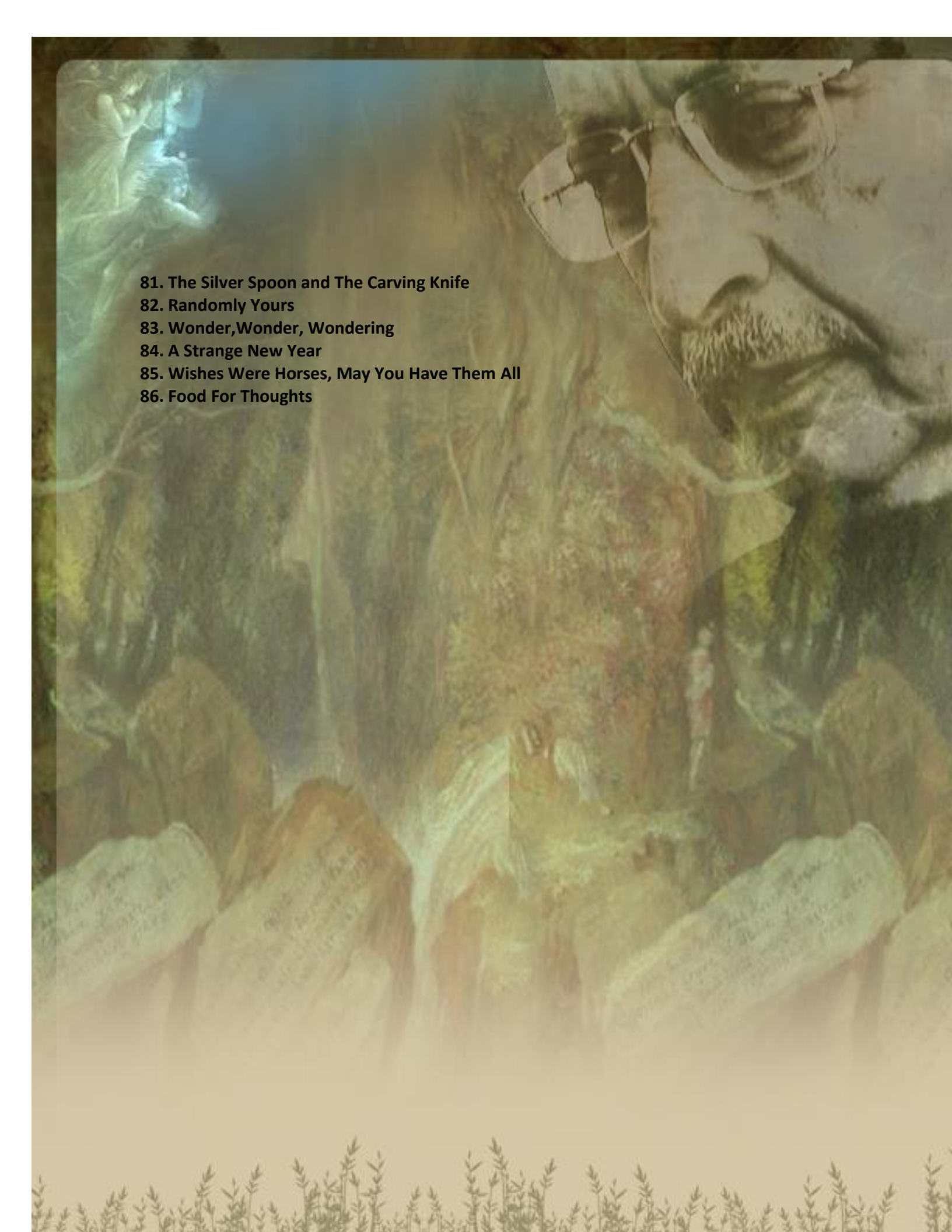




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1.

It Is A Matter of Choice

Happiness is not a matter of chance
But, of a choice that we exercise,
Heaven and Hell lie within us
Not residents of blue or grey skies.

The seas are not the only ones
That, with the aid of winds make storms,
We do much the same, unaided
When we let inflated Egos, break norms.

There are no patterns in life
It is a virtual, unending, maze,
The brightest times are veiled in
A thin mist, a little haze.

We walk the path that's destined
For as long as it's meant to be
So, let's do so with good cheer
And, live happily

The only alternative is gloomy
And, not pleasant at all,
Why jump off the cliff
And not, naturally fall?



2.

Light- Hearted Fun

We win some but we seem to lose more
Destiny never tells us what's in store,
We board the ship of life, clueless
Of the horizon and the other side of the shore.

Calm and placid waters
Betwixt the anger of the seas,
Blue, transparent, reflective
The warmth of summer and winter's freeze.

A life without surprises
Might awfully boring be,
The odd trip to Purgatory
Might be quite heavenly.

If you're laughing your sides out
Please watch the bulges too,
'Cause you might then, willy- nilly
Reading me, rue.!!

3.

A Flight of Fancy With My Fellow – Traveller

I take this flight of fancy
With great remorse and deep regret
For, with me on this magical journey
Is, not other than my loving Ego.

I adore myself no end, do I
As we all do, dear Readers,
It's from within us that we pick
Our super egotistical, Leaders.

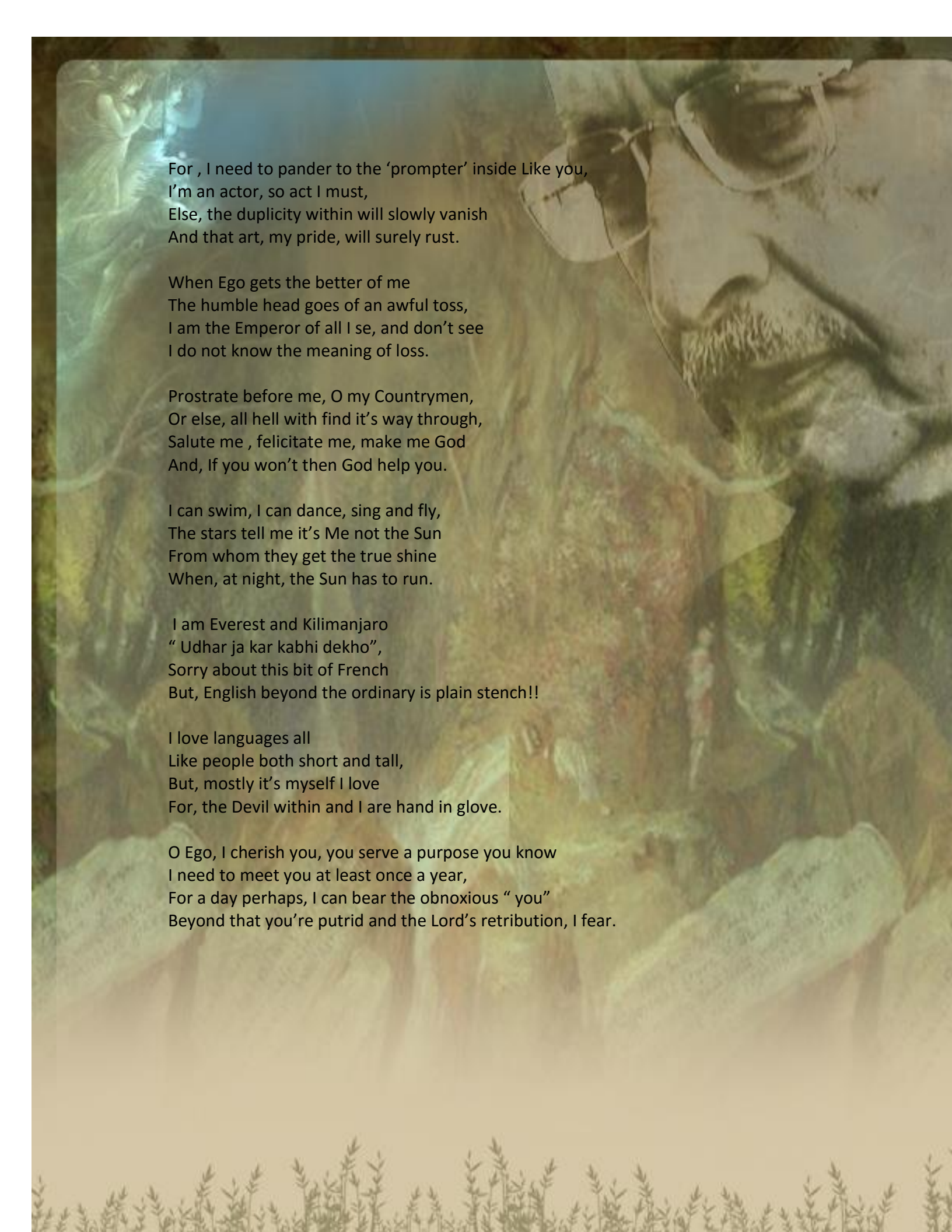
No names need be taken
For, each moment is filled with their rumble,
It's always been so in history
Rarely, do we see one humble.

So, a page out of their book, occasionally
Is not such a bad thing,
As I fly into Outer Space, nearer the Lord
Let me like the Nightigale, sing.

I love my voice, I love my face
I am, like you, in this goddamn race
Where, for no other was this world designed,
Thus, to the rest of you, I must show you your place.

Which is really somewhere else for sure
Some other planet, some other seashore,
This world is mine and till that's acknowledged
I shall be for all, an awful, eye sore,

I said there was remorse within
As I set out to pen these lines,
Overtaken by my image of 'Me'
My art, my finesse, my beguiling designs.



For , I need to pander to the 'prompter' inside Like you,
I'm an actor, so act I must,
Else, the duplicity within will slowly vanish
And that art, my pride, will surely rust.

When Ego gets the better of me
The humble head goes of an awful toss,
I am the Emperor of all I se, and don't see
I do not know the meaning of loss.

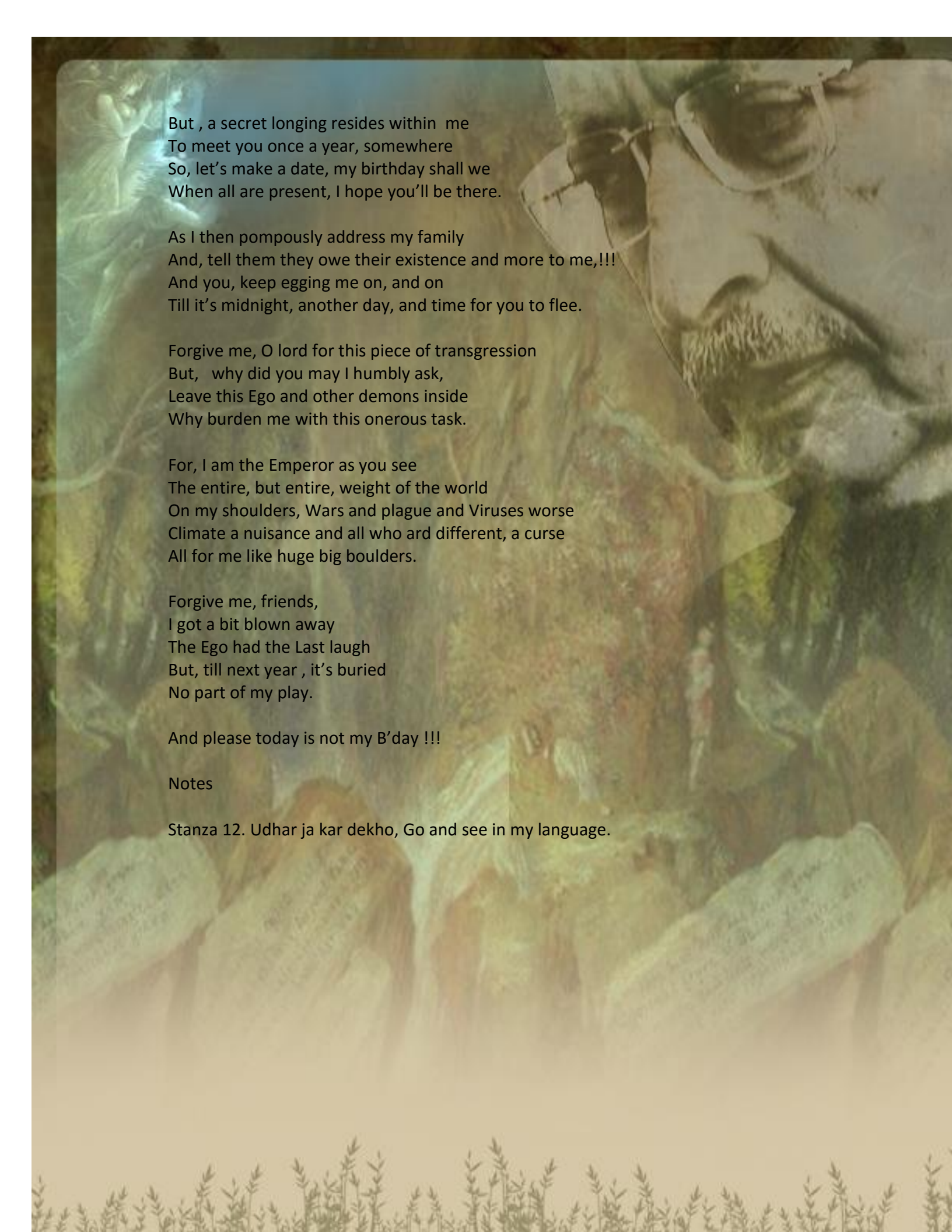
Prostrate before me, O my Countrymen,
Or else, all hell with find it's way through,
Salute me , felicitate me, make me God
And, If you won't then God help you.

I can swim, I can dance, sing and fly,
The stars tell me it's Me not the Sun
From whom they get the true shine
When, at night, the Sun has to run.

I am Everest and Kilimanjaro
" Udhar ja kar kabhi dekho",
Sorry about this bit of French
But, English beyond the ordinary is plain stench!!

I love languages all
Like people both short and tall,
But, mostly it's myself I love
For, the Devil within and I are hand in glove.

O Ego, I cherish you, you serve a purpose you know
I need to meet you at least once a year,
For a day perhaps, I can bear the obnoxious " you"
Beyond that you're putrid and the Lord's retribution, I fear.



But , a secret longing resides within me
To meet you once a year, somewhere
So, let's make a date, my birthday shall we
When all are present, I hope you'll be there.

As I then pompously address my family
And, tell them they owe their existence and more to me,!!!
And you, keep egging me on, and on
Till it's midnight, another day, and time for you to flee.

Forgive me, O lord for this piece of transgression
But, why did you may I humbly ask,
Leave this Ego and other demons inside
Why burden me with this onerous task.

For, I am the Emperor as you see
The entire, but entire, weight of the world
On my shoulders, Wars and plague and Viruses worse
Climate a nuisance and all who ard different, a curse
All for me like huge big boulders.

Forgive me, friends,
I got a bit blown away
The Ego had the Last laugh
But, till next year , it's buried
No part of my play.

And please today is not my B'day !!!

Notes

Stanza 12. Udhar ja kar dekho, Go and see in my language.



4.

Where Are We Headed ?

I can see said the blind man
Yes, I can see it all
And, better than the ones with vision
Who can see but, still fall.

Strange is visibility
Look how well Truth is veiled
As if, it were a dainty damsel
To be selectively, unfurled.

Multi- tasking, the norm that's new
Where we now talk as we jaunt,
Eyes everywhere but the path
The I-Phone will one day, haunt.

Letter writing now a forgotten art
WhatsApp, Wechat, God knows Whatsupp,
Maybe forgotten in the mayhem and rush
The much loved, once-upon-a-time, Tea Cup.

Forgotten now is the meaning of life
Its purpose just seeking out Mammon,
The god of temptations, the Devil himself
God help Man, Amen!



5.

Simplicity

Beware of the pretty face
With evil on the mind,
Beauty and the Devil
They, often, walk behind

For, beauty and the brain
Have a strange lineage link,
Meant to ensure a swim
They, often, sadly sink.

Goodness lies in simplicity
In looks and ways and means,
Simple people with simple lives
No dramas, no lights, no scenes.

Look around and you will see
Truth in simplicity,
No veiled words, no hidden hearts
Just, Purity and Piety.



6.

The Blues

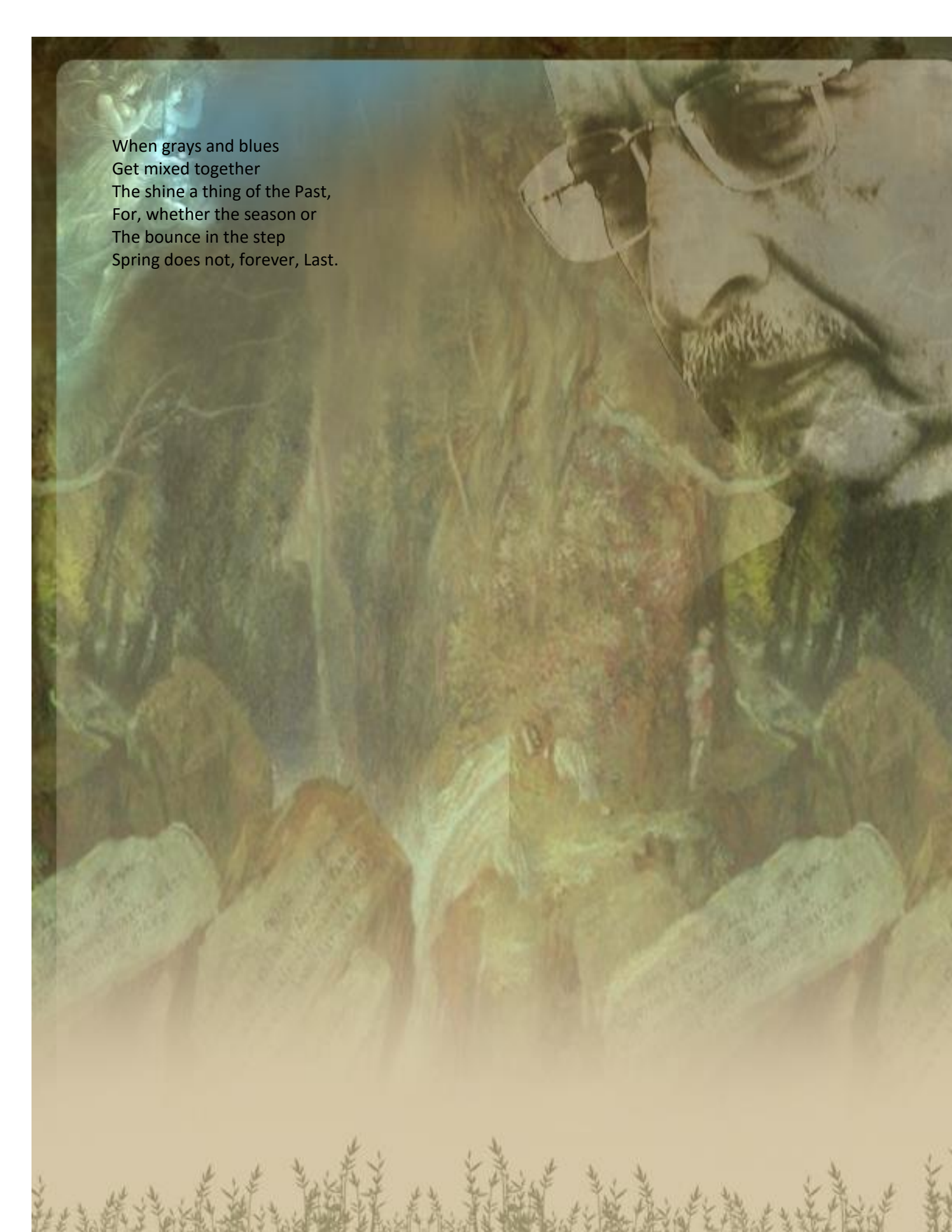
The skies were blue
So were the seas
But, that was long Ago
As was the heart
Beating nice and Slow.

When Spring was eternal
Throughout the year
Whatever be the Season,
There were smiles around
For which, alas
One never needed a Reason.

Time flew by
Like a winged bird
On the move, Forever
It never stood still
Or, so it felt
Like the ever-flowing River.

But, rivers too
The seas meet
Destiny as it Were,
Like cats that frolicked
From wall to wall
Now, simply sit and Purr.

The Blues now
More than skies and seas,
The colour with a meaning its Own,
To which
All living beings
Are seemingly, willy-nilly, Prone



When grays and blues
Get mixed together
The shine a thing of the Past,
For, whether the season or
The bounce in the step
Spring does not, forever, Last.



7.

Life's a Silly Waiting Game

Life's a silly waiting game
You wait, forever, for ephemeral fame
And, when you get there it's so illusory
You almost wish to change your name.

Childhood is dreams and lots of fun
Pretty dolls and the Cowboy's gun,
Mostly happy smiles and cheer
Till it's time for school and the eternal run

Like, drops of water down the hills
That turn to river that soon fills
With, swirls and storms, some gentle flows
And, for each of these you pay the bills.

Soon, one becomes two or, adulterously, more
You say goodbye to land and seashore,
Captain of the ship of your precious life
Stories, adventures, the myths of folklore

And, then it's time for the homeward journey
When you and your ship are alone and lonely,
When all you do is wait and wait, and wait
For, the sparrow and crow to keep you company.

Yes, life is a game that we all must live
And, of ourselves truly, freely, give
To those who walked the path with us
Must seek pardon and also forgive.

A truly waiting game is life
With seconds, minutes and hours rife,
"Dust thou art" was well said
As, the Sword of Time lies overhead.



8.

Desire
(More light-hearted fun)

Enkindle desire and play with fire
It might really warm you up
And, in the process if you get singed
You may please ask me to shut up.

I might listen but then I might not
'Cause, I am not answerable to you
And, you too are a free thinker
Right for you, right for me, is true

So, along the singed edges we go
As we try walk the straight and narrow
But, no archer ever hit the bulls eye
With every flying arrow.

There's a waywardness to arrows
As there is to the human kind,
Desire knows this quality in Man (and Woman)
And, plays with the welcoming mind.

So, we are where we started
No wiser than before,
Desire, sadly, only listens
When its truly quenched, past the encore.

No tongue-in-cheek, I can tell you
'Cause, that is literally "desire",
The English never got anything right
'Cause they only smoked and thought
They were playing with fire.

The desire for a fag is really not the answer
To the question of playing with fire,
The desire, for example, in a "smoking room"
Is a pretty miserable Desire.



9.

How Much Is Anyone Worth

Macron, Trump or Macaroni
Or the incognito little Me,
All dispensable for sure
Bar, the odd electoral encore

Why do these powerful men
Believe in the mirage of “again”,
And again, as if there is no other
Man or, besides them, any other, Men.

Let someone drive the Ego out
Let them face Mortality,
Outside their doors stands the Angel
That will subsume “dust” in the dust of eternity

For, we are that and no more
From the time that we take birth,
Humility, is all that describes Man
Beyond that, he is of little worth.

The billions that describe the rich
Whoever, in the world, they maybe,
Men or Women who think they own it
Will all, in time, just not Be.



10.

What Is Time?

O, Unfaithful Time,
Thou art still beloved
For, where would I be without You,
All Mankind and I would be extinct
If you weren't there and
The sky weren't blue,

Hope We meet, O Beloved, while Time is on my side
For You, have the sands and many horses to ride,
Who knows your waywardness better than I,
O Time, only you know when I
With my beloved
May Collide.

There is a beauty to the depths of the unknown
Like ecstasy when beyond the stars the mind has flown
In search of what it knows not,
Who but Time has ever understood
The Riddles of life
And, untied that impermeable knot

But, alas, Time itself is nothing
For, it only gets substance from You, my beloved
And me,
It goes with us
It knows not where, perhaps
To that which we then call
History.



11.

When we prostrated and did not stand tall

(the opening line reportedly attributed to someone else)

“When asked to bend some chose to crawl”
How low, how low, can Man truly fall,
Dust, of course, must with dust meld
But, not while life’s hand is firmly held.

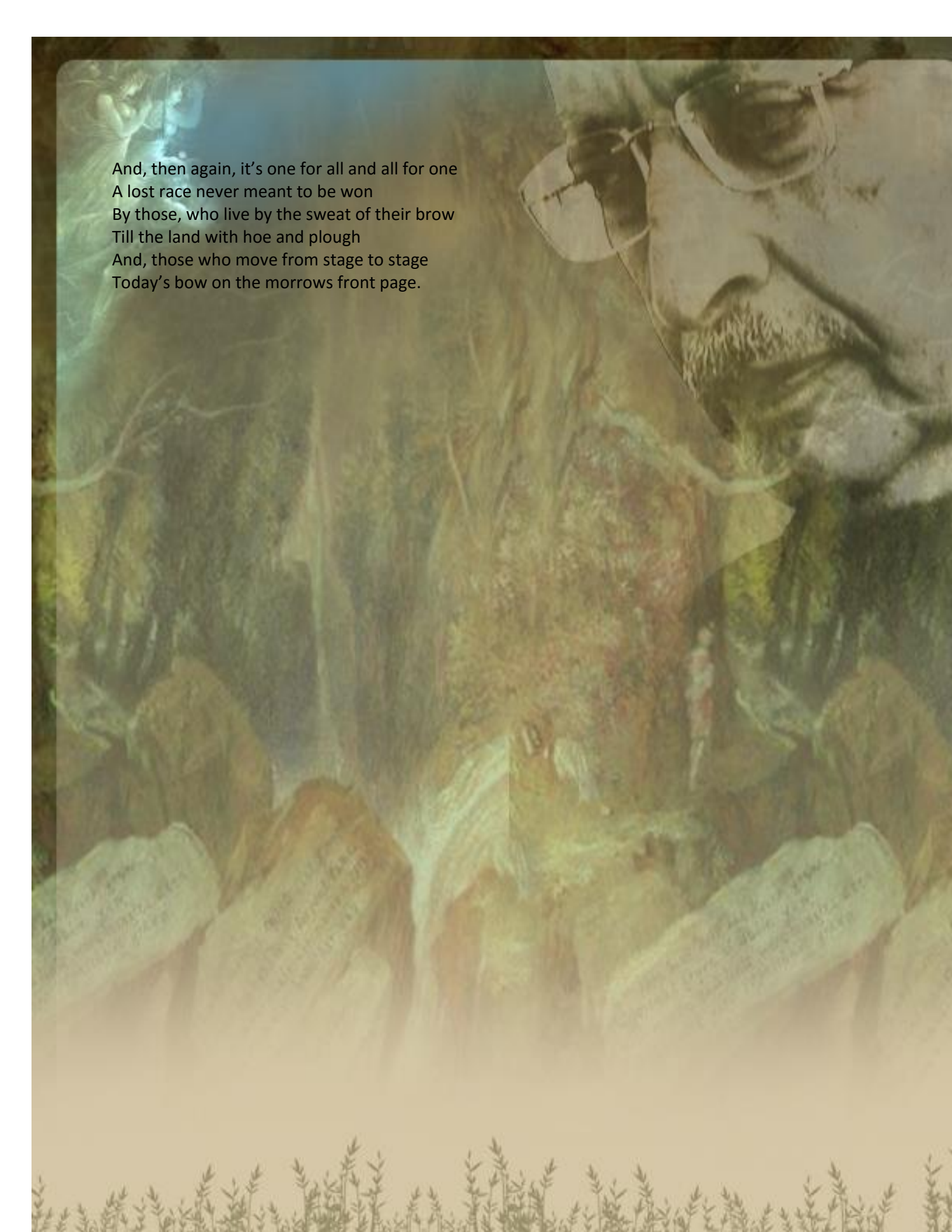
The hierarchy in Man is understood
But, we have one for gods too,
My god is greater than yours, my friend
To mine, then, you must also bend.

Where and when does Conscience leave us
What’s the colour and the route of that bus,
The one we board when we’ve lost it all
‘Cause we prostrated, did not stand tall.

Weak is flesh and weaker the mind
Driven by passions and the reasons we find,
To deviate from the paths that are right
As, with eyes open we lose all sight.

We’re more than emperors and mortal kings
We’re gods in heaven, masters of all things,
We order, we cajole, but mostly we fool
With promises of Utopia and benign rule

To unleash on the silent majority, a tyranny
Of proportions inhuman, sadly,
Till another of some other hue
Does the same to those who have no clue



And, then again, it's one for all and all for one
A lost race never meant to be won
By those, who live by the sweat of their brow
Till the land with hoe and plough
And, those who move from stage to stage
Today's bow on the morrows front page.



12.

Voices from the Wilderness

Voices in the temple
Church, mosque
And Synagogue,
Splitting of
A God into many
By the Sermonizer and Demagogue,

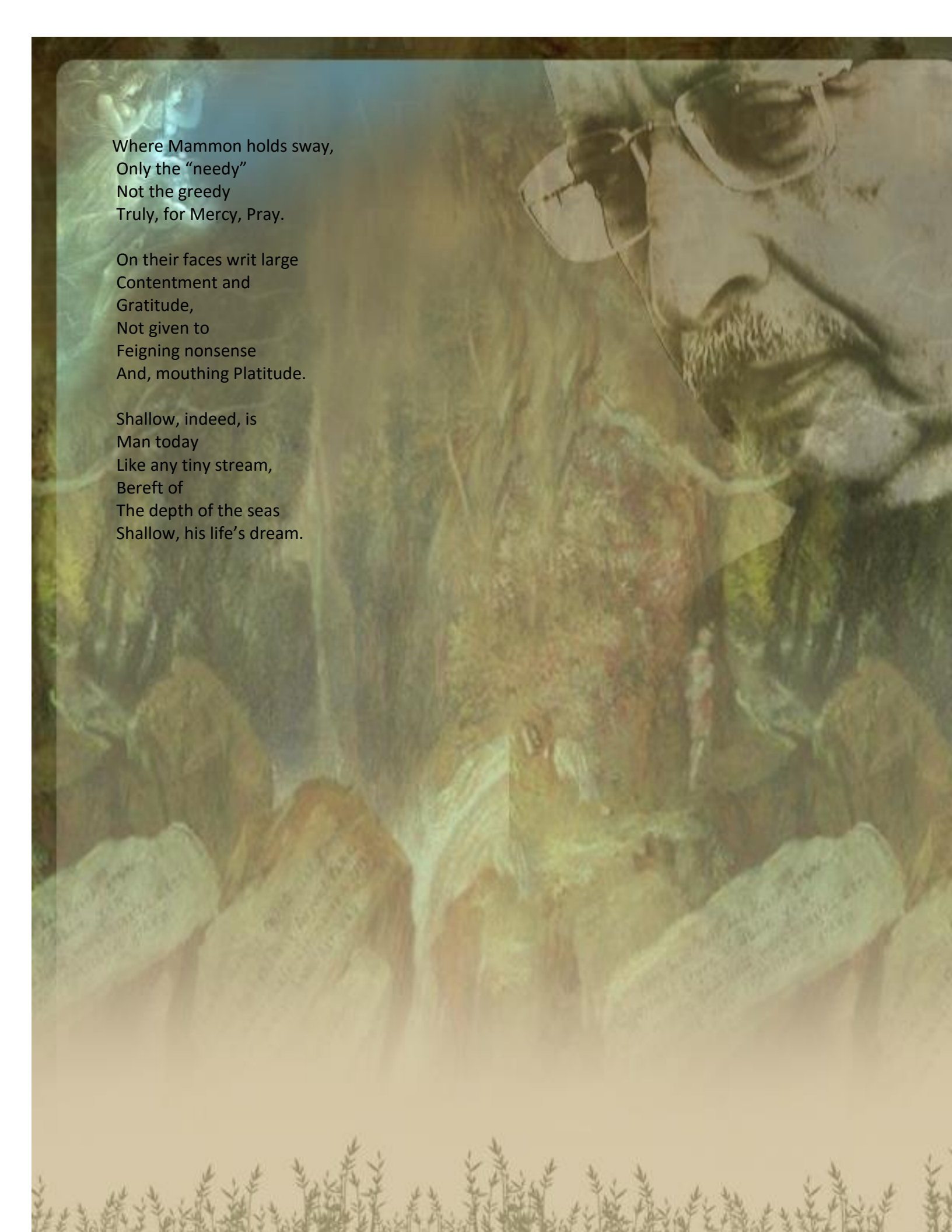
The Prayer, the same
A plea for Mercy
In His munificent name,
With the Almighty
We all play
The same sordid game

Words not uttered
Left unspoken
For, the heart knows better,
From it to the brain
And, then the tongue
There's many a changed letter,

The Lord doesn't read
He listens
The quiver in the voice revealing,
The burnished appeal
The silky flow
Inept at Him, deceiving.

He, who knows best of all
The state mind of the
Sinner,
Remembered only
At bedtime
Post wine and the lavish, dinner.

That's the state of
The well-to-do



Where Mammon holds sway,
Only the "needy"
Not the greedy
Truly, for Mercy, Pray.

On their faces writ large
Contentment and
Gratitude,
Not given to
Feigning nonsense
And, mouthing Platitude.

Shallow, indeed, is
Man today
Like any tiny stream,
Bereft of
The depth of the seas
Shallow, his life's dream.



13.

Put Cynicism To Bed

However dark the night maybe
Or, the one that lies ahead,
There is for all that ray of light
When the Orb rises from the dead.

That morning shaft of brilliance
Lights up the darkest of nights,
Dissipates the gloom that's left behind
By nightmares, and other morbid sights.

So, it will not do, O sullen Poet
To cynical be at all,
That is left to those who cannot
Rise, when they tumble and fall.

The world was never meant to be
A heaven of sorts for mankind,
When the first resident who set forth here
Was a fallen Angel, a repentant mind.

The world's a garden with room for all
The flower, the tree, the weed and the bee,
Heaven's here and so is Hell, and
That greatest of all desires, Eternity.

The afterlife is nothing
It's all here and now,
Play your part in Life's destined drama
Then, take your last bow.

Adieu.





14.

A Dubious Ode To Sleep

Sleep, O beautiful Sleep, indeed
But, only when you're a matter of choice
Not, when I hear all the time Sleep,
Sleep, from my voice.

Where art thou, O Energy
Where, the spring in your stride,
When all I wish to do now
Is sleep somewhere, and somewhere hide.

It's not as though I wish to dream
Of Mermaids in the stream,
It's not as though I'm cheating
Downing strawberries and cream
Or, in the flowing waters
Dining on some bream,
It's just that my eyes are drooping
The lids all ready to scream
So, tell me O Lady Sleep
What am I to do?
I doze in the armchair
For comfort that's designed
And, to my somnolence
I'm truly now resigned.

No answers from you do I expect
For, you do well what you're supposed to,
There was a time, a long time ago
When I slept in your loving arms
Do you remember, O Sleep, Do You?



15.

Life's an Empty Canvas

Life's an empty canvas
Paint it as you wish,
Choice of both medium colour
The paint's in your dish.

Silky oil or water pure
You can take the muddy too,
Landscape, Skyscape, or just Cape
What's the great hullabaloo.

Want to make a name, do so
Want infamy, your choice, your fun
But remember you might stumble
With passion on the run.

Choose the colour of grass
Perhaps, the soothing, emerald green,
There's snaky weed around there, but
If you're lucky, there's that stone in that scene

Or, take the Orange unpeeled
And, splash it on the board,
You can then for fun
Both, Sunrise and Sunset, hoard.

Black and White aren't colours
But, the wise don't know better,
That's why they talk of colour
And, make people very bitter

But, you don't have to follow
Any, except your own heart,
The devil's in the mind
So, please, keep him apart.

16.

Where, O Where Has Innocence Gone

There is no ocean of abundance
Where boundless blessings flow,
Don't go looking for Utopia
On mirages, please go slow.

This world now full of wonders
Many more than the seven we knew,
The one's we learnt on a mother's lap
As happily, we grew.

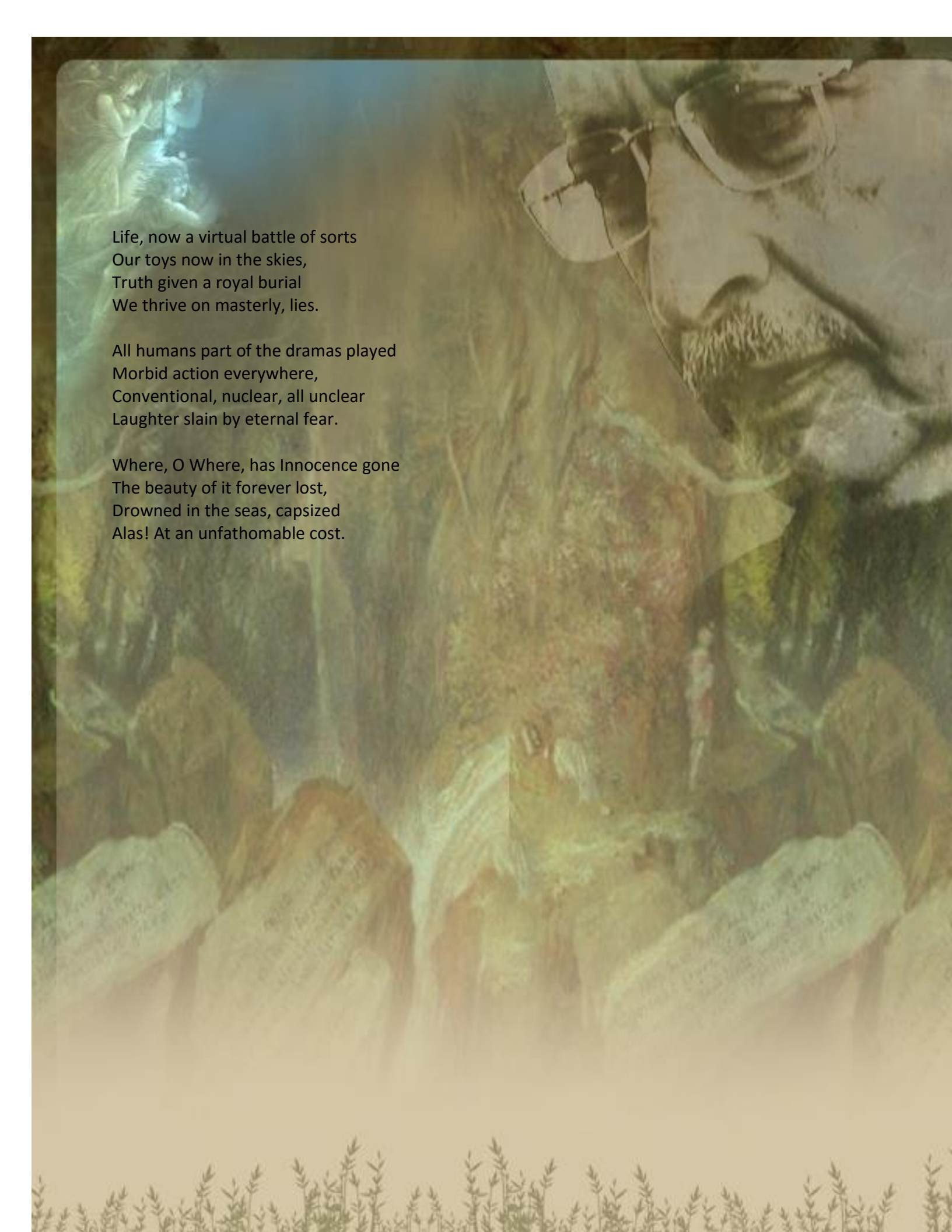
No time spent/ wasted on the "telly" of today
Where little children, sadly, see violence on display.
Screams of terror and anguish, drowned by "anchors" all
How much nicer was the cricket field, the game of football!

And, for the girls of the day there was more for them to do
Helping around the home, living more naturally,
Picnics, school, dolls and more, a real world for all
Movies and such family fun, all occasionally.

The world moved just as well, perhaps, better than now
Oiled and greased by Compassion, the wheels rotated well,
Life was very simple, days and nights knew what do
Play and work and when fatigued, 'sleep' the name of the Alarm bell,

The one we rang to get lost in dreams,
When the Sun went to another,
To brighten the lives of those in darkness
A mother, a father, a sister or brother

Or, a pal somewhere, somewhere, far away
Telepathy, fuelled by strangd empathy
Destroyed today by a naughty "apple",
No, not the one that Adam and Eve ate
But, the one with numbers with which
We daily, phonetically, grapple.



Life, now a virtual battle of sorts
Our toys now in the skies,
Truth given a royal burial
We thrive on masterly, lies.

All humans part of the dramas played
Morbid action everywhere,
Conventional, nuclear, all unclear
Laughter slain by eternal fear.

Where, O Where, has Innocence gone
The beauty of it forever lost,
Drowned in the seas, capsized
Alas! At an unfathomable cost.



17.

Ramblingly Yours

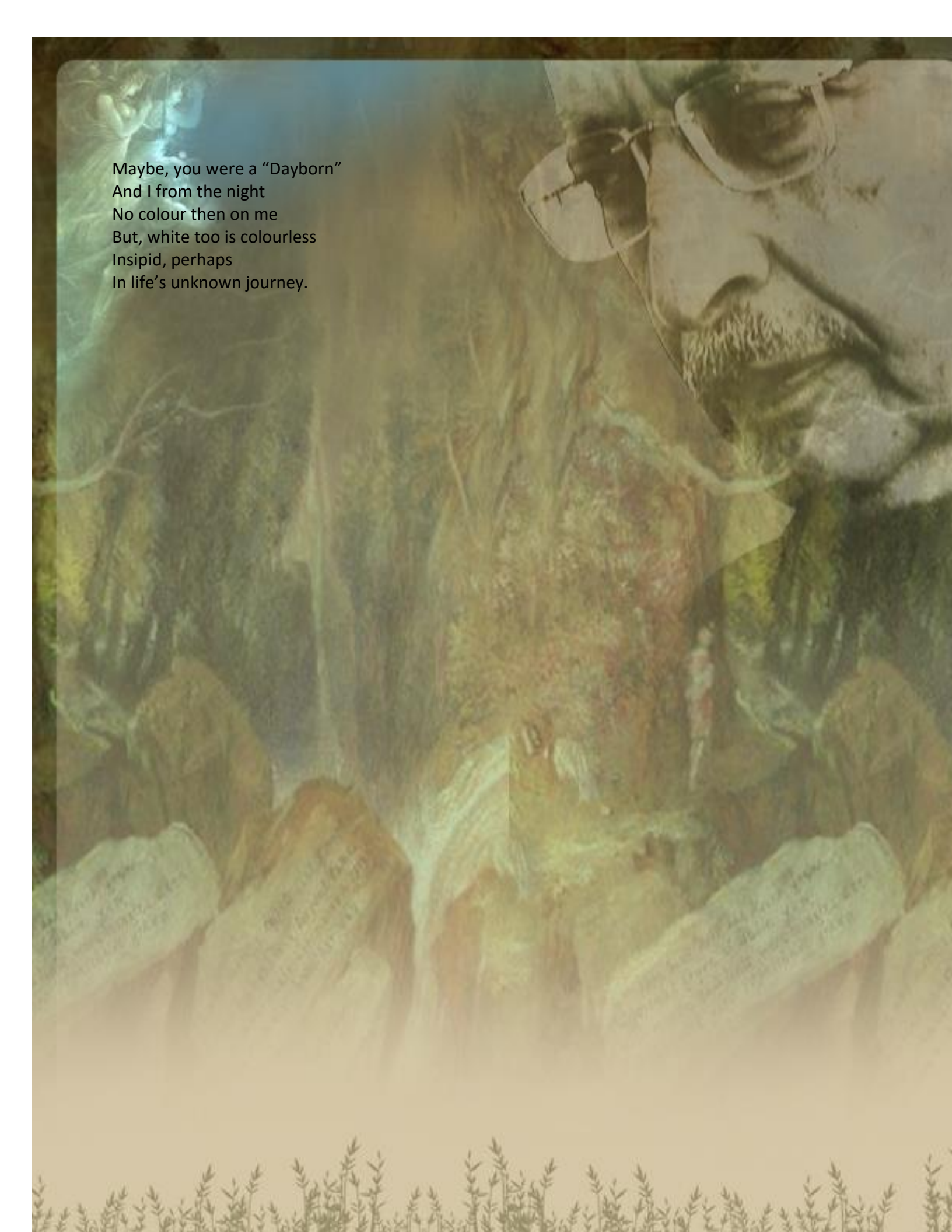
Another day gone from the book of days
Whose number of pages I don't know,
I shall ask the night, later tonight
And see if she is clueless, also,

We ride the same boat
In the Ocean of Life
Night follows day, routinely,
I see the Sunset
The passing night
And the Sunrise await, keenly.

Does the Night
I often wonder
Wait for the day to get over,
Does everyone
And everything
Wish for a life in clover

Or, do some darkness prefer
For, the mirror shows you
As you are,
The lines, the creases
The infirmities
For life's course are always Par.

You win some, you lose some
I'm ugly, you're winsome
Is the game a Zero Sum,
You're white, you're yellow
I'm a black, brown fellow
Does it matter where I come from.



Maybe, you were a "Dayborn"
And I from the night
No colour then on me
But, white too is colourless
Inspid, perhaps
In life's unknown journey.



18.

The Heart Is Your Light In Darkness

Those who go looking for company
Have little connect with themselves,
Where, O Where, are we headed people
Having, permanently, lost ourselves.

You must be your own best friend always
But, not egotistically,
If you don't get to know yourself well
Whom else will you, pray tell me.

You're with yourself each moment of life
No closer can you be with another,
Why then do you for the sake of pleasure
Your own self, needlessly, smother.

Your happiness lies within
And, that's where you'll find it,
The heart is your light in darkness
So, please keep that candle lit.



19.

Long Live The Ramble

Eat out to help out
Someone's brilliant shout
God will take care of the "covid"
So, let's have fun, let's hang about.

Why worry about the Climate
The rain's been first rate,
The heat can take care of itself
All talk of the weather, some really hate.

One more "nuclear" can be lethal, you know
For, the thousands that exist are in very safe hands,
No, that's not specious, that's realpolitik
So, what can "we" do, if no one understands,

Comical, nay, farcical, these utterances supreme
Bordering on to-be-coined words like, "nonsenses",
Take off the mask, O many-faced, Man
You're duplicitous, shorn of your pretenses

One for the Day and one for the Night
Two-faced am I, both blind and with sight,
I spread darkness, ignorance and more
And then, I'm the one to switch on the light,

'Cause I'm both Satan and Angel too
The devil within and a samaritan true,
The clown, the ringmaster, two-in-one
That's the number of things, I can do

For, I'm the multi-tasker, par excellence
Nothing within, the outside a "Sans",
Excuse the French but, that's really a word
In these cockeyed times, let's waltz, a "covid" Dance.



20.

Man Versus God and Nature, Both

Technology's making the world shrink
And people, increasingly, look for the waiting 'shrink',
A confused Man, no nightingale, no flower
Where's the melody and the colour pink.

Burning forests now Nature's pastime
Not without reason, not without rhyme,
Retribution for Man's "Devastating " Progress
Playing with Nature, playing with Clime.

Everything now within arm's reach
Learning too's an online teach,
Covid's the great "inciter" of change
"Apple", may soon bring another peach.

"WMD's", was the buzzword once, Remember
And, nothing was found, no burning ember,
It's "Nuclear" now that worries the world
Maybe, the bow and arrow come September?

Where will all this end, I wonder
How much more will we tear asunder,
How deep are the Mighty Oceans
With the fish, will we live down under?

I don't know, let's ask the Wise
Will we drown below the lies,
Where is Truth buried today
The answer with the Heavens, probably lies.

The only "Wise One", seems asleep
Too many secrets does He seem to keep,
In the open spaces above, somewhere
Does He too, sometimes , weep?

Will He some miracles perform.
One or two will not do,
A Prophet here, a Saint there
Rapacious Man versus God, True?





21.

Forgetting to Live the Sands of Time

See the carafe its wares pour with a bow
Humility, humbly on display and how,
Hold the head high but know when to lie low
No arrow ever sped without a bending bow,

Light has no purpose without darkness
And, sanity without a modicum of madness,
There is room for all in this wide world
Look at happiness and then, look at sadness,

We long for things that aren't around
Silence, when crazy is the sound,
Old friends and that lonesome road
When your billions you have finally found,

Seeking Eternity while life's still there
Longer lives sought in daily prayer,
Forgetting to live the flowing "Sands"
Of Time, without a seeming visible care.

How little do we then of Life understand
As we delve into things that appear grand,
There's an eternal beauty to that first blade of grass
When all you had was nothing but, a tiny piece of barren land.



22.

The Crow And I

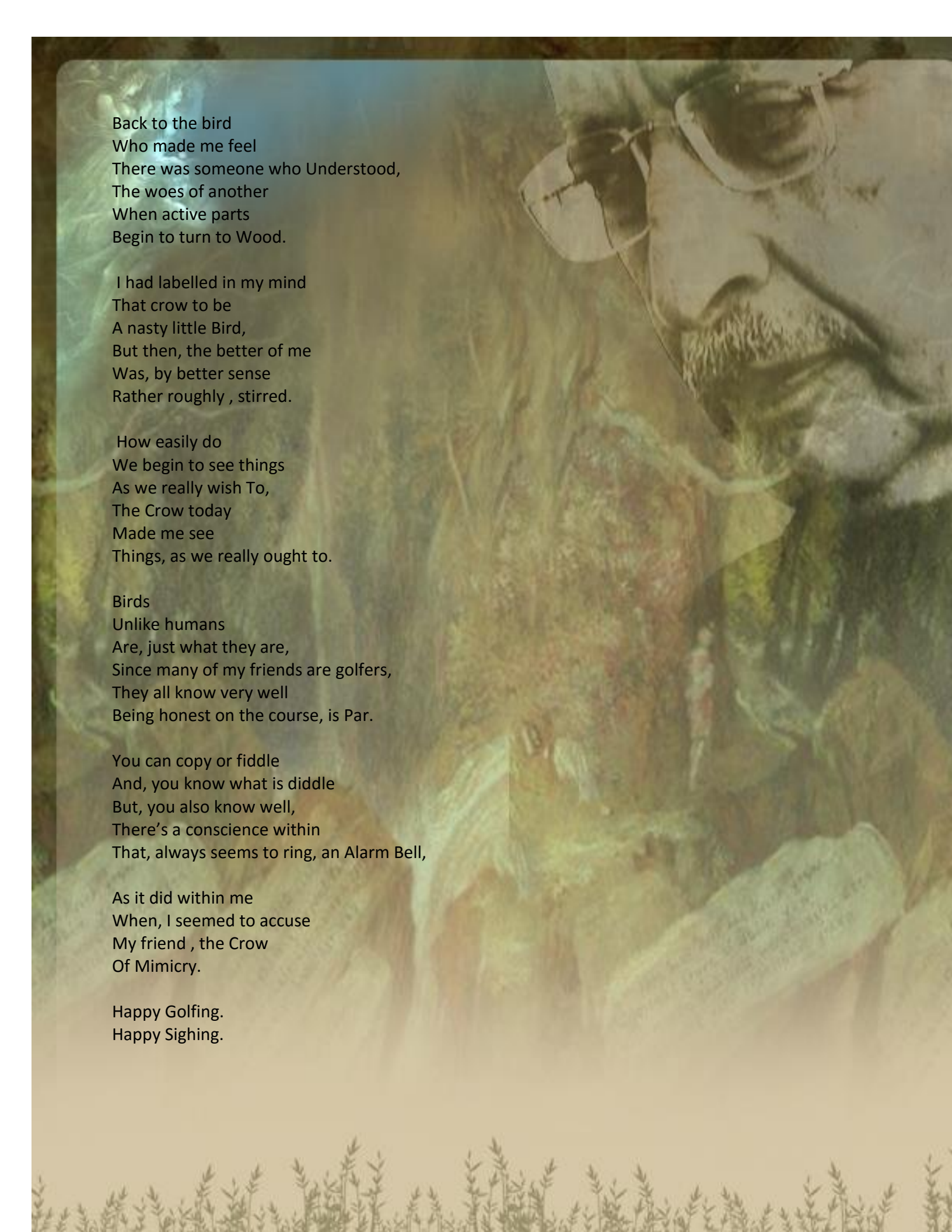
It made me laugh
Nay, smirk if you will
When the crow “refluxed” today,
A little piece of “Mathee”
Went in, then came out
That, I threw it Way.

I wondered , if the crow knew
My state of “digestive”
Affairs,
Where morsels that I chew on
Seem to have deep down in my throat
A set of folding , Stairs.

That they oft climb
Perhaps
Wanting a bit of fresh Air
I’ve never been within me you see
So, really don’t know that what lies there

Or, was it mimicry
That it replicated
What it confronts Daily,
As it waits for its piece
A hungry face
At my morning Tea Party.

It’s not the only one around
There are others too,
Who also adeptly Fly,
That patiently wait
For some “Mathee” action
As they look me in the Eye.



Back to the bird
Who made me feel
There was someone who Understood,
The woes of another
When active parts
Begin to turn to Wood.

I had labelled in my mind
That crow to be
A nasty little Bird,
But then, the better of me
Was, by better sense
Rather roughly , stirred.

How easily do
We begin to see things
As we really wish To,
The Crow today
Made me see
Things, as we really ought to.

Birds
Unlike humans
Are, just what they are,
Since many of my friends are golfers,
They all know very well
Being honest on the course, is Par.

You can copy or fiddle
And, you know what is diddle
But, you also know well,
There's a conscience within
That, always seems to ring, an Alarm Bell,

As it did within me
When, I seemed to accuse
My friend , the Crow
Of Mimicry.

Happy Golfing.
Happy Sighing.



23.

The “No First Use” Doctrine

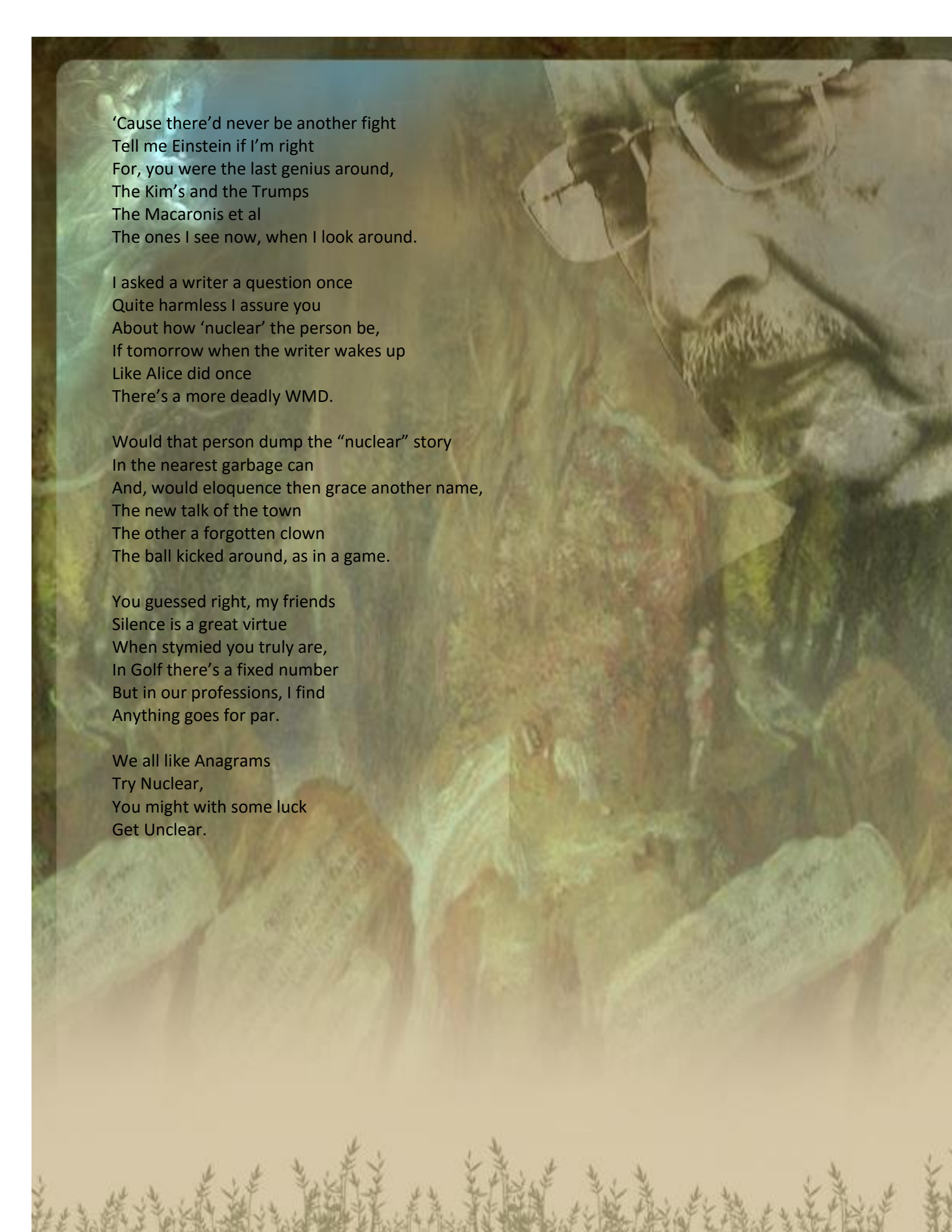
I like the phrase being bandied about
“No first use “ of my nuclear toy
And what will you do, what?
Save yourself or
Retaliate
Or, take me to The Hague Court.

How much can we rely on
On the written word
In times of War and shaky Peace,
Will I fight my battle
Or, look for the best Lawyer
Maybe, somewhere in Greece.

“Principled Wars”, are a pipe dream
A comical tragedy
An unlikely story,
Perhaps, true in the days gone by
With elephant rides of months and years
Ah! for those times, Delightfully , hoary.

We now hear of Cease Fires
That often last for a night
Or, a bit more with a bit of Rotten luck ,
Then resume without notice
As though I was out in the zoo
Looking for a Donald Duck.

Comedy complete
If all on this street
Swore by the ‘No First Use”,
There’d then, never could be
Bigger sighs of relief
And ‘thank you’s”, so profuse



'Cause there'd never be another fight
Tell me Einstein if I'm right
For, you were the last genius around,
The Kim's and the Trumps
The Macaronis et al
The ones I see now, when I look around.

I asked a writer a question once
Quite harmless I assure you
About how 'nuclear' the person be,
If tomorrow when the writer wakes up
Like Alice did once
There's a more deadly WMD.

Would that person dump the "nuclear" story
In the nearest garbage can
And, would eloquence then grace another name,
The new talk of the town
The other a forgotten clown
The ball kicked around, as in a game.

You guessed right, my friends
Silence is a great virtue
When stymied you truly are,
In Golf there's a fixed number
But in our professions, I find
Anything goes for par.

We all like Anagrams
Try Nuclear,
You might with some luck
Get Unclear.



24.

The Unanswered Question

Would I be nearer to You, O Lord, if I was on the Moon
Was that why Man was by Man, so long ago, to that land sent,
To catch a glimpse of the Pearly Gates of Heaven, maybe
And, perhaps, the one's of Hell that surely must be bent.

If you're not beyond the Moon somewhere, beyond the eternal Blue
Why do we , including me, look at the empty skies in prayer,
Heads bowed low, our hands in ardent supplication
We may not say so but, our expectations always seem to all lie there

Because, knowing ourselves as well as we all, apparently, do
There is not much hope that we, within our darkened hearts, carry
From fellow men or women who cross our daily paths
Or those that we, in the madness known as Cupid, someday marry.

You made me, O Lord, so how would this into blasphemy, translate
I am a Believer devout but, the questions that, like a river flow through me
Need answers, and I have no else to turn to in my present state
Of mind, and I can't wait till that mirage known as Eternity.

Will I get my answers or will I be denied
Or do I need, to the Moon, also take a ride
Will you be there in awe-inspiring form
Or, from Man's vision forever hide?

Are you there in that vastness somewhere
Or closeted, within me, in my wavering heart
Are we one, You and I
Or, from each other a million miles apart?

25.

Waiting for the Godot

Waiting for Enlightenment
On the highly tenuous presumption
That there must, to my existence, some purpose be,
Perhaps, a simple madness or some passion divine
Or, simply things done after another's fashion
Waiting for the Godot, could keep me here till Eternity.

I can't, surely, be just another earthling
Sent to eat and sleep, procreate, spread hate
Then, silently, vanish into a nothingness, evaporate,
With nothing to show for my days and nights here
Sunrises and Sunsets, Summers and Winters
All things like the Seasons, all unclear.

Waiting for the Godot
A la Becket's play
Will get me nowhere, for sure,
But, where do I wish to go
Attain what, what heights achieve
Climb the Everest and then, what more

Blank spaces and voids deep
To let Imagination run riot
Bare canvases to paint in colours of my choice,
But, alas, just me at the pinnacle
Isolation complete
Hearing my own rich, golden voice.

So much for Godot
Rather be a Hobo
And, wait for nothing to guide me,
I am sure I shall find
That unknown, hazy, path
That leads to the mirage called, Eternity.



26.

The River of Love

There's a River of love
That always flows
Whenever I look for it,
It's genesis
Is no mountain top
But, the heart within that's lit.

It makes a lot of empty noise
As it careens
Around the bends,
Deep down
Like the bed of the sea
Silence, is the message it sends.

The beauty of Silence
Conquers all
In awe is the spoken word,
Lest it does
Through known folly
Never, ever, be heard.

The torrent within
Soon sobers down
As towards the Sea it flows,
Love knows, as does the River
The transition from passion
And, how true love, truly, grows

27.

Is Time An Entity and Is it Precious

We all know Gold is, indeed, very precious
But, only because we made it so,
If you didn't want it around your blooming neck
It would be rock or dust with no ravishing glow

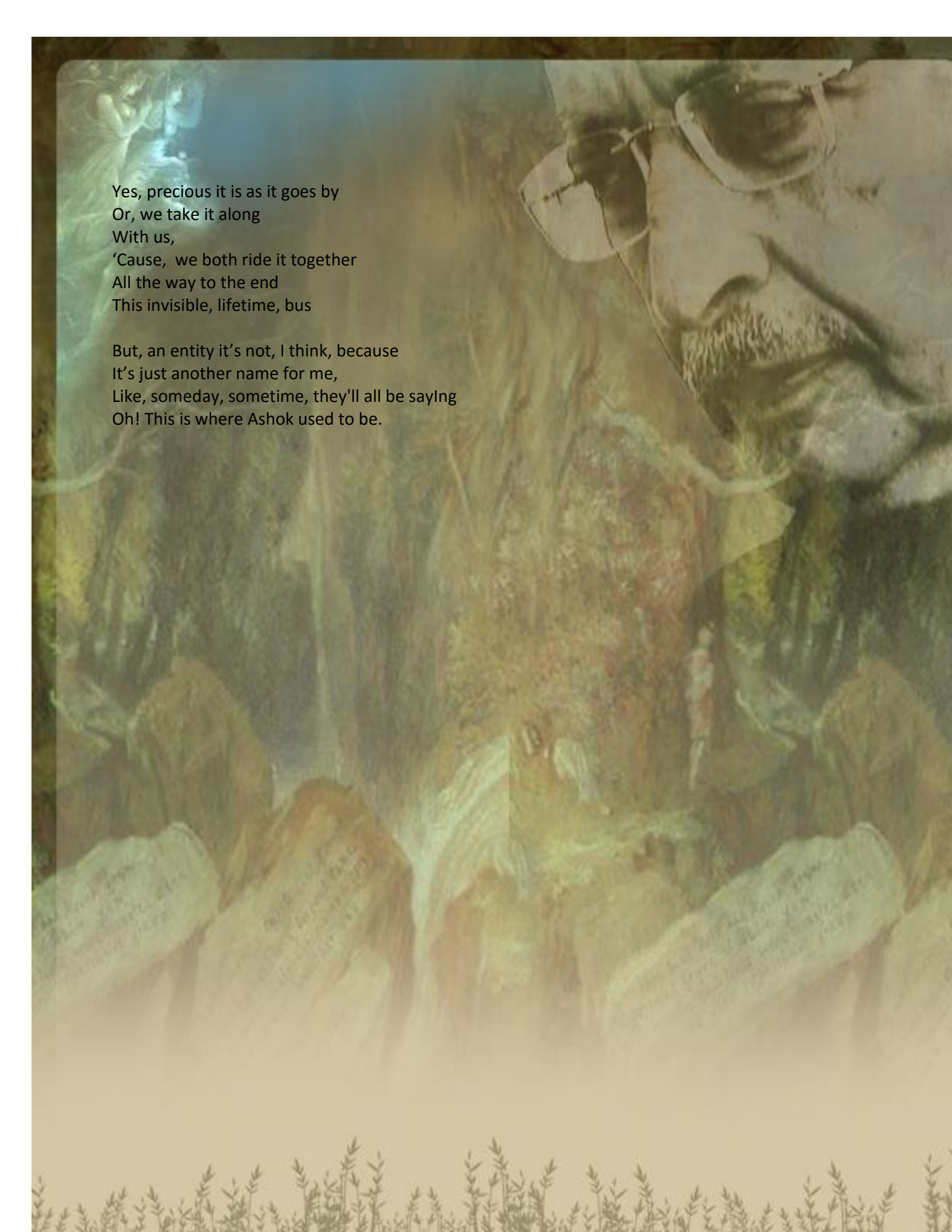
Now, how precious is Time for us
The hours, the minutes the seconds and more,
As we, anxiously, ride the boat of life,
Tossed and twisted from side to side
Till we reach the other shore
Or, midway drown, woe betide

Does it matter, do we care
Is Time, for us, just waiting there,
Is the end In the equation
As we wait for eternity, somewhere

Till, this fastest flying bird
Finds, Sunrise turn to Sunset
And, it then dawns on foolish Man
That another morn we may never get.

But, there is no option there, alas
No other route to take
Or follow,
Except, to swim or boat it
Through
Waters deep and shallow.

Is Time then a thing
That we can string along
An entity neither heavy nor light,
Like the baggage you carry
On your shoulders wide
And, then put to bed each night.



Yes, precious it is as it goes by
Or, we take it along
With us,
'Cause, we both ride it together
All the way to the end
This invisible, lifetime, bus

But, an entity it's not, I think, because
It's just another name for me,
Like, someday, sometime, they'll all be saying
Oh! This is where Ashok used to be.



28.

War and Peace- the Irony

I see a funny battle of words
Tweets from humans who seem like birds,
Flying around in empty skies
Looking for War and Peace both,
Squinting, straining with their eyes.

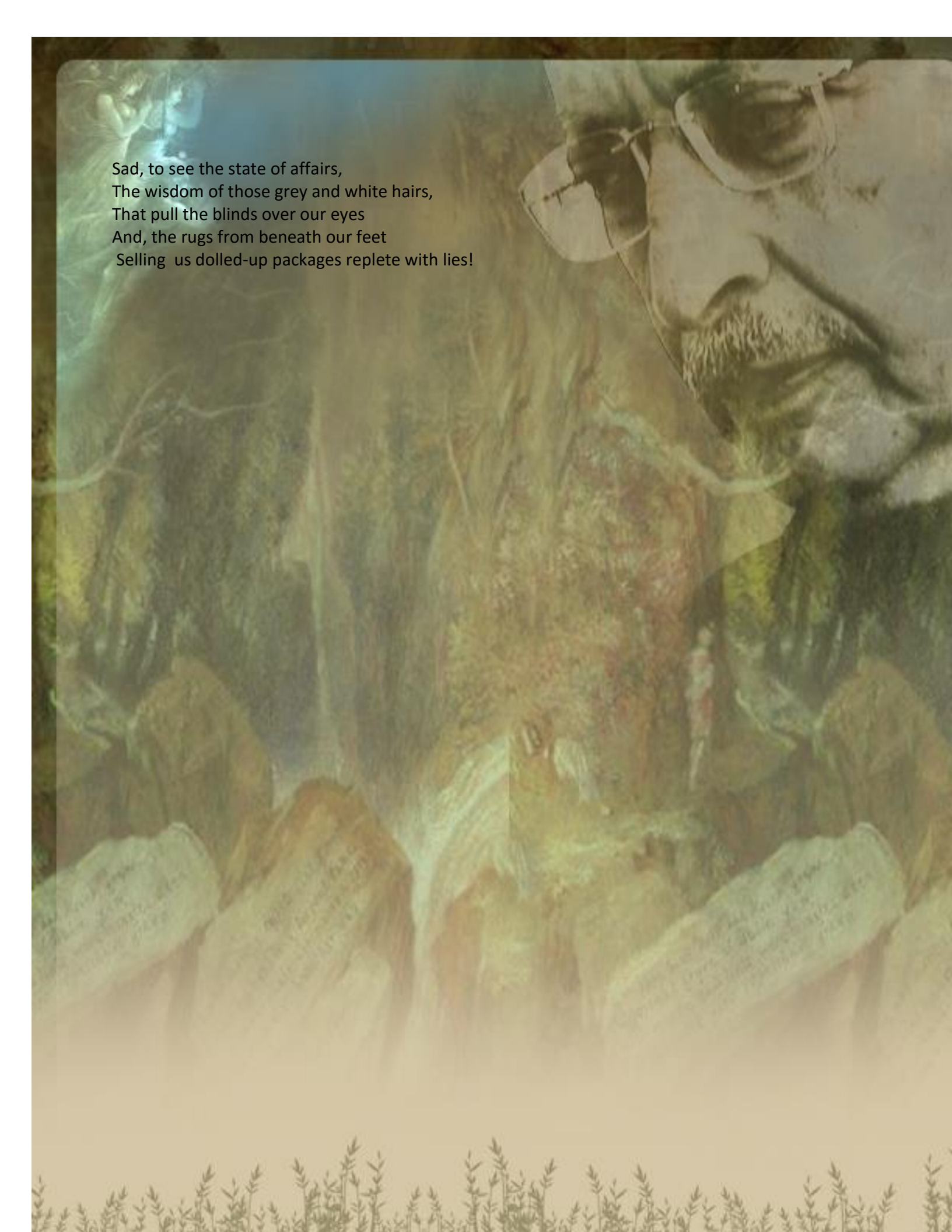
Protagonists, is a tongue- twister for me
“Pro”, I know, not “tagonists” you see,
Missiles hurled and White flags unfurled
Vicious, the one, and Pleading, the other,
In this war of words is my head, all swirled.

If you are or are not a “twitter” fanatic
In whichever room you choose or in your attic,
It’s a tragedy of Shakespearean proportions
Hamlet might have had a different soliloquy ,
If he had, had any or all of these preposterous notions

Wars, for example, to ensure there’s some Peace
“Some” ‘cause we need Peace to our stocks grease
The piles of lethal stuff that lies around everywhere
Or, is traded to keep battles going, Cash flows flowing
And, be ready for the next skirmish, God only knows where?

Pacifists, sadly, are taken simply as silly Philosophers
Who understand nothing of “reality”, like kind brothers
But, their constant harping is not a bad thing
After all, even Nightingales sometimes Croak
Even, as we know how beautifully they sing.

The “warriors” are the ones we need to watch out for
As they vent their anger and ask for more
Bloodshed and mayhem, all for Peace
No life, no people, what better way than this
To ensure it (Peace) from here to Greece.



Sad, to see the state of affairs,
The wisdom of those grey and white hairs,
That pull the blinds over our eyes
And, the rugs from beneath our feet
Selling us dolled-up packages replete with lies!

29.

The Many Facets of Silence

What use the melody that lies within the chords of a harp
Or, the silence of the deep waters of a billowing
Sea, I am surrounded by a silence supreme, by unspoken words
What use, pray tell, is the unanswered prayer to me.

I cannot read nor fathom what the depth of the eyes convey
Nor, what the racing beat of a ravaged heart wishes to say,
The unsaid word, like the staring cloud that doesn't rain
Tells me nothing, I am no clairvoyant.

I like the sweet warbling of larks in the trees
I like the rushing waters and the softly rustling leaves,
The only silence I like is the silence that lies within me
To that I can relate, as my own mind I can read.

I like the tweets of birds, not the "twitter" we know
Seldom sweet and warm mostly bitter we know,
Bizarre are humans wrapped in lust and greed
Warped minds that on schadenfreude feed.

Sinners that wear the garb of holy men today
Games of thrones across the continuum played
For, nothing changes much across the spectrum
All, like the stars brilliantly arrayed till.....
Life's dues are fully paid.

I like the quiet, the silence that resides within me now
Whose hand I hold as I walk along the corridors of time,
That silence which gives me sustenance, a balm for the soul
Till..... the end of life, this eternal Pantomime.



30.

Quick Returns, Diminishing Returns

Motion and action are easy to confuse
But, movement alone gets you nowhere,
Crises in life just won't defuse
Without a plan of action somewhere.

There are multiple pathways that come one's way
Some green, some brown, offering you choice,
Some barren lands that promise returns
Some, that allure you with a silky voice.

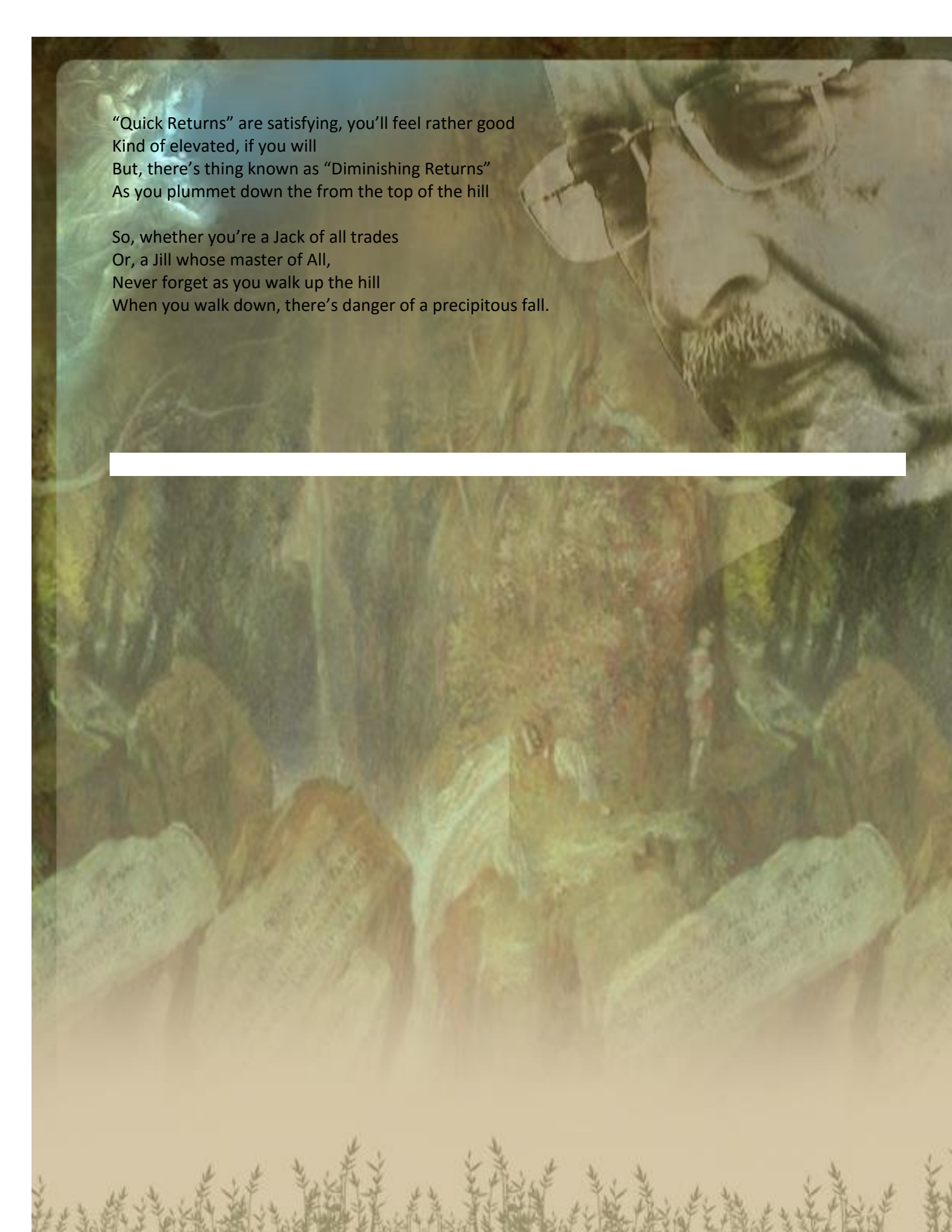
There are Wall Streets and Flat Streets, Round too
The residents there not always fair
But, that fairness bit in humans today
Is a trait you will find, but, rather rare.

Some that offer you a bright Sunrise
Without a reference to the Sunset clause,
Lurking, too, are sharks somewhere
In waters deep with monster jaws

The world today is, indeed, self-centred
Little care for anyone but the Self,
Quick returns are the order of the day
With hungry beings looking for Pelf.

We all know well to our dire distress
There is no day without a night
And, in the darkness that, then, abounds
It's a simple exercise to lose one's sight.

Beware, then, of the deep and dark waters
That tickle your toes and then are knee-deep,
You can climb the Everest, it's been done before
As long as you know it is, rather steep.



“Quick Returns” are satisfying, you’ll feel rather good
Kind of elevated, if you will
But, there’s thing known as “Diminishing Returns”
As you plummet down the from the top of the hill

So, whether you’re a Jack of all trades
Or, a Jill whose master of All,
Never forget as you walk up the hill
When you walk down, there’s danger of a precipitous fall.



31.

Much Ado About Nothing

Seats of Power, red and white houses
Heavens of sorts or palaces in the air,
Where dazed people gather in holy amazement
What else do you expect dazed people to do
When they know nothing of the “Machiavellis” inside
For, in the gilded fortresses only “angels” apparently reside

In chambers and rooms and underground vaults
Oval in shape, some rectangular and round
At the same time, alas!
When machinations can never be transparent, we know
Then structures, too, must confuse and confound!

Walled-in and fenced- off, these mortals divine
Eternal is the term but only limited by years,
All through, till the end, are blown fuses and darkness
In these oceans of authority there are plenty of lighthouses
To douse the storms within and drown the fears

Of a loss, the next time round that the gates open up
Readying for a new incumbent, new spit and new polish
For, someone else to do much the same in reality,
Nothing, Really,
Just hang about the gardens for an annual tea party
Much ado about a lot of
Nothing, Really.



32.

The Lurking Dangers of Inviting Tiger Woods.

There was an “electricity” all around
That seemed to come from nowhere,
No one there but the angel of golf
Expectancy ripe, in the air.

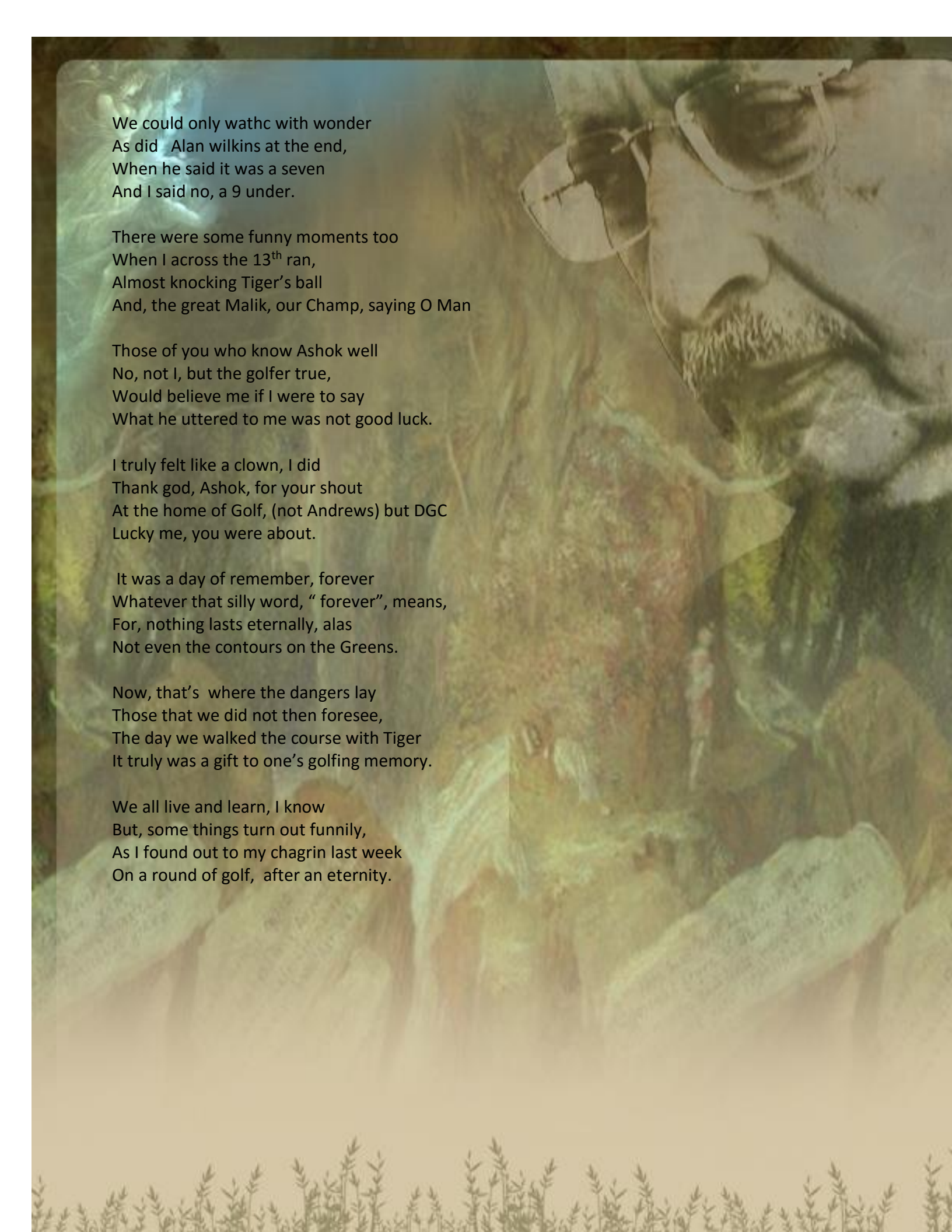
For, the Club had managed somehow
Good scramblers always do that, we know,
Get out of the woods, remarkably unscathed
Sometimes, you wonder in amazement, How?

It was for me and thousands of others,
A day that we would never forget,
Not everyone’s lucky to be at the Masters
Not everyone has the ‘lolly’, I bet.

Out came the Tiger from nowhere
The one without the trail,
The one who wins so nonchalantly
The one who does not fail.

It was a sight for Gods themselves to see
One of them on the first tee, Tiger
And, all he did was to rip it down
To then 8 iron it, miss the eagle, but get the birdie.

After that was ruthless murder
Of the course, but, with great finesse,
Birdies flying around the ease
The ball, a victim of a ferocious caress.



We could only watch with wonder
As did Alan Wilkins at the end,
When he said it was a seven
And I said no, a 9 under.

There were some funny moments too
When I across the 13th ran,
Almost knocking Tiger's ball
And, the great Malik, our Champ, saying O Man

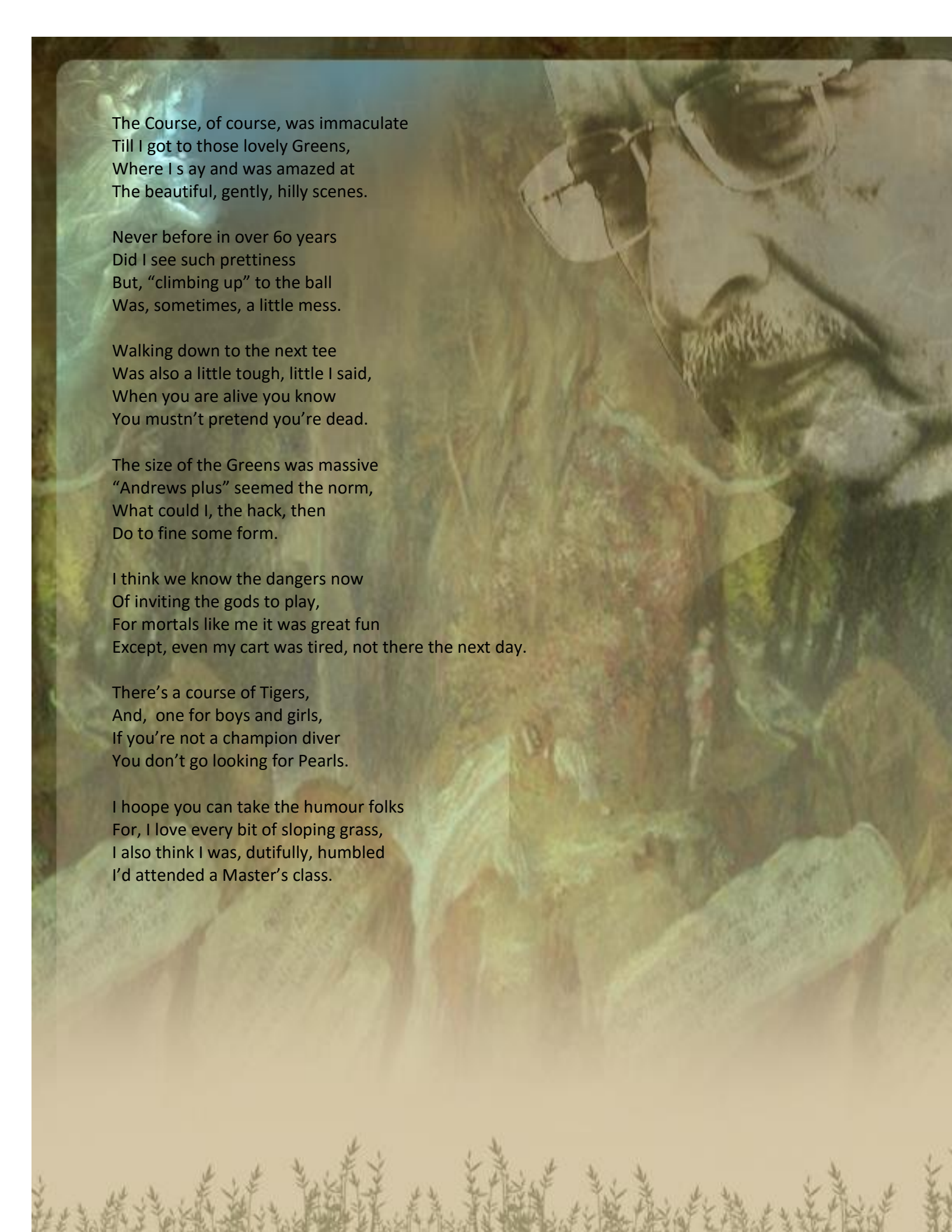
Those of you who know Ashok well
No, not I, but the golfer true,
Would believe me if I were to say
What he uttered to me was not good luck.

I truly felt like a clown, I did
Thank god, Ashok, for your shout
At the home of Golf, (not Andrews) but DGC
Lucky me, you were about.

It was a day of remember, forever
Whatever that silly word, " forever", means,
For, nothing lasts eternally, alas
Not even the contours on the Greens.

Now, that's where the dangers lay
Those that we did not then foresee,
The day we walked the course with Tiger
It truly was a gift to one's golfing memory.

We all live and learn, I know
But, some things turn out funnily,
As I found out to my chagrin last week
On a round of golf, after an eternity.



The Course, of course, was immaculate
Till I got to those lovely Greens,
Where I say and was amazed at
The beautiful, gently, hilly scenes.

Never before in over 60 years
Did I see such prettiness
But, "climbing up" to the ball
Was, sometimes, a little mess.

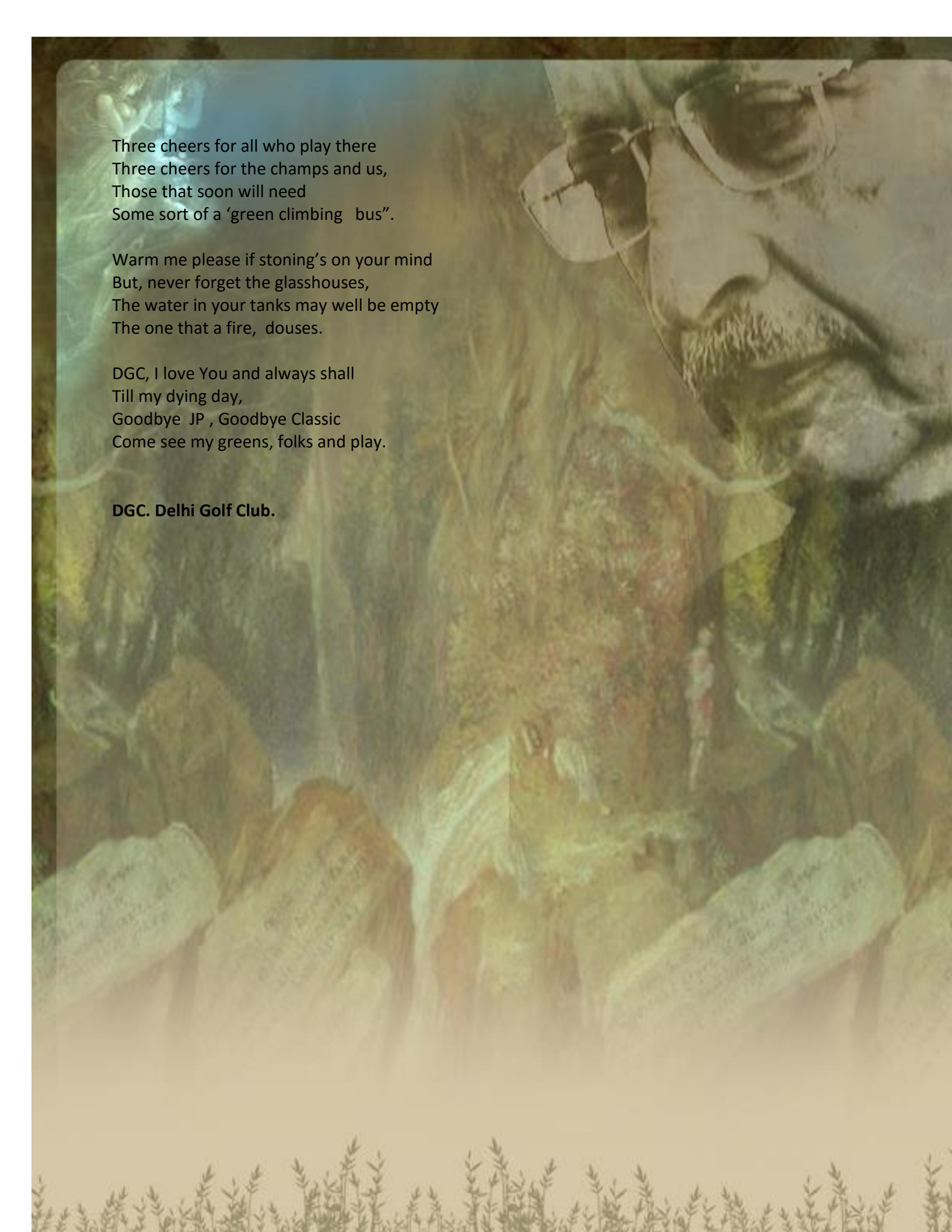
Walking down to the next tee
Was also a little tough, little I said,
When you are alive you know
You mustn't pretend you're dead.

The size of the Greens was massive
"Andrews plus" seemed the norm,
What could I, the hack, then
Do to fine some form.

I think we know the dangers now
Of inviting the gods to play,
For mortals like me it was great fun
Except, even my cart was tired, not there the next day.

There's a course of Tigers,
And, one for boys and girls,
If you're not a champion diver
You don't go looking for Pearls.

I hope you can take the humour folks
For, I love every bit of sloping grass,
I also think I was, dutifully, humbled
I'd attended a Master's class.



Three cheers for all who play there
Three cheers for the champs and us,
Those that soon will need
Some sort of a 'green climbing bus'".

Warm me please if stoning's on your mind
But, never forget the glasshouses,
The water in your tanks may well be empty
The one that a fire, douses.

DGC, I love You and always shall
Till my dying day,
Goodbye JP , Goodbye Classic
Come see my greens, folks and play.

DGC. Delhi Golf Club.



33.

The Reality of Nothingness

Beyond what I can see with the naked eye
Beyond the stars and all else that there, lie
There must be some Power of sorts, some entity
Or else, these empty spaces all seem a lie.

Within me too there are these vacant spaces
That I attempt to fill with names of places
That, I may have visited from time to time
As I run, and so do you, Life's many races.

We all know well the truth of Nothingness
We were and are nothing and into that we egress,
O, Puny Man, look at the Heavens and your poverty
'Cause Nothingness is all you will ever possess.

From one Nothingness to another, we travel
Eternally, till the Lord, call time with gavel,
How perfunctory Man's pronouncements
Will we this conundrum, Ashok, ever Unravel.

34. Don't Build Walls, Build Bridges

Break down the boundaries
Break down the walls,
Break down these barriers
Before Man breaks and falls.

Man is one in the eyes of God
Who then is Man to Man divide,
Look within, O foolish Mortal
Your heart weeps for you, inside.

Before, you brand and label people
That come to live in your land,
Think of those you call your own
And, where they go and, often, stand

On foreign soils and countries hostile
For, the same reasons that you dish out,
“Migrants”, the new name for them,
Your own subjected to vulgar shout.

In a world that gets smaller by the day
Ironic is this need to “protect”
Man, from another Man if you will
Who, are we to select or reject?

Yes, there must rules be
That, then apply to all irrespective,
No colour, no race, no personal faith
Must bear the burden of another's invective.

Harmony and peace don't survive
On lands infested with late and more,
Grass gets overtaken by weed, Yes,
But, only by weed not better grass for sure,

Let's not imaginary or other walls build
Let all playing fields level be,
The Game, remember, is always ahead
Of personal loss or victory.

Build bridges and not wall, connect People
Build harmony and not weapons that destroy,
No Camp fires that burn, maim and kill
New York, London or the Land of Helen of Troy.



35.

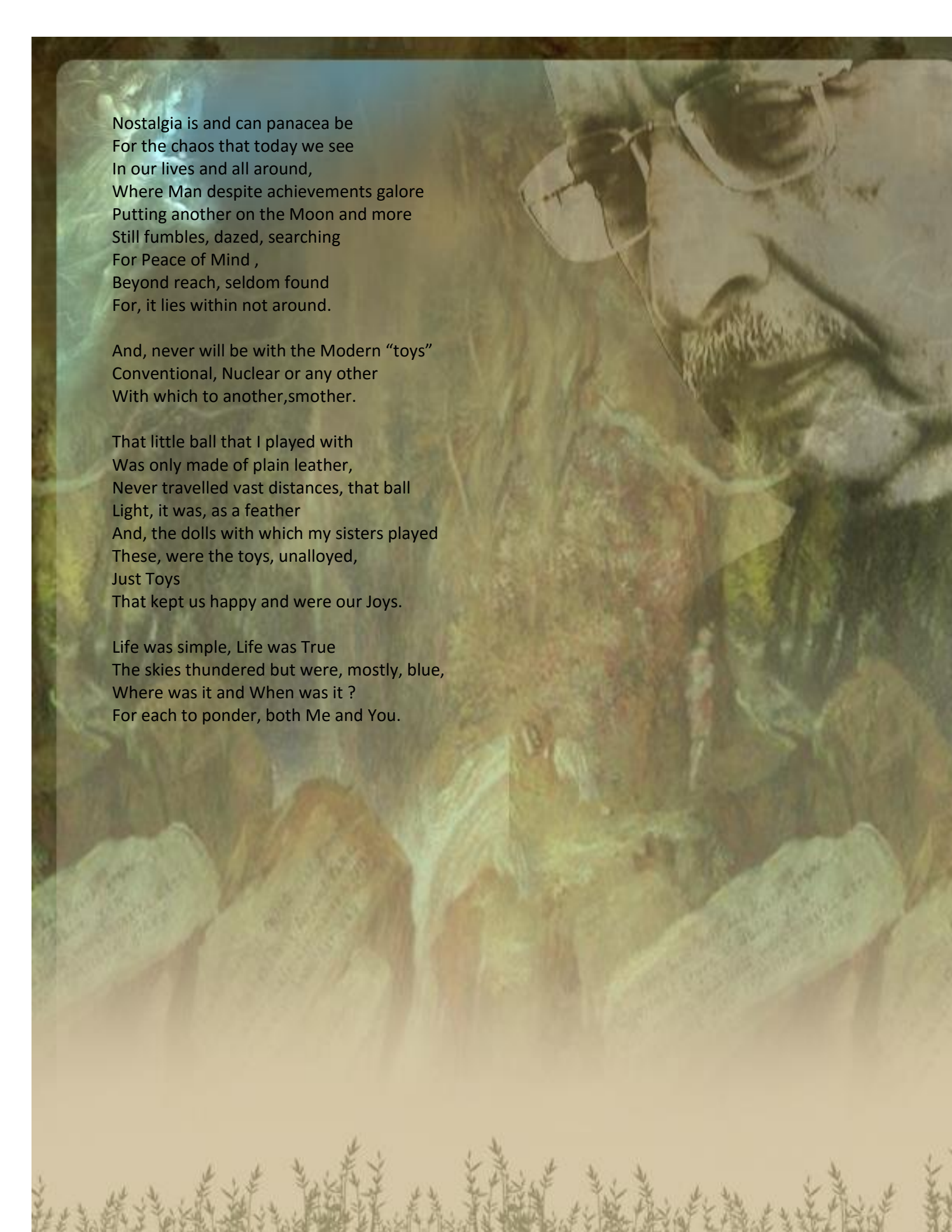
Where was that and When was It?

Another age, another time, another world
Where was that and When was it?
When tadpoles scampered in the streams
And, hooped horses their noises made
In a valley green, verdant, resplendent
Now, a Dream.

Where laughter filled both room and air
Joy the only surround sound,
When voices all were layered with love
Hugs were blankets and warmth was around,
Affinity existed, didn't need to be found,
Where was that, When was it?

In the haze that is now Memory
Faces blurred and visions misty
Were tall trees that lined roads
Majestic, the Chinar,
With little to give to the little me
While, the little trees had Plum,
The things and joys of simple Childhood
When absent are the words, Sulk and Glum

I let the mind now freely roam
Beyond the clouds that hamper sight,
Beyond the stars and seek their light
To create pictures of those days and nights
When, sleep came easy, dreams not marred
The beauty of dreams, unscarred.



Nostalgia is and can panacea be
For the chaos that today we see
In our lives and all around,
Where Man despite achievements galore
Putting another on the Moon and more
Still fumbles, dazed, searching
For Peace of Mind ,
Beyond reach, seldom found
For, it lies within not around.

And, never will be with the Modern “toys”
Conventional, Nuclear or any other
With which to another, smother.

That little ball that I played with
Was only made of plain leather,
Never travelled vast distances, that ball
Light, it was, as a feather
And, the dolls with which my sisters played
These, were the toys, unalloyed,
Just Toys
That kept us happy and were our Joys.

Life was simple, Life was True
The skies thundered but were, mostly, blue,
Where was it and When was it ?
For each to ponder, both Me and You.

36.

Don't Go Looking For Heaven and Hell

A Vagrant Soul on a sightseeing trip
Went looking for two places,
One he'd heard was called Hell
The other Heaven, up a few paces.

Hell came first, and that seemed normal
For, Heaven's usually remembered post despair
So, the Soul looked around, a "recce" if you will
To see who all were there.

It found a few familiar souls
Who seemed to be liking it there,
There were no fires, no surging flames
Was this Hell, who was the Compere?

This was no devilish place at all
No Satan seemed around,
Nothing burning, no embers there
Laughter, was the resounding sound.

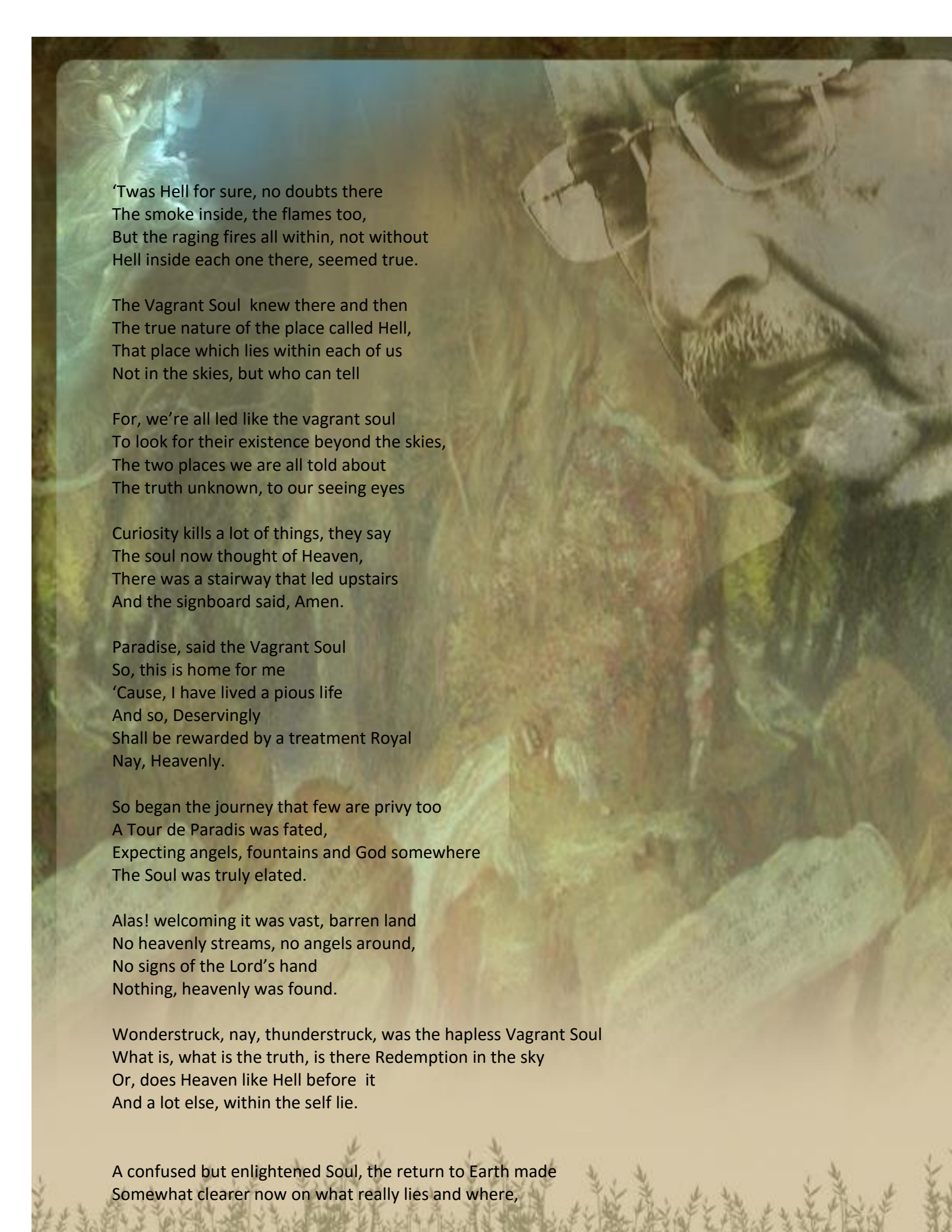
Puzzled, now, was our vagrant Soul
The state of affairs a conundrum,
Look around and you will see likewise on Earth
Everyone beating their own drum.

So it seemed, to the Soul, there was not much to choose
Between the Earth and what it saw was Hell,
Whatever it had seen so far
Rang no different kind of bell.

But, there had to be some difference
However small in size,
Thought the Soul to itself
As all hell broke loose, in shrieks and cries.

Taken aback by this startling drama
The Soul looked deeper for signs of sin,
For Hell was for Sinners only, so they said
Horrendous, was now the din.





'Twas Hell for sure, no doubts there
The smoke inside, the flames too,
But the raging fires all within, not without
Hell inside each one there, seemed true.

The Vagrant Soul knew there and then
The true nature of the place called Hell,
That place which lies within each of us
Not in the skies, but who can tell

For, we're all led like the vagrant soul
To look for their existence beyond the skies,
The two places we are all told about
The truth unknown, to our seeing eyes

Curiosity kills a lot of things, they say
The soul now thought of Heaven,
There was a stairway that led upstairs
And the signboard said, Amen.

Paradise, said the Vagrant Soul
So, this is home for me
'Cause, I have lived a pious life
And so, Deservingly
Shall be rewarded by a treatment Royal
Nay, Heavenly.

So began the journey that few are privy too
A Tour de Paradis was fated,
Expecting angels, fountains and God somewhere
The Soul was truly elated.

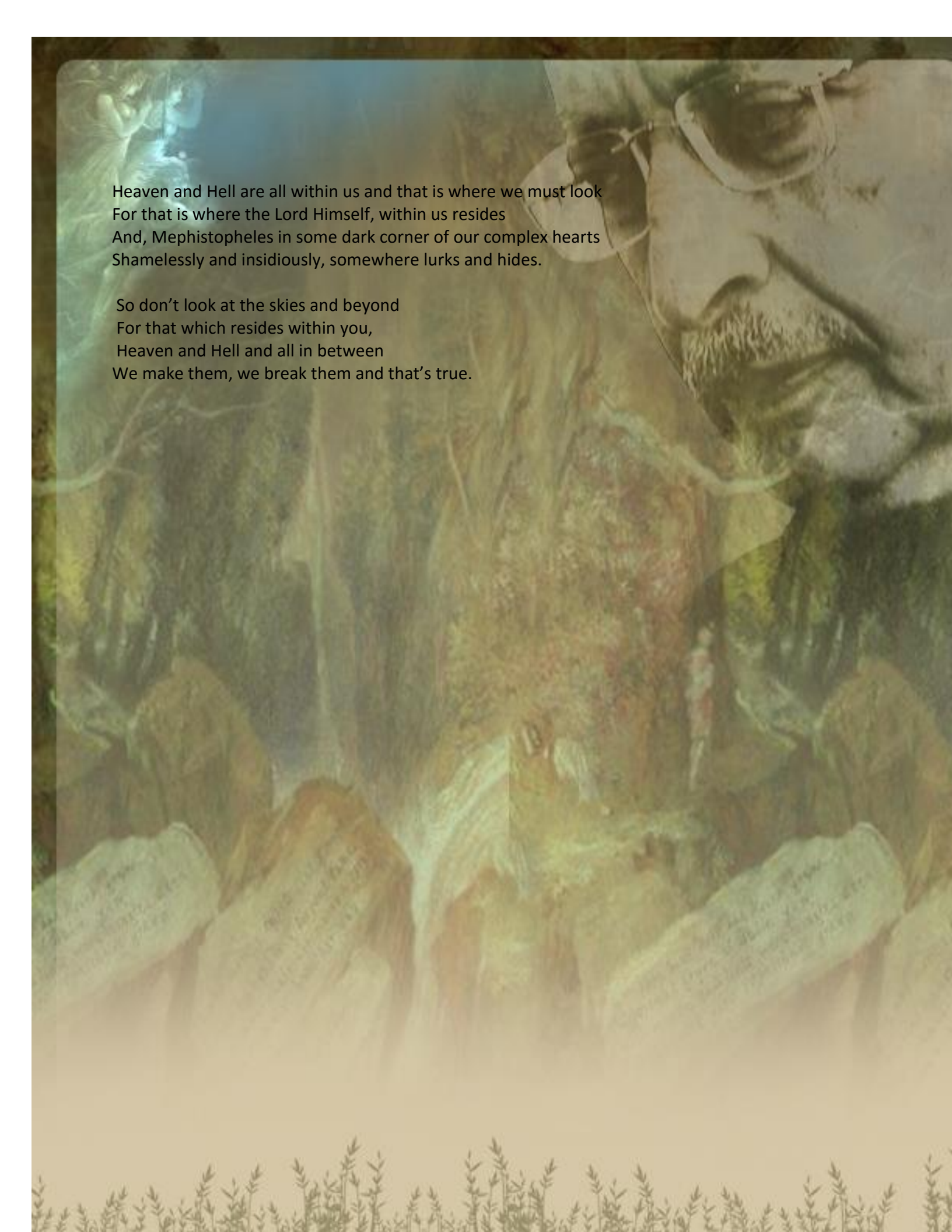
Alas! welcoming it was vast, barren land
No heavenly streams, no angels around,
No signs of the Lord's hand
Nothing, heavenly was found.

Wonderstruck, nay, thunderstruck, was the hapless Vagrant Soul
What is, what is the truth, is there Redemption in the sky
Or, does Heaven like Hell before it
And a lot else, within the self lie.

A confused but enlightened Soul, the return to Earth made
Somewhat clearer now on what really lies and where,

One thing, though, crystal-clear as is the rising Orb
Nothing's there up in the skies, but the Sun's constant glare.





Heaven and Hell are all within us and that is where we must look
For that is where the Lord Himself, within us resides
And, Mephistopheles in some dark corner of our complex hearts
Shamelessly and insidiously, somewhere lurks and hides.

So don't look at the skies and beyond
For that which resides within you,
Heaven and Hell and all in between
We make them, we break them and that's true.



37.

Life's A Blank Page, Write Your Own Story

An eye for an eye would make us all blind
Forgetting retribution makes us unkind,
The word eternal must go, for nothing is so
O how pliable, the weak human mind.

That which smells sweet may not be so
Within, not without, lies your true foe,
Buds all look cute until they flower
And then is when, you don't know.

One man's poison is another's meat
Some like the cold and some the heat
But, remember we must and never forget
We shall be treated as we, ourselves, treat.

A stitch in time saves nine, they say
Do it now, whatever the time of day,
Alacrity, must never be put to bed
Whatever the state of play.

Wisdom has little to do with creases and age
Write your own story on your blank page
For, that's how the book of life is when opened
A soliloquy in-the-making, on your own stage.



38.

Winds of Change

All things come and all things go
Like the breeze of yesterday
Like the storms of day before,
Like what seemed the end of it all
As Spring, through Summer, turned to Fall.

The sands that blew across the shore
The waves that once with bare feet played,
The Sea that roared, the winds that howled
All different now, of what were they made,
Does Time alone change all things
To faces sad, some happiness brings.

Eternal 's a soothing sounding word
Like a Swallow flying, the Nightingale bird
On my tree awhile, resting and then
Flapping wings never again heard,
Gone beyond both sight and hearing
Gone, forever, without fearing.

The Autumn leaves of Red and Gold
And then bare trees, Lo and Behold,
Like Winter's freeze, snows and chill
Denuded forests, bare- bottomed hill,
The Winds of Change, they never lie still
Until, Until, Until.....

39.

Apotheosis

You can climb the Everest or the Kilimanjaro
Get, gracefully, elevated to being a Saint,
Will you then seek empty spaces, look to being God next
Life's a blank canvas, You being the brush and your own paint.

Climaxes and culminations are temporary end -points
That, often, leave us in very confused states of mind
For, Life must and does go on after the tape is breasted
When the arc lights and glory, sadly, leave us behind.

It's only then that the after-effects we feel of Apotheosis
On the way down from the mountain-top,
Hurling down the slopes and boulders
That even sainthood will not help maneuver nor stop.

It's best not to forget both the grey and the skies blue
As we journey through Time, that which we call Life,
Walking along the cliff, a precipice If you will
On, as it were, the edge of a carving knife.





40.

Let The Moon Enchant, Let It Be

'Twas many moons ago
That we landed a Man
On the surface of a shining Moon,
Everyone on Earth
Perhaps, elsewhere too
Was then, well over the Moon.


Dust was collected
And bits of that land
Can't call it "earth", can we,
Would confuse the confounded
So, why get hounded
And, deepen the mystery

Of why we did what we did then
Spending billions on
A strange desire,
To look for new toys
For Men and some boys
To go play with unknown fire.

Nothing was found
That helped Man turn around
To either live longer or better,
It only became
A diversionary game
A sort of, silly, trendsetter.

Not one man in these decades
That have since gone by
Has settled there with family,
Perhaps, the more sensible wives
Think Earth's good for home
And so, led sensible lives.

We learned nothing, of course
As we generally
Are wont to,
This wont is a little different
From the won't you know
And, I'm not giving you a clue



So figure this out
And, also if you will
The mystery of the “still-there” Moon,
‘Cause millions of us
Still look at it in wonder
That silvery, heavenly, boon.

Let’s leave it alone
And other bodies too
That shine and give us light,
Or, else someday we’ll learn
We can’t conquer all
And, it’s not even, ethically, right.

So keep shining, dear Moon
Enchanting us all
As we look at you in a trance,
Then, by the still waters
Still see you in there
And, in celebration , do we dance.



41.

In Remembrance

Had always hoped we'd meet while Time is on our side
Before the sands run out and so the horses that we ride
Maybe, for who knows the wayward ways of Destiny
We may someplace, somewhere, someday, still fondly collide.

Minds connect as do Souls of a fortunate few
Why, how, when, we have no clue,
There's a freshness there, inexplicable
As is the invigorating, early morning dew.

To the friends to whom we must bid goodbye
The heart must speak without a lie,
Too many times do we see, Alas
The, seemingly, teary eye turn too quickly dry.

42.

Interludes

Just interludes of joy and happiness
Is that the pattern, the Grand Design,
How then can I ever lay claim on you
O Wistful, vanishing, smile of mine.

Your fleeting nature worries me, no end
As I try to hold on to you,
You leave me in those doldrums, confused
Are you real, are you true ?

Are you like the changing winds
That blow across the stormy seas
Then, as they reach the sands and shore
Calm down, and the lovers ,softly please

But, I must confess a thing or two
I like you as you truly are
For, you are without a planned disguise
Never deceiving, seeing eyes.

I know that both you and me, are
Dependent on the vagaries
That confront us from time to time
As we try to, everyone, always please

I can't, at even my mirror do that
'Cause that piece of glass never lies,
It has both a heart and a mind too
And also, truly reflecting eyes

As it pierces through with silky ease
Down to the very core of me,
The unspoken words, loud and clear
"You are smiling but, are you really happy".

Bits of joy and bits of sadness
And, bits of nothing also there,
That is life, O Ashok, and you know it well
As you've moved, through it all, everywhere.



43.

Untitled

Is this Heaven where we are

Is this Heaven where we are
Making a right royal mess of it
Or, is it Hades, more simply Hell
Where millions daily hear the tolling bell,

Where children in their Mother's laps
Cry, not sleep, all night long,
Not looking forward to the Sun ahead
Will they live or lie there stone- cold.....

Where overladen, creaking, boats
Take on hurricanes and the violent seas
Knowing, they may never see what's left behind
Cursing Destiny for being unkind.

Elsewhere, lethal stuff from up somewhere
Somewhere, up in the morbid air,
Hurtles down to set ablaze
Entire towns to dust, raze,
Fear stalks each and every soul
No one feels even half of whole,

While the ablest in this cockeyed world
At each other just taunts hurled,
Each out there for a term or two
Just nothing really, just much ado,
No one cares a tiny jot
Each, on humanity, a forgettable blot.

Those here that cannot their Heaven make
Then better know, the skies may only be holding a fake,



44.

A Mirage in the Mind

When we've lived our lives to the fullest
We must thank those lucky stars
'Cause it doesn't get any fuller
With a few more pars(or years).

There's a time for all things here
And, a destined place for them too,
This rather chaotic place called Earth
Becomes Heaven, when with life we're through.

Fields dry out and flowers wither
Dust to dust returns, imperceptibly
For, there is no such thing called "Evergreen"
Except in our minds, wishfully.

There is no ever and there never will be
That mirage in the mind called, Eternity,
Lay this thought to rest, Ashok
Do it now and finally.

Remove these veils and these blinkers
These lovely thoughts from your mind,
They're no more real than the mist you can't catch
Then, lose yourself happily in the daily grind,

45.

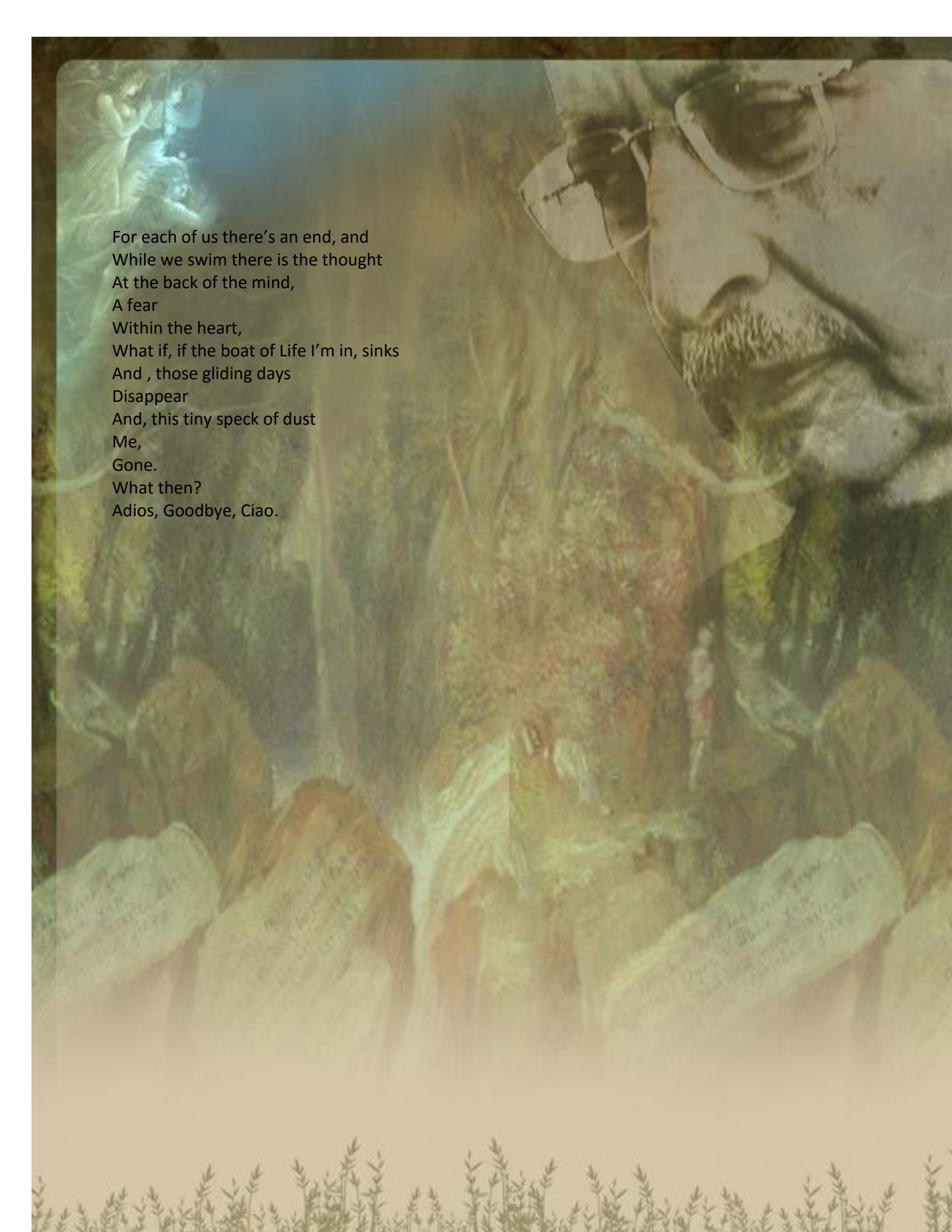
Wander Not, Wanton Not

Wander not, O Mind of mine
For, Time's another's no longer thine,
The play and frolic that were your forte
No longer sharp, now mostly grey,
The waltzing sway now mere shuffling feet
Unaware of that Danube beat,
Flowed has the river through the bridges of Time
And, hazy now both reason and rhyme.

Wanton not, O Heart, you too,
'Cause, I could , perhaps, manage one
But, the two of you together
Would surely be too much be for my age,
As I gaze now at the book, looking for the page
I last read,
And then fumble, as I, wearily, dread
Having to read the lines again,
The follies of Man, now and then,
Again.

'Tis no time to grieve I know
For, Time has its role to play
And,
At its pace ordained
Moves on
For, one and all,
Actors,
Whether or not, we abstained.

Time,
Chooses not between sinner and saint
White the sheet or filled with sordid paint,
Whatever the colour chosen to paint the town
Red, Green, Black or Brown,
The King, the Courtier, the Circus Clown
Must all to it obeisance pay,
Then leave
For, Time does not wait a blink
Nor give you any to think,
Move
And let me, say the "sands",
Complete the stint, while you
Swim or quietly sink.



For each of us there's an end, and
While we swim there is the thought
At the back of the mind,
A fear
Within the heart,
What if, if the boat of Life I'm in, sinks
And , those gliding days
Disappear
And, this tiny speck of dust
Me,
Gone.
What then?
Adios, Goodbye, Ciao.

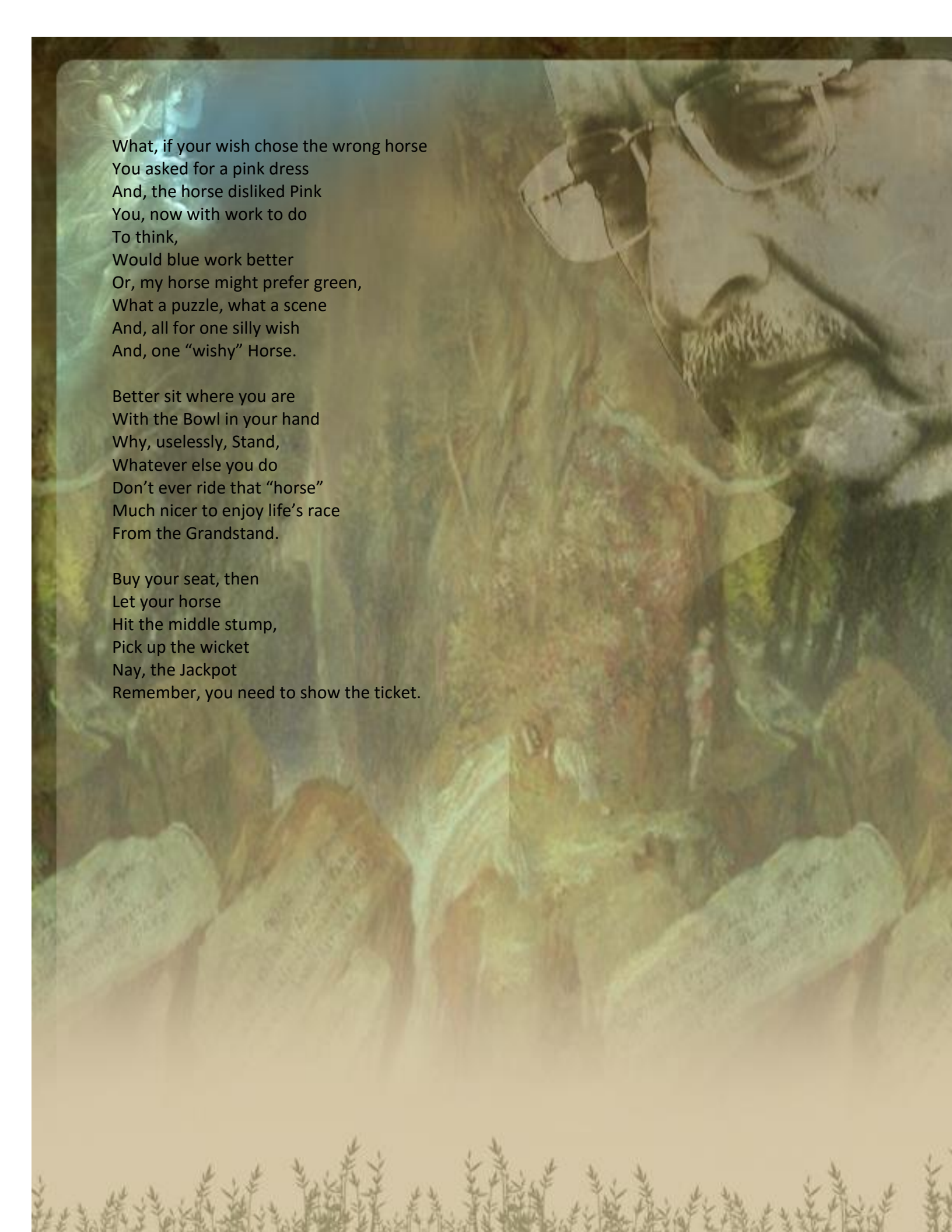
46.

If Wishes Were Horses, Beggars Would Ride

If wishes were horses
We'd all ride
Why just the beggars?
And what, pray tell me, will the kings do
'Cause they don't do much else
Do they?
And again, the horse may not be
On your side
And, you might well be left holding the reins
Of a horse that is not inside
The stable,
The one that bolted
With only you to blame
You, to chide.
And so, even if they were horses
You may not be served well at all,
You could, perhaps, stumble at the first hurdle
Then, softly fall.

Wishes are a bit wishy-washy, you know
Kind of "Iffy",
Like, if the day turned to another day
Minus the night
Or, if the Sun rose without its normal light,
Wishes, too, tend to border on the extreme,
Like a tiger at play with a tadpole in a stream
Or, dinner with an angel in the Garden of Eden
No apple trees, just heavenly breeze
And, a handshake, nay, an elbow rub
With the Lord himself,
The one who owns the garden
Where the apple was Eaten,
By Man or Woman or, maybe,
A baby.

Wishes are like dreams
That, seldom, come true
Interpretations notwithstanding
Or, even with sitting,
But, if they do
'Twas not because of your wish
But, because I earned the Lord's ire
And so, to feel good, the Good Lord
Granted you you're Desire
Your silly wish!



What, if your wish chose the wrong horse
You asked for a pink dress
And, the horse disliked Pink
You, now with work to do
To think,
Would blue work better
Or, my horse might prefer green,
What a puzzle, what a scene
And, all for one silly wish
And, one "wishy" Horse.

Better sit where you are
With the Bowl in your hand
Why, uselessly, Stand,
Whatever else you do
Don't ever ride that "horse"
Much nicer to enjoy life's race
From the Grandstand.

Buy your seat, then
Let your horse
Hit the middle stump,
Pick up the wicket
Nay, the Jackpot
Remember, you need to show the ticket.



47.

The Paths I Once Walked

I have never forgotten the paths I walked
And, the roads I cycled too,
Through seasons and the weathers all
Through storms and freshly laden dew.

Along the way were Hyacinths
And, beds of Roses too,
They all had thorns and prickly ones
The flowers were the colour blue.

The daily ride was never a chore
For, school and college were great
Algebra was a little challenge
But, not enough to hate.

Time flew like never before
And, the world beckoned the “me”,
To do what what we all have to
Make ends meet, however, that may be.

The years went by, not seamlessly
But, the spirit was called Fortitude,
Never gave up, never ever will
There’s a Tiger similitude.

Life’s no bed of Roses
Even for those with golden spoons,
However royal they well may be
The voice within, softly, croons

Carry, we must, at all times
That spirit which keeps us going,
As we do between night and day
Swing, to-ing and fro-ing.



48.

The Sands of Time and of the Seashore

On the Sands of Time
And, also the Seashore
Nothing does for long stay,
It's the winds that rule
That howl, scream and blow
And, erase what you write and say.

They're nice to walk on
Are the Sands of the Shore
To stroll hand in hand,
With those that you care for
But, they're true to no one
And, that's difficult to understand.

The sands of Time that drop from the Hourglass
Recording each single moment Without a slender thought,
No batting of eyelids No feeling remorse I am sold,
You are bought.

The Sands on the shore
Beneath your feet
You can trust them but no more,
Than the Sands of Time
Slippery again
As faithful as is a whore.

49.

What is Man and What Woman

A Man and. a Woman, Once
Sat down to have a chat
On what is Love,
It's many facets
Twists, turns and bends,
Its genesis, and
Its ends.

Not often do they sit together
To do anything seriously
Like, really getting to know each other,
Closing the distance, as it were
Unless, there's a glint in the four eyes
Romance in the air,
Man and Woman
Indeed, A, very, very, strange pair.

Interests all unlike
A Doll, A Ball
Yes, there is a commonality there
I concede
But, life is more than a mere
Fall,
As they both do,
The Doll cries
The Ball will not
For, it's used to the tossing
And, the throwing around,
A bit of "Messi" and lots of Mess
While, the Doll sits around looking pretty
With both great fuss and greater finesse.

The "opposites" attract theory is
I'm afraid more than a bit "whacked "
'Cause the only thing that it truly attracts
Is more Opposition,
Truly , 'cause again, it's true
And, not hacked.

Yes, I know they sat to talk about Love
But, that takes no time,
'Twas all over before it began
Left only
Were A "no- wiser" Woman and
A "confused" Man.

50.

Heaven's All Mine

Unplug yourself from the electronic world
The phone, the TV, the App and more,
Let the grains of sand your feet caress
As you walk down the aisle that you call the shore,

On one side the land, the other the sea
This strip on which you stroll merrily,
Either side could well turn Hellish we know
But it's Heaven in between, most times, verily.

The Moon and the Stars gaze down at you
As you look at their reflections by your side,
Could this not be Heaven, pray tell us
Where else would the Lord wish to reside.

There must be rivers, seas and oceans too
That make up what we call Heaven,
There must be Angels and Houris true
Casinos and Taverns, 24/7,

Can't only be Churches and Synagogues, surely
Temples, Mosques and Worshipping places,
What kind of Paradise are we talking about
If there are no horses no Sabbath Day Races.

I know its a residence for the "good" of this Planet
Who, post- life, are assured a home
But, I'm not sure if and when I finally get there
(Via Hell or direct)
Would I not prefer the Casino with a golden Dome.

Round-the-clock chanting, muttering, something
The good Lord's name might get a little mixed-up too,
Try saying the same thing over and over again
You might agree that, that is true.

A dozen times God is still only god
But at the end might sound like almost nothing,
No meaning, no comprehension, you might actually feel
Simply Nothing.

So much for chanting and it's apparent design
To make you feel godly, a little divine,
But the moon and the stars, the serenity of the sands
And wherever it maybe, Heaven's all mine.

51.

Mea Culpa

Will we ever, ever learn
Or, sin, destroy, and ourselves burn
On Earth,
For we're not like this
Never were, never will be
At Birth.


That Innocence of Childhood
We all seem to now lose
In our race to madly grow up,
To then emulate
Those, that we later hate
Holding nothing but a worthless "Golden Cup".

Fiery in Nature
To acquire all in a hurry
To beat the Angel of Death, as it were,
Mortality, not Life
Staring at us
The kaleidoscope, all bare.

The Green of the Grass
The Blue of the Skies
Given way to the colour, Red
Forests and even Rivers
Aflame and dry
Life, all too seemingly, Dead.

Corpses moving around
Skeletons on sticks
Eyes sunken into their sockets,
Hunger, written all over
Who spoke of clover
Empty lives, empty pockets.

Nature, revolts
Angry and inflamed
Assisting in Man's annihilation,
Destroying parts of itself
But, Man as a whole
Rampant, its devastation.



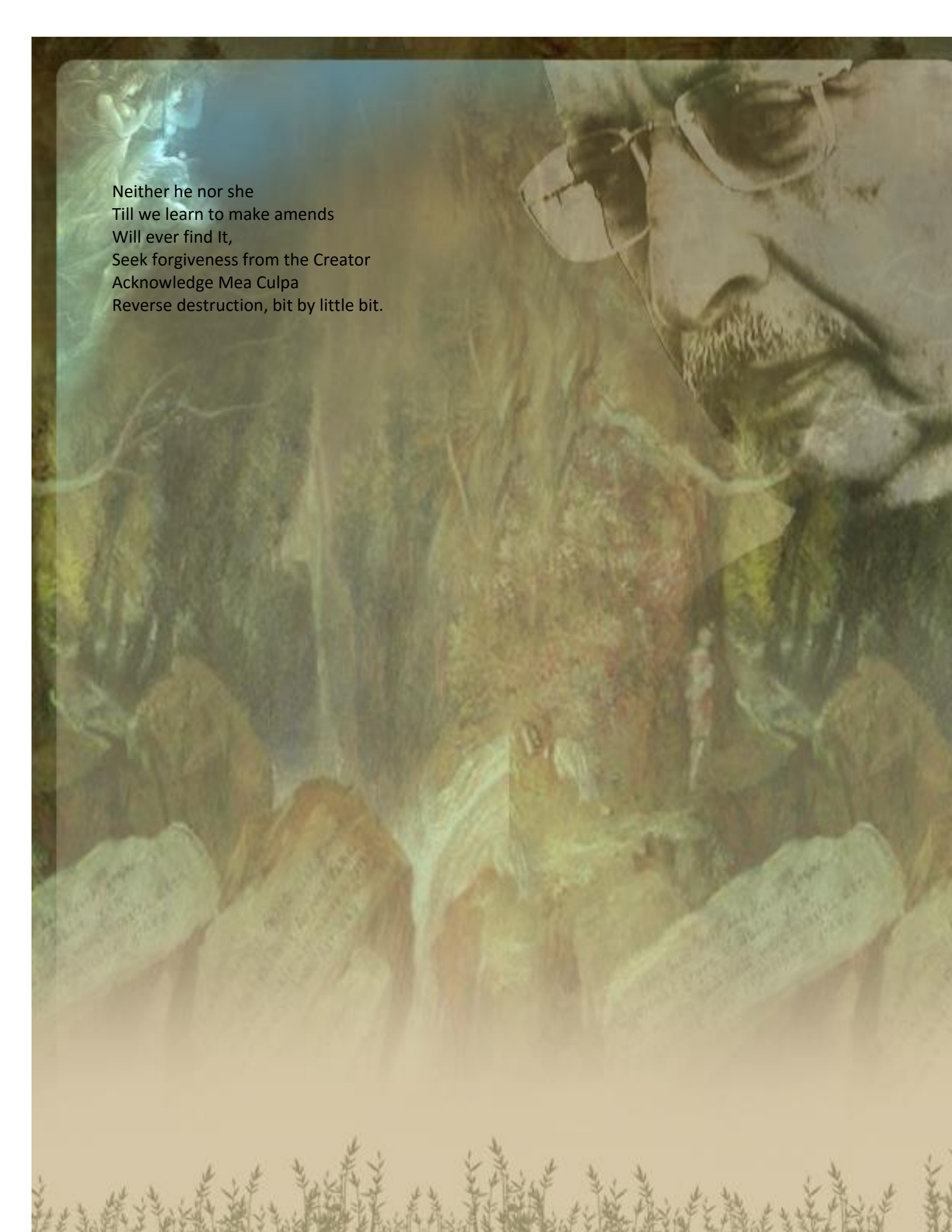
We've lost all our marbles
In the game called
Life,
No lessons learned
The only "Progress"
Each heart, each eye, holding a naked knife,

And, then
To Temples and Mosques
Synagogues and more, we, sheepishly, turn,
To Pray with hearts and minds Blackened
As we behold Mankind
With its ashes in Urn.

Holy books in hand
Psalms on the lips
Playing the game called Chess,
Faced with Reality
Our world
In a right royal Mess.

"Blame time" is the new game
Of those of great Fame
New Deals that, supposedly herald Peace,
As new ways we find
To all the "other's" we see
Mercilessly, ruthlessly, Fleece.

Mea Culpa, Mea Culpa, Mea Cupla
As Hell on Earth
We deliberately create,
Then tell all those that we know
To go look for Heaven somewhere
On Earth, dear Mate



Neither he nor she
Till we learn to make amends
Will ever find It,
Seek forgiveness from the Creator
Acknowledge Mea Culpa
Reverse destruction, bit by little bit.



52.

The Waltz of Time

Soft and tender are the Sands of the Shore
Comforting tired feet, can one ask for more?
Lulled by rhythmic waves, feet sunk into luxury,
Time stands still, where's the reason to hurry?

Calming waters all around you
Silky, balmy, breezes too,
As the Sun changes it's colours over time
And the Moon, sometimes, turns blue.

The Clouds above that promise showers
Then, leave you looking at the skies
And, just when you have given it up
A blessed single drop soothes the eyes.

O Sands, my pretty Sands, galore
Of both Time and the lovely Shore,
Why did you not make me that grain
On which the gentle waves have lain

For that little span of time
Lapping the sands in melodic rhyme,
Till the sea beckoned their return
To meld again, as ashes in urn.

For, all my life I've hurried, endlessly
Like a wound up toy in motion eternally,
Now, Time and I live together, the best of friends.
We'll part with no regrets, I pray, when my life ends!

The first and last stanzas are Geetha Srinivasan's.



53.

Two in One, A Bit of Fun

Runcible Spoon or Venus and the Moon
Proximity is a two-in -one thing,
Imagine a tree perched on which
An Owl and a Nightingale in unison sing

A Runcible is a bit of both
Bit of spoon, bit of fork,
Like the soda in the bottle
And cork inside the cork

Much like cream and ice
That go to make a Sundae,
Then rest and pray Sabbath day
Close enough to the Monday.

Take any two days of the Week
Nothing closer than Sunday Monday,
Easy on the tongue too
Rest, Work, then Play.

Fun time is unthinking time
Nothing needs to make great sense,
And yet, there is always some Wisdom
In the biggest Nonsense.

The Circus Clown makes you laugh
That's his only use,
Please think, what good in there
Would be a Hermit or a Recluse.

The Belly Laugh is hearty, of course
Good for the Heart and Digestion too,
So all said and done, two-in-one
Is pretty darned true.



54.

O Where Art Thou, You Soulful Tears of Mine

When tragedy strikes
And, the soul is ripped apart,
So empty , so hollow, so said is all
The state of the then grieving heart.

The eyes dry, the heart cries
No solace then from anything,
An endless peering at the skies
Nothing does any tranquility bring.

The air glum, the mood sombre
There is no right, no wrong number,
Restless, then is no syndrome
A million sighs and gone is slumber.

I cry for you, O Tears of mine
For, the seas and shore do no comfort provide,
Nothing will again really fill
The hollow, the vacuum, that now lives inside.

55.

Why do I write so very simply

Why do I write so very simply
My friends, they often ask,
Why do I not in verbiage indulge
Am I not upto the task.

Is my command weak at the top
Are my brains in my feet,
Such depths I do not plumb I tell them
Even when some pipes they heat.

I thought to myself with great sobriety
Why not I replace my Philosophy,
Since four's are vulgar why not longer words
Something like Perissology.

I decided then to deliciate
Some illeceberous jargogling,
All for my distinguished friends, of course
Those who will this poem, unread fling

For, they will find the words opaque
Those that blinkers wear at night,
Whatever the vision , however prescient
They'll miss the true Insight

And, while thy suffer the ignominy
Of their now apparent illiteracy,
I shall enjoy the Schadenfreude
And their future humility.

Someone said, simplicity is supreme artistry
Even if that someone was the little me,
Two plus two is always four, nothing changes that
So why not enjoy the simple folks, why the dictionary.



56.

Let the Imagination run Wild

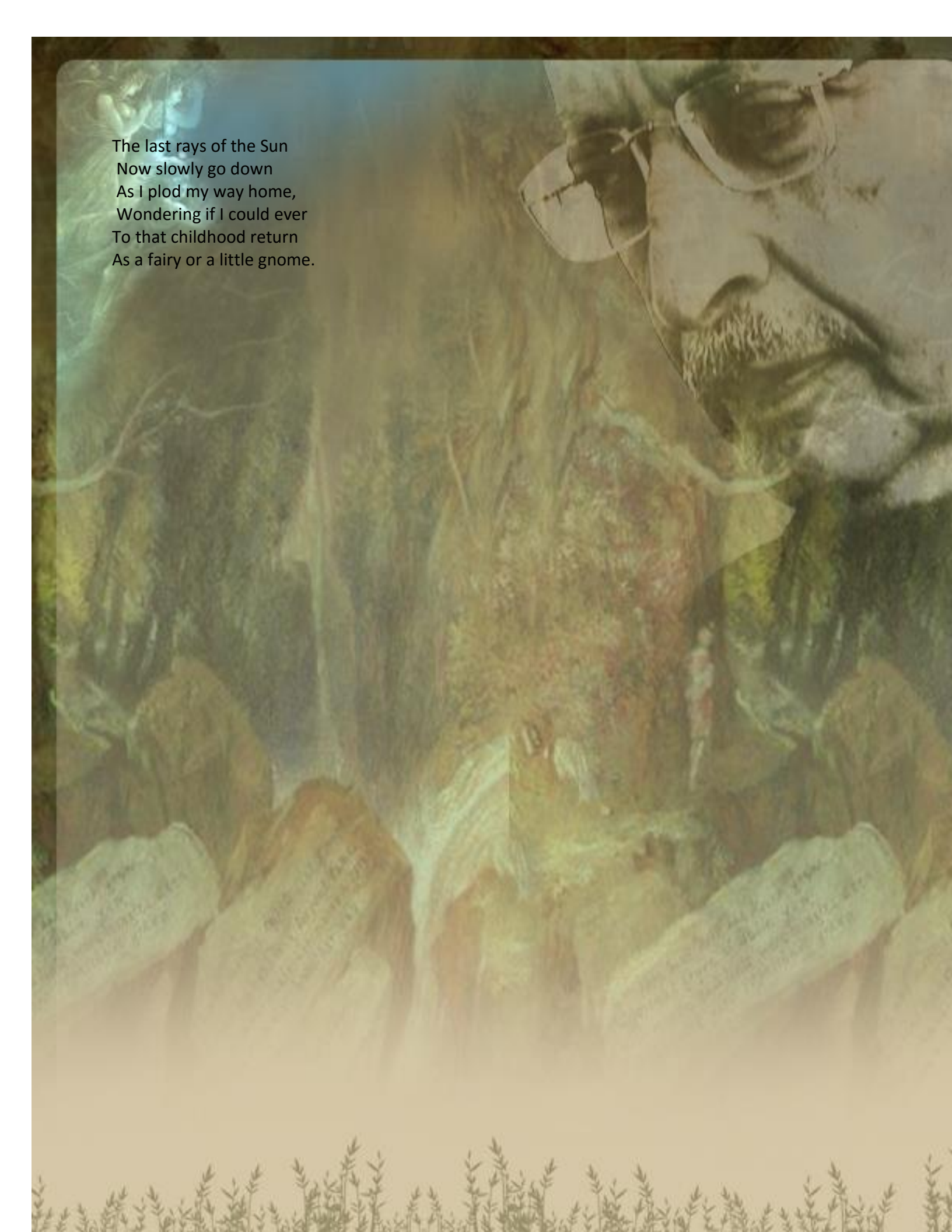
O, how pretty can barren be
When both heart and mind are verdant
To sow the seeds of greenery,
The green within and the brown without
It's all up to you
You see.

You can fill a dry river
With the waters of
Your choice,
And the desert sands of Arabia
With the sweet melody
Of a lovely Nightingale's voice.

Try steal the stars
On starlit nights
From their home, the skies,
To fill dark nights
With the splendour that lies within
Those stolen stars in your eyes

All you need to do
Is close your eyes
Let your imagination run wild,
Go back in time
To the Jack 'n Jill rhyme
And find that, sadly, lost child.

Remember, the school in front of home
Now opposite me In the Park
As I go back in Time,
To dwell in the past
For a little while a day
Is never any kind of crime.

The image is a vertical composition. At the top right, there is a close-up of a man's face wearing glasses. The background is a soft-focus forest scene with trees and a path. At the bottom, there is a decorative border of small, stylized plants.

The last rays of the Sun
Now slowly go down
As I plod my way home,
Wondering if I could ever
To that childhood return
As a fairy or a little gnome.

57.

The Jungle We Call Our World

Rob the poor to feed the rich
Disarm those unarmed,
Do whatever it takes to ensure
Your interests aren't unharmed.

Make mountains out of molehills
And hullabaloo over nothing,
Listen to your crackling voice
And, tell the Nightingale it can't sing.

So much for other people, folks
The sad state of the world,
Withering flowers everywhere
Stones and missiles hurled.

Blindfold the ones who can see
Muffle the voices that speak,
Better, birds than Man
Can't do much with a beak.

Not an inch of space anywhere
Freedom no longer a right,
Darwin it was who said long ago
This jungle is for those with might.





58.

If Life Was Never – ending

For the Gods to receive my prayers
There must then, someplace, be
For the former to truly happen
The latter must not be a mystery

This is what the rational me
Will always say unprompted,
Till you bring in strange things
And then, I'm duly tutored

To believe in that which I cannot see
Feel, smell nor hear,
I am then, O Moral Preacher
Instilled with divine wrath and fear.

I'm not eternal and that I know
For, I see it all around me,
Man, flora, fauna and more
Meld with dust and eternity.

Is mortality then a liability
That I carry all my life,
Is this then the seeming cause
Of all hostility and strife.

If life was never-ending
I guess I'd never need to pray
But, it might really get rather boring
Wonder, what you have to say.



59.

What Is The Truth?

I am mortal, yes I am
I am, but, eternal too,
For, I will return when I am gone
This also is, but, very true.

Dust with dust will meld, of course
The Soul will wander hereabout,
Till it finds a home it likes
Then, 'twill enter without a shout.

The Soul it never, ever, dies
Its Heaven and Hell both here on Earth,
There is a mirage called
Paradise Doubtful, is its true worth

For, no one's ever vouched for it
No Preacher, nor the holy Priest,
No one's seen it dark or lit
Nor, has the Sun from West or East.

Where else would the Soul go then
North or South to reside,
When there is no path to that Heaven
Where should it, its nudity hide.

"Bare the soul" is an adage old
Tell it as it really lies,
That's what Transmigration is
There's nothing up in the skies

Or,

There is no Soul that we speak about
It's just Poetry and Philosophy,
God, too, just Man's creation
Sophistry and Fallacy.



60.

The Heart is Large and Gracious

Does the Heart have eyes
Or do they only adorn the face,
Can it see beyond the skies
Envision the presence of god's grace,

Do the Mind's eyes within it reside
In the cracks and crevices of the Brain
Or, do they too in the heart hide
The repository of feel and pain

For, feelings, too, in the Heart live
The Preacher and the Judge within,
The one who knows how to forgive
However dark, the committed sin.

It's quality of Mercy is not constrained
The Heart is large and magnanimous,
It is the home of true blood and duly veined
Loving, forgiving and gracious.



61.

A Pulse More

A pulse more is all I ask for
Not an iota more,
A grain of sand that measures Time
As I walk along the shore.

In awe I am of the Oceans
In awe of all that's mightier,
The trees of Oak, the storms of Snow
That silence me with fear.

Each step I take is about a yard
So, a few of those will do,
As two of those is all I need
To rest forever, is true.

Want is a mere function of Time
And, as we move along that passage,
A pulse, an iota, a grain of anything
Is the only inner message.

62.

A Walk Down The Lane Called Life

When months and years don't count anymore
And the here and now is all,
When the back's bent and a stoop's there
And, you can't stand quite tall,
When you're over the hill and it's all slope down
You fear within that you might fall,
It's then alone that you understand
The meaning and purpose of it all,
The journey that we all undertake
That which we call Life,
It's part fun and laughter, folks
Part struggle and strife
But, real it is for all of us
For, life's anything but a hoax.

The greener grass across your fence
May well be full of weeds,
Sown there you may find
Are some 'unhappiness' seeds,
So long as you have access to
Wherewithal for your needs,
They don't have to be lined with gold, you know
For, that doesn't speak of deeds,
It only says there's money there
Which the 'over-the-hill' don't really need.

Each day, my friends, takes a day away
That much less to stay
So, while you're still around, mentally sound
Enjoy both work and play.

Dance with me, sway with me
Be my partner, O Life,
I shall then be ready always
To walk with you, even on the edge of a knife.

Adios!



63.

Let's Look For The Heart And Soul Inside

Black as coal is a nice expression
And so is white as snow,
But why link it to a person
Brown or the colour yellow.

Brown can also wear the crown
And Yellow the mantle carry,
Oceans can and Sorrows drown
Ashok and also Harry.

A name's just a name you know
To call another being,
A proximity to the known fellow
The one that you're now seeing.

White needs the sun
The black does not,
Lying on beaches is no fun
When the Orb's boiling hot.

So, let's leave the skin aside
And, go with what's inside,
Within each there's a heart and soul
Let's find where they reside.

64.

Que Sera Sera

Que Sera Sera, whatever will be, will be
At the end of a full life, the mirage of Eternity,
In truth what waits is just plain dust
The inglorious end of all humanity.

Dream we can and fantasize too
A beautiful, generous, Heaven true,
Where Angels walk in step with us
Starlit nights and the skies all blue

Or, if you like you may choose pink
Green, Red or Indigo,
Maybe you'll need to see a "shrink"
'Cause you forgot the colour, yellow.

Foresight, hindsight, no sight
Don't think the blind see less,
Probably more and better, and
Surely, much less of the mess

That we ourselves create
All in the name of human progress,
Not an inch of Peace anywhere, just hate
The world, sadly, in moral regress.

Fake this, fake that, fake the operative word
When was the last time anything true you heard,
Que Sera Sera, what will be will be
Said to me, a chirping, whispering bird.



65.

You'll Never Catch The Zephyr

Time feels precious when you're short on it
And, burdensome when it hangs around,
The difference between nothing to do
And, when something to do you've found

This, having to find something to do
Is the crux of a happy, daily, life,
For which nothing plays a greater part
Than learning to do nothing, to avoid strife

For, this "nothingness" is the centre of all action
Since it's all a matter of small things
Like, the breath inhaled and the one exhaled
Consciously, that then a lot of joy brings.

In our efforts to achieve great things
Like ovation, recognition and praise
From others, who are mortal like us,
We often take wrong paths
Lit by candles in the winds
Catching the wrong bus.

Life's a matter of choices galore
Like seas that offer ripples, waves and more,
As you walk along sands of time
The future unknown, looking back a chore.

It's all in the here and now
This moment is all we can call our own,
Make of this the most, any old how
You'll never catch the zephyr once it's blown.



66.

Time, The Master

Prairies, Steppes, Savannahs all
Grasslands where the grass is tall,
That's where Green is truly so,
Nature tells it as it is
No make-up, no arc lights
With our blandishments, we never know.

Mirrors too, like Mother Nature
Reflect just what they daily see
Never flatter, never lie,
Humans act like other people
Never like themselves
Till Repentance asks them, Why?

Rivers flowing to the Sea
On their way to Destiny
Time does its part play,
Some the final merger see
Some not meant to there be
Some lost on their wayward way.

Time, the Master of all things
The bird that croaks and the one that sings
Time, that joy and sadness brings,
Time that carries all in its wake
Of its actions never warns
Time, that all surprises springs.

Cannot change what's meant to be
True for you and also me
The silent lines always say,
That's the way it always was
And, shall always
That way, stay.

67.

The Clown

Trapeze artists, nets and all
Tigers, horses standing tall
A little fear, a little frown,
As I wondered where I was
Was this a Circus
Where was the Clown ?

For, in a Circus the Clown was
Both adjective and verb
And, also the chief Noun,
He who had all and sundry
In hearty laughter
Simply drown.

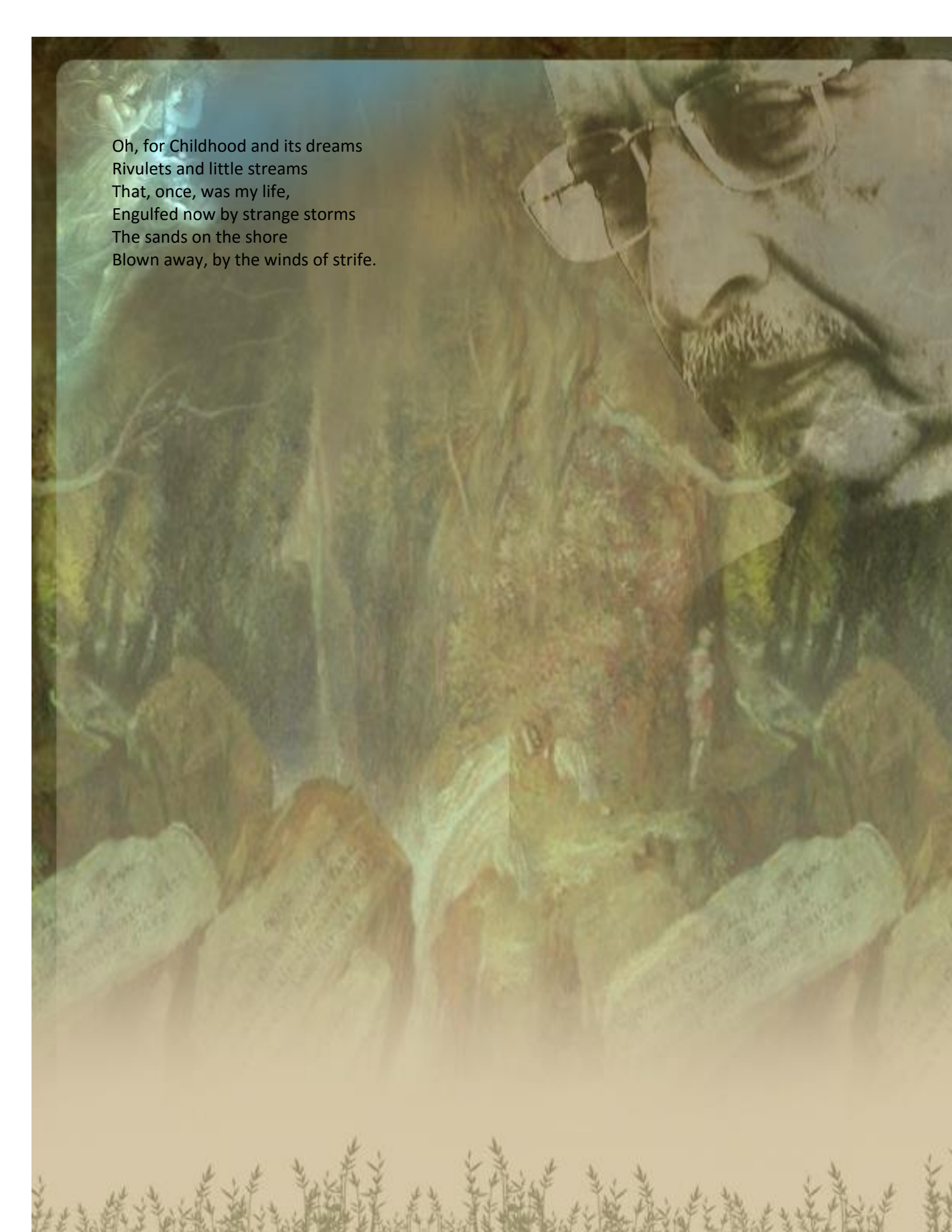
The Joker of the pack then
Was spied on a Tiger's back
Both wearing the same gown,
Now who would do a thing like that
Except for
A Circus Clown.

The little me
All of seven
Now, in what must, surely, be Heaven,
Joyful faces all around
Smiles replaced the creases now
Eternal fun, a given.

Lumbering elephants now on stage
Magicians everywhere I looked
An aura of magic true,
This is where and how
I spent childhood
And then, quickly, too quickly grew
Lost in the whirlwind of the world
To clown around as adults do
Without a known clue,







Oh, for Childhood and its dreams
Rivulets and little streams
That, once, was my life,
Engulfed now by strange storms
The sands on the shore
Blown away, by the winds of strife.



68.

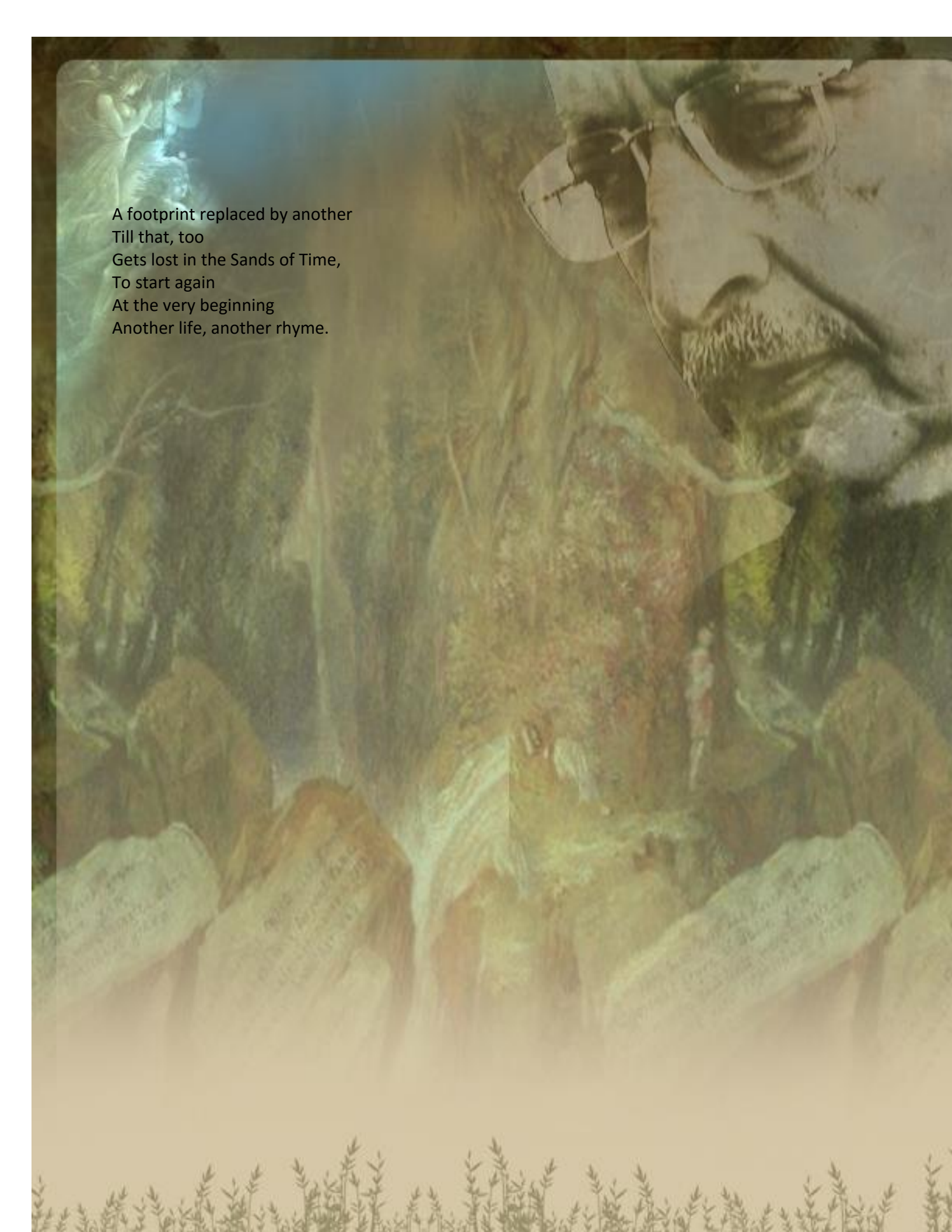
(Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose)

Primordial are all impulses
For nothing ever changes
Since Times immemorial,
From leaves to dresses
Perhaps, back to leaves
Fashions all, sartorial.

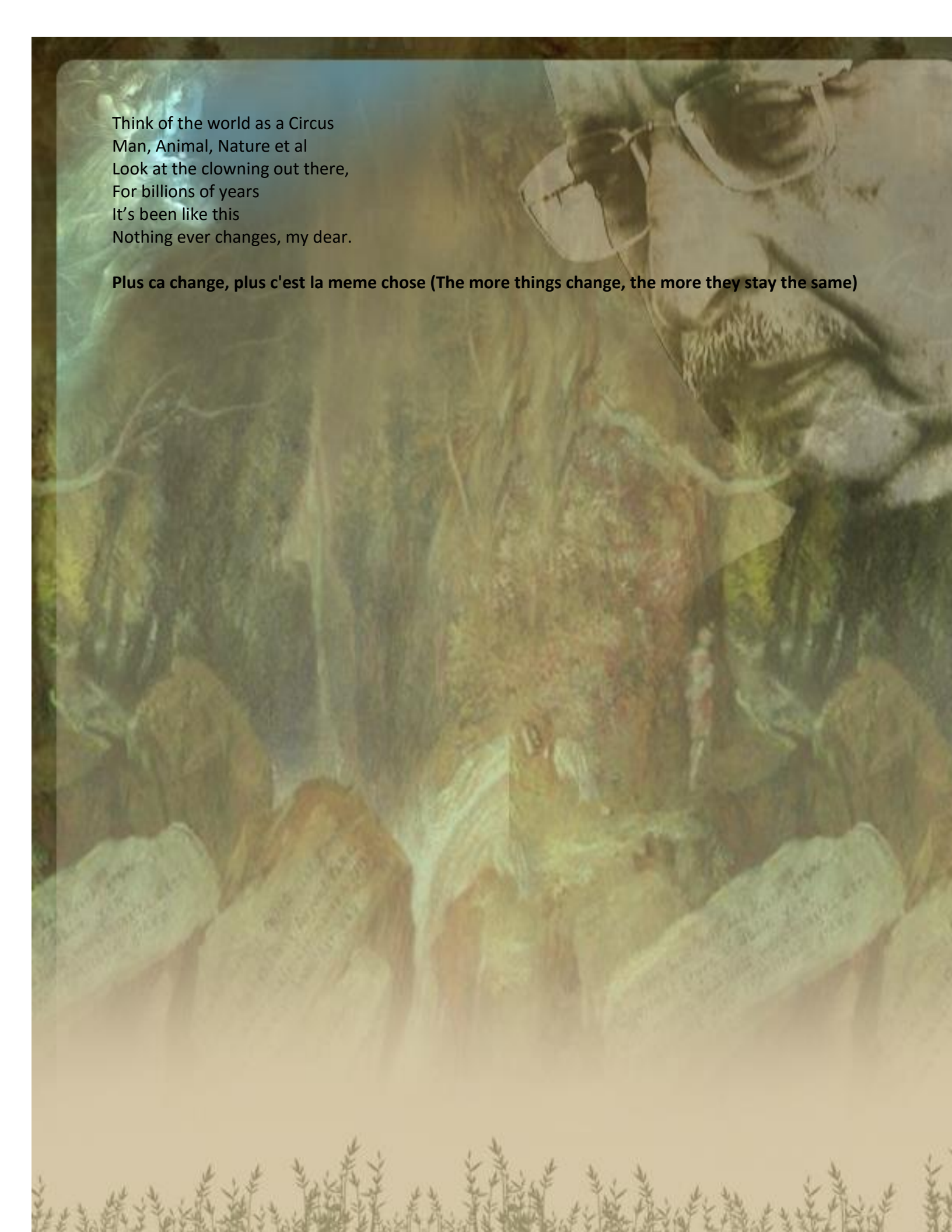
True of habits, too
A matter of much ado
When basics remain the same,
Don't take things too seriously
Its just a little play with Time
Just another game.

There is no night without a morning
And, yet nothing changes
The Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Seas,
A play of light and some dark
Shadows, that come and go
Triumphant, is the breeze

As the winds of change
That all footprints
Seem to ,sadly, blow all away,
Nowhere does Time go
No vanishing trick
No magician here at play.



A footprint replaced by another
Till that, too
Gets lost in the Sands of Time,
To start again
At the very beginning
Another life, another rhyme.



Think of the world as a Circus
Man, Animal, Nature et al
Look at the clowning out there,
For billions of years
It's been like this
Nothing ever changes, my dear.

Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose (The more things change, the more they stay the same)



69.

Alone, But Connected

Not superior nor inferior
To any other on Earth,
No more than a Man/ Woman
And, that is all my worth.

Nature, too gigantic to take on
The Oceans, the Seas, the Forests, the Trees,
I am puny when compared,
The Regal Me
The Mighty Me
Or, when I'm Naked, bared.

A Planet, A Star or an Alien, whatever
Seem as tiny and alone as I
But, that is no mystery,
For, both You and Me
Are Monads, single, alone
As is a centuries old Oak tree.

The connect between not apparent
But, there for certain
Till time for one to draw the curtain,
Fade away into the unknown
Called Eternity
Perhaps, then again, Uncertain

That is all that is Certain.

70.

Renunciation

Is that the answer to life's puzzle
The conundrum that no one's solved,
Renounce it all for the woods
As Lord Buddha once resolved.

It's a mad, mad, world we know
Where we live, work and play,
The calm of yesteryears now lost
In the crazy maze of today.

Has Time taken on a meaning new
Moving at frenetic speeds,
Not seen before by Man nor Beast, or
Is it Man's insatiable needs, his deeds.

Is Renunciation the panacea for all that ails
Forests, too, no friends of Man today,
Burn themselves, as they do in seeming contempt
Of a Man, responsible for the horrific state of play

Running away, sadly, is never the answer
As Man roams the world, friendless,
This hunger for "growth" (whatever that might mean)
Bordering on delirium, Madness.

We need to look back to the days gone by
To those fleeting moments of Peace and Calm,
And, from those distill the essence therein
The beauty of silence that acts as Balm.

Life, needs to be better accepted
Not, needlessly, questioned, analyzed,
Its genesis, its purpose, its continuum all
A given, its inevitability realized.

So, let's have a reign of Peace, folks
All flags, the colour white,
Bury all that comes within us, as People
Let's bury might, Let's do what's right.



71.

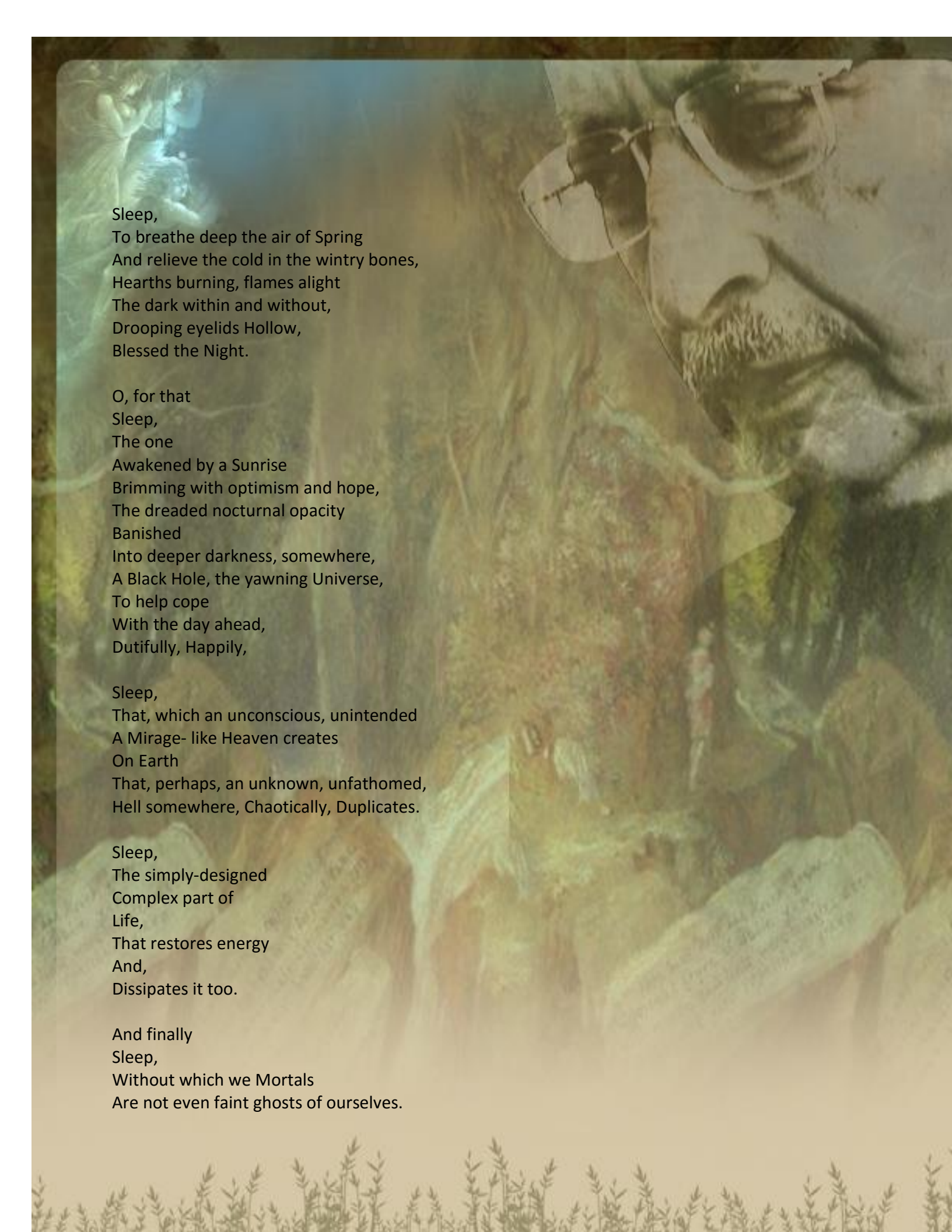
The Enigma Called Sleep.

Sleep
Perchance, to dream
Of kindly things, like
Lapping waves and stars above
Hand in hand with the one's you love,
The Moon, in the waters, sublime
The heart afloat with melody and rhyme
Or,

Sleep,
Torn apart
By terror in the Heart
And Mind,
That only deep sleep
Cruelly Unveils,
Thar frightening form
Of the Nightmare.

Sleep
That which all "fatigue" needs
And, that which rejuvenation feeds,
Makes a person whole,
Never a good excuse
Not a Ruse,
An Artifice,
But,
Sleep
The night's cherished goal

When,
We reach for the stars above,
Yearn for the past,
A longing for the long gone
absent
Or,
To only bury that memory
Deeper within.



Sleep,
To breathe deep the air of Spring
And relieve the cold in the wintry bones,
Hearths burning, flames alight
The dark within and without,
Drooping eyelids Hollow,
Blessed the Night.

O, for that
Sleep,
The one
Awakened by a Sunrise
Brimming with optimism and hope,
The dreaded nocturnal opacity
Banished
Into deeper darkness, somewhere,
A Black Hole, the yawning Universe,
To help cope
With the day ahead,
Dutifully, Happily,

Sleep,
That, which an unconscious, unintended
A Mirage- like Heaven creates
On Earth
That, perhaps, an unknown, unfathomed,
Hell somewhere, Chaotically, Duplicates.

Sleep,
The simply-designed
Complex part of
Life,
That restores energy
And,
Dissipates it too.

And finally
Sleep,
Without which we Mortals
Are not even faint ghosts of ourselves.



72.

Ordinary Lives

Lost in the woods, as it were
With no one to comfort me
I spoke with my friends, the equally lonely trees
For, what they seem to be doing all day long
Is to just wait and play with the truant breeze
That, chooses the time and pace that suits it
To caress the ever silent, waiting leaves.

No words were spoken for none were needed
Between the trees and I there was an empathy,
We've been together for a long stretch of time
Stories between us to fill a book of history,
Moments that we'd shared, both tears and joy
Treasured by both, secure, shelved in memory.

I'd look at them and they at me, every single day
Each content in the other's gaze as Time stood still,
For, that was their way as I sipped my cup of tea
With the birds joining in to complete our daily drill.

Ordinary lives, ordinarily lived, are supreme
Grounded, well-rounded, lodged in the arms of reality
Each day well-spent, the daily dream
No fireworks, no extravaganzas, no mystique,
Lived Just,
Honestly .



73.

Me and My Destiny

Between the dreams of old
And, those of an unknown morrow
There lies, the despondent, optimist
Me,
Waiting in silence for that which I call
My destiny
That,
Which I, frenetically, try altering
To fit my patterns of desire,
My wishes lying stone- cold dead
And, some, smouldering bits
Of ember and fire

Till, it dawns on me that, I cannot,
Must not allow this malaise of indolence,
Just waiting for Heaven to intercede,
Overpower the senses
Else, a derived numbness will lead me to
A Wasteland ,
Degeneration.

Whether or not I can make or break
The supposedly invincible frame of Destiny,
Whether I can or not both have and eat my cake
My belief in myself must never suffer fatal injury
And,
I then strive to do that which I can and when
I fail,
Those broad shoulders in the sky
Are sturdy enough to carry me for a while, I know.
To be or not to be, To do or not to do.

Human endeavour needs, nay demands,
This defiant attitude of a benign arrogance
That a "Reasonable" Destiny must, surely,
Applaud.



74.

The Magic of Music

Rock 'n Roll or Twist away
Trot like the fox, to the "Danube" sway
The lilt of Music , it bares the soul
Your love for it gives you away

Tap your feet or just dance to beat
Music's the thrill, the absolute treat,
That lifts the mood, mysteriously
Till you're dancing down the great main street.

It's the only true way to go
Rumba, Samba or the Tango,
Jive or as the Dervish, circulate
In frenzy, or do it real nice and slow.

A song in the heart needs no voice
Whistle or hum, it's all your choice,
Let yourself go, dreamily, wildly
Life's about living, not just poise.

The Power of Music, the lilt of it
The heart and mind both, beautifully, lit,
Fingers on the keys or a trumpet to the lips
It's Magic, the access to Heaven, bit by bit..

75.

When The Curtain Falls

How long before you're a dot on a page
In a book of ancient history,
How long before you are no more
Than a fading bit of a memory.

How long before the warmth within you
Freezes, and the leaves leave the trees,
How long till you're, forever, still
With not a whiff of breeze.

If only this dreaded scenario
Were to get embedded in the mind,
We'd all be nicer, gentler, people
More caring and much more kind.

It's the silly notion of eternity
A mirage, if you like,
That we translate to mean
(In a "lingo" all our own)
I'll always ride my bike.

It's no more than a "here and now"
A Play on the Stage of Life
Till, the curtain falls and we take a bow
To end the spectre of life-long strife



76.

Humility Is Indeed Divine

The goblet bows and also bends
To pour the blessed wine,
Man, too, must well remember
Humility is, indeed, divine.

Head in the air is plain disaster
For the one with no flyer's wings,
Man, you are no Nightingale
You croak, the bird sings.

A smile will a smile get
A frown some creases in return,
Tit for Tat is not just for kids
The place for dust is the Urn.

So, be humble like the lowly dust
On which you daily tread,
Without which we would not live
We'd all be stone-cold, dead.

77.

Those Golden Days Of Yore

Is this what it's all about
The Plus's and the Minus's,
The simple arithmetic that rules all lives
Strengths and human weaknesses.

Black and white and the greys too
Rain and shine, bits of blue,
Silver linings to some clouds
And others, dark but very true.

The sweet sweat and toil of long ago
A fading haze in memory,
The salty drops of perspiration
And now, the slick contours of technology.

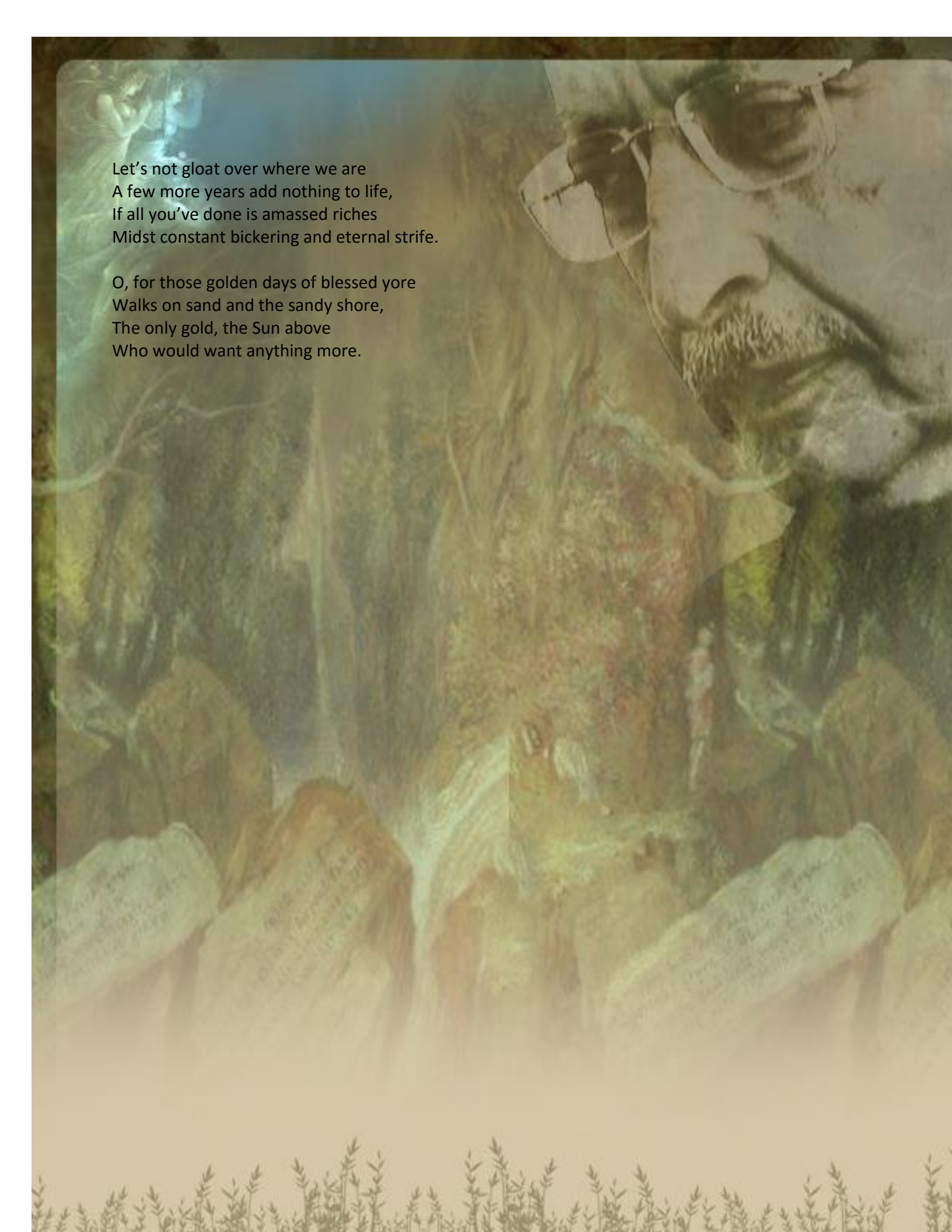
Antiques like worn-out feet
Bare-headed in the summer's heat,
Unconditioned the sultry air
No summer's conditioned, balmy, retreat.

The cycle and its punctured tale
A story all its very own,
No 'choppers' and flying wings
Everything simple, homegrown.

No fancy screens just chalk and slate
Banana leaves the fancy plate,
No fancy shoes, just plain feet
Ordinary lives in ordinary state.

Human values in a mother's Lap
No 'virtual' sermons or webinars,
No dazzling lights, no late-night stuff
Just gazing at resplendent stars.

I could go on and on, forever and ever
But, Time's the Master of one and all,
No 'App', no tube, no flix, no spaceship
Can save us from the eventual fall.

A painting of a man with a beard and sunglasses, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The man's face is in the upper right, wearing dark sunglasses. The landscape below is a mix of green and brown tones, suggesting a field or a distant shore. A small figure is visible in the distance. The overall mood is contemplative and somewhat melancholic.

Let's not gloat over where we are
A few more years add nothing to life,
If all you've done is amassed riches
Midst constant bickering and eternal strife.

O, for those golden days of blessed yore
Walks on sand and the sandy shore,
The only gold, the Sun above
Who would want anything more.

78.

Untitled

If there is an after life
Have I provided for it,
Have I, in the presumed darkness there,
A candle of Hope lit

For, all that I might have gathered here
Will not be accompanying me,
for sure No friends, no things, nor the
Nightingale that sings
Will cross the seas, with me, to the other shore.

My boat will carry nothing but me
In the arms of an Angel, I hope,
'Cause, nothing I've done makes me liable,
I think To be hanging at the end of a rope.

On balance, I've tried to be as fair as
I could And thus, a deposit of "goodness" ensured
In vaults, that the Lord may see out there
And, give me both lodging and board.

There's an urgent need for us to remember
And remind our over-stressed mind,
That all we amass in this mortal world
Is always left behind.

Kind words, good deeds, precede us
To whatever there is that lies ahead,
Forgive me, those that I may have hurt
By things I may have said.

79.

Denuclearize

I see calls for wakefulness
I see sanctions all around,
Nuclear arms came from somewhere
Nothing that we, yesterday, found.

I see some with thousands of them
Some with a hundred or more,
Some with none and so the clamour
Why must unprotected be my shore.

Those, who with the 'strikers' sit
Claim they are responsible powers,
If everyone touts no first use
Then aren't we storing dead "showers."

There's also talk of future stuff
Way more lethal than the "nuclear",
Will someone tell us simple folks
What is coming, when, and how much deadlier.

Corny, is this big wise world
Man bereft of all his senses,
Closer now to the jungle than ever
A place of falsehoods and pretenses.

Meant to be deterrence, I'm told
Then, why discriminate,
You assume great wisdom
All else riff-raff, third rate.

How about Denuclearization
You know, just do away with them,
Those things ugly as they are
And, from which needless wranglings stem.

Let white flags fly everywhere
Let the phantom called Peace, reign,
Let's bury the ghosts of hate and war
Let's relieve ourselves of this self- inflicted pain.

Let's denuclearize, let's disarm
Naive as it may seem,
There is still time available
To repent, to redeem.



80.

Happy New Year

May there be no doubts, no fears, ahead
No wet eyelids, no tears ahead,
May 2021 be nicer, kinder and brighter too
May happier be your years ahead.

May laughter fill all hearts with joy
All ships at sea, all ahoy,
May the waters lie still and calm
All typhoons shy, muted and coy.

May roses line the paths you tread
May you never regret the words you said,
May you always have whatever you need
And, never run short of the daily bread.

No dark nights, no trying times
No discordant notes, just happy rhymes
May the New Year bring back smiles on faces
Each day of it rising in sunnier climes.

May all your dreams and wishes come true
And, the stars above all shine for you,
May evening shadows meld into nights
Greeted by Dawns, all fresh and New.

May the rays of the Sun through your windows, peep
May you always remember to your promises keep,
May you sow the seeds of cheer and fun
And may you, forever, then happiness reap.

Happy New Year

Amen.



81.

The Silver Spoon and The Carving Knife

I often get lost in the sands of time
In the long gone past of melody and rhyme,
When Time meant nothing nor did its passing
When the bells of old had the happiness chime.

When shadows of the long gone distant past
Their lengthening reminders now gently cast,
There's an eerie feeling of impermanence
Like nothing's going to forever last.

Why, O why, do I get carried away
By swirling winds that only games play,
With me now, then blowing against
Wayward, the mortal story shall I say.

The air's heavy and so is the heart
The Sun's the same but not my start
For, the lithe spirit of the yesteryears
At the end of time plays no part.

Life's a Play, a game of Chess
A Stage of both defeat and success,
These two words of little import
That turn happy lives into a web of mess.

The stages and pages and phases of life
The struggles, the battles, the moments of strife,
The same for all who set foot on Earth
The Silver Spoon and the Carving Knife.

The clarity of mind and its fogginess
The unkind heart that seeks forgiveness,
The Saint, the Sinner, the losing Winner
All a part of an inglorious gloriousness.

Live our lives we all must
Can we not live them, just,
Why break 'em down, why analyze
The freshest iron too will, one day, rust.

Why swing from Hope to Despair, Ashok
The warmth of Spring you will soon, soak
Save the best for the last, friend
No one wears the eternal cloak.

82.

Randomly Yours

What can I say, I'm no sage
Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, I'm not on that page,
They're all Greek to me, and that lingo
I don't know If it was Hamlet, I'd be on that stage.

They were masters of Philosophy, so
I am told That branch of the tree, leaves me cold,
No roots, no trunk, no bark, whatever
All airy-fairy and, on that I'm not yet fully sold.

I'm all for logic, that simple stuff we all know
Like gravity, and why things I throw all fall below
My feet, and why two plus two always make four
And, why the warmth in our hearts will not melt snow.

Why smiles on faces their own stories tell
And frowns reveal the internal pell- mell,
Why things we see we still call fake
And, the Invisible stories we constantly sell.

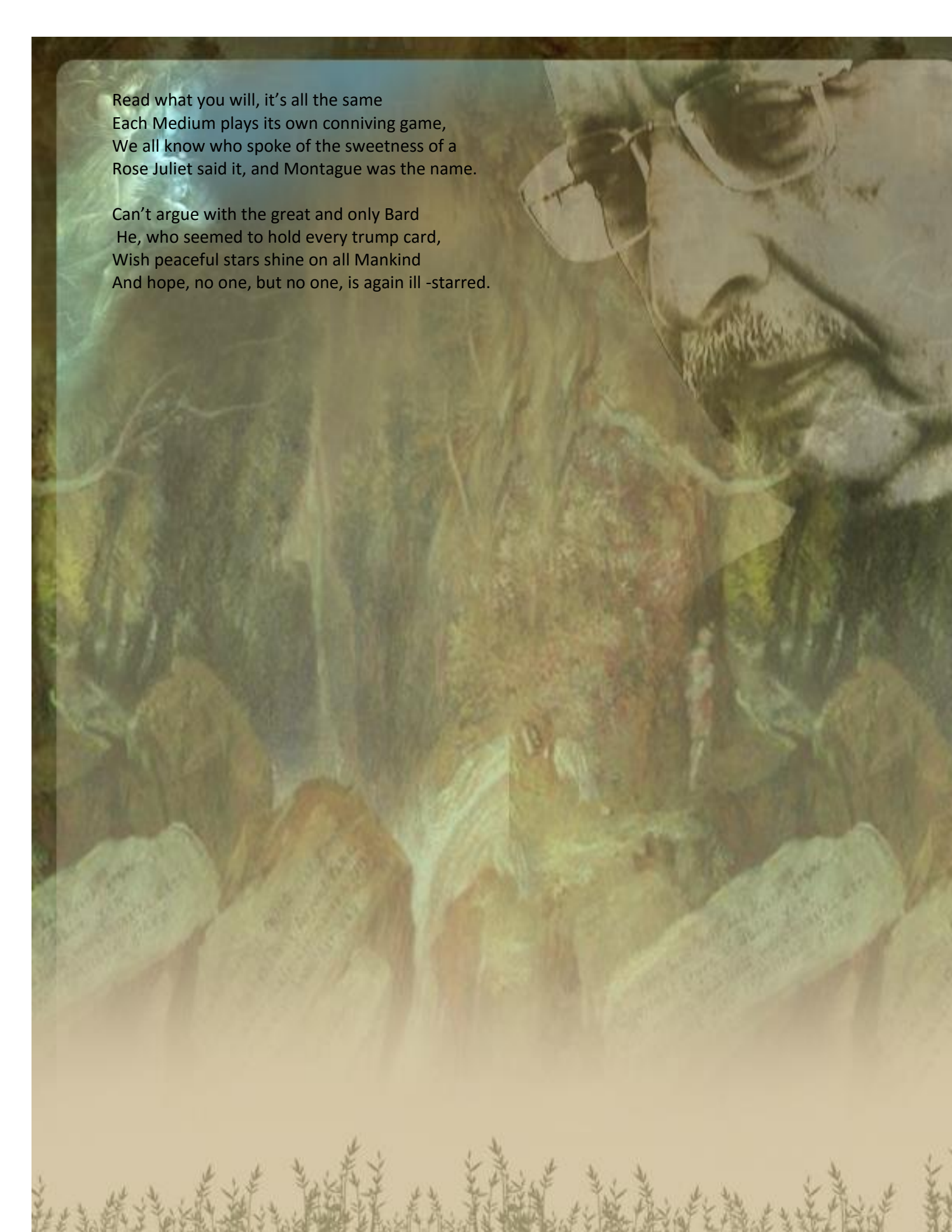
Why all we do now is full of deceit
Spurred by Ego and our own self- conceit,
Brotherhood and Fellowship, mirages all
The flip side of Victory is another's defeat.

You decide what is good for another
What gives you that power, my dear brother,
You're not infallible, no god on Earth
No angel from above, no right to smother.

Doctrines are doctrines and all man-made
Produced in minds and then tailor-made,
To suit a set of vested beliefs and ideas
Then spread in stages, like a cascade.

Never has the world been in such tremor and turmoil
The Earth shaking everywhere, volcanoes on the boil,
As ordinary folks live their unquestioned, destined, lives
By the sweat of their brows, by honest toil.

So much for the great Masters and their discourses
It's only now about grabbing and securing resources,
Land, air, sea or the heavens and beyond
And this is really true, tell me my sources.



Read what you will, it's all the same
Each Medium plays its own conniving game,
We all know who spoke of the sweetness of a
Rose Juliet said it, and Montague was the name.

Can't argue with the great and only Bard
He, who seemed to hold every trump card,
Wish peaceful stars shine on all Mankind
And hope, no one, but no one, is again ill -starred.

83.

Wonder, Wonder, Wondering

Things not always cast in iron
The rain today maybe tomorrow's dew,
Wonder if we leave the best for last
Will we have nothing ever to rue.

People, people and people anew
Outnumbered is Nature on this score,
The Sands, the Seas, the lands too
Some sail and some like standing on the shore.

If it's just more of the same always
And if nothing ever really changes
Then, wonder why this strange attachment
To a world that only successfully, deranges.

Wonder if the breeze it is
That blows our precious Time away
Else, why does Time hang still sometimes
Wonder why it is this way.

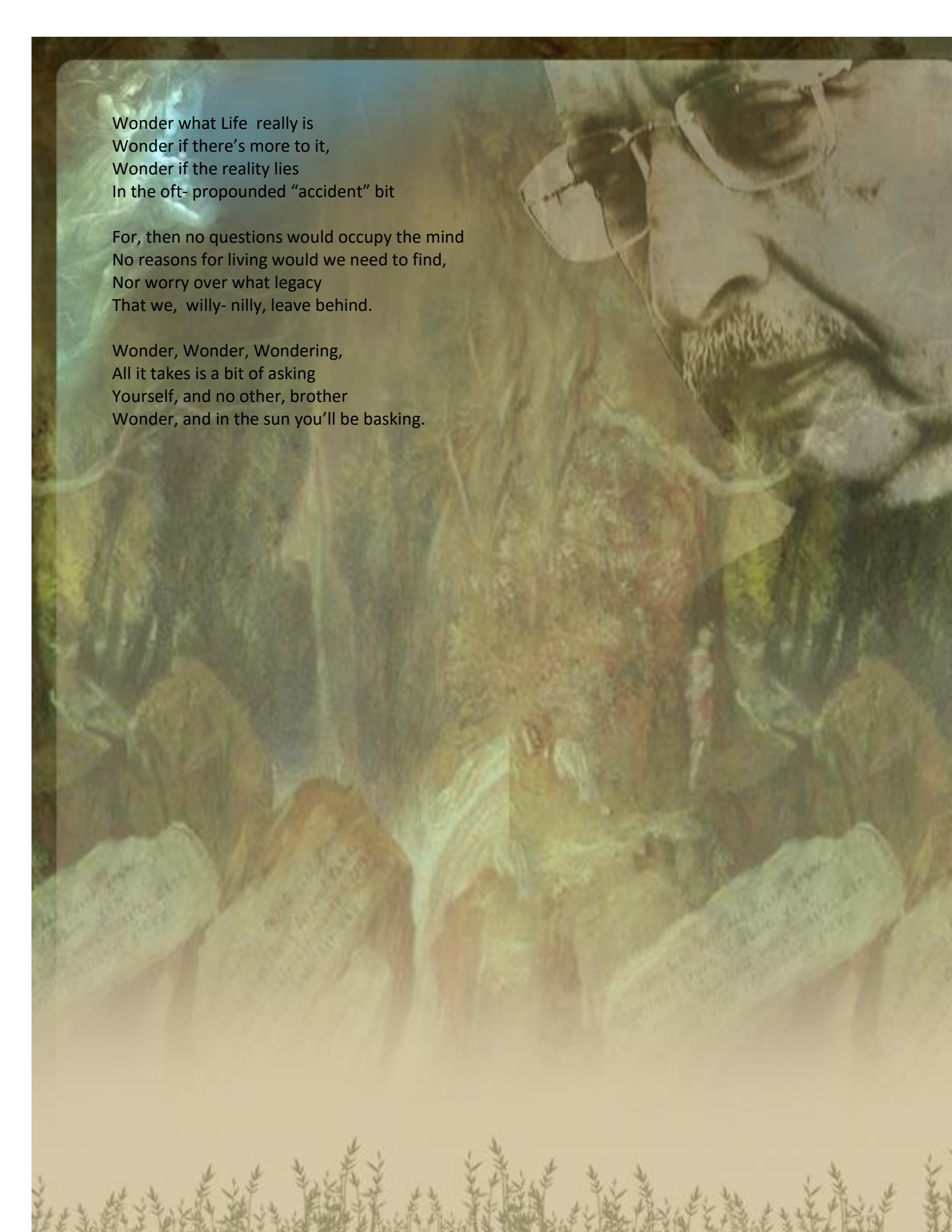
Wonder at so many things
At life over thousands of years,
At how the Nightingale melodiously sings
And I, at my fears and tears.

Wonder what the hereafter is
The fantasy of Eternity,
The nothingness of heaven and hell
And, the wonders of this mystery.

Wondering is the essence of it all
Makes it easier to stand tall,
Wondering as we look at the stars
Which one tonight will descend, nay fall.

Never give up on wondering
For, it displays a new world a day,
Wonderful, then, how at each sunrise
It's a different game that we'd, possibly, play.

Wondering is a form of Hope
Wondering helps in the daily Cope,
Wondering where the pinnacle is
And how sharp the return downward slope.



Wonder what Life really is
Wonder if there's more to it,
Wonder if the reality lies
In the oft- propounded "accident" bit

For, then no questions would occupy the mind
No reasons for living would we need to find,
Nor worry over what legacy
That we, willy- nilly, leave behind.

Wonder, Wonder, Wondering,
All it takes is a bit of asking
Yourself, and no other, brother
Wonder, and in the sun you'll be basking.

84.

A Strange New Year

To kill time or fill time
Is the most abject of human acts,
To seek peace at all costs
Is the weakest of all pacts.

There's a time for rapprochement
And, a time to stand tough,
A time to stand up to balderdash
And, a time to say enough.

The whole wide world
Can never be your friend,
There'll be likes and dislikes
And, those who won't mend

No winners, no losers
Just travellers all,
Pilgrims on life's road
Who both rise and fall

Governed by Destiny
And, its Scythe of Time,
All Jokers in Life's Circus
A dozen to a Dime.

Both humble and pompous
A two-in-one concoction,
The Lord, seemingly, confused
In Man's construction.

Be that as it may
We're all in it together,
Let's Happy New Year say
Dear Sister, Dear Brother.

All said and done
Let's hold hands and run,
Life's sombre and grim
Let's teach it some fun.

Amen. Adios.

85.

Wishes Were Horses, May You Have Them All

Time to go, Adios, Goodbye
May blue always be your sky,
May happier times their faces show
And, radiant always be that glow.

May Deep Indigo never your mood be
The mystery of it in dark hue,
May its lighter variants kiss your feet
At dawn, as they play with the morning's dew.

May gentle breezes your companions be
And storms their safe distances keep,
May all your dreams be realized
And, heavenly be your nightly sleep.

May the sands of Time not run out on you
Till life's been lived, fulfilling and true,
May you never need to remorseful feel
May that always hold good for you.

May the boat you ride your destinations find
And those you meet be like you, generous and kind,
May you share your happiness with one and all
And, extend your hand to those who might fall

For, Destiny's script is not for us to read
That mistress is fickle and, fickle indeed,
Remember, you never know when it's head or tails
The best of guesses also fails.

So, hedge all bets and do so wisely
Carry an umbrella for the rainy day,
The scene is always a mystery unravelled
When Shakespearian is life's unrivalled play.



86.

Food For Thought

The arrow that without feathers, flies
Swifter than do the swiftest birds,
Lies within the confines of our eyes
More lethal than all venomous words.

With nothing spoken all is said
The darting arrow of venom and more,
Pierces hearts that fear to remember
What deadly dart its fabric, tore.

Words are empty and minus weight
The scales of the mind toss them out,
The shafts of loathe and vile hate
That the arrows carry have drowning clout

So, tarry while you speak for sure
But remember, glances pack greater punch,
It's over things like this we should mull more
Food for thought, please go ahead and munch.