

Chalk *an Chyse*

**A
Short Selection
From
John Henderson's**

'Pawky Poems'

Renaissance Man

My poor hips they were aching.
My big toes had the gout.
My hearing was lots duller,
And my voice had lost its clout.

My neck stiffened when in bed.
No pillows put it right.
I tried a rubber collar too,
But couldn't stand it tight.

My sense of smell was useless.
My tastebuds told me lies.
Thus when I lost my appetite,
It came as no surprise.

My sight kept failing daily.
I found it hard to focus.
The doctor called it 'Glaucoma',
Or some such hocus-pokus.

My hair it just kept falling out.
My nose a constant drip.
No wonder that my wife oft said,
'You're ready for the skip.'

I was no use to anyone,
So hypochondriacal.
Not least because I couldn't use,
My aging 'block and tackle'!

Then suddenly

My old hips stopped their aching.
My gout it went away.
My ears and voice came back on song,
But why, I couldn't say.

My neck no longer stiffened up.
Its muscles quite OK.
No need for rubber collars then,
But why, I couldn't say.

My sense of smell got better.
My taste buds told no lies.
My appetite came back again.
Another big surprise.

My sight got sharper daily,
With no blurring in my eyes.
The TV came through crystal clear.
Perhaps the best surprise.

My hair restarted growing.
My nose became bone-dry.
I even had to shave again,
Still often wondered why.

My ill-like moods just disappeared.
I could gaily skip and jump.
No wonder that my wife then smiled.
When I smacked her on her rump.

My 'block and tackle' dare you ask
Did it come back in play.
Of course it did, with vigour!
But why, I couldn't say.

I feel a new-born athlete now,
Not just a done old-stager.
So what brought on this turn-about?
You'll never guess, I wager.

What is that I hear you say,
"A good dose of Viagra?"
Wow!
Nothing quite so drastic
But,
No lime now in my Lager!

Mair Maitters Nor Siller

Yon are sich wil hulls an' hich,
Gien fowks aye sich guid leethe,
Faar they bide saffly doon aneth,
I' steadins naar the Teith.

Else by baul burns, fit aye rin oan,
Roch fest ablo the Bens,
Whase taps gie bird's ee vizzie,
O' smearless Forth an' faar it wens.

Nae wiss'd me a' straths' pleuchs an' hyowes,
Nae saan an' fell cauld sea.
Ma hert wis wi' thon Bens an' cleuchs,
Faar ma jo awyt'd me.

We teuk oor wauks; we jaa'd awa;
We fun oor hodden lea,
An' syne frae hungert smearichs,
Oor luve wis clair tae see

N'er she socht rich Lairds or Sirs,
Fa nichta sair'd a miss.
She bein' a guid lang heidit lass,
She heeld aff teeps lik this.

She kenn'd I wis the ain she'd wad,
E'en siller airnt bein sma'.
"Mair tae life than pickle gowd,
I' a' the wins thit blaw."

Noo we've twa chiels; they're twins,
Lik twa peas frae ain pod,
Wi' baith i' airms, she brichtly chirms,
"Them's sich braw lads I haud.

Leuk!

There's their Dad, I'm gled I wad,
Couthiest guidmaan e'er there'll be,
Sae richt I wis i' keppin' him,
The ainly jo tae me."

The Marvel of Our Age

I wanted to be a good pianist,
Who played rag time at pace,
But just having eight small fingers,
I never won that race.
If I'd had ten good fingers,
And not been born with eight,
I might have tinkled ragtime music,
At any called for rate.

Yes, if I'd had two more digits,
All ten could then have sped,
Not fumbled and stumbled,
Through pieces sorely bled.

I scratched my head,
And then I said,

"What should I do
To improve this situation?
Pay some clever surgeon
For a transplant operation
To stitch two more digits
Onto each of my hands?
Or try to get rag fairies
To wave their magic wands?"

I opted for the surgery,
Drastic though it seemed,
To merely play piano,
As I had always dreamed.
The additions I was given,
Came so well to scale,
It never even crossed my mind,
These extra joints might fail.

My muscles and my tendons
For weeks I stretched and flexed,
Knowing only with such work-outs,
Fast fing'ring might come next.

The results of my persistence,
Are amazing, so I'm told.
And the crispness of my ragging
Is so wondrous to behold,
That folks queue up for hours on end,
Outside '**THE MONKEY CAGE**'
To pay to enter and admire,
Me,

THE MARVEL OF OUR AGE
Who often hears it whispered,
"That chimp would grace the stage."

Tak Affs

A gleg haflin monk i' toon Abbey he stairts,
An' the wee jot he's gien is tae screeve lang dreich pairts,
O' the auld Beuk o Laas aboot hoo a monk sairs,
Lik nae-haen kimmers tae gleddin thur hairts.

Fan he sees maist the screevin's tak-affs frae tak-affs,
An' mistaks fack'd intult cud hae garr'd dreedfu gaffs,
He fest gings pit his opeenion anent the auld Abbot,
O the gyp'ry an belike scaiths frae sich teeps o' sclaffs.

The Abbot greed ging doon cellar tae rake i' the kist,
Hae guid scance fun ull gaffs past scribes micht hiv missed
I' aincients laas' wycedom aboot hoo tae sair Christ,
'Sweil a' o' the wrangs frae whilk monks maun desist.

Wi' oors gaen by an nae sicht maan's beld pate.
Vext haflin syne skelp'd doon tae fin oot his fate.
Abbot, alane, his een reid raw frae weepin,
Wi' smuchin' waik vyce sobb'd oot this dool greetin,

"Son, it's ow'r late ... the wird's **celebrate**,
Nae us ordeen'd nae tak a mate!"

Mini UFOs Sighted

We lurched aff the ferry fae Mallaig,
Oor laun-legs and ruckie's a' tilted,
But struck oot for sea-side attractions,
A swim 'fore the low sun hid wilted.

First sicht o' the bay wis fair dauntin',
Mair san' than caud waater in reach,
An' sca'ered aglay oan its surface,
Huge dishes fair li'ered the beach.

'Baby UFOs fae Mars', quipped ma pairtner.
'We'll skirt them an' gang fir oor dook.'
'Nae fear, says I less enchanted
Let's jist tak a wee closer look.'

Oor 'space-craft' seemed coated in jeelie,
Changed shape when drooned by the tide,
Nae even a paddie wis ventured,
Oor detour whit followed wis wide!

Tale Out Of School

Mrs Macnonimous stormed up to the school.
Her brow it was furrowed, her looks could have killed.
She knocked on the door of the teacher's room hard.
No shadow of doubt that she'd well marked his card.

Quoth she

"We both know my little girl's no scented rose,
And oft to be sure she will trouble your nose.
But sir, that is something that teachers must suffer.
So just teach my lassie and ignore all stinks off her."

Belle and Bob

Bob lad come over here by me,
And hold me in your arms;
Leave your cloud, float gently down,
To sample all my charms.
We'll waltz around the forest,
Then spoon, just me and you;
Join me with a loving heart,
And pledge that you'll be true.

Belle lass I'll come to meet you,
And sample all your charms.
There's nothing better I would like,
Than dancing in your arms.
Spoonng blythely in the woods,
Seems just OK by me;
But if you want to capture this Bob's heart,
First tell me, **What's for tea?**

Ools Warkin Oors

Fan cam the douce-lik gloamin oors,
Tae gie a rist maist sprootin flooers,
Matthiolae kythed thur hodden pooers,
Tae sype strang waffs lik April shooers.
Syne beddit ools begood tae preen,
Weil kennin nicht wis camin seen,
An wi it wark tae sherp sik oot
Fell rottans reem'shin roon aboot.
Neest cam mony 'taewit-taewoos'
Tae prob the perfum'd air.
Ye'd a thocht a kyre wis chirmin
Thase wirds oot lood an clair
"Oot i' the meen-licht,
By flich'rin starn-licht,
We'll scran wi a oor micht.
We'll keek faur oot,
We'll drap wyes doon,
We'll snitch as is oor richt.
Syne,
Fan jaup floo'rs waffs'iv weert awa,
An skreek o day sheens bricht,
We'll vainish tae oor brenches,
Hich up an oot o sicht."

Fate

I wake to find o'er the valley spread
Eerie whiteness like the dead.
Great joy to some, others' deadly fate,
Yet seems to purify the mortal state.

Near-by laden pines, needles clad in snow,
Strangely soothing out a soft elusive glow.
I wonder if a greater love than this there be,
Given by whoever brings the light to me?

But what on second glance lies bare?
A bird by yonder tree?
O calm you wafts of swirling snow!
O'er silenced robin at rest below!

I linger, ponder for a while,
As o'er the corpse cold snow doth pile.
My sad heart cursing nature's stings
That cause such wintry sufferings .

Hark! Noisy shouts! Squeals' refrains
Of children's voices ease my pains.
Snow's delights are all they know.
Not hidden victims still below.

But I in bitter sweet repose
In moments such as those,
Accept the good and bad my God can send,
For even at last great pines before Him low must bend.

Gi'e and Tak

Yin morn a weel kent lendin' loon
Wis fishin' oan the Dee,
An' tho' it flow'd in mighty spate
It ne'er fash'd sich as he

The watchers oan the banks sensed fate
Wid nae be loathe, and suin,
Tae coupe their 'scrooge' richt oot his boat,
An strive tae cause him droon.

Scarce meenits pass'd 'fore toss'd he wis
Fu' clad and feckless in,
As swirlin' currents rush'd tae send
Him doonstream at their whim.

"We'll catchit ye doon by the brig"
Wis holler'd fae the banks.
"Gi'es us yir hauns as ye sail by,
An' we'll nae seek mair thanks"

Nae sign o' comprehension came
When 'scrooge' doon near them speed'd
But then a couthy cynic thocht,
"A different offer's need'd!"

"He'll ne'er gi'e us his hauns," he mused,
An sure as he hid speakit,
When "Tak' oor hauns" wis shoot'd clear
The loon fast on them cliquet !

If I Had My Way

I'd like to make Gods children's dreams come true, YES
If only I had my way.
A real kindly place this world would seem then,
If only I had my way.
If I had my way, forever there'd be
Peace here on the earth for thee and for thee,
A thousand and one things, we sure could do,
For all races, the religious, and agnostics too.
If I had my way, not one child would be harmed,
And sunshine they'd have every day,
If we'd share what we have then no person need starve
And that'd sure be the way

Simmer Nichts

Sin draps ahint Ben Lomond
Casts shaddas ow'r the Carse,
Fit win tae Stirlin Castell an the toon.
A bide a wee i' winner at braw gloamin' sich as thon,
Afore stown-wyes the dairk dits doon.

Neest sittin' i' ma gairden syne blin tae sindoon's glowe,
I wyte fin gin ither ferlies there wull be.
Seen cam pirr-winnies waftin doon frae hedder braes abeen.
An soons o rubbits dellin nar tae me.
Scents o' pines thit pleasure; braiths fit naitur lens.
Syne starns bricht-twinklin i' 'The Ploo' oan hich,
Thase mak me think the Gweed fa gies sich preevileges tae fowk,
Fan simmer eves rowe oan tae nicht.

Show a Smiling Face

Show a smiling face to the world.
It's the finest thing known.
Open up your heart and be glad.
There's no point in your looking sad.
Show your sparkling eyes clearly.
People will smile back at you,
And,
Soon you will see,
Yes they will always be,
Bright and shiny eyed too.

A smile is something very, very special.
So always bring one right up to the fore.
It will cheer up most folks and quite easily,
Make them a lot happier than before.

Each morning

Nothing more designed to chill,
Was getting up to Jordanhill,
Each morning.
R-- was there to meet you and,
He seldom failed to greet you there,
Each morning.
Then with so much keen-ness,
Through the old gym door,
He smiled out, the orders,
You longed to hear no more.

Nothing more designed to bore,
Was running round and round the floor,
Each morning.
Nothing made you sicker,
As it over-dosed your ticker there,
Each morning.
Round and round and round,
And round, you had to go.
Hop ... skip ...,
Then walk and so,
It became monotonous,
For whole damn lot of us,
Each morning.

A Bul Binder

Maist the McNabs wur reivin chiels,
Stown-wyes, sleekit, nabb'd kye frae a.
Teuk nae peety oan wham they strack,
Shair wur nivver respeckers o the laa.
Fan ithers' coos wur gettin stoot,
They pilked them oot i ains an twas.
Fest teuk em hame tae gairded cleuchs,
Lang tae mait thur gutsy maws.

Bit ain thon days fan oan a jant,
They nabb'd the laird's fite cankert bul.
Pit it a fyle frae heifers sicht;
Heeldin it redd sire wi a wul.
Bit heid-bummer o The Heilan Watch,
He'd hid eneugh an bittie mair,
Seen telt his troop twal gheelies ging,
Fin thon McNabs tae dicht the flair.

Weil kenn'd the gheelies a McNab lans,
Forbye nabbit kye thon wid be girsst,
Quait waak'd beas ow'r tae bul's lean-tee,
Naar close's stank tae slock thur thrist.
Gheelies richtly thocht bul's kneggum sid,
Fesh oot moo-bannin frae heifers seen,
An sweil ain muckle het wi naitur's ca,
Wid sik oot the bul lik a lang tint freen.

Loats o the reivers cam breengin' oot,
The meenit bul's pumphel wis apen'd hich.
An fan bricht red kilts fest garr'd it gyte,
It rampaug'd amang a McNabs i' sicht.
Till ain braw redd heifer's wae mooin ca,
Tirn'd thon wull breet's birse tae baul delicht,
Syne it treetl'd aff far the gheelies wur treeshin'
The kine doon roch gate an oot o sicht!

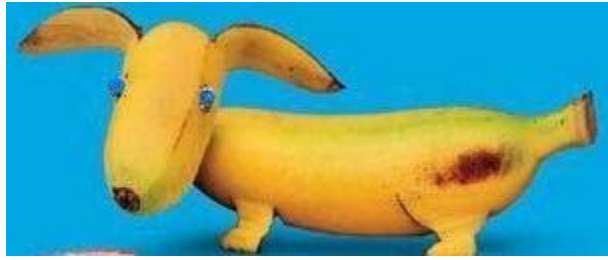
Little Ones

Sitting, watching little ones,
There playing on the lawn.
Brought back happy memories
Of former days long gone.
In them I saw our very own,
As they'd romped wild and free.
Though life moves on from year to year,
Seemed just hours ago to me.

I think how rich my life has been,
With all its heartaches and its joys;
How most of these were all bound up
In one small girl and two small boys.
Sometimes I wonder who shaped who,
I learned so much its true.
Such open love, such simple faith,
Brought daily blessings new.

But boys grow up, and girls grow too,
And start to wonder, "Why"?
They leave their land of make-believe,
Thence give the world a try.
Wondering how they'd make their way,
I watched ours one by one;
And was so proud of what I saw,
In what they had become.

The Abandoned Banana



All were bananas, light green bananas,
My brothers, sisters and poor me.
Unripe bananas, but fine bananas,
Who'd grown in bunches on a tree,
Till we were all cut down last week,
Piled up in a great big heap,
Sold so cheap it made us weep.
All soon were boughtExcept for me!

A real sad story, a real sad story,
My brothers, sisters all away.
I was so lonely, so very lonely,
I cried as in that box I lay,
Till a nice old lady as she passed near,
Whispered kindly, 'Just you wipe that tear.
I'll take you with me, and I'll not eat you.
You'll be safe with me ... no fear!'

By that kind old lady I was maintained.
Four legs, long ears and blue eyes gained,
With clever knife-cuts and strong-thread stitch,
She'd sewn me up without a hitch.
She said,
You're my precious young banana,
You'll sit upon my grand-piano,
So noble as an ornament.
And there you'll be content.

You'll love that piano, your grand-piano,
With its grandstand view from where you'll rest.
You'll not be lonely, my one and only,
Happy sweet banana guest,
Who'll always smile when I sit near,
Saying oft to me his voice so clear,
This grateful feeble fruity foundling,
Feels fostered life is quite astounding.

Evenin Prayer

When ye ging tae bed the nicht,
I pray, 'Bide beddit meekly;
Saufly i oor ain Gweed's sicht,
Till sin wull fesh-up mornin licht.
Bit gin afore ye shid awak,
Breeth leaves ye a thegither,
A syne dae pray, thit oor guid Gweed,
Yer soul He wull tak thither.'