
then spat it out anew  
would we do it all again this time?

RLW

## The Grass

Alive – and sixty-nine – I mowed the grass  
And at each pass, I stood  
I stood and rested on my scythe  
Both sad and glad to be alive  
Saddened by the close of day  
Pleased by the smell of new-cut hay  
Such was my sweet and sorrow mood

But life is good – I take the rake  
And sweep the swathe before me  
I wish I could, like swallows wield  
In zig-zags flight above the field  
But though I shall not ever fly  
I know that should tonight I die  
The garden grass is cut and dry

LTW

## To the Sea

Take my hand and come with me  
I'll lead you to a better place  
Slow your step, brake your pace  
Step off the mill, let go the race

See the leaves, smell the sea  
Shed your shoes, let down your hair  
Feel the sand beneath your feet  
Bare; its gently warming heat

Running through the flickering trees  
To the beach, the balmy breeze  
Floods the lungs near to choke  
Spume, spray, salt, shock, soak

To the ankles, then the knees  
Deeper, further, by degrees  
Beneath the waves, through azure blue  
Swim hand in hand, just me and you

LTW

## Bonfire Night

The Broads are flattened by fog tonight  
working its way into the cogs of a windmill  
persuading it into another year of sleep  
before prostrating across the canals

Wild geese bob by the long grass  
chattering in the reticent dark  
while the silhouette of a cow blurs in the murk  
her underbelly waiting for the first dew

Then: defiant door bangs open on derelict barge  
a pandora's box from where tinny speakers scream  
and drunken teenagers lurch, as rockets pop  
the sky is lit, the maddened fog retreats

Only when a fireball crashes into the shallows  
and honking geese take flight  
do these frenzied folk pause, breathe,  
and remember they are guests

RLW

## Soul Food

I watch the barge rotate  
sending headlights leaping through trees  
to apartments where  
they become the glow of my anticipation  
displayed across balconies and stone  
before dropping into dark water  
the barge completes its turn

The next morning  
you wake before coffee and croissants  
and I know that your anticipation  
is also alive  
when you open the curtains  
and I see you poised  
in the burgeoning light

The butter melts  
amongst finished flakes of pastry  
as we cycle  
towards southern mountains  
where we plunge into tunnels  
where stray sun rays are lightning bolts  
whipping the road in pursuit

We come in search of soul food  
to the space-time of the mountains

RLW

## Fugent Thoughts

Lying idly on the sofa after tea  
I tossed the paper carelessly aside  
Stared listless at the window blind  
And left the day behind. The more I tried  
To still my brain, to stem the race  
Of fugent thoughts, to hear no sound  
Beside the ticking clock; in its place  
There came these words to fill my mind

LTW

## Spanish Siesta

We stand in an empty town square  
stared at by naked white walls  
in flames from the sun  
Closed shutters  
sealed doors  
drowsy places  
The houses turn their backs on us  
Moorish in metaphor  
they are sleeping  
We have not met this heat before  
we are blinded by white light  
alone with sleeping cats

But they do exist  
behind closed doors  
surrendering to an inner living  
Hushed voices in the heat  
tip-toe on the tiles  
reaching for the dark  
They move quietly through their homes  
pattering through inner courtyards  
but always hand-in-hand with the shade  
They leave their bodies dead on mattresses  
or sprawled upon chairs  
eyes unseeing the slow-moving fans

Now the heat is gone  
rested minds pick up lost bodies  
They come alive to meet us  
with their warm faces  
We introduce ourselves  
with strange accents and cameras

RLW

## Social Media

Whenever I hear someone fussing, or moan  
That everyone's always glued to their screens  
Often the young, especially the teens  
Whose everyday lives are spent on the phone  
I reflect to myself what they actually need  
Is to carry a book, some paper and pen  
Make a drawing, a sketch, a poem, or read  
Something challenging, pithy, creative and then  
They'll use their own brains, their hands and their eyes  
And after a while have quite a surprise  
In the place of a text, a photo or tweet  
There's a chance to encounter a human, or meet  
Someone for real, to be freed from Netflix  
Exchange living right now, for a series of clicks

LTW

## A Day I'll Remember

When my dad gets out his paper  
I know immediately I'll be bored  
He gives a small but predictable sigh  
Makes himself a cuppa and sips for a while

Relaxed on a chair, practically moulded  
His black and white paper so perfectly folded  
Without hesitation, in one stage  
He picks up his paper and flicks page to page

This is the moment, the one I dread  
When an alarm bell ring, goes off in my head  
As he reads these stories time goes by  
I beg him to stop, I honestly try  
All of the interest my brain once stored  
Seeps out of my soul and instead I feel bored

The next day, as one might predict  
Down at the table sat the paper addict  
But before he ate muesli from his bowl  
The paper opened its jaws and swallowed him whole

At this response I was quite surprised  
The paper had never attacked me in my life!  
Quite a sad moment, so it would seem  
But at least a change from the daily routine

My dad and his reading was getting intense  
And he never thought of the consequence  
And though I know he wasn't warned  
He should have known – it should have dawned  
So a reminder to you – some things don't play nice  
When you pick up your paper you gotta think twice

MSW

## **Sitting in a Room**

Surrounded by a richness of things  
Accumulated in a life of parts –  
Of medicine, heraldry, history and arts  
Books and files, boxes, take wings  
Fly in my imagination, like darts  
That prick memories; a bell rings  
An image sings of a sweet moment  
Long gone but brought back, of how  
When small I dwelt in rooms  
That wrapped and kept, contained  
Me, and housed objects here now  
Books and chairs, pictures and prints  
Read once in past rooms, sat on or seen  
Now present, there then, existing and been

LTW

## On Seeing the Parthenon

If you like to travel and see classical sites  
Then Greece is the place – an absolute must  
A cure for your restless wanderlust  
With columns and capitols of spectacular heights  
When you've been to Rome, seen Pantheon and tombs  
Of St Peter, Pope Pius, Caesar and Trajan  
Toured Nero's Palace and the Villa of Hadrian  
Touched bones of dead Christians in dark catacombs  
Behold: shattered torsos of dead mortals and gods  
Of emperors with names, and nameless stone bods  
Funereal urns and fragments of pottery  
Surviving exhibits of history's cruel lottery  
But nothing can prepare you for Athens' Acropolis  
The crowning glory of this ancient metropolis

LTW

## Monsoon

It is the night before the Monsoon  
when all of India has finally cracked  
and hums with anticipation:

the crickets chirping louder than usual  
the flies buzzing persistently  
the dogs pacing restlessly

Even the sun lingers in the sky  
before resigning to the moon

Time drags  
and people rest their backs against doorways  
newspapers discarded  
they wait for rain

Only the monkeys on the rooftops see sense  
scampering to find shelter

But at last the water falls and the Monsoon arrives  
India is released and rushes to the rain

\*

It is the night before your arrival  
when all of me has finally cracked  
and hums with anticipation:

my heart beating louder than usual  
my mind buzzing persistently  
my feet pacing restlessly

Ever my eyes linger on the airport gate  
before resigning to the floor

Time drags  
and I rest my back against a wall  
my book discarded  
I wait for you

Only the butterflies in my stomach see sense  
somersaulting in the hope of escape

But at last the gate opens and you arrive  
I am released and rush to you

RLW

## The Fairy

I saw a fairy in my garden  
With wings like whispers and twinkling toes  
On the rhododendrons  
Like a figurine she posed

'Have I arrived at Earth?'  
She asked me as I stared  
She looked around my garden  
The sun caught her golden hair

All I could do was nod  
As this creature peered at me  
'Thank goodness I'm here at last  
On planet Number Three

World of historic heroes!  
Who fought so sincerely  
For equal rights, or spent their lives  
On Philosophical theory

Famous for varied culture'  
She said excitedly  
'Known for its human kindness  
And sustainability'

'These stories predate all', I said  
'My experience of man  
As for historic heroes -  
Do you mean the Kardashians?

Ah yes, we're culture lovers!  
I'm planning to move to Rome  
But after doing five hundred forms  
I'll be too old before I go!

I told her of our airports  
That search us and make sure  
There's nothing bad going on  
'We feel much more secure'

The fairy looked perplexed  
She raised a questioning brow  
'I don't want my body searched  
I want to see Rome now!

But I'm blessed to see a planet  
That is so far ahead  
On earth you can live for ever  
To a hundred before you're dead'

'You've got that right' – I said  
'My gran's reached ninety three  
But when she talks about the olden days  
The world sounds much more free'

I showed off our inventions -  
'Our improvements never stop  
But to make our iPhone Xs  
The Amazon got chopped

There's many tons of wasted food  
Our temperature's too high  
Greenland's melting, it does no good  
To use fossil fuels to drive'

The fairy shook her head  
'No one's kept me in the know  
When you live light years away my friend  
News often travels slow

I don't think I should stay here  
Goodbye, So long, Good Day  
I know of a new planet  
In a galaxy far away

In a parallel universe  
Where you're all rewound in time  
When living with less you humans  
Found that things were fine'

I saw a fairy in my garden  
With wings like a shiny firefly  
She didn't want to stay on earth  
So she waved and said Goodbye

MSW

## Stone Letter Cutting

Hand on chisel, eye on stone  
Tungsten steel meets pristine slate  
A brief encounter, an incisive stab,  
Sense intense in a place alone  
Just stone and chisel, eye and brain  
Work as one to fabricate  
A single letter of graceful form  
A thousand cuts until it's done  
And then the next, and next, again

LTW

# Comic, Cryptic and Curious

### Three Clerihews and a Limerick

Capability Brown, or Lancelot  
Found little time to dance a lot  
Preferring digging by far  
He invented the ha-ha

Lawrence of Arabia  
When older thought maybe a  
'Nother spell in the sun  
Wouldn't be such fun

The grand mufti of Smyrna  
Was an accomplished wood-turner  
He preferred sculpting bowls  
To saving souls

There was a young lady from Muker  
Who married a man you forsook her  
For a girl from Shoreditch  
Who was exceedingly rich  
And also a very good-looker

LTW

## Four Limericks

A pious young Scot, Robbie Burns  
Kept his relative's ashes in urns  
When asked for the reason  
He hoped in due season  
They'd enjoy 'Many Happy Returns'

Said Lizzie 'Pray give up your clowning'  
As beer after beer he kept downing  
'Just give it a rest  
For I'm nary impressed  
Desist or my name isn't Browning'

Euripedes, one of the Greeks  
Could hold your attention for weeks  
But old Aristophanes'  
Bawdy cacophonies  
Brought quite a blush to your cheeks

A poet who sharpened his wit well  
Wore trousers too baggy to fit well  
'But what does it matter?'  
He said, 'When I am fatter  
They surely will help me to Sit well'

TRW

## Haikus for Four Seasons on an East London Rooftop

Morning's pinkish tint  
Hangs across a rising sky  
We emerge for tea

\*

The rooftop is hot  
We are sticky gummy bears  
Lying belly up

\*

Leaves swirl below  
Up here the gathering wind  
Stirs only ash trays

\*

*Marquis'* punters  
Toast a merry christmas cheer  
We pray: *silent night*

RLW

## Birds, Teeth and Nits

There are many types of snipes  
But fewer skua  
A great deal of teal  
Look more like widgeon than pigeon  
But the capercaillie is maybe  
The prettiest of birds  
Its tail is bright yellow  
And so are its turds

LTW

I use a brush to clean my teeth  
It makes a gentle whirring hum  
First the top ones, then beneath  
Tickly bristles sweep my gum  
Of tartar, gunk and bits of peas  
To rid my mouth of tooth disease

LTW

Oh horrible, horrible, horrible nits  
You stupid creatures, you brainless gits  
You're fast and tiny, impossible to catch  
So I itch and I wheeze and I tug and I scratch!

They pass to your mum, your dad and brother  
They go from one head and onto another  
Vice versa and versa vice  
Oh why, oh why was I cursed with head lice!

MSW

## Mr Sausage

There is no reason why  
A sausage falling from the sky  
Should hit my head and say  
'It's a lovely sunny day today'

I never could work out why –  
The sausage that hit my head  
Never introduced himself...  
And got squashed by a car instead!

He was bandaged up, put in a van  
And driven to a sausage doctor  
Who bewilderingly said,  
He should be kept in bed  
Then taken to the royal proctor

The proctor helped Mr Sausage  
Say his prayers in the religious den  
As Mr Sausage was a devout man  
And wanted advice from the almighty. Amen

The whole nation  
Called for an investigation  
Kings and queens helped too  
Why did this criminal run over him?  
When, why and who?

But we will cut a long story short  
To end with his treacherous fate  
After all his adventures, sins and good deeds  
I ate him off my plate!

MSW

# Epic and Narrative

## **On the Trail of the Holy Grail**

*Or Summer Holiday 2015*

Come gather round, you boys and girls  
To hear this epic tale  
Of how the Weavers spent their hols  
In search of the Holy Grail  
A journey South from rain to sun  
From dark to light, from toil to fun  
They waved goodbye to Rachel Munn  
And into grey skies set sail

Soon 'sconced in Hotel Constantinopoli  
An oasis of calm in frantic Napoli  
They shed their jumpers and woolen socks  
For summer shorts and skimpy frocks  
And with pallid skins and shaven thighs  
In a sparkling pool 'neath cloudless skies  
A site to excite Italian eyes  
They frolicked and splash-ed happily

Through jagged blocks and wild graffiti  
(Not fine hewn stone, but drab concreti)  
Wound the Circum-Vesuviana  
In a gently curve, like a green banana  
The trundling train to Herculaneum  
(A Roman town on the Mediterranean)  
Bore the party on its way  
To the ancient city on the Bay

To seek the Holy Grail by rail  
May somehow seem how you should not  
But pray remember before you wail  
That it was dusty, dry and hot  
Rested the four by the still clear water  
Gazed out over the deep blue sea  
Ate prosciutto, pizza and panna cotta  
With a distant view of the Isle of Capri

From terra firma, or Italian soil  
They climbed onto the hydrofoil  
With wild hopes and gleeful thoughts  
Just like the ancient Argonauts  
They sailed into the Tyrrhenian Sea  
To the Island of Ischia, not Capri

Behind shrank Mount Vesuvius  
Its lava cold and dry  
Before rose the cliffs of Ischia  
Sharp and rough and high

Arriving as the heavens were opening  
Down came such a mass of water  
That fell in torrents, thick and soaking  
On mother, father, son and daughter  
So leapt into a camione  
And through the raging rain to Panza  
No faster than a cart and pony  
So ends this short mid-story stanza

Down marble steps to a secret grotto  
Wide-eyed, whispering voce sotto  
Where cerulean waters flow from thermal springs  
The current bore them as if on wings  
To a deep and steaming blue lagoon  
Oval shaped and very womby  
Its dome above alike a tomb  
But feeling very much more roomy  
There they swam in a perfect circle  
Thinking about Angela Merkel  
(Who when not leading the German Nation  
Comes to Ischia for her vacation)

But now there'll be an interlude  
To tell you what they ate  
All the lovely sorts of food  
They piled upon their plate -  
Zuppa di mare and battered zucchini  
Insalada verde con tomata bruschetta  
Pasta vongole and a peach Bellini  
Pizza margherita with olives and feta  
You can picture it all with veri-similitude  
The laden tables, groaning with food

The sun was up, the solar rays  
Had fast dispelled the misty haze  
That hangs beneath the peaks of Ischia  
And makes the mornings much more mistier  
But mark you, readers, what happened next  
Keep your eyes upon the text  
The plan was that the four should go  
Across the sea to San Angelo

The anchor was weighed, the boat set sail  
Once more on the trail of the Holy Grail  
A soft sweet breeze blew through their hair  
The scent of seaweed filled the air  
Over the water without a care  
Forward it bore the family foursome  
A scene to behold that was truly awesome  
The passage over couldn't have been fleetier  
O mirabile cosa, O dolce vita

But from Punta Chiarito to Ischia Porta  
They went by road and not by water  
A rattling ride in an autobus  
By the mountainous route to their terminus  
Super-vito, multi-curvy  
Crazy traffic, very swervy  
Enough to make you very nervy  
They wished the journey had been shorter

So rested the four at Trattoria Fontana  
And ate a dish of carbonara  
Before re-embarking upon their ride  
Over bay by boat to the other side  
And as they crossed the harbour sound  
Into choppy waters, Amalfi-bound  
Above them hung the merciless sun  
Below them lurked the fabled fearful one  
Which even seasoned seamen shun

In the cold and fathomless deep  
Where the slimy krakens sleep  
And Neptune sits upon his throne  
Of silver-studded precious stone  
There broods the one-eyed monstrous gorgon  
With a hundred tentacles and a massive organ  
In an eerie emerald watery palace  
Guarding the eternal secret chalice  
Enclosed by a jewel-encrusted lid  
In which the Holy Grail is hid

But all at once the sky grew dark  
Blacker than black, but for a spark -  
A tiny spot of luscious light  
Lit up the blackness of the night  
And a sighing sound of sirens singing  
Of cymbals clashing and bells aringing  
Soon grew into a woeful wail  
'Hear me' - the voice of the Holy Grail!

The wind had dropped and the ship lost motion  
Like a painted ship on a painted ocean  
And then above the tiny spark  
That hung ahigh the wretched barque  
The sacred bird that sailors admire  
Its wings aglow, as if on fire -  
The Neapolitan Albatross  
Shone out like a blazing golden cross

The fiery bird then slowly rotated  
Its wings and feet bizarrely conflated  
And soon it was spinning, head to heel  
Like a giant flaming Catherine wheel  
Surely this must have been an omen  
A sign to simple men and women  
To the poor, the sick, the old and frail  
To follow the trail to the Holy Grail?

The very deep did rot, Oh Christ  
That ever this should be  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea  
And like a star the blazing bird  
Traversed the indigo sky  
They watched in awe, without a word  
As it hovered above Amalfi  
Aloft the Hotel Santa Caterina  
(With its swimming pool and blue marina  
That once belonged to Signora Gambardella  
Great-aunt of Camilla and Serena)  
Allegro, vivace, adagio, andante  
The trail had led to Camilla's great-auntie!

Then on a balcony entwined by vines  
With fragrant herbs and bougainvillia  
They chatted happily of ancient times  
Of tutti persona in grande familia  
On a gift of a ceramic painted dish  
Decorated with a four-finned fish  
In sparkling letters of bright acrylic  
Were engraved tiny letters hieroglyphic  
Palpable dots much more like Braille  
A clue to the secret of the Holy Grail  
A cypher spelt out in cryptic code  
Foretelling the future in days of old

And so concludes this epic fable  
Played out beside the Bay of Naples  
I must confess without false modesty  
That twas a truly heroic odyssey -  
To follow the trail of the Holy Grail  
By air and ship and road and rail

Thus they took the train to Rome  
And then by Ryanair, safely home  
Where on the sideboard sits the platter  
For all the world to see  
But what the words mean is another matter  
That remains a mystery

LTW

## Thespian Therapy

In the theatre he lay like a mummy  
They sawed a long gash in his tummy  
As they put him to bed  
He could hear what they said  
When he knows what they've done he'll say 'lummy'

Twice a day they came by with a pin  
They said 'just to puncture your skin'  
Each dressed like a Druid  
Was armed with a fluid  
He either took out or put in

The nurses, all busy, some grim  
Soon showed their impatience of whim  
He got the impression  
Each day or night session  
They couldn't be bothered with him

These nurses seemed somewhat affeared  
To watch the old man grow a beard  
They said it was scruffy  
And got rather huffy  
Reaction he found rather weird

By a catheter tethered in dock  
Each leg in a lillywhite sock  
By some kind of gnosis  
To scupper thrombosis  
The bed was as hard as a rock

After giving him gallons of tea  
They woke him at twenty past three  
He would happily throttle  
The nurse with her bottle  
'Now prove that you're able to pee'

Colostomy – don't shed a tear  
They said its quite easy to bear  
They diverted his gut  
(With the normal one shut)  
To a hole in his side from the rear

He reckoned he'd earned a diploma  
For learning to cope with his stoma  
When all's said and done  
It isn't much fun  
For its tiresome but free of aroma

Oncology – next on the list  
With which he must soon make a tryst  
Let's just call it cancer  
A non-life-enhancer  
Of which he must soon get the gist

Of future life chances no gauge  
He cannot foresee the next stage  
Have a good sense of humour  
Don't dwell on your tumour  
Who knows but he'll die of old age?

Chemotherapy – what should he choose?  
He could either say Yes or refuse  
Some said in enhances  
The future life chances  
Decision without many clues

Would side effects follow? They might  
So he finally said 'I'll sit tight  
There's not much to lose  
If I say I refuse  
And no one can know if I'm right

Of anxieties he's had quite a plateful  
For to him such decisions are fateful  
But please be aware  
For their cherishing care  
To his carers he's terribly grateful

TRW

## Epitaph for a Princess

Herein lies the People's Princess  
Who cherished all those in distress  
We mourn for the queen  
That she might well have been  
A damage no words can redress

Diana and Dodi are dead  
And tears the world over are shed  
They travelled to France  
In pursuit of romance  
But only in death were they wed

She was born for a place in the sun  
She sparkled with laughter and fun  
But death was in wait  
And determined her fate  
And she left her last home on a gun

For a mother most tender and warm  
Whose children inherit her charm  
May the papers take heed  
Of the absolute need  
For their souls to be sheltered from harm

Her guide was her own intuition  
She treated her life as a mission  
To help the afflicted  
No longer restricted  
By protocol's dumb inhibition

She bound up the wounds of the torn  
And strove for the sick and forlorn  
The weak she'd embolden  
With sentiments golden  
What a mercy for all she was born

A woman of feeling and grace  
A presence than none can replace  
Her glamour and beauty  
And high sense of duty  
Are a loss to the whole human race

A candle – but also a star  
Di brightened our lives from afar  
Though she'd think it too quaint  
If we called her a saint  
Let nothing her memory mar

On love from the people she throve  
For with people she lived hand in glove  
Her secret mystique  
Was a talent unique  
She knew how to generate love

We hastened her grave to embower  
With bouquets of flower upon flower  
We laid them in banks  
Both to signal out thanks  
And to demonstrate thus people power

The mistress of manifold arts  
She played in her life many parts  
How happy, how tragic  
Bewitched by her magic  
We crown her the Queen of our Hearts

TRW

# Family and Christmas

## Christmas 2012

Silent night, holy night  
All is quiet, all is bright  
Marion's I-phone's blasting out  
Talking to Robin I have to shout  
The phone is ringing yet again  
It must be someone for one of the wains  
Presents to open, all over the floor  
Endless wrapping, what a bore  
But books galore, more and more  
Poetry and novels from window to door

The sun goes down, the light grows thinner  
There's lots to do for Christmas dinner –  
The sprouts need cutting, the turkey stuffing  
I'm so darn tired I can't stop puffing  
Spuds to peel and parsnips to roast  
For a meal that all of us can boast  
Was a co-op effort, a family job  
Around the sink and before the hob

Then come the hour, comes the dish  
A roasted bird (no not a fish)  
With bacon, bangers and sauce of bread  
That many would die for, but be not dead  
Enjoy the feast and toast once more  
Within the walls of the big red door

LTW

## Christmas Treasure Hunt

Pictorial gallops front rough stormy sea  
Above a machine played by different keys  
In this room of laugh and leisure  
Is carefully hidden, golden treasure

Remember a place under renovation?  
With many things made in this creation station  
Amongst the dust is some edible gold  
Where letters and shapes are chiselled in bold

A place for snuggling on special occasions  
The location of many birthday conversations  
When young baby Weavers can't get to sleep  
From under where might monsters creep?

A sleepy-time squeeze of teenagers' snores  
There are not one, but two, opening doors!  
Uncles and aunties and lodgers galore  
Our visiting quarters are total top drawer!

In a room full of jigsaws and marble runs  
Let's watch films, play board games, grow up and have fun  
Around flickering flames, postcards and snaps,  
Colourful baskets and babies on laps

Eating and drinking, it's hardly a sin  
But nothing at all in that bottle of gin  
What will I find in this nice-looking tin?  
It's Christmas! There ain't no need to be thin!

A studious place where one answers questions  
Does secondary projects, or internet sessions  
In the light of the day look for a chapter  
On Thomas Weaver and there-ever-after

An essential machine which groans and grumbles  
Turns and twirls and toils and tumbles  
In this place your gold might be  
Hotted up to a higher degree

Think of the princess of a tiny green veg  
Tucked between mattress' uncomfortably wedged  
Away in a townhouse in a tall brassy bed  
Where would I go to one I've been fed?

Curious clutter and always a mess  
In the first line of a wizard's address  
When you need to pack – go round to the back  
Rummage and search in bright bric-a-brac

MSW

## Returning Home

Turn the familiar corner  
to walk beneath green trees  
and as they sway and stir  
unearth my memories

To walk beneath green trees  
towards where I am from  
unearth my memories  
of where I most belong

Towards where I am from  
I stride with head held high  
to where I most belong  
to a place I deify

I stride with head held high  
and reach the bright red door  
to a place I deify  
I can stray from here no more

I reach the bright red door  
and you greet me in the sun  
I can stray from you no more  
my oh so darling mum!

RLW

## My Mum

On my mum's birthday  
I decided to spend some time  
To celebrate her life and traits  
In basic couplet rhymes

Mum's made marks in the world  
Creative fun and clever  
She wrote, designed, re-worked, refined  
All sorts of great endeavours

A big name in publishing  
A producer of many a great book  
She met a wonderful Cambridge man  
But not a wonderful cook

They made a life for themselves  
And their two incredible kids  
So alongside burnt, black toast  
They watched children's Disney vids

There's reason to be glad  
My mum passed on her genes  
For example, now I am tanned  
Well-spoken, light and lean

And now I can write fluidly  
Born from a literary dynasty  
My art skills are like Van Gough's  
As a daughter to an artistic boff  
Mum can serve from high and low  
So my sports skills are semi pro

But the most important thing you'll find  
Is my mum's graceful, modest and kind  
By good grace it'll come to be  
That these good traits rub off on me

MSW

## Marion's Christmas 2012

With mounting excitement we emptied dad's socks  
A face mask, a walnut, an egg-shaped box

We leapt out of bed, had melon to eat  
We went out with scarves and boots on our feet

Bored of sharing our new career jargon  
We grumbled our way to the botanical garden

A circuit we went, not stopping at the station  
Our measured steps hiding secret anticipation

In a race we got home, threw ourselves through the door  
Sprinted upstairs and there on the floor

Under the sweet-smelling tree lay our presents  
New shoes and a purse, a book by a pheasant

Serena and Mike, Juliet and Kris  
Jules et Jim, I'll give that a miss

I should have got Robin some Paco Robane  
Instead of a T-shirt for an extra large man

Dad got socks – they were cool and from Barbour  
Robin made an unfunny comment about a Kindle charger

Mum did her famous swap of books  
We all became chefs under one chief cook

Time and time again the telephone rang  
We listened to One Day by Asaf Avidan

I was moulting and dressed like a yeti  
Dad played devil's advocate 'why not spaghetti'?

He made up a story about why he chose thyme  
For the Christmas pudding, there was also no dime

After we're finished, we'll all watch New Girl  
Mum and Dad'll hate it, we think it's a whirl

Get into pyjamas, make-up still on  
Tomorrow's breakfast is leftovers from Wong

Of past winters I reminisce and remember  
Close my eyes and dream of our next December

MSW

# Closers

## Writing Poems

When trying to learn to write good verse  
I'm tempted to say you couldn't do worse  
Than reading the poems of Siegfried Sassoon  
Of Belloc or Carrol, who aptly lampoon  
The ponderous lines of other great names  
Like Tennyson, Macaulay; even Clive James  
Who mixes allusions to Keats and Shelley  
With whatever he's recently seen on telly  
Is well worth studying to appreciate the craft  
The job of the poet is really hard graft

LTW

## Elusive

Every so often  
You never know when  
All seems perfect  
You pick up your pen  
To catch the moment, then  
It passes. Forgotten

LTW

## Apology

To the reader I owe this apology  
These verses are weak in chronology  
You need not rejoice  
At my personal choice  
They're not meant to form an anthology

TRW

