

Poetry Series

Robert John Meehan
- poems -

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Robert John Meehan()

Robert John Meehan's insight into the hearts and souls of both teacher and students has earned him international recognition as 'The Voice Of the American Teacher'. Selections from *The Teacher's Journey/The Road Less Traveled* and *The Teacher's Treasure/Bounty for All* have appeared in countless magazines and educational journals worldwide. Robert John Meehan has long been one of the nation's most read and quoted education allies. Much has been said about the difficulties involved teaching in the inner-city schools, but little has been done to share the emotions of both teacher and student as Robert John Meehan has. He has done much in the area of encouraging others to share their feelings about what can and should be done in today's classrooms. His career has expanded over five decade. Robert John Meehan's gift of bringing the focus of the American public to a deeper understanding of both the rigors and compassion found in today's urban classrooms is unmatched among others in his profession. Robert John Meehan's *The Teacher's Journey/The Road Less Traveled* along with *The Teacher's Treasure/Bounty for All* are available at most major bookstores or book sellers. It has earned him much acclaim and popularity among educators and parents alike.

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A Bell Too Soon (Her First Recess)

who am i
my eyes do see
who are you
replied by me

who will accept
me i will see
who to meet
me soon to be

who i like
will be to see
who to know
i'll need the key

who to greet
me soon to be
who to lead
me soon to see

who to be
in need of me
whose smile to be
just made for me

WHO RANG THE BELL
FOR ALL TO FLEE
who's to remain for
me to see

WHO RANG THE BELL
FOR ALL TO FLEE
who's to see
or be with me

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Robert John Meehan

A Child's Plea By Robert John Meehan

lest i be forgotten
(please notice me today)

forget that i was rotten
as we plan another day

yesterday is behind me
another day ahead

if only you'll forgive me
and welcome me instead

my behavior was uncalled for
but your attention i did get

if only you'd include me
both our intentions would be met

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Robert John Meehan

A Hug At Arms Length

An inveigled law impossible to define
Or a ratiocination barring sensations sublime
Now be it a resolution
Benumbing meaningful hugs
While our reassuring arms are brazenly shackled
As if we were thugs
No longer a caring a closeness
Dare be perceived
Nor a lasting acceptance possibly believed
A new forbiddance of sharing souls
Now mandated by the court
By a purblind law demanding
Denying hugs now be tort
Relegating a closeness a bonding forbiddingly conceived
Dare a bad touch to a child be mistakenly perceived
Hence a comforting shield from unannounced harm
Now regulated by law to a securing glance
Or meaningless words of charm
Now be it...A warm welcoming smile dissolves undiscovered
With only chance eye contact diminishing hope it's discovered
No longer a child shall a teacher's caring soul to greet
Nor our soul's selflessness without sharing hugs when we meet
A law regulating human hugs
They would deceptively bestow
A hug at arms length...
Is no way to greet a child we know

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Robert John Meehan

A January Fear

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
My class is all here
Down to each little sneer

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
Those cute little creatures
Have nothing to fear

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
Still knowing that teacher's
not entirely all here

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
Each little tear
Makes it perfectly clear

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
A day off is coming
And hopefully near

a sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
It's harder and harder
Maintaining my leer

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
Perhaps my behavior's
becoming quite queer

A sick day a sick day
I'll not make it all year
Perhaps in the morning
I'll call in and cheer

A SICK DAY A SICK DAY
I GOT A PAIN IN MY EAR

Alas...I can hear my principle sneer
With a resigning smirk easy to hear
NO SICK DAY NO SICK DAY
SORRY MY DEAR

NO SICK DAYS NO SICK DAYS
REMAINING THIS YEAR

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Robert John Meehan

A Resilient Child

Positive outlook initiative and effort
Progress and Friendship encouraging more effort

Expanding my interests building my skills
Effectiveness in work no longer just frills

Humor and focus with higher esteem
Critical thinking my teachers will gleam

Problem solving thinking abstractly
Handicaps dissolving progressing exactly

Now in control My feelings to share
No ones to wonder...MY POTENTIAL BEWARE!

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Robert John Meehan

A Simple Matter

My pencil is on the floor
Just what am I to do
I'll not get it with my feet
As the other children do

The test has already started
I'm in danger of falling behind
If only a fellow student
Would return it in ample time

My palms are now sweating
My frustrations beginning to show
No talking is permitted
Thus my pencil lies below

If my eyes were to wander
For a helping hand to find
Would my teacher be believing
Or would questions of cheating be defined

As I squirm anxiously in my seat
There's sweat forming on my brow
I wantingly glance beneath me
Believing I'll retrieve it somehow

A commotion I could make
But others I would distract
Or an illness I could fake
With a slim chance the test retake

I glance up at the clock
With feelings of dismal shock
Wishing in my predicament
My teacher soon takes stock

I hesitatingly raise my hand
As a tear trickles down my cheek
Hoping and praying all along
That my teacher's eyes and mine do meet

But much to my dismay
She's still looking another way
With hopes of finishing diminishing
I'll need find yet another way

I swallow a gulp of air
In hopes of clearing my throat
In need of my teacher's attention
To questions with answers yet unwrote

In fear of promoting a commotion
I begrudgingly bury my head
Any hope of a successful solution
Are lost in my feelings of dread

With a tap on my shoulder from behind me
And a tug on my chair's brake release
My teacher's whispering voice reminds me
My wheelchair's brake to release

With a smile and a nod to assure me
To put my worst expectations to rest
My teacher returns me my pencil
And on I continue my test

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Robert John Meehan

A Teacher's Pledge

To the DIFFICULT ones

I'll be patient

To the PAINED ones

I'll be concerned

To the FRUSTRATED ones

I'll be committed

To the IGNORED ones

I'll be accepting

To the INDIFFERENT ones

I'll be caring

To the DEMANDING ones

I'll be modeling

To the ANTISOCIAL ones

I'll be including

To the INATTENTIVE ones

I'll be interesting

To the NEGATIVE ones

I'll be assisting

To the UNFEELING ones

I'll be reflective

To the DESTRUCTIBLE ones

I'll be focusing

To the UNACCEPTED ones

I'll be embracing

To the SERIOUS ones

I'll be amusing

To the INEXPERIENCED ones

I'll be enriching

To the SUBVERSIVE ones

I'll be forgiving

To the LAMENTED ones

I'll be consoling

To the OTHER ONES

I'll just assign bubble tests!

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Robert John Meehan

Field Trip Monitor

I approach it with great hesitation
(all the while loathing my assigned destination)
Each child I lead permission received
(making note their interest is not well perceived)

Obedience was submitted by parental dictation
(warnings were made to hinder temptation)
Each one committed by orientation
(all the while fearing my mortification)

Soon to head off my worst inclination
to act on my thoughts of prognostication
Year after year with board justification
we make this trip for student dedication

Alas...my being filled with just pretension
if only I could leave each child in detention
I think it is obvious by this short deposition
that monitoring this bus is beyond my disposition

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Robert John Meehan

Flash Cards

Flash cards flash cards
Hidden under my bed
Lest my mom drills me
Till I fall over dead

Addition Subtraction
What are all these facts
They don't seem to thrill me
Like feeding my rats

Take-a-ways and pluses
They're all just the same
Just a teacher's evil plan
To drive me insane

I can't seem to add
Without fingers to count
Who's ever to know
If they never find out

I'll never subtract
If it has to be
Cause no one I know
Takes a thing from me

So what if I answer
a single card right
Learning the rest
Would be too hard a fight

Math and arithmetic
Shouldn't ought to be
A young boys mind
Should always be free

I've got places to go
And friends to see
No flash cards tonight
School ends at three

My mom just told me
A firm warning to be
Do flashcards tonight
Or there's no TV

Perhaps to my mother
I'll just pretend
Not finding my flashcards
Till too near the end

Or perhaps I'll reply
'I left them at school'
Hoping again
My mother to fool

As my mother walks
Towards me
It's too plain to see
A NEW box of flashcards

TO PUNISH POOR ME

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Robert John Meehan

Frost (The Teacher's Journey)

Sometimes a moment
Stands out in time
A new life discovered
By a lesson in rhyme

Everything changed by
A single selection
A turning point made
In a moment's alliteration

A new way to continue
Discovered in rhyme
One moment that changed
My life for all time

In that moment of time
A difference was made
My turning point reached
A life's validity laid

My life's road discovered
By a lesson in rhyme
The road less traveled
Was that selection of mine

And that too has made
All the difference

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Robert John Meehan

I Am Defiance

You heard my voice
Long into the night

You felt my presence
As your dreams took flight

You tossed and turned
As I embattled your night

i made you squirm
throughout this disquieted night

Your mind grew weary
As I demanded with spite

In all your dreams
I belonged this night

I enslaved your dreams
As you cursed the night

From dusk to dawn
Not a moment's respite

Your thoughts soon turned
To the morning's first light

Knowing again this morning
Your patience I'll fight

You sensed my wrath
You know your doom

Another day's energy
Will be mine too soon

Your hopes, desires
And lessons planned

All soon will fade
At my every demand

The floor is all swept
The desks are all kept

The classroom is lit
They know where to sit

The bell has now rung
For all you to greet

All children...save one
Are found in their seat

I AM DEFIANCE

Robert John Meehan

In Memoriam (A Child Missed)

A desk lies empty
A missing face to find
A child soon missed by some
Another life consumed by one

A classmate questioned
A missing child to find
While a desk lies empty
A hope dwindles with time

As a child's life once abound
A child's fate is now found
While a desk lies empty
A lifeless child is found

As questions of why arise
A time for tears to flow
While a desk lies empty
A prayer for a missed child we know

A quiet voice to miss
A child missed we know
While a desk lies empty
A question of why to know

A future now not to be
A tragic loss we are told
While a desk lies empty
An answer of why yet untold

A myriad of lives changed
Another youthful innocent lost
While a desk lies empty
At a life's innocence cost

A society believed so rich
And yet a life's worth so poor
While a desk lies empty
Another child's life's no more

A time to ponder a commitment
A life's question to answer
While a desk lies empty...

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Robert John Meehan

Johnny's Walking Down The Hallway

Johnny's walking down the hallway
hands neatly at his side
Johnny's walking down the hallway
all the rules he will obey

Johnny's walking down the hallway
having nothing much to hide
Johnny's walking down the hallway
teachers proudly step aside

Johnny's walking down the hallway
but his feet begin to glide
Johnny's skipping down the hallway
round the corner he'll soon slide

Johnny's running down the hallway
I quickly swallow my pride
Johnny's yelping down the hallway
a part of me just died

Johnny's staggering down the hallway
with poor Miss Vance he did collide
Johnny's crying down the hallway
thinking poor Miss Vance had died

Johnny's waiting down the hallway
till some teachers all decide
Johnny's whimpering down the hallway
his fragile ego they did chide

Again...Johnny's walking down the hallway
hands neatly at his side
Johnny's walking down the hallway
all the rules he will abide

Johnny's walking down the hallway
teachers proudly step aside

Egad...Johnny's fleeing down the hallway

I think I'll let it ride

Oh no...Johnny's missing down the hallway
I think I'll go and hide

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Robert John Meehan

Ld Unexplained To Me

i have a disability
his name is LD
i think he lives
deep inside of me

my mom sometimes cries
she's afraid you see
i think she thinks
she'll catch it from me

i go to the doctor
down neath the stairs
she comes to get me
while my whole class stares

she's fixing my progress
without shots or pills
i hope poor progress
ain't a disease that kills

i don't feel a hurt
but i'm a little scared though
can i be like the others
or will my LD soon show

will there be spots
or pox or an itchy rash
or will my body just melt
into a pile of trash

i don't want LD
its scary to me
what can i do
to rid it from me

my teacher is nicer
and kinder to me
cause she's moved
her desk closer to me

i know just why
she did this for me
we were nicer and kinder
to aunt rose before she died...you see

will i have to get shots
and amputations too
or will i be in much pain
before all this is through

when the whispering stops
will someone just say
let's bow our heads
for this poor boy we pray

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Robert John Meehan

Now Keeping Pace

Now included and of value
I think I've found my pace
Now attentive and supportive
I assume my rightful place
Now accomplished and creative
I eagerly join the chase
Now responsible and directed
I promise anger to displace
Now showing initiative and acceptance
I feel exclusions no longer the case
Now beaming with pride and potential
I've now earned my teacher's embrace

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Robert John Meehan

Personal Attention

Personal attention
a gifted child leads
Personal attention
an average child needs

Personal attention
at risk child pleads
Personal attention
an autistic child needs

Personal attention
a parent plants the seeds
Personal attention
is what every child needs

Thus..Personal attention
is what every teacher needs

Robert John Meehan

Play

Main occupation of children enhanced
Life's mode of learning given a chance

Best done when not eating sleeping or complying
Interfering rejecting ridiculing or denying

Watching and imitating interacting with some
Acquiring language...Relating will come

Opportunities for development and emotional skill
Experiences with language and ideas that thrill

Motivation creation exploration to invest
A child's development and intellect to test

Whether parallel play in a solitary way
Or social play in a complimentary way

Play is its own reward throughout life
Imagination expression...Life Without Strife

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Sanctuary

In the stillness of the moment
Our eyes quietly meet
A nod from me affirming
Good behavior in their seat

La Tisha and Amanda
Quietly working at their task
While Frederick and La Tonya
File up for questions yet to ask

Robert and Desmond
With counselor soon to meet
As Brian and Keisha
Resist playing footsie with their feet

In the solitude of the morning
My class is all on task
A smile from me OKing
There'll be time for questions yet to ask

I can hear Michael sighing
As yesterday's homework's done
While noticing all the while
That Sara's just begun

With pencil to the paper
A whispering sound I hear
As Clarissa and Latonya
To Rhonda lend an ear

Nikki and Lakisha
This quiet moment to invest
Both silently preparing
Knowing tomorrow brings a test

Brandon and Malinda
Their attention never waning
Even Tyrone and Kevin
New knowledge are obtaining

While Anthony intently studies
The biography of Dr. King
Jackie's yet perceiving
Her book's new wonders soon to spring

Nodding and affirming
My smile fans the class
Not a sound unconfirming
That they're mindful of their task

THE SOUND OF TIRES SCREECHING

Interrupts our private life
As little bodies scramble
To the gunfire's ambient strife

Glass shattering around them
Each immediate sanctuary sought
As frightened eyes seek out mine
Wondering what of this we wrought

No...Not just another drive-by
But the unveiling of a not so innocent truth

No...Not just another drive-by
But a vile invasion of our precious youth

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Robert John Meehan

Science To Test

Apprehending, Applying, Along with Providing
While others are Obtaining, Extending or Classifying
Interring, Referring and Randomizing too
Translating, Integrating, and Responding to

Comprehending, Visualizing and Processing some
Concluding, Paraphrasing, Improvising will come
Selecting, Classifying, Internalizing facts
Questioning, Shifting, and Graphing the rats

Relating, Previewing, Forecasting the end
Comparing, Paraphrasing, Obtaining pure ZEN
Science is easy...no less for some
But just reading the book sure ain't no fun

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Self

Self direction is a virtue
A quality of strength
The development of self
Responsibility at length

An image of this strength
Independence and reliance
Characteristic at length
With self-assertion and less defiance

Stability and intellect
Contributing to success
The strength of self-direction
Achievement more than less

Effective in enhancing
Attitudes which promote
A component of a process
Negative attitudes to garrote

A sense of autonomy
Through the concept of relating
To build a one time wanna-be
To a better self elating

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Robert John Meehan

The Preferential Please

'Pass a perfectly plain piece of picture paper.'
was Paula's preliminary proclamation
A 'Pass a perfectly plain piece of picture paper.'
plainly perceived without the preferential PLEASE
Thus, a 'Pass a perfectly plain piece of picture paper.'
perceived without the preferential PLEASE
will presumably predicate a precursory point
that a 'Pass a perfectly plain piece of picture paper.'
perceived without the preferential PLEASE
probably permits a plausible presumption
that passing a perfectly plain piece of picture
probably won't be permitted
primarily as a precautionary procedure
to prohibit possible presumptions that
a perfectly plain piece of picture
can be procured without the preferential PLEASE
thus, 'Pass a perfectly plain piece of picture paper.'
preceded with the preferential PLEASE would be permitted
pending a parley with Paula to pattern
her perception that a 'Pass a perfectly plain piece
of picture paper.' would be plainly permitted
if prefaced with the perfunctory preferential PLEASE

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