



Jan B. Hurych

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These verses first appeared in Hurontaria. All pictures are by author

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BOL-37-33

Foreword.

*At the time these poems started to appear in **Hurontaria** literary net magazine (English version), I was only experimenting. True, I wrote many poems before, but it was in Czech language and that was quite different matter. It's rather different to write verses in your native language. The rhymes are easier to come to one's mind, but more important: the poetic part of foreign language cannot be so easily learned when one is already an adult. To express own feelings, it takes extreme skills that can be easily obtained when we are young and still learning. True, one can learn a lot from reading foreign poems, but even more by correcting his own poems. And that art takes years and years, not talking about the art of thinking and feeling "in somebody else's language".*

Well, my beginnings were rather difficult: I took some workshops and used the valuable advices of Saskatoon "writers-in-residence". Unfortunately the one who was a real poet liked my stories more than my poems. Robert was from Wales and I am mentioning here only his first name, just in case he might change his opinion about my poems :-)). To my further confusion, next year we had a lady, story writer, who liked my poems more than my stories! Of course, they might have been just polite to me, but I carried on, experimenting in different forms and styles to their utter desperation, I presume. So blame is only mine . . .

*First **limericks**, as you may know, were written by Irish poet Edward Lear. They soon spread around the Anglo-Saxon world. They have a special rhythm as well as structure and they are mostly of humorous nature. We may sort them into three categories: those we can tell even when there are some ladies present, those from the second group are good when there are no ladies present but still there is some priest, and still others, the real one, are the genuine, sharp limericks. From that point of view, those included here are only the mild ones.*

*Finally, I experimented with some **computer programs**, designed to generate the poetry. They were only 10 percent efficient - I had to throw away 90 percent of poor quality stuff. That is not to say the rest is any good, but they might evoke some thoughts which are rather unusual. After all, those programs use just a random arrangement of some phrases or so it seems.*

*"Haiku snapshots" are written in Japanese style called **haiku** and they are three line poems with 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively, which do not rhyme. They usually have some references to nature, the object Japanese like most, but of course their intent is to create the special mood, invoked by unusual pictures tied together. That's why I called them "snapshots". I did use the computer generation here too, with somehow better results.*

Jan B. Hurych

ILLUSIONS OF LOVE



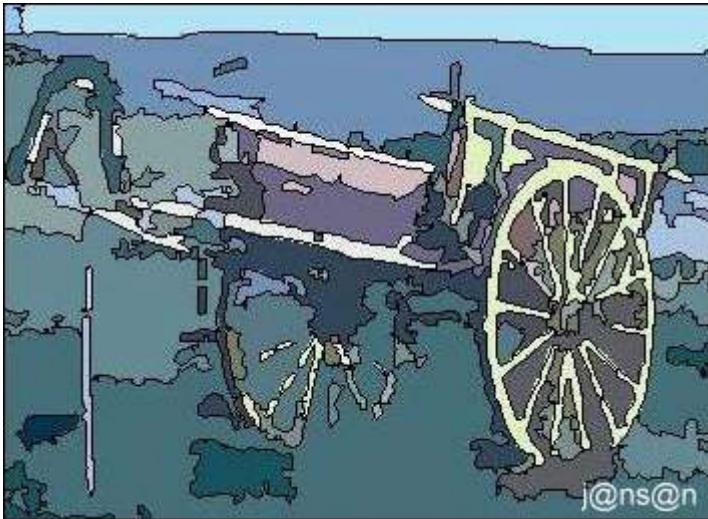
There is the time for joy and sorrow,
the time to lend and time to borrow
yesterday's feelings for tomorrow.
(Then comes confusion -
love is illusion.)

It's passion warms in heavy rain,
to control it we try in vain,
gives little pleasure, lots of pain.
(Remains conclusion:
love is delusion.)

When lost, it turns our heart in stone.
Since we can't bear to live alone,
on happiness we take a loan.
(Lifeblood transfusion -
lover's allusion.)

So comes the end and then fresh start
with promise that we never part.
Being in love is hardly being smart.
(Instead of fusion -
double seclusion.)

THE OLD COACH ROAD



in summer days
we walk our maze
old road by river bend
runs from no place
and has no end

there I lay down
my ear to ground
first I hear nothing
then some sound
they´re passing

hoofs pounding
and loud rumbling
of the wheels
and something tumbling
axes squeals

they´re just passing . . .

BOULEVARD DES SOURCES



To make ends meet
to die, to sleep
last rites, oak coffin
promise to keep
and blessed, blessed are the meek

So dreadful...

Short intermission
endless night
one cheating heart
one hopeless fight
last breath of broken violin
So dreadful...

Custer's last stand
then tearless weep
hello, goodbye
and life is cheap
last sexless climax, body twitch
So dreadful...

...and so wonderful

LUCY

You can meet her
on the boardwalk
she's so young and yet so old
hitchhiking her daily ride
hitchhiking for daily bread

once a beauty
teacher's pet
abandoned by highschool
sweetheart
left in rain she run away
left in pain she run away

then she found
this little harbour
place to raise her little child
when the blessed moment
comes
when the fearful moment
comes

life is unfair
life's a bitch
for the single pregnant mother
has nobody, has no hope
she has not a single hope



in the fear and desperation
for the child to have a home
was the little girl darling
being sold
yes, being sold

but the nights are wet and cold

when somebody
loves somebody
memories won't go away
memories are here to stay

she starts walking
down the boardwalk
every day and every way
giving anything she has
giving only thing she has

you can meet her on the
boardwalk
walking down and down again

heading for the river bend
where the stone will tell her
story
story which will never end:

**HERE RESTS LUCY
WHO LOST IT ALL:
her love
her child
her self.**

THE GREAT ANIMAL FAIR DISASTER

There was a Toronto musician,
who suffered from extreme
ambition:
he wanted to play
at least for one day
at Animal Fair exhibition.

To undertake that noble
mission,
the prepared animal audition,
and gathered them dense
inside wooden fence,
and didn't charge any
admission.

Further this one proposition,
he wrote his own composition.
Introducing culture
into agriculture
he hoped to increase their
fruition.

When he took final position
sure of his novel submission,
all animals present
except for one pheasant
waited for music rendition.



He started his exposition.
Contrary to supposition,
production was bummer
- he was only drummer -
causing common admonition.

In order to show opposition,
cows made sudden
intermission:
with enormous pleasure
released extra measure
of flatulent gases emission.

The horses also in addition
broke down the surrounding
partition,
galloping indeed
in splendid stampede
and causing extreme
demolition.

Quite later the City
commission
wrote up detailed deposition
and simply admitted:
"Music wasn't fitted
for animals' art recognition."

HAIKU SNAPSHOTS



HERE

here in the village
a mourning dove calls
softly
as the morning fades

CITY

men of the city
have no sensitivity
and so become famous

NIGHT

a garden lantern
brushes a shadow of
pines
and old hoot-owl calls.
..

CHIMNEY

a narrow chimney
has only inner beauty
in the sunny afternoon

SUNSET

something in the air
brings surprise to my
vision
as daylight fades

GEESE

low on the mountain
geese by the water
fountain
must be ready to leave
again

GOOD-BYE

light from the bonfire
dancing on the trees
I must keep moving

GIRL

MEN

ridiculous men
are unwilling to grow
up
never means never

BEE

as the busy bee
drifts from flower to
flower
another joins it quietly

MOTH

a white moth flutters
partly hidden in the mist
but this has no meaning

CLOUD

a tiny white cloud
on a breeze that cools
the land.
thoughts of the good
life come

MAIDEN

the wading maiden
bathes calmly every
morning
sinking and rising

SPARROW

the hungry sparrow
seems to be looking for
food
and sings as time goes
by

PEACH

the last peach blossom
dances quickly on the
wind
by the garden near the
pond

near the silent woods
a young girl swims in
circles
in white water lilies...

FLOWERS



She brought me flowers.
I was stunned,
surprised,
then shocked
and puzzled, too.

For just a moment,
maybe few,
I wondered what it was.
What I have ever done
to deserve that?

Such offence, even ridicule!
I took the bouquet,
still quite mad,
I looked at her
and asked the simple question:

Why?

She smiled and gently touched my hand.

"It used to be a privilege of men,"
she said. "Not any more.
I also want to tell you
I'm in love."

CANADIAN LIMERICKS



MONKIE DO

There was an abstinent monk,
who never was seen to be drunk.
Whole year he was sober,
except for October,
when he drunk and then sunk in his bunk.

LAWS OF PHYSICS

Physicist from old Nipissing,
religion was strictly dismissing,
So devil took his soul,
his body went black hole,
and he shrunk, but he wasn't missing.

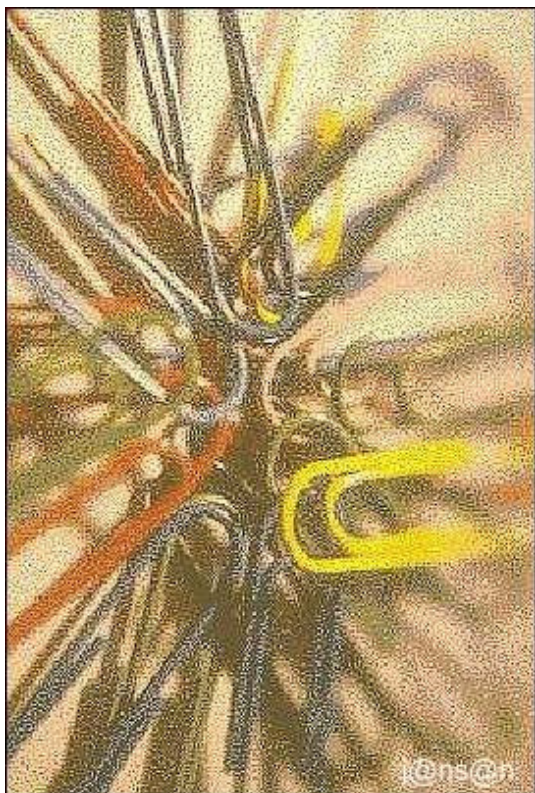
NO DEAL

Sick Charlie who couldn't heal,
promised God he woudn't steal.
But when he recovered,
he quickly discovered:
I'm no more sick - forget the deal!

OLD JIM

On his property Jimmy took hold
and he suddenly discovered gold.
He said: All that treasure
would not give me pleasure,
because for pleasures I'm too old.

COMPUTER GENERATED POETRY (1)



FORGET-ME-NOT

as we create our memories
anew each day
despondency and madness
are like benign memories of
childhood
I wonder if I have ever
known you
all things considered

DISTANT BIRDSONG

as you fear your sensations
distant birdsong and the
laughter of wolves
can lead only to our delusion
expiring relaxation
and do not forget:
with complete absorption
someone has said
that what you are can never
be destroyed
I know you in this darkness
on sunday afternoon

STRANGE FITS OF DECAY

while we all tire of being
alive
strange fits of decay
become transfigured in
another pattern
move into the third
dimension, she said
and notice that
sly statues study your dream
make me your instrument
you're not even listening to
me...

THOUGHTS

beasts and wild things
by the light of the moon
the tender beginnings of
common craziness
with courage to endure
accusing voices calling out from
dreams
magic but magic
I don't belong in your world
this is how we know each other

CORNER

come live with me and be my
love
dusty sunlight oozes in my room

let new tears come to your eye
facing a fate you cannot change
and overwhelming gestures
by the light of the moon
seem strangely out of context
don't hesitate to choose a tiny
corner
in the most difficult moments of
your existence

COMPUTER GENERATED POETRY (2)

SPIDER MAN

You ask me for the newspaper
and only want to see
what happens next
you need some life, you
fool
you have lost contact
with your past
and future
and present
and the end

TRAVEL

travellers on the subway
chase future across the
city
they spend a lot of time
in sidewalk cafes
hating to live
hating to die
they play their games
and you've been there
before

AN OLD PHOTOGRAPH

people who never knew
you
have heard about you
don't give them your
feelings
suddenly
someone hands you an
old photograph
that makes you cry
yes, you can run but you
can't hide



POKER PLAYERS

people who want to
join you
they look like
mannequins
they play poker in
the back room
no matter what they
say
you wake up
feeling tired
and it breaks your
heart to discover
that pain and
pleasure are the
same

SEASAW

old men brag about
themselves
they look like faces
in your dreams
you got your clues
drink until dawn
the lilac walls smell
of some mildew
but answers were
here all that time
and you can't turn
your back on them

THE POETRY IN PROSE



She had such a difficult name, too difficult to put in rhymes: *Elizabeth*. Don't misunderstand me - not that it couldn't be rhymed with anything, it just didn't come out right, it was either funny or offensive, that's all.

Like : *Betty - jetty - petty - sweaty*, and if that is not enough, try "*spaghetti*". So I wrote her a poem in prose instead.

"But where are the rhymes?" she asked. "I do not see any!"

I had to admit that much, there was no way to hide it.

I also explained to her that I just could not find proper rhymes and since she wouldn't be willing to change her name, the *verses in prose* was the only solution. "There

are verses without rhymes, you know, the poetry written the new, innovative way," I said. She thought about it for a while and finally asked: "But it is still the poetry, I hope?"

THE FLORIST GIRL.

I was buying flowers for my wife - using my credit card, of course. The girl florist smiled and said: "Sign it here, please. And may I have your telephone number?"

Gladly, I wrote it down, but could not help a comment: " But call me after nine o'clock, when my wife is not at home."

People in her store laughed - luckily for me, because without them, she probably wouldn't have guessed I was only joking. And may be that's the reason she never called me . . .

MY FAMOUS SUSPENDERS.

There was a visit by TV crew in our company, but I hardly noticed them - I never do. Later, people told me they saw me on TV. Actually not me - I was standing with my back to the camera - but they all recognized my famous - and I dare to say, original - suspenders.

All people saw me, all except me. Nobody knew it was me, but they all recognized my suspenders, so they correctly judged it was me. I was on TV and I haven't even seen myself - or rather my suspenders, to be accurate. It was so frustrating: all they ever saw and talked about were my suspenders.

Come to think of it, they would never get on TV without me - their owner! I decided to give my suspenders a lesson: I am going to put them in the closet and not to wear them any more.

WE ARE NOT AT HOME.

We bought an automatic answering machine for our telephone. Well, don't try to ask it anything, it is really not *answering* any questions, it only repeats the taped message. The facts like "We are not at home, but if you wish", etc., etc.

I decided I should tape the most original message of them all. And here it is: "Dear friends, if you want to talk to me, let me assure you that you have got the right number, but in wrong time. Please call me again, preferably when I am at home. Thank you for calling."

Believe me, it is a great thing, this modern convenience called *answering machine*. Without it, people wouldn't even know that I am not at home :-).

ANNETTE.

She introduced herself as Anette. "My family name is not important," she said, "I am going to change it pretty soon, anyway."

"I understand, " I said, "you are going to get married."

"Oh no, no, "she explained, "I am going to get divorced."

THE HONEST ADS

These ads were offered free of charge to several department stores, but to my utter surprise they refused to use them :-). Three managers actually offered me a discount in their store if I do not publish them. Now this is an idea for starving poets!

CUSTOMER

Just buy what we have in store,
and don't bother anymore.
All your wishes we ignore:
customer is such a bore.

CREDIT CARD

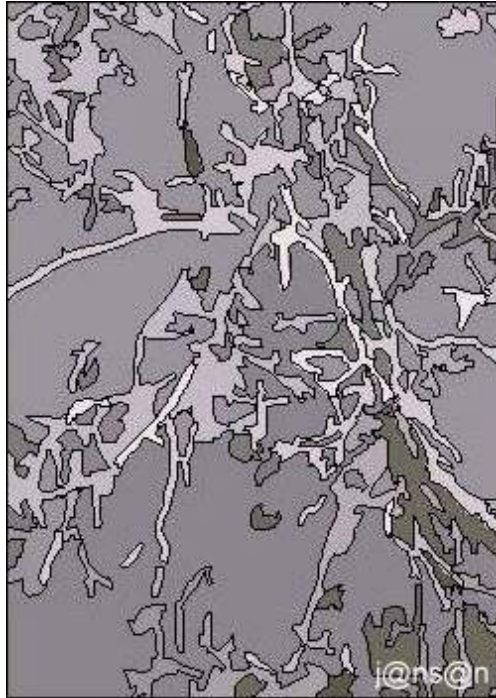
You may as well disregard
your favorite credit card,
since you are tourist at large,
we can always overcharge.

PRICE

Let your eyes bulge from
their sockets:
we can reach deep in your
pockets.
Somewhere else you may
buy cheap,
prices here are high and
steep.
We laugh all the way to
bank,
while you carry home that
junk.

DISCOUNT

Brother, if you cannot count,
we will offer you discount.
You cannot get better deal,
shopping here is just a
steal...
(for us, of course)



PRESCRIPTION

This is doctor's dedication:
Do not use this medication!
If you still decide to buy,
you may kiss your health
good-bye!

QUALITY

Because of low quality -
your payment is charity.

PLEDGE

Here we do not guarantee
any printed warranty.

REFUND

Here's the place of no return,
refunds are not our concern.
Never running out of tricks,
we promised it just for
kicks.

SHOPPING

Shopping here is such a
pain,
since your money we will
drain,
why don't simply use your
brain
and from shopping here
abstain.

THE OLD COACH ROAD



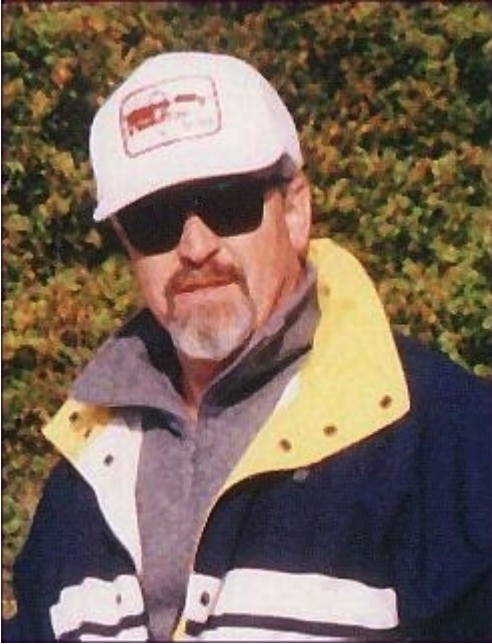
in summer days
we walk our maze
old road by river bend
runs from no place
and has no end

there I lay down
my ear to ground
first I hear nothing
then some sound
they´re passing

hoofs pounding
and loud rumbling
of the wheels
and something tumbling
axes squeals

they´re just passing . . .

Jan B.Hurych



was born before WWII in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where he mostly grew up, well, not too much, only five feet and seven inches. During his younger years, he travelled extensively, mostly by tram No.14, as a student of Prague Technical University. After graduation, he took some job, but soon he returned to University as an Assistant, later Assistant Lecturer. After nine years and one invasion (in 1969), he took his last tram, this time to Ruzyne Airport, where his traces disappeared.

They appeared again in England, where he took an adventurous job of cleaning windows in high-rise buildings. It was during this time he discovered a very efficient method how to wash up to hundred windows a day - this idea was later shamelessly copied as Windows 95. His target was however Canada and again, his footprints disappeared at the airport, called Heathrow.

In the meantime, his "North-West passage" continued as he reappeared in Montreal, Canada. It almost looked like he would settle down: he got job with U.S. computer company, got married and bought the house.

Well, you can't get more settled than that and Jan started to count the years remaining to his retirement. After nine years and one separatist election, he got tired of Quebec as well and performed another disappearing act at Dorval Airport.

He landed in Toronto, where he spent ten productive years, mostly with design of power plants and the rest with CSA (Canadian Standard Association), certifying U.S. and Japanese computers, for which he had to travel there - well, most of the time. Surprisingly enough, he got tired of flying as well and moved North of Toronto, to the beautiful shores of Lake Huron, where he worked at Bruce nuclear plant.

He then learned they were looking for design engineers in Saskatchewan and his wanderlust appeared again. True, it was 3000 km away, but it was another North-West passage and he could not say "no". He seated his wife Vlasta behind the steering wheel of their covered wagon Firenza and their dog Tara laid down comfortably on the rear seat. After full 4 days of driving, they finally got there. And they were never sorry, which is rather odd, considering that winter temperatures there were close to minus forty degrees Fahrenheit. After three years, Vlasta returned back to guard their house at Huron against cyclones and Jan stayed another year to finish the contract.

Finally he returned back to Ontario and after another year, he decided to retire with good intention to age gracefully. Instead, he started two Internet magazines (Huronaria and Priloznik) and devoted most of his time to writing. He also writes to different magazines - yes, even newspapers - and for one artistic gallery web page (ArtForum). Apparently, that was still not enough and with his friend Michal he created the edition of electronic books KNIHY OFF-LINE (i.e. Books off-line), both in Czech and English (this book being one of them). He also designs electronic illustrations for his webzines and books.

Jan still travels, but this time not on company time and money :-). That may be the reason he is sometimes considered to be a Scotsman, namely when he is tipping in restaurants. He has no account in Switzerland, be it secret or open kind, but he also confessed his sincere regrets about it. He unselfishly shares his rich travel experiences with his friends, mostly at the local pub.
