Classic Poetry Series

Spike Milligan

- poems -

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A Silly Poem

Said Hamlet to Ophelia,
I'll draw a sketch of thee,
What kind of pencil shall I use?
2B or not 2B?

Spike Milligan

Bazonka

Say Bazonka every day
That's what my grandma used to say
It keeps at bay the Asian Flu'
And both your elbows free from glue.
So say Bazonka every day
(That's what my grandma used to say)

Don't say it if your socks are dry!
Or when the sun is in your eye!
Never say it in the dark
(The word you see emits a spark)
Only say it in the day
(That's what my grandma used to say)

Young Tiny Tim took her advice
He said it once, he said it twice
he said it till the day he died
And even after that he tried
To say Bazonka! every day
Just like my grandma used to say.

Now folks around declare it's true
That every night at half past two
If you'll stand upon your head
And shout Bazonka! from your bed
You'll hear the word as clear as day
Just like my grandma used to say!

Spike Milligan

Bump

Things that go 'bump' in the night
Should not really give one a fright.
It's the hole in each ear
That lets in the fear,
That, and the absence of light!

Spike Milligan

Contagion

Elephants are contagious!
Be careful how you tread.
An Elephant that's been trodden on
Should be confined to bed!

Leopards are contagious too.
Be careful tiny tots.
They don't give you a temperature
But lots and lots - of spots.

The Herring is a lucky fish
From all disease inured.
Should he be ill when caught at sea;
Immediately - he's cured!

Spike Milligan

Eurolove

I cannot
   and I will not
   No, I cannot love you less
Like the flower to the butterfly
The corsage to the dress

She turns my love to dust
   my destination empty
   my beliefs scattered: Diaspora!

Who set this course - and why?
Now my wings beat -
         without purpose
Yet they speed.....

Spike Milligan

Feelings

There must be a wound!
No one can be this hurt
and not bleed.

How could she injure me so?
No marks
No bruise

Worse!
People say 'My, you're looking well'
.....God help me!
She's mummified me -
ALIVE!

Spike Milligan

Go North, South, East, and West, Young Man

Drake is going west, lads
So Tom is going East
But tiny Fred
Just lies in bed,
The lazy little beast.

Spike Milligan

Goodbye S.S.

Go away girl, go away
   and let me pack my dreams
Now where did I put those yesteryears
   made up with broken seams
Where shall I sweep the pieces
   my God they still look new
There's a taxi waiting at the door
   but there's only room for you

Spike Milligan

Granny

Through every nook and every cranny
The wind blew in on poor old Granny
Around her knees, into each ear
(And up nose as well, I fear)

All through the night the wind grew worse
It nearly made the vicar curse
The top had fallen off the steeple
Just missing him (and other people)

It blew on man, it blew on beast
It blew on nun, it blew on priest
It blew the wig off Auntie Fanny-
But most of all, it blew on Granny!

Spike Milligan

Halved

The essence of true beauty
Lingers in all-encompassing rainbows
Of your joy and laughter

You hold my hand and smile
As we ensconce ourselves in our world of fire
Our love is all there is

I touch your face
Your gentleness astounds me
I'm held in the honour of your love

Then overnight, the wrold truns suor
61 mInnIts past the ELevenTHH HouRR
I'M A L 0 N E

Spike Milligan

Indian Boyhood

What happened to the boy I was?
Why did he run away?
And leave me old and thinking, like
There'd been no yesterday?
What happened then?
Was I that boy?
Who laughed and swam in the bund*
I there no going back?
No recompense?
Is there nothing?
No refund?

Spike Milligan

Jumbo Jet

I saw a little elephant standing in my garden,
I said 'You don't belong in here', he said 'I beg you pardon?',
I said 'This place is England, what are you doing here?',
He said 'Ah, then I must be lost' and then 'Oh dear, oh dear'.

'I should be back in Africa, on Saranghetti's Plain',
'Pray, where is the nearest station where I can catch a train?'.
He caught the bus to Finchley and then to Mincing lane,
And over the Embankment, where he got lost, again.

The police they put him in a cell, but it was far too small,
So they tied him to a lampost and he slept against the wall.
But as the policemen lay sleeping by the twinkling light of dawn,
The lampost and the wall were there, but the elephant was gone!

So if you see an elephant, in a Jumbo Jet,
You can be sure that Africa's the place he's trying to get!

Spike Milligan

Letters

I was thinking of letters,
We all have a lot in our life
A few good - a few sad
But mostly run of the mill-
I suppose that's my fault
For writing to run of the mill people.
I've never had a letter
I really wanted
It might come one day
But then, it will be just too late,
And that's when I don't want it.

Spike Milligan

Maveric

Maveric Prowles
Had Rumbling Bowles
That thundered in the night.
It shook the bedrooms all around
And gave the folks a fright.
The doctor called;
He was appalled
When through his stethoscope
He heard the sound of a baying hound,
And the acrid smell of smoke.
Was there a cure?
'The higher the fewer'
The learned doctor said,
Then turned poor Maveric inside out
And stood him on his head.
'Just as I though
You've been and caught
An Asiatic flu -
You musn't go near dogs I fear
Unless they come near you.'
Poor Maveric cried.
He went cross-eyed,
His legs went green and blue.
The doctor hit him with a club
And charged him one and two.
And so my friend
This is the end,
A warning to the few:
Stay clear of doctors to the end
Or they'll get rid of you.

Spike Milligan

Me

Born screaming small into this world-
Living I am.
Occupational therapy twixt birth and death-
What was I before?
What will I be next?
What am I now?
Cruel answer carried in the jesting mind
of a careless God
I will not bend and grovel
When I die. If He says my sins are myriad
I will ask why He made me so imperfect
And he will say 'My chisels were blunt'
I will say 'Then why did you make so
many of me'.

Spike Milligan

Mirror, Mirror

A young spring-tender girl
combed her joyous hair
'You are very ugly' said the mirror.
But,
on her lips hung
a smile of dove-secret loveliness,
for only that morning had not
the blind boy said,
'You are beautiful'?

Spike Milligan

My Sister Laura

My sister Laura's bigger than me
And lifts me up quite easily.
I can't lift her, I've tried and tried;
She must have something heavy inside.

Spike Milligan

On the Ning Nang Nong

On the Ning Nang Nong
Where the Cows go Bong!
and the monkeys all say BOO!
There's a Nong Nang Ning
Where the trees go Ping!
And the tea pots jibber jabber joo.
On the Nong Ning Nang
All the mice go Clang
And you just can't catch 'em when they do!
So its Ning Nang Nong
Cows go Bong!
Nong Nang Ning
Trees go ping
Nong Ning Nang
The mice go Clang
What a noisy place to belong
is the Ning Nang Ning Nang Nong!!

Spike Milligan

Oojah-ka-Piv

The people who live
On the Oojah-ka-Piv
Stand around in bundles of nine

When asked how it feels
They reply 'Curried Eels'!
Otherwise - everything's going fine!

Spike Milligan

Porridge

Why is there no monument
To Porridge in our land?
It it's good enough to eat,
It's good enough to stand!

On a plinth in London
A statue we should see
Of Porridge made in Scotland
Signed, "Oatmeal, O.B.E."
(By a young dog of three)

Spike Milligan

Pussy-cat

Pussy-cat
What are vices?
Catching rats
And eating mices!

Spike Milligan

So Fair is She

So fair is she!
So fair her face
So fair her pulsing figure

Not so fair
The maniacal stare
Of a husband who's much bigger.

Spike Milligan

Summer Dawn

My sleeping children are still flying dreams
in their goose-down heads.
The lush of the river singing morning songs
Fish watch their ceilings turn sun-white.
The grey-green pike lances upstream
Kale, like mermaid's hair
points the water's drift.
All is morning hush
and bird beautiful.

I only,
I didn't have flu.

Spike Milligan

Teeth

English Teeth, English Teeth!
Shining in the sun
A part of British heritage
Aye, each and every one.
English Teeth, Happy Teeth!
Always having fun
Clamping down on bits of fish
And sausages half done.
English Teeth! HEROES' Teeth!
Hear them click! and clack!
Let's sing a song of praise to them -
Three Cheers for the Brown Grey and Black.

Spike Milligan

The ABC

'Twas midnight in the schoolroom
And every desk was shut
When suddenly from the alphabet
Was heard a loud "Tut-Tut!"

Said A to B, "I don't like C;
His manners are a lack.
For all I ever see of C
Is a semi-circular back!"

"I disagree," said D to B,
"I've never found C so.
From where I stand he seems to be
An uncompleted O."

C was vexed, "I'm much perplexed,
You criticise my shape.
I'm made like that, to help spell Cat
And Cow and Cool and Cape."

"He's right" said E; said F, "Whoopee!"
Said G, "'Ip, 'Ip, 'ooray!"
"You're dropping me," roared H to G.
"Don't do it please I pray."

"Out of my way," LL said to K.
"I'll make poor I look ILL."
To stop this stunt J stood in front,
And presto! ILL was JILL.

"U know," said V, "that W
Is twice the age of me.
For as a Roman V is five
I'm half as young as he."

X and Y yawned sleepily,
"Look at the time!" they said.
"Let's all get off to beddy byes."
They did, then "Z-z-z."

Spike Milligan

The Dog Lovers

So they bought you
And kept you in a
Very good home
Cental heating
TV
A deep freeze
A very good home-
No one to take you
For that lovely long run-
But otherwise
'A very good home'
They fed you Pal and Chun
But not that lovely long run,
Until, mad with energy and boredom
You escaped- and ran and ran and ran
Under a car.
Today they will cry for you-
Tomorrow they will but another dog.

Spike Milligan

The Lion

If you're attacked by a Lion
Find fresh underpants to try on
Lay on the ground quite still
Pretend you are very ill
Keep like that day after day
Perhaps the lion will go away

Spike Milligan

The Soldiers at Lauro

Young are our dead
Like babies they lie
The wombs they blest once
Not healed dry
And yet - too soon
Into each space
A cold earth falls
On colder face.
Quite still they lie
These fresh-cut reeds
Clutched in earth
Like winter seeds
But they will not bloom
When called by spring
To burst with leaf
And blossoming
They sleep on
In silent dust
As crosses rot
And helmets rust.

Spike Milligan

Two Children

Two children (small), one Four, one Five,
Once saw a bee go in a hive,
They'd never seen a bee before!
So waited there to see some more.
And sure enough along they came
A dozen bees (and all the same!)
Within the hive they buzzed about;
Then, one by one, they all flew out.
Said Four: 'Those bees are silly things,
But how I wish I had their wings!'

Spike Milligan

Unto Us...

Somewhere at some time
They committed themselves to me
And so, I was!
Small, but I WAS!
Tiny, in shape
Lusting to live
I hung in my pulsing cave.
Soon they knew of me
My mother --my father.
I had no say in my being
I lived on trust
And love
Tho' I couldn't think
Each part of me was saying
A silent 'Wait for me
I will bring you love!'
I was taken
Blind, naked, defenseless
By the hand of one
Whose good name
Was graven on a brass plate
in Wimpole Street,
and dropped on the sterile floor
of a foot operated plastic waste
bucket.
There was no Queens Counsel
To take my brief.
The cot I might have warmed
Stood in Harrod's shop window.
When my passing was told
My father smiled.
No grief filled my empty space.
My death was celebrated
With tickets to see Danny la Rue
Who was pretending to be a woman
Like my mother was.

Spike Milligan

Values '67

Pass by citizen
don't look left or right
Keep those drip dry eyes straight ahead
A tree? Chop it down- it's a danger
to lightning!
Pansies calling for water,
Let 'em die- queer bastards-
Seek comfort in the scarlet, labour
saving plastic rose
Fresh with the frangrance of Daz!
Sunday! Pray citizen;
Pray no rain will fall
On your newly polished
Four wheeled
God

Envoi

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder
Get it out with Optrex

Spike Milligan

Welcome Home

Unaware of my crime
they stood me in the dock.

I was sentenced to life....
without her.

Strange trial.
No judge.
No jury.

I wonder who my visitors will be.

Spike Milligan

When I Suspected

There will be a time when it will end.
Be it parting
Be it death
So each passing minute with you
Pendulummed with sadness.
So many times
I looked long into your face.
I could hear the clock ticking.

Spike Milligan

Why?

American Detectives
Never remove their hats
When investigating murders
In other people's flats.

P.S. Chinese Tecs
Are far more dreaded!
And they always appear
Bare-headed!

Spike Milligan