



Contrarious Alternosities

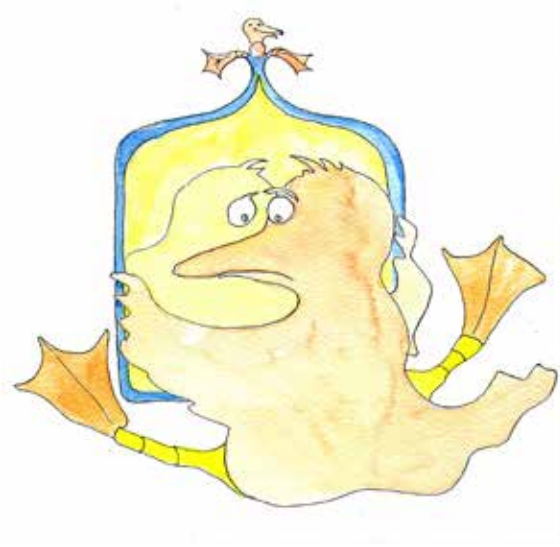
Tam Fairlie

the fl@ubert duck series



for my contrarious family

T. I. N. A. There is No Alternative



The modern mind prefers to shun
all compromise, sets contrast stark.
You're in our camp or with the Hun,
beyond the pale and in the dark.
You're either with us or against,
there are no middle grounds
Just two extremes, both strong ring-fenced,
Exclude nuance that confounds.

With black or white presented choice,
no room for pastel dreams
Or time for that uncertain voice,
that lies between extremes.
In others we the worst surmise
uniting fractious side,
Confronted with fanatic eyes,
concession we deride.

To marginalize opposing side
the best resort is WAR
Let all appeasement be denied
as propaganda lore.
We glare across a no-man's land,
eschew views relative
Aversion will mount out of hand,
without alternative.

The War on Hunger, War on Drugs,
the war on all those 'isms'
The War on Viral Spamming Thugs,
and those who fill our prisons.
The War on Children Without Mums
and War on Driving Drunks
'Gainst terrorists we stock pile guns,
those lowly rats and skunks.

Asserting firmly purpose clear,
and deaf to all detractors
At stake is all that we hold dear
No mitigating factors!
Though others' weapons are unknown,
we fear the worst and fuss
It's safer first strike with our own,
and faster, much less fuss.



Confucius Say



Confucius made suggestion plain,
to seek a balanced life
Draw back from hot pursuit of gain!
All greed just ends in strife.

To fail a task or overshoot,
he equally reviled,
Condemning all excessive loot,
when unbridled lusts run wild.

A life well led lies in the head,
Your brains are bonus luck.
With balanced view and cautious tread
your sad misgivings duck.

Aristotle sought gold mean,
avoiding grave excess,
With judgment balanced, cool and keen,
nought whipped up by the Press.

Wise ancient pundits led a search
for position on a spectrum
Twixt good and ill midst which we lurch.
Confront extremes, reject 'em!

The ancient heroes knew the ropes
In times so oft agley,
Suppressing rash, excessive hopes,
lest Nemesis held sway.

Odysseus passed by quite unscathed
 'twixt Scylla and Charybdis
This skillful oarsman was thus saved
 from either doom insidious.

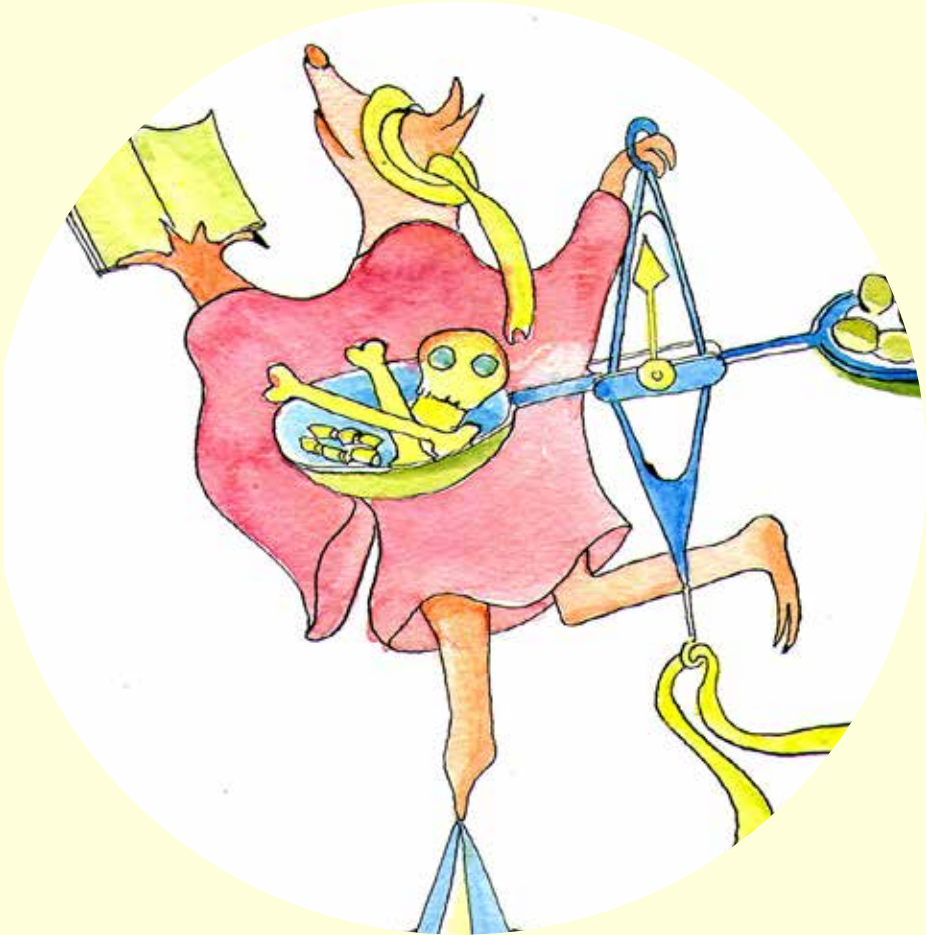
Icarus sought Helios' warmth
 invading stratosphere.
Deriding lemmings, left on earth,
 with no direction clear.

But in our day the spectrum's grown
 to contrasts quite obscene
It's hard to not reap what you've sown
 and find your golden mean.

Examining the two extremes
 we don't know what to think
Neither's merits seem to gleam,
 when peering o'er the brink.



Justice



When earthly Justice must mete out
to emulate divine
To impose a fairness, beyond doubt,
just reckoning to find,
She dons the finest robes she's got,
lifts balance with gold pans
Averts her eyes , and banished thought
she takes dramatic stance.

Impartial to what's out of sight,
and deaf to bootless cries.
She stands above a fractious fight,
and plaintive entreaties.
Blind justice must be seen being done,
and facts speak for themselves
Unprejudiced by set of sun,
for in this her fairness dwells.

Why should some killer's baby face
be weighed in the equation?
Or innocent's dire lack of grace
condemn him in his station
In weighing up the raft of facts
the conman's knowing smile
Should not deflect where falls the axe,
and the jury to beguile.

She cares not for what goods are brought
to place in her two pans.
The needle swings to left or right.
On this her verdict stands.
It matters not what pundits claim,
for everyone must cower
First and foremost is her aim,
to demonstrate her power.

Impervious to competing brands
for like with like compare
While others ladle full the pans,
blindfolded is her stare.
Guilty as charged! and down go thumbs,
her balance held up high
But what if unwatched scales succumbs
to puttee passing by.

Indeed, when weighed up, sun and moon
appear of equal size
One at midnight, one at noon –
hardly a surprise.
For weighing like for like may fail
if blind to shades of grey
We send the wrong soul off to jail
in judgment gone astray.



The claim that justice fits the crime
at times may seem pathetic
But in aspiring to the hope divine,
at least she is poetic.

Lovers



Most famous lovers come in twos,
with extras not allowed
When there were more than one might lose;
for it's certain three's a crowd.

It started first with Adam - Eve
amidst the joys of Eden
No alternates were up his sleeve,
Eve made sure when she seed him.

Had Romeo more birds in hand
that Juliet could espy
She might have taken firmer stand,
found other fish to fry.

And Tristan might have drawn well back
and somewhat cooled his ardour
If Isolde had more wholesome snack
and better stocked her larder.

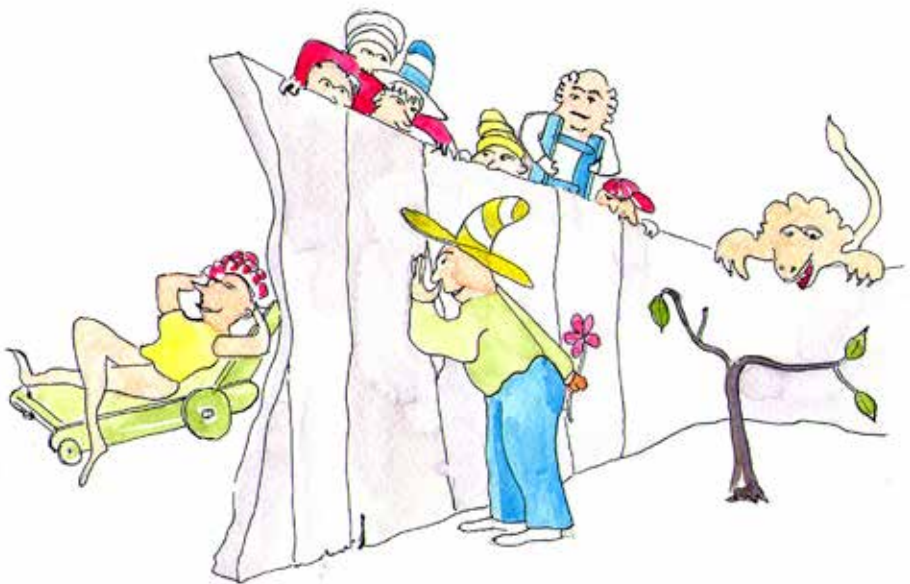
Would Guinevere take time to pause
and contemplate her nails
Had Lancelot shown other flaws
than questing Holy Grails?

Would Anthony choose fall on sword
with Cleo in his grasp
Had she alternative resort
than entertain the asp?



And Abelard with Eloise
might exhibit fewer scruples.
Had she been prone to shoot the breeze
with too many of his pupils.

And Pyramus' most tragic end
would make but little sense
Were Thisbe just another friend
through many holes in fence.



And what of Rochester and Jane
(though it took so long in coming)
Or Rhett with Scarlett's speaking plain,
and to modern world succumbing?

And Calypso for eternity,
would Oddy still refuse her
Choose Penelope, paternity,
and mowing down those suitors?

Would Napoleon for Josephine
drop plans for world dominions
And vows to make her world-class queen,
had she some other minions?

Would Cyrano endure those sieges
(though Roxie did not know it)
And leave her with such thoughts egregious
not recognising poet?

Of Casanova what say you,
who spread so wide his net?
Why he too had his lover true,
himself - and that's a bet!



Verbal Monstrosities



When adjectives are not enough,
we amplify our nouns
Embroidered with poetic fluff,
- much kudos then redounds.

If that noun is not quite sure, we conjure up an *'osity'*
For instance there is some allure, decrying a *'monstrosity'*

And just as mere *'atrociousness'* was transformed from *'atrocidity'*
Less frequent plied *'velociousness'*, can be summoned from *'velocity'*.

If subtle minds at times conspire to practice *'deviosity'*
Extreme positions oft aspire to nurture *'perfectionosity'*.

When poetry of every kind is victim of *'pretentiousity'*,
It helps to discipline your mind avoiding *'spuriousity'*.

Extreme positions will inflate their acute *'pertinaciosity'*.
'Gainst hyperbole let's dedicate ourselves with *'conscientiosity'*.

The broadminded try not blink impugning *'awfulosity'*
Even if inclined to shrink from encroaching *'proposterosity'*.

Our Language should embrace broad sweep that elicits *'uniquosity'*
And call halt to stealthy, whinging creep of political *'correctnosity!'*



Less Than Fullsome



Thinks language ogre in his lair
“It’s delightless to be frightless
I’ll cultivate my dreadless flair
for qualities insightless!
‘Cause what’s the point of baleless gaze?
It’s hardly worth the candle
In dismissing with disdainless phrase,
some mouthless bite I dandle.

Though worshipless by others seen
I'll don my bashless mask
With dreadless and masterless mien,
embrace my grateless task.
My vengeless and disrespectful soul,
endowed with blissless youth
Perhaps a spinelessness in role,
Will reveal an aweless truth?

Fretless will be my disguise
Proclaiming rightless role.
And from those hapless spirits prise,
the less-some blissless soul.
The plentiless must tackle life
determined and disdainless.
But lustlessly I'll stir up strife
with certainty that's baneless.

Their bountiless and gleeless days,
draw spirits that are zestless.
While I sit back with hurtless gaze
to gnaw manlessly the restless
My less-some lips are scornless set
Embracing thankless task
Trustless I'll win boastless bet,
For I've nothing less to ask."



Dualities



When exiting from mighty Ark,
all filed out two by two.
Long cooped up, the sexes marked,
contrary points of view.

For evolution bears the brunt,
with preference to endue
Two eyes, two ears, a back, a front
and dual opinions too!

So ever since those free-range days,
all creatures fall in line
They've learned to shun more complex ways,
preferring alternine.

It can be said of human race
from ruler down to artisan
It thus prefers bilateral grace
and favours the bipartisan

We magnify alternatives,
make things not what they seem
And conjure up superlatives,
defining poles extreme.

A starfish on the other hand
has many points of view
Attempting to draw line in sand,
it reveals a judgment skew.



Binary Code



Those clever gadgets that abound
and hold our world enthralled
Just seem to drive us round and round
with intelligence - (so-called)

Where'er you venture nowadays
ubiquitous they're seen
Those souls withdrawn and in a haze
communing with a screen.

Within these boxes in dark gloom
their deepest secrets languish
Widgets hum an aimless tune
and all their self-doubts vanquish.

For widgets are just boring folk
who answer 'yes' and 'no'
No other option to invoke
or other place to go.

When all boils down to yes and no
and binary is code.
There is no room for 'maybe so,'
or middle of the road.

We let such forces build our world
on semblance of extremes
Nowhere within the middle ground,
lies truth - not what it seems.



Each day smart new improvements come,
and pile up information
To such a depth we soon succumb
to self-asphyxiation.

And wallow in our info-glut.
They let us know so much
Of our past deeds, our current tastes
to profile such and such.

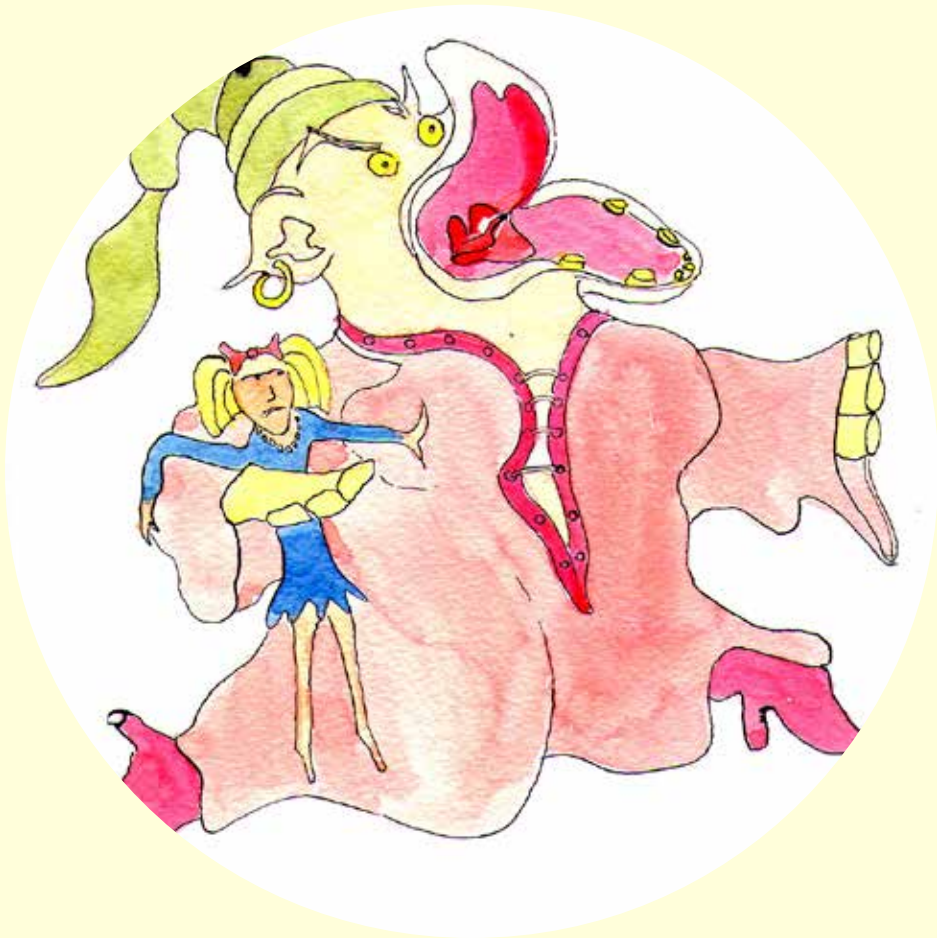
But where does truth and judgment lie,
the nuances of a cause
That essence of the life well led,
Should all this give us pause?

“I’m on the bus, adjust your dial.
I’ll be home in a tick
Inspect your horoscope meanwhile,
it says I’m really sick”

“I’ll check my records ten years back,
while bopping to this tune
I’ve made a filmalogue - a stack
attuned to phase of moon.”

With all this information fall,
build up like layers of snow
It sometimes seems beyond the call,
do we really *have* to know?

Avatars and Alter-Egos



Deficiencies seem to abound,
‘the fault lies in our stars’
One remedy that some have found
is blame their Avatars

They thus endue their mythic selves,
when times are out of joint
And with fantastic outer shells
conceal the weaker point.

Like ballet star with two left feet,
and calves that tend to swell
Finds mascot sylph-like and petite,
embodied in gazelle.

The fencing master jabs and prods,
though career path may be chequer,
To distance self from clumsy clods,
adopts tireless woodpecker.



The socialite, not quite endowed
to dazzle, preen and coo
Bounds confident amidst her crowd
with attentive kangaroo.



The opera diva with thin lips,
Enhanced, imbibed from bottle
Her whale that sports such massive hips,
delivers at full throttle.

The Titan businessman can hide
the fact the he's a brat
Ascribing all of his worser side
to lacunas of his rat.



The Thick Red Line

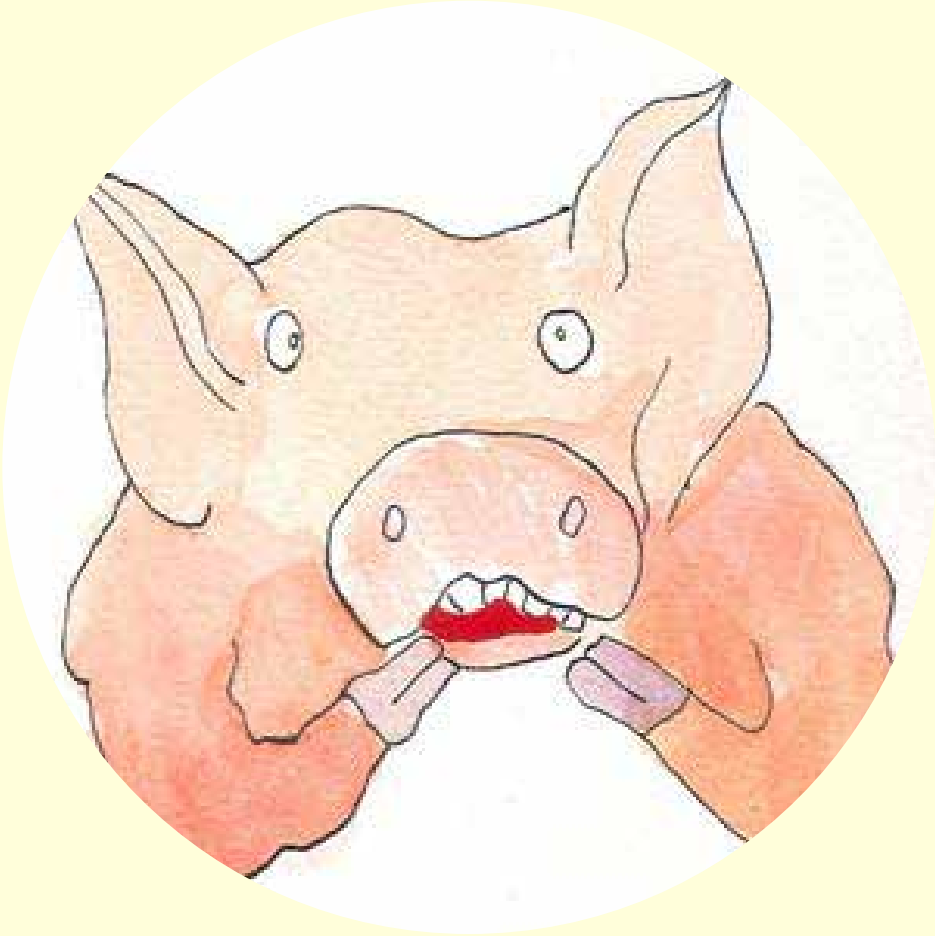


The strength of Empires, some opine
Depends on virtue of red line.
Hewn Highland rocks at Balaclava
Stood firm and countered foreign lava.
Those valiant souls stood resolute
Despite the background of dispute,
Their distant leaders could extol
Tenacity and self-control.

A boundary's better thick than thinner
When separating saint from sinner.
One should not be scorned as flexi.
Intransigence is always sexy,
And obdurate won't comprehend
Benighted souls at another end.
No need for wishy-wash forbearance
When piloting Zero-Tol-Err-Ance.

So! our red lines are growing thicker
(Especially 'mongst those drawn to liquor)
Parliaments expound at length
How robust lines will show their strength.
And politicians cut wide swath
Constructing fables from whole cloth.
And deaf to imprecations stand
As they draw thick line in the sand.

Do or Die - What Kind of Alternative is That?



With succinct alternates expressed
you'd hardly need a trainer
Answers to them must be stressed
are clearly - '*a no-brainer*'.

'To Be or not to Be' is said
to highlight inner flaws
But *'Money or your Life'* instead
occasions few to pause.

But when it comes to 'Do or Die',
supposedly the tough
Will stand their ground while others fly,
to avoid such tiresome stuff.

Best, when the pundits rank the odds
as overwhelming black,
The so-called tough and fearless bods,
divert to other tack.

Hysterics who will paint extremes,
suggesting all is lost
Call one last chance through trenchant themes
to save the tempest tossed.

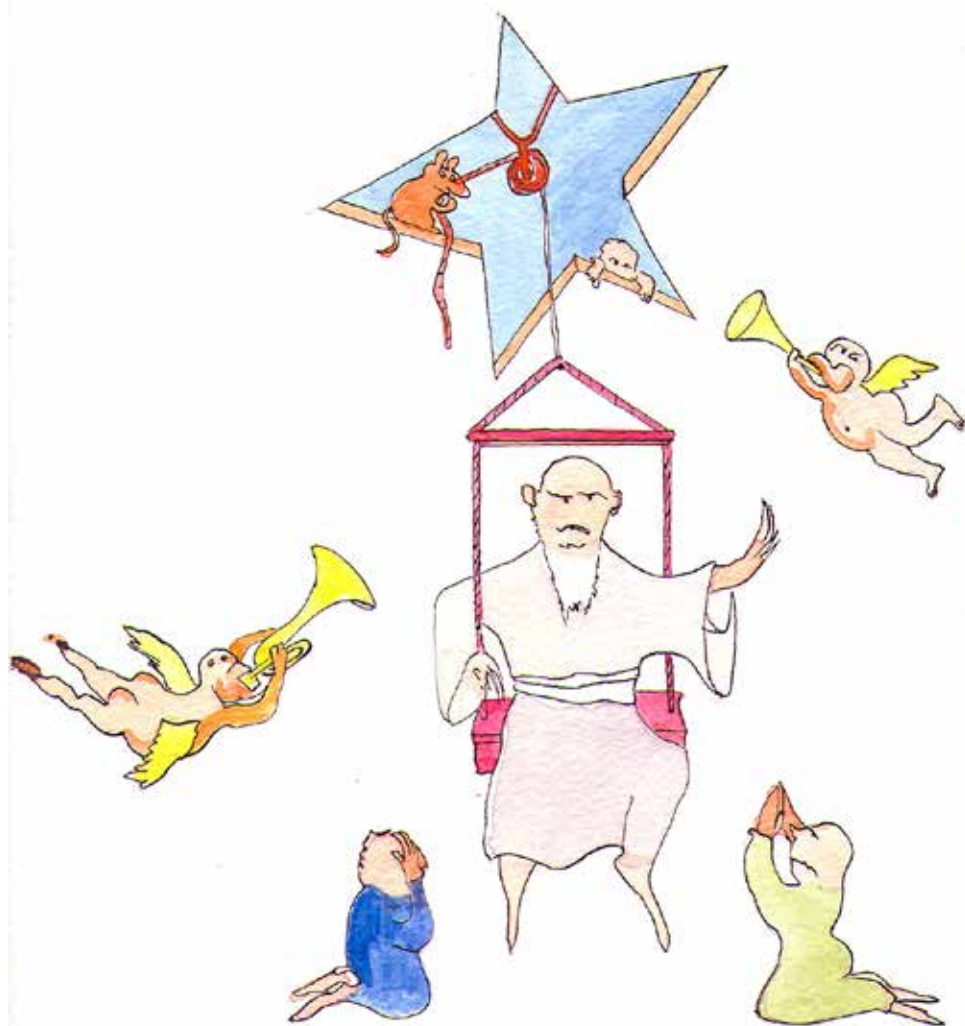
These experts cannot glimpse a cure
abating general fright
Their clock ticks on forever sure,
mere seconds to midnight.

Instead of goading with a spur
amidst predictions bleak
The agitee sees but a blur
and joins the ranks of meek.

Some hope that help from outer space
or science yet untried
Will come to succour human race.
On this they have relied.

Ex machina let deus come!
prise ope' our prison door
That way we needn't look so glum,
Just continue as before.

Instead to quagmire we succumb
instead of taking action
Let force of Nature surely come
with inevitable redaction!



Greenselves



For many years our race divided,
country folk would favour green
While those who in the towns resided
preferred more varied, coloured scene.
But allure of cities tipped the balance;
And greenards too soon dropped their yoke,
Abandoning their self-reliance
to join bedazzled city folk.

Whose knowledge of the world around them,
interlocking seamless parts
Got lost in maelstrom of the urban.
Where one learns alt-survival arts.
Bread and circuses to feed us
compost in the urban maw
With all those vying now to lead us,
grasping straws, they lay down law.

Chosen leaders need to scare us,
with world a'teetering on the verge.
Lest spectral poverty ensnare us,
They beat out out dreary daily dirge,
While movie starlets join in chiding,
urging others think more lean
Abetting press, lifestyles deriding
adding to the populist paean.

Advocates for micro clamour,
'small is beautiful' they say
Others don a thicker armour,
stronger walls, protect from fray.
Proposing purging full clean sweep
avert calamity
A necessary quantum leap
to transform humanity.

Perhaps our psyche's past its sell date,
the package needs to be rethought
Assertive challenge bucking fate,
to spring the trap in which we're caught.
But who will to guide this re-defining,
midst those vying for the stage?
Not little folk so prone to whining
We need to find some new age sage.

Of one commodity for sure
we see some great abundance
In prescribing one another's cure,
there's considerable redundancy.
Perhaps the vision where from here
requires a different attitude.
That comes not from a sense of fear
but old green sense of gratitude.



PostScript



When Gilgamesh first hit the stands,
scribes chiselled out the text
A process which left time on hands,
to posit what came next.

Old Testament was packed quite dense
with tales of jealous God,
Complications were immense
and outcomes somewhat odd.

Homer's songs of men and gods,
so risqué in detail
Pitted heroes against great odds;
but he cribbed his notes in Braille.

Now Aesop swore by W-y-s-i-w-y-g
'What you see is what you get'
His heroes might be infra dig,
but morals a safe bet.





The Romans fostered 'Pax Ubique',
lest plebs arise incensed
Translated all that lore once Greek
to *Times New Roman Condensed*.

Imaginations o'erloaded
summoned up the Gita
This world of Gods and myths exploded,
it should have been much neater.

The Nibelung ne'er failed to mention
troves of purloined gold
Which were designed to hold attention,
as convoluted tales unfold.

Tolkein brought the orc to life,
with myriad monsters hateful
And tales of cataclysmic strife,
for which we're ever grateful.

Rowling's wizard world is fraught,
and pervasive evil blamed
New nadirs of malfeasance wrought,
by '*He who can't be named*'.



Flowbert 'sends to print' when done,
sequestered in safe study
His lifestyle is designed to shun
a world that's cruel and bloody.

He cuts and pastes, most avidly,
relentless with his spell-check
"Auto-correct" induces glee,
and sense of '*what the heck*'.



Yours Truly,
Flaubert
O ! non da plume !

