



Jan B. Hurych

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

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### 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 . . .*

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*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*

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## 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.)

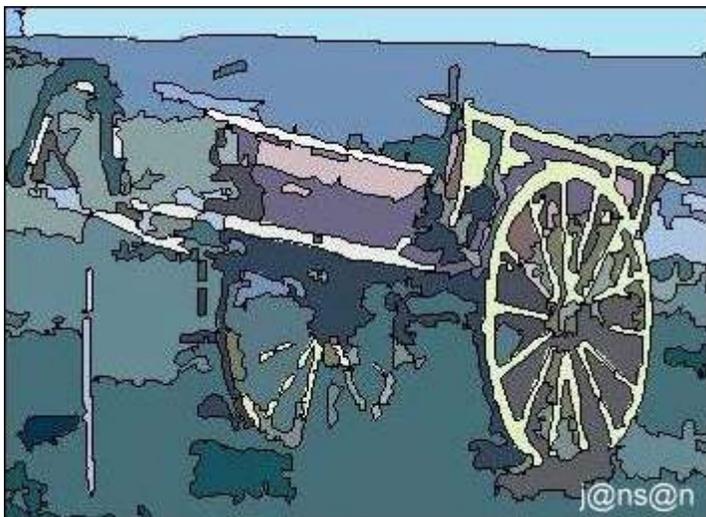
It's passion warms in heavy rain,  
to control it we try in vain,  
gives little pleasure, lots of pain.  
(Remains conclusion:  
love is delusion.)

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...

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## 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."

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## 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**

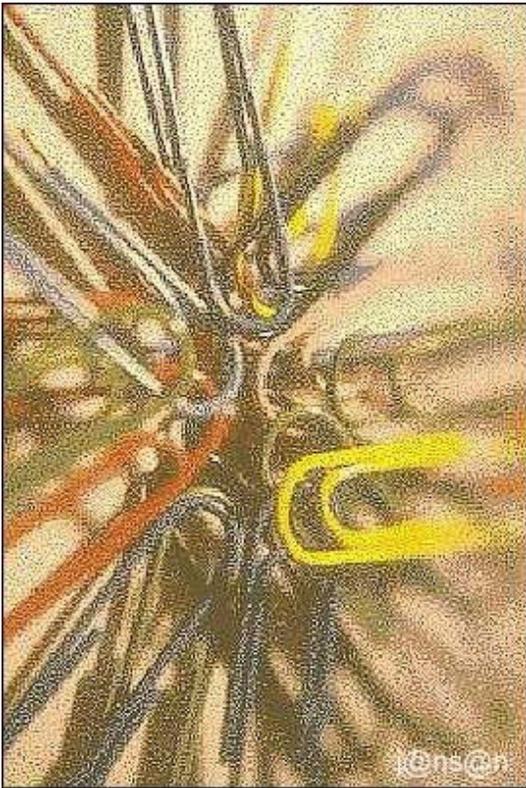
Sick Charlie who couldn't heal,  
promised God he woudn't steal.  
But when he recovered,  
he quickly discovered:  
I'm no more sick - forget the deal!

### **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."

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## 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

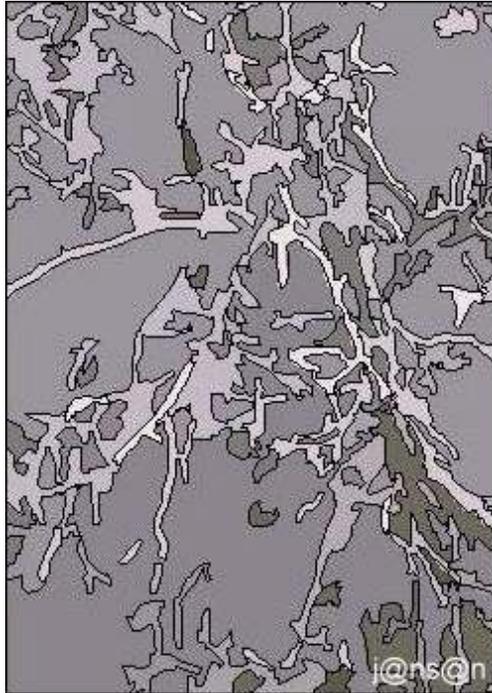
You may as well disregard  
your favorite credit card,  
since you are tourist at large,  
we can always overcharge.

### 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

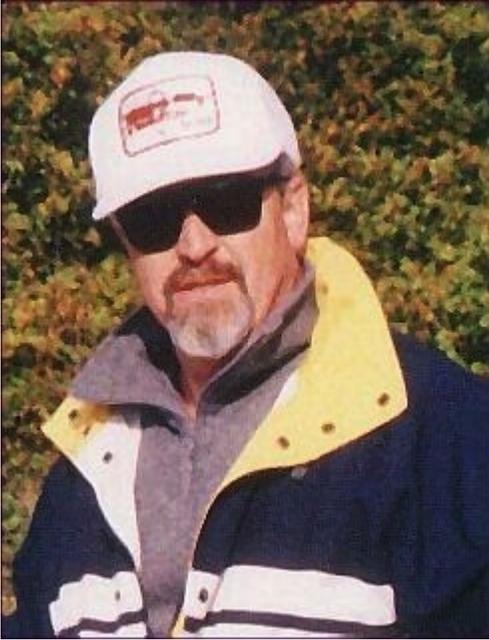
there I lay down  
my ear to ground  
first I hear nothing  
then some sound  
they´re passing

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.

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