

# TEN (10) poemS poems poems poems

By Strider **M**arcus Jones

**WHY I LIKE IT:** *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... Strider Marcus Jones refines a language all his own. While the arrested of us employ our word into service to project our modest biddings, communicating as best we can. His are formed to dance, prance, pluck and strum. Singing and swinging as though they are truly enjoying his penetrating, orphic-like process; happy in their work as they leap and bound off the pages and back. Revealing themselves as they spring from his distinct and galvanizing lexicon, anxiously awaiting to be called into action, to snap to attention, and rejoice in a festival of words and featured imagery. But don't settle for my pitch, screwballs mostly throw junk—spin googlies. Not Jones, he's all cricket, he'll bowl you over with lithe precision and lightning tempo. (Spacing, font & format poet's own.)*

## MAVERICKS

you taste of cinnamon and fish  
when you wish  
to be romantic-  
and the ciphers of our thoughts  
make ringlets with their noughts  
immersed in magic-  
like mithril mail around me  
stove dark forest, pink flesh sea  
touchings tantric-  
make reality and myths  
converge in elven riffs  
of music, so we dance it-  
symbols to the scenes

of conflict, mavericks in dreams  
that now sit-  
listening to these pots and kettles  
blackening on the fire  
of rhetoric and murderous mettles-  
before we both retire  
to our own script.

## TWO MISFITS

it was no time  
for love outside-  
old winds of worship  
found hand and mouth  
in ruined rain  
slanting over cultured fields  
into pagan barns  
with patched up planks  
finding us two misfits.

i felt the pulse  
of your undressed fingers  
transmit thoughts

to my senses-  
aroused by autumn scents  
of milky musk  
and husky hay  
in this barn's faith  
we climbed the rungs of civilisation  
so random in our exile-

and found a bell  
housed inside a minaret-  
with priest and muezzin  
sharing its balcony-  
summoning all to prayer  
with one voice-  
this holy music, was only the wind  
blowing through the weathervane,  
but we liked its tone to change its time.

## THE BLOOD THAT MAKES US BLACK

imagine yourself,  
in a photo-fit picture  
with every nothing that's new-  
minus in health,  
quoting icons and scripture  
under the whole black and blue.

optimum dreams  
turn out fake in the mirror  
facing what's been like fallen heroes-  
in so many scenes  
like a ghost who is giver  
passing on wisdom, who knows-

the blood that makes us black  
of two from one,  
is schooled by fungus fortunes  
and faiths old hat  
to be sold on-  
like tamed-trained gangs, making golden dunes.

## VISIGOTH ROVER

i went on the bus to Cordoba,  
and tried to find the Moor's  
left over  
in their excavated floors  
and mosaic courtyards,  
with hanging flowers brightly chameleon  
against whitewashed walls

carrying calls  
behind gated iron bars-  
but they were gone  
leaving mosque arches  
and carved stories  
to God's doors.

in those ancient streets  
where everybody meets;  
i saw the old successful men  
with their younger women again,  
sat in chrome slat chairs,  
drinking coffee to cover  
their vain love affairs-  
and every breast,  
was like the crest  
of a soft ridge  
as i peeped over  
the castle wall and Roman bridge  
like a Visigoth rover.

soft hand tapping on shoulder,  
heavy hair

and beauty older,  
the gypsy lady gave her clover  
to borrowed breath,  
embroidering it for death,  
adding more to less  
like the colours fading in her dress.  
time and tune are too planned  
to understand  
her Trevi fountain of prediction,  
or the dirty Bernini hand  
shaping its description.

## THAT BLACKSMITH FELLOW

crumpling  
crumbling  
heart

war thump  
peace pump  
stall start

cave hunting  
and gathering  
in groups

to farms with crops

and hoofed livestock  
drink beer, eat meat and soups.

that blacksmith fellow,  
with fire and forge, hammer and bellow,  
is still the alchemist-

malleous like his mettles  
when everybody settles  
into civil lists.

in us now,  
the subliminal plough  
sets our furrows footsteps-

so summer's run and winter's plod,  
with, or without god  
in and out of upsets.

## IN MAID'S WATER

we've left the well-footed  
road,  
the rutted  
and rebutted  
road  
of shadows cast  
by towered glass.

opened closed curtains  
for fusty moths,  
chanted white spells with Wiccan's  
goths;  
left pictured

rooms and halls-  
become un-scriptured  
hills and squalls-

in maid's water  
pouring down her  
erect chalk man,  
like a wild gypsy,  
love tipsy  
partisan,  
smelling of cinnabar  
and his cigar,  
swirling  
like whirling  
clouds  
while the changed wind howls.

## THIS IS THE FIELD

this is not the field  
for truth to grow in.  
it's furrowed lips are sealed  
with knowing  
nothing can sing  
in the wrong wind.

the crop is stunted  
self expression blunted  
opinion gagged  
and head sagged  
waiting for the final blow  
from the farmer's shadow.

the field hands  
cut to His commands  
and every leathered face  
has served in it's place  
like all the others, for centuries  
in these peasant penitentiaries,

without bolting  
or revolting  
in union, except for Loveless's Tolpuddle few,  
who knew what to do  
but were jailed, or transported  
and thwarted.

## WATER AND MIST

let the world do what it does,  
and when the desert  
comes for us  
we will be water-  
sow the seeds of new ideas  
replace the wars and fears  
of decadent thrones  
spying on the homes  
of those they slaughter.

bring on the people's revolution,  
that returns our stolen  
land into our hands

from these swollen  
fat cats, with their final solution  
and fascist FEMA plans.

let the world do what it does,  
and when the guns  
are turned on us  
we will be mist-  
eclipsing everything they've done  
when we resist.

strike them like ghosts  
in the halls of their hosts,  
topple their temples of sin-  
dissolve all their banks,  
then their missiles and tanks,  
leave no corrupted survivor-  
cleanse what's within  
for a new way to begin  
by severing each head from this hydra.

## THE DOOR

the door  
between skyfloor  
topbottom

is rankrotten

portalbliss  
or abjectabyss.

it contains conversations  
confrontations,  
hiding loves two-ings  
in lost ruins-

shuts us inside our self  
with or without someone else.

we,  
the un-free,  
disenfranchised poor  
have no bowl of more-  
only pain  
on the same plain  
as before,  
homeless  
or in shapeless boxes,  
worked out, hunted, like urban foxes-  
outlaws on common lands  
stolen from empty hands.

files on us found  
from gathering sound  
where mutations abound  
put troops on the ground.

## MIND'S AND MUSK

so now  
we both came  
to this same  
branch and bough-  
no one else commutes  
from different roots.

me carrying Celtic stones  
with runes on skin over bones-  
and you, in streams  
on evicted land  
trashed ancients panned-  
our truth dreams  
under star light crossing beams.

in here, there is no mask  
of present building out the past  
with gilded Shard's of steel and glass  
shutting out who shall not pass.  
the tree of life breathes  
a rebel destiny believes-  
we are minds and musk  
no more husks and dust.

**THE POET SPEAKS:** *I like the company of people but prefer solitude. I like to listen to people talk, the way they see it and say it. For me, poetry spans our past, present and future. These poems, and those in my books, are about the themes of love, relationships, peace, war, racial, economic and sexual equality, cultural integration, poverty, mythical romance, the magic of childhood and experience of growing old as a Bohemian maverick. The strings of chance and consequences meld with music and art in Spinoza's orderly chaos of the universe.*

*Life is hard and uncertain for most of us now, but also rare in our corner of the universe, so I strive to express my own understanding of it. Thinking time is my creative cove. My English teacher, Anne Ryan inspired me to write poetry when I was thirteen. The poems have grown with me and reflect much of who I am now. Some poems sleep for years. Mere jumbles of words, themes and rhythms in subconscious gaseous clouds. Their form and meaning evolve in Spinoza's orderly chaos. Other poems just happen, triggered by a single word or phrase, a sound, smell, or shape that relates to something from our past, present, or future. Writing a good*

*poem makes me feel like the artist who can paint, or the musician who can play - joy in creating something that others enjoy and feel inspired to try doing themselves.*

*My first poetical influences were the Tin Pan Alley lyricists and composers like Sammy Cahn, Cole Porter and Rogers and Hart. I love the fun, rhythm and interplay between lyrics and music. Bob Dylan, Tom Waits and Leonard Cohen influence my poetry in the same way, allowing me to experiment with metaphor, form and rhythms.*

*Relationships and love are one of the main themes in my poetry. Two books which have travelled with me through life are Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy and Tess Of The D'urbervilles by Thomas Hardy. Tolkien's Lord Of The Rings trilogy is a big influence on some of my work.*

*My favourite poets who have influenced my work include: Shelley, Keats, Yeats, Auden, Dylan Thomas, Bishop, Szymborska, Langston Hughes, Plath, Art Crane, Larkin, Forough Farrokhzad, Neruda, Rumi and Heaney.*

**AUTHOR'S BIO:** Strider Marcus Jones – is a poet, law graduate and ex civil servant from Salford, England with proud Celtic roots in Ireland and Wales. A member of The Poetry Society, his five published books of poetry <https://stridermarcusjonespoetry.wordpress.com/> reveal a maverick, moving between forests, mountains, cities and coasts playing his saxophone and clarinet in warm solitude.

