

# Poems

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## When there is nothing

When there is nothing left to give,  
And none to take that I desire;  
When all affection has dried up,  
When love, when even kisses tire,  
Yet we remain, the seeming pair,  
Is there not something wrong, my dear?

When we complain but not delight,  
When we look back yet never on,  
When we are too estranged to fight,  
Removed too far from times long gone  
To even think we once could care,  
Is there not something wrong, my dear?

When kindness fails for being forced,  
When sex appears a just reward  
For all the hardship we endure,  
When out together both are bored –  
So bored there's nothing we can share,  
Is there not something wrong, my dear?

When sitting here, alone, away,  
Torn from you by your own consent,  
I find these words come all too fast,  
Too easy, as if they were meant,  
Is there not mischief in the air?  
Aren't we, together, wrong, my dear?

## Over the tracks

Over the tracks,  
Alongside the muddied ocean,  
Watching the waves that have turned  
That have turned,  
And the ships sunk into the sea

Between barbed wire  
And the tambili tree,  
Pushpi and me

I watch your hair in the wind  
In the wind  
As you curl it back behind your ears  
As it frets against your neck.  
I search  
In the furrow of your frown  
The shock of your smile  
Those eyes which drown,  
And I see

Between barbed wire  
And the tambili tree,  
Pushpi and me

Yet all I have wanted to say,  
All I have practised so hard,  
Falls away from my lips like tears;  
It dissolves in the sand,  
It is washed  
It is washed from the sea-wet rocks  
Where we stand

Between barbed wire  
And the tambili tree,  
Pushpi and me

In the fool of the moment  
When fear has no voice  
And longing no words –  
When awkwardness sits  
On my shoulders  
And smiles to witness such perfect shame –  
All I can hear is the sound of my silence:

Of the barrenness of being alone,  
Of this ache in my heart which has no home

How could you know,  
When here there is no one to tell  
And nothing to see

Besides you and me,  
Watching the waves that have turned  
And your hair in the wind  
And the sea-wet rocks,  
The sea-wet rocks  
Where we stand

Between barbed wire  
And the tambili tree,  
Just you and me

## You will never see me

You will never see me,  
You will never know,  
Because I will never show

Not in my eyes,  
Not in my words  
Nor actions,  
Not even in my smile

So stay awhile,  
Come talk to me,  
And in the gentleness of words  
Which are so slight they beggar meaning

Know not my heart  
Know not my mind  
Know not the dreams which every dawn  
I bury with the night

So every day I can be here –  
Your gentle fool,  
Your simple friend

Who till the end will never show,  
Will never let you know,  
Will never let you see  
The agony of  
You in me

## If you scream in the night

If you scream in the night, scream softly  
Lest any hear your cry  
And hasten to your lone bedside  
To ask the reason why,  
For aught you say against me  
Still never can you prove  
My guilt in our redundant love  
Which your love can't remove

If you scream in the night, scream softly,  
Drown the past in tears,  
Hug your distress around your breast  
And cushion all your fears  
On that, your joyless midnight bed  
Whose sheets you can't remove;  
There suffocate in our thick love,  
That love you cannot prove.

If you scream in the night, scream softly,  
If any ask you why,  
When hastened to your lone bedside,  
Suppress the truth and lie.  
For no one will believe you  
Or will tenderly remove  
The symptoms that you cannot prove,  
You cannot prove, my love.

## Time to go Home

Last lonely moment

    On the watchface of the moon –  
In those granite eyes, that head of stone  
    So far removed, and so alone –  
Casting a bald, unbroken light  
On the smoldering, shrinking lips  
    Of the street.

A shadow shrouds the shape of her face,  
    Her hair awash  
With the wan, spectral glow,  
    Eclipsed in the snow-damp car  
With another fag  
As a final fleeting hour  
    Slips through the slow-frosting windows.

Last lonely moment

    As she crosses the road,  
As she walks to the door,  
    As she pulls on the bell –  
As she tears her eyes from the sickening day,  
Cloaked in the shivering dusk,  
    Shrugging the darkness away.



Last lonely moment  
    As the door opens wide,  
As, for an instant, from the inside  
    She is melted with light;  
An electric dawn  
Prematurely born  
    Spreading its warmth across her skin.

The door half closed:  
    Half way she's in.  
The final thread of day  
    Snaps, unwinds, and falls away –  
She is gone  
In that moment  
    From the door.

## These hands

These hands  
Which held you,  
Which captured your form  
Drugged on the toxic of flesh,  
Love-drunken and warm

These fingers  
Which traced the paths  
Of your face,  
The curl of your neck,  
Of your breast, of your waist

These lips  
Which slipped  
Round your shivering skin,  
Which married your mouth  
And breathed you in

This nose  
Which blindly sought the curves  
Of your half-clothed body,  
Trembling with life,  
Christened with sweat

This body  
This brow  
This being  
This now

## Time

Time

Time that we never had  
That we trapped between our fingers,  
In our embrace –  
That drained from our skin  
However closely we pressed

Time

That instant from the first kiss to the last  
That moment I dissolved  
In your love,  
In your eyes;  
That gasp of light when I was locked with you

Time

That chattering tube which wrenched me from you  
That silence between each text, each mail  
That unknowing,  
That scarcely daring to know  
That night after night after night alone

Time

Time that I cannot recreate  
That hangs about me now in folds,  
In a fatal embrace –  
That shudders to a final halt,  
Even as I reach for you

## Mother and Child

The man that gave me breath  
Did I once know him?

No, little crow; you are black, little crow,  
And always have been black.  
Black you were born, black you are now:  
For that I love you so,  
I love you so.  
Think not on that,  
The thing that gave you breath.

What burnt within his breast  
That he desert me?

None, little crow; there was no fire, little crow,  
No fire in his soul.  
He hid from the break to the curtain of day,  
And twisting his fingers  
He sat out the night.  
There was no light  
To burn him.

What breath is breath if breath disown it –  
Flesh from flesh removed?

Hush, little crow; I am tired, little crow,  
Too tired to set forth.  
Let sleep what comes not, wake what will,  
And think no ill of that,  
The thing that made you –  
Black and black –  
For thus I love you so.

## She looks at me

She looks at me with eyes  
Like cold blue cauldrons,  
Frosted with disinterest or disdain;

She twists her crying shoulders  
From the calling of my arms,  
She leans aside against my touch  
Till nothing more remains.

Who can tell her meaning  
From the motions that she makes?  
Who can hook upon her mind  
From what she neither does nor speaks?

I stare into a wilderness  
A lost, unloving place –  
Those vacant cold blue cauldrons  
Which simmer on the palate  
Of her face  
Like frozen eyes.

I turn against that wilderness,  
I steal into the night;  
But sleep is branded by that face –  
Those vacant eyes which cast from mine,  
Which sow derision's barren crop,  
As if myself the crime.

## You are haunted by the dark

You are haunted by the dark.  
All night you sit in a sailboat  
On the open seas  
And smile in sleep;  
You inhale the Solent's breeze,  
And wrap the pillow  
Closer, closer round your head.

Your feet are cold,  
You toss and turn,  
Lost in the giggling waves.  
And it's ever so wet  
In the sea.  
You sneeze,  
And pound the surf with furious arms.  
Are you dead yet, darling,  
Are you dead?

## Night on the Town

Weak whisky fumes still in my hair,  
Still washing round my throbbing head,  
From last night's last term's devil-may-care,  
When I should be in bed instead  
I marched the pavement down Sloane Square,  
Across the road to number three –  
My mind filled with your face, your hair,  
Your smile, and my timidity.  
I found your flat, I rang your bell,  
I waited, anxious, at your door,  
I heard that voice I know so well,  
Then there you were – the same once more.  
We went downstairs, across the road,  
The pub invited, we went in,  
My love encrypted in Morse code  
Was tapped unheard beneath your gin.  
We shared some chips, another drink,  
I paid the bill, I held the door,  
The air was chill, your cheeks were pink,  
Your eyes more emerald than before.  
I told you that I loved your smile,  
You answered it was very cold;  
And cold the empty half a mile  
Back to your flat. And then the bold  
Insane attempt to say goodbye,  
To kiss your cheek, to grasp your hand,  
To share my tortured soul, and my  
Heart, in the hope you'd understand...



Victoria isn't quite the place  
To hide from midnight and the pain  
Of feeling your disarming face  
Dissolve in darkness once again.  
Each time we part the distance grows  
Between us, as a riven void  
That won't, despite my efforts, close  
Till all I yearn for is destroyed.

## Nothing can last

Nothing can last

And when this future is past,  
When I turn around the clock  
And I see

In all its wretched agony  
This moment, this time

Only then will I divine  
The stupidity  
Of being me

The absurdity  
Of this illusion,  
Of this false fusion

Cementing me  
To an insanity,  
To a need I cannot break

To one immense mistake

So real, so true –  
So bound to you

Unwilled, unwanted, unnoticed, unseen  
Obscene

Yet beautiful  
For having once been there,  
For having once aroused a care

A silent shame  
Fretting around me again  
And again

Till I cannot move  
For the pain

## Can you see me now

Can you see me now  
Here  
In this room,  
Can you see me  
Watching you?  
Can you feel my eyes  
Sink through your skin  
And stare within your soul?

Can you hear me now  
Here  
At your back,  
Can you hear us  
Breathing as one?  
Can you feel my breath  
As it fills your chest  
As it fires up your lungs?

Can you feel me now  
Here  
With you, now  
Can you feel me wrapped around you?  
Can you feel the strength  
Of these arms which enfold  
To lock you in,  
To lock you, here with me, now?

## When this ends

When this ends  
It ends because of me –  
Mine the jealousy  
Which spits its treason in my ear  
Contorting reason, whispering  
The sly, seditious truths  
I loathe to hear,  
But still hold dear

When this ends  
It ends because of me –  
Mine the family  
Which lives, deluded, on,  
Which knows no wrong  
Save its own absurd deceptions,  
Its own home-fashioned lies,  
Which lives, which dies

When this ends  
It ends because of me –  
Mine the absent honesty,  
The certainty, the constancy  
That I have locked away from you –  
The hope I have defied,  
The promised love denied –  
For want of being true as you

## Once Upon a Time

When Time was young  
When minutes passed the more they passed,  
The more they came and burnt away,  
I had no thought to count the clock  
Or tinker on my fingers precious hours

For wake seemed much as sleep –  
A thing of dreams –  
As careless to my reckless self  
As when surrendered  
To my slow-sprung,  
Sympathetic bed

Why should I else? I was a creature then  
To whom this counted state was artifice;  
My mind and senses were my world –  
Awake, asleep –  
A rich illusion  
Which grew the more fantastic by the day

And still it grew

Now I am tired and lame,  
My mind is worn –  
I am a spot, a stain upon humanity;  
No longer can I process what I see  
Without imposing factories  
Of cultivated space and time

What once was mine –  
Space without limit,  
Time without cause –  
That infinite being  
Beyond question or pause –  
Is lost

## In the stillness that has come

In the stillness that has come there is nothing –  
No laughter, no tears.

I am barren.

I have reached that tranquillity of despair

In which nothing is left me –

Nothing is all.

It is so long,

This age which I must tinker out,

Peddling through the hours;

So long before we meet again

An hour ago your eyes were buoyant,

Were radiant, as they sought my own;

Half an hour, and I saw the crest of your

Round-turned head slip beyond all sight

So easily I thought nothing of it,

As I have trained myself not to think

So it is now

Only now

And the passive infinity to come



Which is full of what and who is lost,  
Of what I have become  
And needs must be

She is gone

She is gone

Camilla

It is so long –  
These unfocused months which spread before me,  
To be filled with feinted life.

How, how is it to be borne?

I know nothing but this loneliness,  
This utter isolation  
Which cannot be breached

I reach out  
And there is nothing

## Madam, I'm Adam

When God said unto Adam  
'Guess what I'm going to do? –  
I'll knock you up a woman  
Who'll be just right for you',  
He little knew the consequence  
To post-primordial man,  
How great would be the recompense  
For such a mighty dam.  
(This shows how even Godhead,  
With charitable cause,  
Can turn man's grand design instead  
To fights and menopause.)  
He little thought man's lofty aims  
And dignified desire  
Would all go up in carnal flames  
And cinder in Eve's fire.  
For man, he is a gentle fool,  
Though bold and brave and strong:  
He took the thing he thought he'd rule  
And ere the day was long  
He'd fawned and grinned, he'd begged and knelt,  
He'd grasped both heart and gun;  
She'd gone at him with tongue and belt,  
She'd scratched and kicked, and won.  
And ever since, in servitude,  
He's lived beneath her will –  
The victim of each changeful mood,  
The one who pays the bill;

And still, yes still, she tortures him  
With threats and well-spun lies,  
She subjects him to every whim,  
And will, until he dies.

## Drowning

Hold me here, on this wind-worn cliff,  
Above unwinding shores  
Stung with the pallid glow of dawn  
Released from night's chill claws,  
For yawning life is wakening  
To its cyclic genesis,  
And the dew-sweet mists of morning  
Wash upon me with a kiss.

Each day and every day I hear  
The sea-surge pounding in my ear  
Its frightful warning, cruel and clear,  
That it will rise and take me.  
Yet come the curtain of the night  
That flame of darkness flickers bright  
And fuels my dance, my eager flight,  
Down to that selfsame sea.

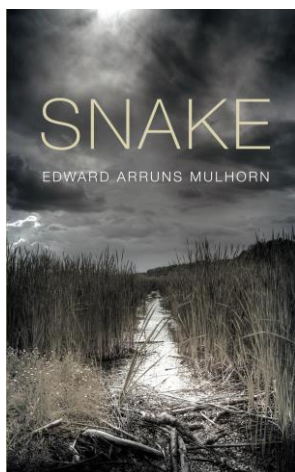
But should I go what follows on,  
When I am lost and there is none?  
When, even if alive, inside  
I'm hid from that wherein I hide?

Is this, this populated land,  
Too hard for such a man as me –  
Trapped in a bald humanity  
I cannot come to understand?

Is this, the salt that stings my eyes,  
This thing, with neither form nor guise,  
This demi-hell, this paradise –  
Is this where my true future lies?

No! Let me rise and drink again  
From pools where once I cried;  
My listless, wishless world of pain  
And anguish will subside

By the same author –



The ley is a world apart. A paradise, a prison. A raw and elemental wilderness; a place of lost innocence. Bowing to seasons, to wind and to fire, to the shocks that nature thrusts upon it.

Within its labyrinth of reed, creatures search and stumble blind. Vengeful, beautiful, unforgiving. Living and thriving, surviving and dying, feeding off themselves.

Into this merciless world the girl is lured irresistibly. She is drawn to it, repelled by it, drowned in its subterfuge and shame.

Trapped and unable to escape, she is changed irretrievably, beyond the power of salvation. Beyond redemption. Transformed and reborn, only to be compelled to confront her ecstatic nightmare repeatedly. Locked in a cycle of death and life.



Ever since he arrived in the village of Nettlesden, Matty has been warned not to enter the wood. It has lain undisturbed for years. The trees within it creak and groan perpetual pain; they yawn an invisible agony at the life that lies buried within. No one has reason to go near, except for Uriah.

But Matty is enthralled by its savage beauty, and entering deep into its heart he begins to discover its secrets. Things that the villagers thought dead and forgotten; and things they thought were alive.

What Matty uncovers prompts shame and denial, setting the village against itself, and threatening all those who live there.

Visit [www.edwardarrunsmulhorn.com](http://www.edwardarrunsmulhorn.com) to find details of future publications, or contact [eam@edwardarrunsmulhorn.com](mailto:eam@edwardarrunsmulhorn.com)