

Poetry Series

**Thomas Vaughan Jones**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**  
2014

**Publisher:**  
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Thomas Vaughan Jones()

Thomas Vaughan Jones was born in Liverpool, is indisputably Celtic and has those characteristics which include a deep sense of melancholy (hiraeth) for the land of his fathers, and a sense of humour which prevents him writing anything even remotely serious. Unless of course, he is discussing Love or Death, which is an entirely different matter.

Tom began his adult career as a professional soldier in the British Army on the Rhine, where he became a regimental signal instructor and fell in love with countless Aryan maidens. After a fairly short military career, it was a logical step to become a Firefighter, where in the course of thirty years he rose to the rank of Supervisory Divisional Officer. At the same time he assisted his late lamented wife, Sheilagh, in raising five children.

On retiring, he pursued his love for formal poetry and attended Liverpool and Knowsley Universities before being elected Chairperson of Knowsley Writers. Here he supervised the production of a quarterly magazine, The Roundabout and established Open Forum for other would be went on to found The Pen People and served Halewood Arts Association for many years.

His poetry has been published in many magazines, including The Big Roundup, and he wrote a play For BBC North, as well as a musical history for Halewood Performing Arts.

Tom has a multitude of kissing cousins in U.S.A, Canada and Australia, and enjoyed a great relationship as a moderator on the internet with The Critical Poet. These relationships have allowed him to develop the characters which he uses to write a varied genre of formal poetry.

Favorite Quote or Motto: "There is nothing new in a poem: The same words, the same meanings, yet a poem becomes new due to the skill in making it." – Abu hilal-al Askari.11th century.

# A Beastly Affair

The rain came down for forty days,  
as God had said it would.  
So Noah built a little ship  
Of fibre glass and wood.

He called out to the animals  
and welcomed them aboard,  
except for the duck billed dongeree-doo  
(For somebody said he snored)

The water rose in massive waves,  
the skies were dark and grey.  
The torrents seized the little ship  
and carried it away.

The people left upon the shore  
began to wail and weep,  
except for the duck billed dongeree-doo,  
for he was fast asleep.

The maelstrom wreaked its havoc,  
all of the people drowned.  
Even the duck billed dongeree-doo,  
who died without a sound.

Then when the flood was over,  
the ark was safe and dry.  
All of the animals landed,  
then one began to cry.

So Noah said, quite crossly,  
'What on earth is the matter with you? '  
and the creature said in a tearful voice,  
'I'm a duck billed dongeree-doo!

There's nobody left to love me,  
no one to call my own.  
I must live on in solitude,  
spending my life alone.'

Which is why, my dear children,  
if you ever go down to the zoo,  
it's so sad I fear, but you'll never hear  
of a duck billed dongeree-doo.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# A Brief Note For My Surgeons

I shall not mark it as some  
dark depravity  
When you delve deep in my  
abdominal cavity  
Come cut me!  
Slash me!  
Slice me as you will.  
Let those voracious scalpels  
drink their fill.  
But please remember  
when you've done the deed  
to put back any organs I still need

For this one small advice I must impart  
A poet cannot write without a heart.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## A Celestial Fantasy.

An Angel cried beside my bed last night.  
I held her face and wiped away a tear,  
I opened up my arms and held her tight,  
and never dreamed that Paradise was near.  
Her perfect form, her first sweet earthbound kiss  
creating such exotic harmony.  
Ethereal enchantment gave such bliss  
that Heaven opened wide its gates to me.

Warm is the love that mends this aching heart.  
Impassioned fires that make my body whole!  
Begin the dance and let Love's music start  
and weave your web around my long lost soul.

For I am you, and you, Sweet Love, are me;  
Entwined together in our Poetry.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# A Chapter Of Accidents

I was looking in the gutter when I saw this little note,  
So I picked it up and read it, and somebody had wrote;  
'You'll never get to Heaven if you keep on looking down.'  
So I straightened up my shoulders; then I gave a little frown.  
For as I raised my head up to look into the sky,  
A dirty little birdie dropped a hot-shot in my eye.  
It stung; more than a little, but I struggled with my hurt  
and I bravely kept on walking; then I stood in doggy dirt.  
I slipped, and then I skidded, and I hit a rubbish bin.  
I cried out for assistance, but alas, I still fell in,  
and then a passing stranger, who had failed to see me skid  
thought the place looked too untidy, and replaced the dustbin lid.

So.....

I sat there in the debris, and I thought " Now here's a lark,  
I'm cold and wet and dirty, and I'm sitting in the dark."  
I couldn't get the lid off, but I bit my bottom lip,  
as I huffed and puffed and struggled till I felt my trousers rip.  
At last, distressed and thirsty, I just had to fall asleep,  
and while I slept, the binmen took me to the refuse heap.  
They thought I was a dummy, and they left me in a mess,  
for they pinched my coat and trousers, and they caused me much distress.  
Alone, so cold and naked, for all the world to mock.  
I rummaged through the rubbish till I found this tatty frock  
I hurried home for dinner, as the day was getting late,  
but as I passed the school yard, I was stopped outside the gate.  
The bobby, from a distance, for he didn't like my stench,  
said he thought I was a pervert, and he brought me to the bench.  
'I know that I've been stupid, and I've looked above my station  
But I really hope, Your Honour, you'll accept my explanation.'

The Judge looked down upon me, and he said, " A likely tale!  
You're a lecherous transvestite, and I'm sending you to jail."

So I won't be going upwards in a heavenly ascent  
I'll be going down to prison, for the Judge thinks I am bent.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# A Flight Of Fancy

Come spread your wings and fly with me, my love;  
Let earthly passions swiftly pass us by.  
and as we soar above an errant world  
we'll sing a song to make the angels sigh.

A song that forces mortals to recall  
that spiritual strength can set us free.  
Though feeble flesh may falter or may fall,  
our love can last for all eternity.

Little by little, time erodes our youth,  
but some emotions never fade away.  
If you will only stretch out for my hand  
sufficient to our ethos is the day.

Oceans and seas may change to barren rock.  
Meadows and clouds may meld in endless night.  
Mountains may crumble into fallow ground,  
But for our time we'll keep our endless flight.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# A Ghost Story

The curfew bell rang out its lonely call.  
The world fell fast asleep at close of day,  
and as the shades of night began to fall  
some ancient phantoms ushered out to play.

The maid looked through the window of her house.  
The house in which her parents lay asleep.  
So quiet she, and timid as a mouse,  
until she heard the restless spirits weep.

“Come play with us, my dear, the time is now,  
The hustle of the day has long since passed.  
What sorrow leaves its stain upon your brow?  
No earthly love was ever meant to last.

Now Passion dies and love has grown cold.  
There is no comfort in the crying game  
Why wait until your heart is sick and old  
and time has stamped its mark upon your frame”

Her face turned white, a deathly shade of pale.  
A manic gleam developed in her eye;  
Responding to the spirits’ plaintive wail  
her throat closed in the essence of a sigh

She left the comfort of her feather bed.  
The spectral throng drew round in high delight.  
With morning light her soul had long since fled,  
abandoned to the shadows of the night.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# A Great And Glorious Adventure

Fair sits the wind for France,  
said Harry to his band  
'Let's grab a boat, and take a trip,  
and pinch some Gallic land.'  
They formed a mighty army,  
equipped with sword and bow.  
Some thought that he was balmy,  
but none dared tell him so

He made such rousing speeches,  
men cheered from lusty throats,  
Then went down to the beaches  
and climbed aboard their boats.  
They sailed the English Channel,  
which didn't take too long.  
The English sharpened weapons  
while the Welsh men sang a song.

Some sad and surly Frenchmen  
were waiting on the shore.  
"What are you doing, Mes amis!  
What 'ave you come 'ere for? "  
The British groaned when Hal stood up  
to tell once more his story.  
He rambled on, for hours and hours  
about his quest for glory.

(A burly man named Falstaff,  
with glazed and vacant eye  
Said "When I'm back in Blighty  
that Shakespeare's got to die".)

The French were quite impassive;  
They blew both froid et chaud.  
Then Jean le Tet said, loud and clear,  
"You'd better hit the road.  
You may be here for glory,  
but lads, you'll have to hike  
There is no public transport,

La France is out on strike”.

Poor Harry gave an inward groan,  
his generals were no fools  
But British men would never fight  
against the Union Rules.  
His eagle eye surveyed the land,  
and then he saw a thicket,  
His heart leapt high within his throat,  
they hadn't placed a picket.

He shouted from his rostrum,  
come brothers one and all.  
Though base you are, and base we be  
let's breach this rustic wall.  
Thus in the name of glory,  
they waged a bloody war.  
The Frenchmen cried at Crecy,  
and they wept at Agincourt.

Until the lads grew restless,  
they tired of Coq au Vin.  
The French had this embargo,  
and there was no British lamb.  
They ventured back to England,  
setting a speedy course  
Dreaming their dreams of fish and chips,  
and lamb chops with mint sauce.

When they got back to Windsor,  
they stood and looked askance.  
Their wives were making merry  
with some gentlemen from France.  
While they had been out fighting,  
the girls had had a ball,  
Indulging Latin Lovers  
from the heart of deepest Gaul.

And high up in the ramparts  
the Frenchmen cried with glee,  
“Vive le France, et Vive le Guerre  
et Vive la company ”.

Poor Harry's heart grew bitter  
and his soul was filled with gall.  
He knew, once more, he'd have to breach  
another bloody wall.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## A Nonet Sonnet

I don't want frantic orgies out of time  
with loose limbed couples making love a mime.  
I just want you to fill my loving arms  
for no one else exceeds your gentle charms  
and if my passion seems a passing lust  
then let me stay and maybe win your trust.  
So we can fly where no one flew before  
and when you think that I can love no more  
I'll raise aloft my pinnacle of fire  
and give you once again your hearts desire..  
Burning and turning; Loving you all night.  
If this be lust, then lust is my delight,  
until the fire's glow becomes an ember.  
A memory to treasure in December

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## After Six Beers

I was tired and feeling quite thirsty  
so I walked to the nearest bar,  
where I met this peculiar woman  
who was looking a shade under par.

She approached me and said to me, "Darling,  
will you buy me just one little drink? "  
Then she smiled an odd smile, "It will be worth your while"  
and she winked a libidinous wink.

Her nose had a shape like a corkscrew.  
Her mouth was decidedly weak.  
Her hair was quite thin, except that on her chin,  
and she had a big boil on her cheek.

I bought her a drink out of pity.  
We sank back a noggin or two.  
Then to my great surprise, when I noticed her eyes,  
they were big, and amazingly blue.

The third and the fourth glass were emptied.  
We shared a deep glance after five.  
This woman it seems was the girl of my dreams,  
she was vibrant, exciting, alive.

The sixth drink went down in a hurry,  
disposed of with unseemly haste.  
With one thought in my head, we were off to her bed,  
and there wasn't a moment to waste.

We spent a mad night full of passion.  
Her kisses were mingled with magic.  
I awoke the next dawn with a sigh and a yawn  
to a sight that was dreadfully tragic.

She was bald as a boiled egg at breakfast,  
just the ugliest girl in the land.  
But she'd killed the romance when she started to dance  
and her leg came away in my hand.

Now she grinned from a glass on the table.  
I took note of the scene and I wept,  
as I shuffled away, at the break of the day,  
to the sound of her snores while she slept.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# After The Grief, The Gratitude

The fireside chair sits empty,  
I hear no more your song.  
Each summer day is stagnant;  
Each night is cold and long.

I have no arm to lean on  
the way I leaned on you;  
and no more funny stories.  
Who would I tell them to?

God knows how much I miss you.  
The love light in your face,  
the sounds of your night music,  
the warmth of your embrace.

But this is my endeavour.  
These memories we share,  
a lifetime full of treasures  
Thank you for being there.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Ambitions

Come friends come fellow poets;  
No matter what your station or your age  
Monarch, peasant, peer or politician.  
All who aspire to write upon this page;  
what common thread aligns each life's ambition?

Ambitions change!  
For in the callow innocence of youth  
we prize our immortality  
and Truth.

But time expands and then erodes  
that bright veneer.  
We seek our fame and fortune.  
Perhaps another's heart.  
The essence of a promising career,  
while in our space the world will still revolve.  
Eventually, ambitions must resolve;  
Then must we turn our mortal tools away.

Poets and Kings  
must face approaching night,  
and all would wish before the fading light  
that we might find some words  
in dark December;

That someday, somewhere,  
someone might remember.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# An Eternal Question (The Eight Ages Of Woman)

With childish laugh and dainty little hand  
She builds a thousand castles in the sand.  
Though errant tides would wash them all away,  
She can return to build another day.

Why should she weep?

When female guile and coquetry awake;  
A thousand hearts are hers, for her to break.  
With one flirtatious nod of curly head  
She can transfix the youth that she would wed.

Perhaps she feels the surging of his heart,  
The agony of hours spent apart;  
Can she not sense the power of her charms  
Calling him home to hold her in his arms.

Does she believe he has the urge to roam,  
Bored with the bland emotions found at home.  
Is there another voice she comes to dread  
Is she secure within her marriage bed.

Is she afraid to turn another page,  
Stepping so softly into middle age.  
Though youthful passion crumbles into dust  
Richer by far are loyalty and trust.

Is it the pain within her feeble frame,  
Or knowing life can never be the same;  
Though his old heart has ceased, despite her cries,  
Does she not know that true love never dies?

This lady, lover, mistress, mother, wife  
This woman he has loved for all his life  
Does she believe he'd leave her on her own,  
Facing a silent future all alone.

Though he no longer holds his time and place,  
And cannot wipe the tears from that sweet face.

He still stands guard, and patiently he'll wait,  
To lead her by the hand through Heaven's Gate.

Why should she weep?

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# An Old Love Viewed By Candlelight

That flicker finds the corner of my eye.  
A golden glow that brightens up this place  
then hurries, scurries through the waiting house  
to rest against the sunshine of your face.

A face of somber sweetness, yet serene  
in true affection, quizzical but kind.  
So gentle in those tenets held so dear  
that fortitude was never undermined.

When poetry has strummed its final chord  
and words dissolve into eternal night,  
my world will still retain that tiny glow  
of your reflection, warmed by candle light.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# An Old Man's Sonnet

There's no one here! We're sitting in the dark  
So now is not the time to be pedantic  
I'd rather take your hand and be romantic  
It's warmer here and safer than the park

For your sweet youth has lit my inner fire.  
I hope that you reciprocate my passion  
Imagine that obesity's in fashion  
And kindly disregard my extra tyre.

I'll tease you, bend you, mould you to my will  
And I will write you sonnets by the score  
Soliloquies you've never heard before  
Italian, Shakespeare, till you've had your fill

Until our hearts are quieted and still  
And poets songs are silenced evermore.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# An Old Sailor's Prayer

Bring on the Pilot, cast off the lines,  
wait for the flooding tide.  
Haul up the anchor, lay off the shore,  
open the topsails wide.

Make fast the hatches, cargo secure,  
close up the wind to lea;  
Slide from the harbour, let out the log.  
make for the open sea.

Hold tight the rigging, stand by the bridge,  
ride on the surging foam,  
until the vessel, voyage completed,  
turns again, bound for home.

I am the vessel, mine is that ship,  
buffeting through Life's gales.  
Hope is the steerage, Faith is the hull,  
charity firms my sails.

When on the shoreline, God checks my log,  
looks at my manifest;  
Pray that His Mercy grants me safe harbour,  
laying my sails to rest.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# An Orphan Girl

A little girl stood in a silent street,  
uncared for in the meanest part of town.  
No silken hose or shoes upon her feet;  
a ragged doll dressed in a tattered gown.

She shivered in the grasp of winter's cold.  
The wind cut through her body to the bone,  
and never friendly arm to reach and hold.  
An orphan girl who faced the world alone.

Her feeble frame was feverish and ill.  
She searched and clutched to find each frantic breath,  
until at last her tiny heart was still.  
Her tired spirit yielded up to death.

But wait! What gentle smile lights up her face?  
Why has her sun at last begun to shine.  
Has she discovered some Eternal Grace  
that takes her through a portico divine?

Her Father waits to take her by the hand.  
In harmony, a heavenly choir sings.  
She enters gladly to her Promised Land  
and soars above the world on angel's wings.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## Attention. Elvis Alert.

I was sitting at the traffic lights  
and looking straight ahead;  
I was pumping up the motor for  
the traffic lights were red,  
Then I caught a little movement  
in the corner of my eye.  
When I turned my head to check it out  
I thought that I might die.  
I put my foot down on the gas  
and left that awful scene,  
I never even noticed if  
the traffic lights were green.

It was Elvis! Really! ELVIS!

He was looking mighty cute,  
sort of smooth and suave  
and sexy,  
and amazingly hirsute.  
He came driving up beside me  
in a brand new Cadillac,  
When I offered him a weak salute,  
He smiled and waved right back.  
I was dazed at such a wonder,  
so I didn't even see  
that another apparition had come  
sneaking up on me.  
My heart was hardly beating,  
and it almost stopped with fright  
when behind me came strange noises  
And a blinding flashing light.

I was overcome with horror!  
when I pulled up to a stop  
for approaching my rear mirror  
came a dreaded traffic cop.  
He looked real kind!  
and gentle!  
Like a cop's supposed to be,



but I couldn't stop from cringing  
as those glasses looked through me

Well!

He never stopped to notice that  
my face was drawn and white.  
He had the nerve to ask me why  
I'd jumped a traffic light.  
He heard my explanation and  
he didn't even blink;  
He asked if I'd been smoking grass,  
or had too much to drink.  
He wouldn't even listen,  
he just wrote me out a ticket,  
so I got a wee bit angry,  
and I told him where to stick it.  
I've never dreamed of taking drugs  
and never drink and drive  
I've told them all, stuck in this jail;  
King Elvis is ALIVE.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Autumnal

I gaze upon these leaves which once were green,  
adding such splendour to the verdant scene;  
Firm in their footings, dancing in the breeze,  
flirtatiously carousing at their ease;  
Unthinking and uncaring of the truth,  
blind in the callow ignorance of youth.

Then for a fleeting rhapsody of time  
they seem to find a majesty sublime.  
Fiery red robes and crowns of russet gold  
create a sight so wondrous to behold.  
Their whispered conference, so wise, so sage;  
until the season turns another page.

Their beauty fades, as each must close his term,  
brittle and ageing, crumbling and infirm;  
Shivering in the chill when North winds blow,  
yielding themselves before the Winter's snow.  
Crimson and gold give way to sodden rust,  
and finally returns to earthly dust.

Reflections in the corner of my mind  
regard that cycle, and myself I find.  
In youthful stride, I swaggered down the street,  
tasting each maiden, finding life so sweet.  
Blind in my folly, throwing love away  
content to know I'd love another day.

Maturing then, and with no hesitation  
striding the path which led me to my station.  
Discoursing there, with tongue so erudite  
on ceaseless ways to put the world to right;  
While other heads would nod, or disagree.  
Voices that met in muted harmony.

But Time's relentless mill stones slowly grind.  
Brittle the body, ageing is the mind.  
Is life to be so temporal and brief?  
Will joys succumb, and sorrows meld with grief?

Until the cycle falters, and I must,  
like Autumn leaves, lie crumbling in the dust.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Balancing Act

There comes a time, the poets say  
when days grow dark and skies are grey.  
When woeful wailing fills the air,  
with canting chorus everywhere.  
All life seems as a bitter cup  
that every mortal mouth must sup;  
but courage bids us, crystal clear  
to wipe away self pity's tear.

Regard the world with noble eye  
and drink the cup of sorrow dry,  
then cast the loathsome chalice down;  
show Fate a face that's free from frown,  
embracing Life's mortality  
and smiling at Eternity

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Bar Fly

I was sitting on my lonesome in a corner of the bar.  
Contemplating as I drank an ice cold beer,  
when a man from Loozeanna who was kinda under par  
started shouting out for all the world to hear.

'I'm the toughest roughest cowpoke that you folks have ever seen  
I'm the hardest hombre since the world began.  
I'm a whirlin' twirlin' twister, an' there ain't a man so mean  
as would tangle with a Loozeanna man'

I stood up slow and easy, I was heading for the john,  
Then he swung and hit me with a baseball bat.  
My head began a-buzzin' and I had a dander on  
for he'd put a doggone crease in my best hat.

Wa'al he dragged upon my hair some, took a bite out of my nose,  
and I very slowly started to get mad.  
I'm a quiet man from Texas and don't often come to blows,  
but I hit him with the best shot that I had.

He was shaken for a minute then he got up once again.  
Started in like he was coming back for more,  
So I kicked him where his mother hasn't looked since he was ten.  
Then I nailed his ears down firmly to the floor.

There are times a feller wants to sit and have a drink or two.  
Reminiscing on the hard men that he's met.  
Especially those who plumb forgot, as some are prone to do,  
That a Texican's as tough as you can get.

I'm just sitting on my lonesome in a corner of the bar  
There's this feller and he's looking straight at me.  
I can see his busted nose and on his face a fancy scar  
As he says 'Hey Mister! I'm from Tennessee...'

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Bedtime Story For The Babes

Why has Daddy been so naughty?  
Telling us those scary tales,  
Full of witches, wolves and warlocks,  
Moaning sighs and eerie wails.

Then he says its time for bedtime,  
Time that we went up the stairs.  
Snuggled up in cosy blankets,  
Don't forget to say your prayers.

I lie in my little bedroom,  
Hearing every tiny sound.  
Are there werewolves in my wardrobe?  
Awful creatures all around?

I see through my bedroom window  
Shadows from a hunter's moon.  
I clutch tightly to my pillow,  
Vampire bats are coming soon.

Rustle, rustle in the treetops,  
Fluttering on my windowsill.  
Small red eyes that peer intently  
At me, lying quiet and still.

Pointed noses, bristled whiskers;  
Canine teeth, so sharp and white.  
Crimson tongues with feral flicker,  
Mouths just longing for a bite.

Now a voice is crooning softly.  
'Come to me my little lass'.  
While I cringe in mortal terror,  
Claws are scratching at the glass.

Lying here, alone and frightened,  
So afraid that I can't scream.  
I can't wait until the morning,  
When I wake up from this dream.

Daddy dear, I'm only little.  
Your tales fill my soul with dread.  
Daddy dear, there are some stories  
That are better left unsaid.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Boy's World.

Have you tried to touch the wind, lad  
In your life without a care  
Do the easy days of childhood  
Bring you dreams beyond compare

Would you like to ride the white clouds  
Mount a charger in the sky  
Dream a dream of slaying dragons  
Drink your well of wonder dry

All too soon you'll grow to manhood  
Have imagination scarred  
You may find that Life's a labour  
Learn that times are often hard

Would you like to touch the wind, lad  
Will you find some solace there  
Or discover winds, like dreaming  
Are just currents in the air

Thomas Vaughan Jones



## Bukowski, And Me.

Charlie was fat and coarse.  
He didn't appreciate women  
He never had a woman throw her head back  
or stretch out her limbs  
then scream in ecstasy.  
His kisses tasted of dead tobacco ash.  
He drank red wine until he vomited.  
Then he drank some more.

Yesterday an Italian woman  
looked at me with hot eyes.

"Tomasino" she said,  
"You are beautiful.  
Give me Hugz"

I will give her hugz  
And we will fly to Antigua

We will run on white sand  
We will find that place where the sea  
washes a path for whispering clamshells  
and she will raise her neck to be caressed.  
Her mouth will taste of wild strawberries.

I know this.  
My eyes and heart have told me it is so.  
When her lips are warm and moist  
I will whisper in her ear

"Cara Mia

To rhyme is sublime"

Bukowski could not do this.  
He is dead.  
He drank until his liver sighed  
and left to find a better life.

Stupido

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Byr Y Thodaidd

In Arthur's Halls

In Arthur's Halls there lived a maid  
Her charm and modesty displayed  
And favours given on a white pennant  
proclaimed her gallant knight.

He took her colours to the list  
Held tight within his ironed fist  
While she kneeled down that she might pray to God  
To grant her lord the day

He plied his sword and mighty lance  
But came unhappy circumstance  
His charger slipped and blood ran red and hot  
Her hero lay there dead

And thus the maid in modest pose  
Did sorrowful in her repose  
Ensconce herself in widow's weed so black  
Bereaved, bereft indeed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hiraeth (Home sickness)

My father said when I was young  
That I should guard my mother tongue  
But I was filled with arrogance and youth  
In truth I failed his stance

I journeyed to a foreign land  
Where welsh they did not understand  
They cared not for that lilting luted voice  
A choice I would refute.

Now Hiraeth bids me no more roam

My hills and valleys call me home  
But I have no one there to share my speech  
I reach out in despair.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Cogito Ergo Sum Di Mundi

When someone loves the written word  
And would romantic bliss enhance  
Let from the breathless mouth be heard  
The essence that is assonance

But classic scholars demonstrate  
Such words need not be dressed in satin  
Successful lovers conjugate  
The words they need in ancient Latin

The swain who whispers 'half a mo'  
Would bid love wait and hold its sway  
This stems the fever of love's flow  
And scorns the Latin Lover's way

Proclaim 'Amo, amas, amat'  
With heaving breast, and fiery chant  
And all embracing, follow that  
'Amamus, amatis, and amant'

This love, for better or for worse  
Poets recite with flags unfurled  
Declaring to the universe  
That Love encompasses the world.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Dancing In Sonnet Time

If anyone should feel inclined to try  
to write a sonnet, I will understand  
that first you may feel diffident and shy.  
Pick up your pen and let me guide your hand.  
Imagine first, you want to sing a song.  
Iambic meter helps you keep in time.  
Your notes must match the music. Teach your tongue  
these lyrics. Oh! And don't forget to rhyme.

Emotion rules in this poetic form.  
Despair and Joy. The essence of a tear  
display a tone much higher than the norm.  
The flagship of all poetry is here.  
So if you feel you want to take a chance,  
take your position. Ready? Shall we dance?

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Dawn Chorus

A sparrow lived in Dingle Wood,  
it searched for mates, as sparrows should,  
but soon discovered in dismay  
no other sparrows came that way.  
The sparrow sang, high in the trees  
which carried by a gentle breeze,  
found every corner of the wood  
and woke up all the neighbourhood..

Some starlings and a flock of crows,  
awakened from their sweet repose,  
began to shriek with all their might,  
then spread their wings and took to flight;  
disturbing blackbirds, magpies, rooks,  
(some birds you only see in books ;)  
each voice increasing the affray  
which broke the peace of early day.

The noise grew like a feathered riot  
until The Owl demanded quiet,  
for he had just got into bed  
to rest his worn and weary head.  
He'd worked all night, providing food  
to offer to his infant brood,  
he wasn't very pleased at all  
to wake up to this clarion call.

The Owl in fact was very cross,  
and thought he'd show them who was boss;  
and boss he was, without a doubt,  
there was no bigger bird about.  
No other bird so strong or wise,  
inhabited the Dingle skies.  
He rolled his eyes, he shook his beak,  
and then The Owl began to speak.

"To whit, to woo, I want to know,

To who began this noisy show.  
Who has disturbed me from my sleep  
and caused my owlet brood to weep? ”  
At which the other birds calmed down;  
More than a few got out of town,  
for no one there was fool enough  
to argue when The Owl got tough.

Except, and this may seem absurd,  
that one persistent little bird.  
no doubt inspired by sheer frustration  
maintained its musical recitation.  
This was a foolish thing to do,  
The Angry Owl, to wit to woo,  
stretched out a mighty taloned claw  
and stilled his song for evermore.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Death Of A Fireman

When he came to our station, so brash and full of fun;  
He came to be a fireman, this lad of twenty one.  
His face was full and friendly, his heart was brave and true;  
he was a worthy member of our trusty fire crew.

He loved to fight the fire, he yearned to man the hose.  
This was his heart's desire, this was the life he chose.  
He didn't work for money, the pay was far too poor;  
his joy came from the people he saved from Fire's maw.

And then one fateful evening, we heard the shrilling bell  
that sent us on the fire call that took us close to Hell.  
We went to do our duty, without a doubt or fear,  
not knowing that this call-out would leave us with a tear.

The house had seen it's good times, it stood four storeys high  
but now it's days were numbered, it's glories long gone by.  
There was no need to hurry, no urgency, no haste;  
This house was old and derelict, consigned to be laid waste.

We jumped aboard our platform, began to raise it high,  
till we were up above the roof, framed in the evening sky.  
He leaned across the guard rail, began to ventilate,  
coaxing with axe and ceiling hook, dislodging stubborn slate.

Till arrogant, impatient, full of his reckless youth,  
he left the platform's safety and stepped upon the roof.  
The joists were old and weakened, this house had had it's day,  
without the slightest warning, the entire roof gave way.

A thousand slates went crashing, down to the basement floor;  
Down through a well of fearsome flames, some sixty feet or more.  
His eyes were wide in deep surprise, his mouth a rounded "O"  
His arms were opened to embrace the fires down below.

He fell through the inferno, his helmet left his head,  
and when we later found him, the fireman was dead.  
He'd trained to do his duty, and he had passed his test  
he entered into manhood, the bravest and the best.

We took him to the Chapel, whispered once more his name.  
and then with love and dignity, returned him to the flame.  
Thus we restored his honour, and now we know full well  
when we ride out to fires, he is answering the bell

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Didactically Firing Blanks

If poetry is not disposed to rhyme  
Would it still honour metrical display;  
Could lyrics sing and still maintain the tune  
and ballads hold their pleasing harmony?  
Could we at least place scansion to the fore,  
Some form of cadence to enhance the words?

Or shall we face the bleak alternative,  
When streams of self-expression have their say?  
Mute mutterings cathartically on show,  
demanding answers only from the id.  
While streams of dumb verbosity hold sway;  
Cacophonies sung by discordant brass.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Distant Voices

As I stirred in my morning bed,  
prepared to meet the day,  
I heard faint voices in my head  
from fifty years away.

My father, in the bathroom,  
clearing a lusty throat.  
Singing in fine Welsh tenor  
and losing not a note.

My mother, in the kitchen.  
Her sounds are everywhere,  
her lovely clear soprano  
embellishing an air.

The shouting of my life-long friend.  
The sounds of skipping feet.  
Those happy games that never end,  
the noises of our street

I close my eyes and contemplate  
a childhood filled with joy.  
Sweet memories to meditate  
on when I was a boy.

And should my children, growing old,  
remember just the same,  
then even though I'm lying cold  
I'll know I've won the game.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Echoes

There's a house on Windy Corner  
at the top of Breezy Hill,  
standing cold, alone and empty  
in the grasp of Winter's chill

Once the rafters rang with laughter,  
fun and music filled the air.  
Sunshine poured through every window.  
Love lived in profusion there.

Now it houses only phantoms,  
ghostly voices whisper low.  
Time, the ultimate assassin  
plied his blade long years ago.

As I brush aside the cobwebs  
in each dusty room it seems,  
once again I hold my memories.  
Broken echoes of my dreams.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Eternal Love

No love can last forever;  
No love remains sublime.  
But sometimes there's a moment  
in the canopy of time.

A fleeting, precious moment  
when all the world stands still;  
That subtle special second  
that only love can fill.

Small minutes of seclusion  
that only lovers share;  
Mere temporal diffusions  
may never venture there.

A place of perfect passion,  
a glade of joy and tears,  
Where love may reign, enduring,  
throughout the passing years.

Then when our time is ended,  
and days are judged complete,  
There may be, in the Cosmos,  
a place where lovers meet.

So why should we be troubled  
For who can question why  
If spirits are immortal  
Then how can true love die.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Forty Seven Years

We met in nineteen fifty five  
and never noticed love arrive.  
We little thought it would survive  
for forty seven years.

We tasted joy and faced the pain  
through summer sun and autumn rain  
and listened to love's sweet refrain  
for forty seven years.

The clock has gone from Lover's Way.  
Its time is done, it's had its day,  
it gently ticked the time away  
for forty seven years.

I well remember standing there  
with perfect teeth and wavy hair.  
I left them on the thoroughfare  
of forty seven years.

But that was then and now is now.  
Let's stand up proud and take a bow.  
Be glad we struggled on somehow  
through forty seven years.

Our love will last eternally  
for you mean all the world to me.  
I thank you for the memory  
of forty seven years.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Good Night Jack

There's an angel with his head upon the pillow  
and his face reflects the dreams inside his head.  
He is thinking of a leather striking  
willow and dispatched beyond  
the boundaries of his bed.

Or perhaps he's in the soccer team for England.  
He is listening to the adulatory roar,  
of the crowd from near and far,  
hailing Jack, the football star.  
Every time he gets the ball, he's sure to score.

I look down upon a little boy who's sleeping,  
and I gaze upon an innocence supreme.  
Then I quietly douse the light and I whisper  
' Sweet goodnight '  
And I slip away and leave him to his dream.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Growing Old

We outgrow dancing every night,  
and sit home by the firelight;  
Relaxing with the family  
with children dangling from our knee.  
The wild oat days are dead and done,  
but what of when the kids are gone?

Our son grows up, our daughter weds.  
The family expands and spreads.  
The children come from wide and far,  
to ransack Grandma's cookie jar;  
But what prepares us for the day  
when all these children fly away?

The world revolves, the years speed by.  
Life's song becomes a lullaby.  
We search for some familiar face,  
some comfort in our time and space,  
A shoulder we can cry upon.  
when all we loved in life has gone.

If fortune smiles, and nature's kind,  
before we leave the world behind,  
as we await our final call,  
we once again may see them all.  
When God sits by our rocking chair,  
in our mind's eye, they'll all be there.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Harbingers

The sun shines down, the morning's fair,  
till clouds come scudding by.  
A whisper in the morning air,  
a darkening in the sky.

The trees dance low and bow their heads  
in supplicating plea,  
and cattle take defensive stance  
to bend the humble knee.

The wind beats air waves in the grass  
and sweeps the dust in town.  
The rain draws patterns on the glass  
and cuts the flowers down.

Now lightning flash and thunderous roar  
brings terror from the skies,  
as Nature opens wide her maw  
in demonic disguise.

The skies are black as darkest night,  
while demons ride the gale.  
Each flashing roar brings endless fright  
and hearts and courage fail.

The storm is raging overhead,  
while hurling Nature's blast.  
and trembling creatures lie abed  
until the rage is past.

When winds die down and skies are clear,  
the air feels fresh and clean.  
Earth wipes away the final tear,  
and garbs afresh in green.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Henry And The Dragon

The howling winds appeared to mock  
the maiden tied up to a rock.  
Brought by a silent, horse drawn wagon  
to serve as supper for a dragon,  
and from her cruel and stony bed  
these are the plaintive words she said  
"Will no one save me from this fate  
too dreadful far to contemplate.  
My Hero! Please don't hesitate  
or else, I fear, you'll be too late."

Thence came a pure and gentle knight;  
He rode up from the Isle of Wight.  
A handsome and upstanding fellow  
with posture bold and manner mellow.  
He'd brought his lance and sharpened blade  
to try to save the hapless maid.  
He said in tones so loud and clear,  
"My Lady, you need have no fear,  
so shed not one more single tear.  
Have courage damsel, Henry's here."

The dragon, hearing from his cave  
those ringing words, so fierce and brave;  
Flew very quickly to the spot  
with flaming coat and breath so hot;  
Angry to hear this idle boast,  
ready to turn the knight to toast.  
The damsel screamed in mortal fright  
"Will no one save me from this plight?  
Where is my parfait, gentle knight  
to neutralise this dragon's bite?"

Then Henry drew his shining sword  
with which he'd faced the Golden Horde.  
He'd slain a troll, and killed a wizard;  
he wasn't frightened by a lizard.  
He stood before the frightened girl  
and gave his sword a skilful twirl.

He cried, "Come dragon, do your best!  
Prepare to face your final test;  
This sword will sleep within your breast,  
before the sun sinks in the west."

The dragon glared a baleful glare,  
then rose to hover in the air;  
The breath he breathed was fiery hot,  
and suddenly, the Knight was not.  
Where he had stood, so bold, so brash,  
there rose a pile of smouldering ash.  
The dragon spread his wings, and then  
he took the maiden to his den.  
She vanished from the sight of men,  
and nevermore was seen again.

The moral of this story's clear;  
The thing that hurts us most is FEAR!  
For though it may seem quite absurd  
If she had never said a word,  
she might have stayed there through the night;  
Unheard, unnoticed, out of sight,  
Then with the coming of the day  
she might have found a cunning way  
the rope to cut or knots to fray.  
She might have even got away.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# I Married A Somnambulist

The hall clock struck twelve, I retired to bed,  
put out the light and laid down my head,  
whispered goodnight as we both turned to sleep  
sank into slumber so restful and deep.

The night moved along and the world was at peace,  
so restful and quiet, all sounds seemed to cease.  
Not even the sigh of a cough or a snore  
but all was not well, for at quarter past four....

....I awoke with a start, and my heart missed a beat.  
What was that noise that I heard in the street?  
It wasn't a burglar, for burglars don't knock,  
they just stick this 'thingummyjig' in the lock.

Someone was tapping, some timid wee mouse,  
the sounds seemed to echo all over the house.  
Persistent, peculiar, who could it be?  
I put on my slippers and hurried to see.

I opened the door to the shock of my life,  
for there, on the doorstep, asleep, was my wife.  
It seemed that the lady had turned to sleep walking,  
but true to her form, the girl never stopped talking.

She launched right away to a bitter invective  
that locking her out was my major objective,  
haughtily passed me with nose in the air,  
brushed me aside and went straight up the stair.

She seemed so convinced that there wasn't a doubt  
that I was to blame because she'd got locked out.  
Jumped into bed as a matter of course  
muttering something about a divorce.

Disconsolate, locking up, all on my own,  
wondering how I could ever atone,  
when once I stepped back through our bedroom door.  
all I could hear was the sounds of her snore.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Insomnia!

Moonlight trickling in across my window,  
raising silken shadows on my bed.  
Small illusions scream with silent voices  
waging secret wars inside my head.

Eye and mind are brought up to attention  
quicken by the heartbeat's stirring drum.  
Arms and legs draw taut in stressful tension  
while I strive for sleep that will not come.

Every creaking floor-board breaks my slumber.  
Shadows hold each corner of my room.  
The clock resounds with peals of crashing thunder.  
Each second hails a harbinger of doom.

My mind is in a murky, manic maelstrom.  
I think of those appointments I can't keep,  
until the sun come over the horizon  
and gentle daylight lulls me off to sleep.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Irreverence

He was ugly. Have you ever looked  
Into the heart of a dirty dustbin?

He was uglier than that.

Children quailed beneath his smile

Until he won the lottery.

He bought a new Mercedes.  
a new mansion.  
a new anorak.  
but remained ugly.

He visited the plastic surgeon.  
New nose. New chin. New everything.  
He was gorgeous as he ventured out;

He stepped onto the street  
his flowing hair framing his  
now-handsome profile.

A huge lorry restored him to a  
semblance of normality.

He was ugly again.  
Dead ugly.

In Heaven,  
he confronted God  
'Why Lord? Why?

You gave me a fortune.  
You gave me a new car.  
You gave me a new house.  
(Not to mention the anorak)  
Why did you kill me? '

The Lord looked down



upon his crestfallen servant.

'Sorry son']

He said

'I didn't recognise you'

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Is There Anybody Out There

Space! The final frontier  
where stars are simply signposts to a place,  
where, we are told, a paradise awaits.  
Open to all who live within God's grace.

But is He there? That Sentient Entity!  
Does He exist? Or is He just asleep?  
Does He no longer hold a watchful eye,  
or does He take delight when strong men weep?

The World is screaming, torn by war and blight.  
White collared men place all the blame on Man,  
for God is Love, and love is blinding light.  
But Love lies bleeding in His Master plan.

Should any say that Man must have his choice.  
That God stands by to let Man make his mark.  
Such words are laid from self deceiving voice,  
for man, himself, lies helpless in the dark.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Kung Hey Fat Choy

Fireworks in the city,  
Dragons in the street;  
A thousand chanting voices,  
The sound of dancing feet.

Noisy, joyful chaos;  
Boisterous good cheer;  
Chinese celebration  
of another year.

Swirling scarlet sashes,  
Ribbons streaming by;  
Joss sticks gently smoulder,  
Smoke climbs to the sky.

There the prayers assemble,  
waiting to be heard.  
Softly spoken whispers,  
secret wishes shared.

Who foretells the answers?  
Does the future hold  
happiness or sadness.  
Poverty or gold.

One more year has ended  
old scars fade away away.  
This is our new future  
starting from today.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Lady Moonlight

A ghostly galleon sails above the clouds.  
On well trimmed topsails dancing moonbeams fly  
Clothing the world below in silver shrouds  
As she completes her voyage through the sky.

She carries not the heat of summer's sun.  
Her light is no enhancing sea of gold  
Reflections of a billion passing years  
My Lady's heart is frivolous and cold.

And yet, the whole world trembles at her feet  
Hers is the hand that moves the flooding tide.  
She will not count her labours as complete  
Until the world, and all therein, has died.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Leaf Fall

Gone is the supple sap of Spring  
And leaves hang limply from the sovereign tree  
Remembering the time the world was young  
And days were green in their fecundity

Yet those old leaves of brittle age  
Resplendent in their glorious red and gold  
Still have a tale to write upon the page  
Still have a final story to unfold

See how they burst in splendid disarray  
Colours enhancing these, their final hours  
Until that wondrous splendour fades away  
And winter shields the empty leafless bowers

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Listen To The Children Of The Night

The moon is full and shining,  
it fills us with delight.  
It's time we went out hunting,  
we children of the night

Listen to us calling.  
The night is clear and still,  
and nature sits with bated breath  
as we run down our kill

The mystery of our Moon Song  
will fill your heart with dread.  
We come as bat or werewolf  
to take you from your bed

The screaming of our victims,  
beaten, bloody, raw  
is music to our monstrous ears  
as we regale in gore

When once we take your virtue  
betray you with our bite,  
then you must come and join us,  
we children of the night.

Come join in the love songs  
we render to the Moon.  
Come take part in our ritual  
and dance the Devil's tune.

For we are Satan's children.  
We run before the light,  
delighting in dark kingdoms,  
we children of the night

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Love Is A Many Splendoured Thing

Love sometimes calls like thunder on the wind,  
as iridescent as a lightning flash;  
Thrusting and bustling, shouting to be heard;  
complicated, boisterously brash.

Perhaps it's like an uninvited guest,  
sneaking beneath an unobservant eye,  
Disturbing sleep and spoiling appetite;  
creating breath in semblance of a sigh.

Do secret signal plays a masquerade  
somewhere within the nuance of a glance.  
Who orchestrates this splendid serenade?  
and designates the essence of romance.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Menagerie De Trois. A Tale Of Tragedy And Star Crossed Lovers

Millicent Maybelle Mortenson flashed golden yellow eyes,  
rebuffed her Persian suitor; ignored his feline sighs.  
His coat was of the finest silk; his eyes the brightest blue;  
but Millie loved another and no other swain would do.

She loved the scruffy tomcat who strode her garden wall  
and offered her his symphony in strident caterwaul.  
Thomas was an alley cat, his coat a mass of scars;  
but he and Millicent made love beneath a thousand stars.

Percy the Persian, wracked with rage and plagued by jealousy,  
bade Millie to behave herself and guard her pedigree,  
but Tom, the cross bred tabby had captured Millie's heart.  
Together they had pledged their troth and swore they'd never part.

So Percy laid a cunning plan; he found a long dead mouse.  
He placed it in the dining room of Millie's owner's house.  
Her owner, fraught and anxious made Millicent stand guard;  
She could not keep her rendezvous with Tom in her backyard.

Where Percy, sly and cunning had found a water butt;  
He sat and sang like Millie until Tom came by hot foot.  
Tom leaped up on the barrel; slipped on its mildewed rim  
fell in the water cold and deep, and that was the end of him.

When Millie heard the awful news, she screamed in deep despair;  
jumped in the waiting water, and that was the end of her.  
This was the gist of Percy's plan, that foul aristocat.  
if he couldn't have her, no one could, and that was the end of that.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Michael Mchale And The Magic Fiddle

Michael MacHale was a travelling man,  
a shiftless, but loveable rogue.  
Renowned for his blarney  
and devilish charm  
his wits, and his broad Irish brogue.

He wandered along, with a smile and a song,  
his heart never carried a care.  
Though his shoes had no soles,  
and his coat was all holes,  
and his pockets were empty and bare.

As he travelled the land with his hat in his hand,  
he took rest in a field in Kildare.  
He was sat on the ground,  
when he heard this sweet sound,  
a magic, melodious air.

He raised his head high, with inquisitive eye,  
and looked on a wondrous scene.  
Saw the fiddle that played  
such a sweet serenade  
in the hands of a wee man in green.

He jumped up with a start, with greed in his heart,  
and he stole that sweet fiddle away.  
then he took off and ran  
from the little green man  
little knowing how he'd rue the day.

For he'd stolen the fiddle from Liam O'Diddle  
a leprechaun, fiery and brave,  
and for better or worse,  
Liam uttered a curse  
which poor Michael would take to his grave.

"You can't throw it away, you are destined to play,  
you must fiddle the rest of your life  
There'll be no time for bed,

till the day that you're dead  
this old fiddle will serve as your wife."

So the end of this tale sees poor Michael MacHale  
his laughter has turned into tears,  
It's so sad to relate,  
he'll be left to his fate,  
as he fiddles away through the years.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Myfanwy

Do not forsake me my Myfanwy  
I dread each moment we're apart.  
Please hold me in your arms Myfanwy  
the way I hold you in my heart.  
The night is cold and dark without you;  
No star adorns an empty sky  
so do not leave lest I should grieve,  
I love you till the day I die.

The sunshine finds your hair Myfanwy  
It turns your crown to liquid gold.  
No other quite so fair Myfanwy  
no other love I want to hold.  
The laughter in your eyes, beloved.  
Your mouth the  
whisper of a sigh  
Please take my hand  
and understand  
I love you till the day I die.

This is my song of songs Myfanwy;  
A serenade held to the sky.  
One thing is sure  
for evermore;  
I love you till the day I die.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# O'casey's Wake

The people started shouting,  
from Mayo down to Cork.  
The message passed from Flaherty,  
to Reilly and O'Rourke.

'Have you heard about O'Casey?  
Bejays, he's passed away.  
He went and kicked the bucket  
drinking Guinness yesterday.

Now isn't that the way to go?  
All full of ale and cheer,  
he died amongst his loved ones,  
drowned in a vat of beer '.

The crowd all came a'calling  
to see O'Casey dead.  
He lay there proud and regal  
in his king sized feather bed.

Each caller brought a bottle,  
and some brought bread or cake,  
as they settled down to celebrate  
the late O'Casey's wake.

The widow Prosser, first in line,  
had come to wash him down.  
Her usual fee was one and nine  
but they slipped her half a crown.

The priest took out his rosary beads  
and gave the final rite,  
Then cheerfully drank the corpse's health  
from a case of Black and White.

The women raised their aprons  
and covered weeping eyes,  
Their keening and their wailing  
was rendered to the skies.

The stout and whiskey flowed quite free,  
the noise grew wild and loud.  
The whole town danced an Irish jig  
before O'Casey's shroud.

The widow of O'Casey,  
demurely dressed in black,  
drank from a jug of neat poteen  
and fell upon her back.

O'Casey lay there smiling,  
his heart was full of joy.  
He could hear O'Mara's tenor  
singing darlin' 'Danny Boy'.

Then drunken Ritchie Flanagan,  
in a spurt of sodden wit  
raised O'Casey's head and shoulders  
and gave the crowd a fit.

There were screams of fright and horror  
as he tumbled from his bed.  
'We should bury him tomorrow  
but the poor sod isn't dead '

The widow jumped up screaming  
'We can't waste such a wake! '  
Then the corpse began a'moaning  
so she hit it with a rake.

Then they brought him to his coffin,  
and they screwed O'Casey down,  
sure it was the finest funeral  
they'd ever had in town.

The Moral of this story?  
If you're going to have a wake,  
Is first be sure the corpse is dead,  
for everybody's sake.



# Oh! To Be In April!

(in England, that is)

You can always tell it's April  
By the sound of falling rain  
That mystic, mournful music  
As it trickles down the drain.

We're told we should be thankful  
For the kiss of April showers  
As it washes all the grass clean  
And prepares the soil for flowers.

There's another side to April  
Which doesn't bode us good,  
When that mini, manic maelstrom  
Turns the lawn to liquid mud.

When mice hide under hedges  
And hedgehogs take to ground,  
The birds are wet and hungry,  
The worms have all been drowned.

Within a week, or maybe two,  
A million latent seeds  
Will germinate and procreate,  
To fill the world with weeds.

Then while I'm fighting anarchy,  
Armed with my trusty hoe.  
Behind me, surreptitiously,  
The grass begins to grow.

I ease my taut and breaking back  
And nurse my aching bones.  
I think I'll call the builders in  
To lay some paving stones.

I'll build a concrete jungle

Where I can sit for hours,  
Snug in a concrete garden shed  
Secure from April Showers.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Our Common Ambition

Come friends come fellow poets;  
No matter what your station or your age  
Monarch, peasant, peer or politician,  
All who aspire to write upon life's page;  
what common thread aligns each life's ambition?

Ambitions change!  
For in the callow innocence of youth  
we prize our immortality  
and Truth.

But time expands and then erodes  
that bright veneer.  
We seek our fame and fortune.  
Perhaps another's heart.  
The essence of a promising career.  
While in our space the world will still revolve.  
Eventually, ambitions must resolve;  
Then must we turn our mortal tools away.

Poets and Kings  
must face approaching night,  
and all would wish before the fading light  
that we might find some words  
in dark December;

That someday, somewhere,  
someone might remember.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Our Kids

Years ago we bought a semi in a tiny town estate  
where I'd potter in the garden or I'd lean against the gate  
and the children from the houses built in our locality  
liked to bring along a football or a broken doll to me

I would mend their broken playthings and we'd talk of this and that.  
They could fill my heart with laughter with the essence of their chat,  
or they'd come in times of sorrow with a teardrop in their eyes,  
then I'd love to tease and tell them I was Batman in disguise.

How I'd sailed the Orinoco, or rode rockets into space.  
Maybe hunted with Red Indians or saved the human race.  
Then their eyes would fill with wonder, and they'd toddle off to bed,  
who could tell what dreams were churning in each curly little head.

There's a special little dumpling, I would call him 'Shrimp' or 'Prawn.'  
He'd come riding on his bicycle and blow his rubber horn,  
he had that lovely kind of face that gives the heart a tug.  
If things were good he'd shake my hand, sometimes he'd need a hug.

We would talk away for hours while he sucked his little thumb  
then I'd give him fruit or flowers as a present for his mum,  
while his tiny little girl friend was a star amongst the girls,  
She could melt my heart like butter with a flourish of her curls.

But the years go by so quickly, and the children went to school.  
When they passed me with their schoolmates they'd act 'nonchalant' or 'cool.'  
As they grew to adolescence they were fair in form and face,  
they were bright and warm and lively and they moved with agile grace.

They'd come walking through the garden and come knocking at the door  
'Can I do your weekend shopping? ' 'Shall I mop your kitchen floor? '  
Where are these troubled teenagers we're brought up to expect?  
They greet me with affection, I treat them with respect.

I'd turn to tie a shoelace, or point a garden wall,  
and when I'd turn around again, they're standing six feet tall.  
Can that be little 'Thingy ' who lives in our street.  
They've stood him in a growbag and poured compost on his feet.

Too soon the children leave me, to take a man or wife  
as they move out of my shadow and begin to live their life,  
there's a sound of little footsteps on my path like gentle rain.  
It's the children of my children, and the cycle starts again.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## Poetry Is- - -

That place where hearts and souls unite  
and hold their congress of delight,  
then range across the Universe  
in search of scattered scraps of verse.  
Perhaps some brief soliloquy  
on Humour or Philosophy,  
a modicum of Gothic prose,  
the shadow of a withered rose.  
Emotions phrased with symmetry  
this essence that is Poetry.

When hidden thoughts remain unheard  
concealed behind unspoken word.  
Where solitary musings spin  
around the loneliness within.  
Perhaps a self placating balm  
arises like an ancient Psalm,  
found in a well beloved book,  
discovered in some shaded nook.  
Where words can make good company.  
and nurture love for Poetry.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## Poor Old William (Wordsworth)

He wandered lonely as a passing cloud  
amongst delightful dancing daffodils;  
Unknowingly he wove himself a shroud  
for he was catching early springtime chills.  
Though this may seem to be a tad absurd  
poor Willie had a very nasty throat;  
and while he softly browsed through golden flowers;  
Forgetful, he had gone without a coat.  
Perhaps the dreamer should have stayed in bed  
safely ensconced inside his dressing gown;  
but now alack! alas! Poor William's dead,  
It was the yellow fever brought him down.  
The poet passed away within the hour  
as he admired a narcissistic flower.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Preferences

A baby's face, so innocent and bright,  
with eyes so wide and shining with delight;  
Safe in the comfort of a warm embrace,  
the love that blossoms in a mother's face.

A horse that stretches out his noble head,  
well curried, groomed, well exercised and fed.  
His mane full flowing in the summer breeze,  
pacing the meadowed grass with graceful ease.

A sailing ship that follows down the wind,  
top gallants set, and all sails safely pinned.  
Straining and surging through a foaming sea.

All of these sights are beautiful to me.

But most of all, the love within those eyes,  
the warming smile that shines for me alone.  
This is the beauty I would idolise,  
this is the face that bids me.....

..... Welcome Home!

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Rain

Lying in bed, so snug and warm  
we listen to the awesome storm.  
The lightning flash, the thunder's roll  
bring trembling to the bravest soul.

Under these sounds, a gentler strain.  
The pitter-patter of the rain,  
singing its plaintive melody  
in hydrophobic harmony

The quiet insistence of each shower  
does not proclaim this mighty power.  
For every drop the Heavens weep  
can bring the river fast and deep.

While flash and thunder have their say,  
the rain can wash the world away

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Reflections From An Old Man's Diary

Yesterday we set the vine  
with quickened heart and supple limb.  
We drank from eager honeyed mouths,  
played Harlequin and Columbine;  
While Time sat on the mantle piece  
counting away each precious hour.

Today we thresh the golden corn  
treading our grapes and drinking wine.  
We use up our maturity  
to reap the harvest we have sown.  
We ponder on our long lost youth;  
while seasons pass with dreadful ease.

Tomorrow holds it's mystery  
in shrouded halls of swirling mist.  
The fruit lies withered on the bough,  
while we walk into history;  
The heart no longer counts the years,  
and all we were lies quiet and still.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



## Re-Union

The sound of muted voices,  
heard from another age,  
spirits of long dead soldiers  
who'd turned their final page.  
Old Joe sat in the corner,  
left all alone at last,  
hearing the secret whispers  
as he relived his past.

He'd met here with his comrades  
for over sixty years,  
fighting those ancient battles,  
the love, the joys, the tears.  
Tonight the hall was empty,  
as Time, Immortal Foe,  
completed all that carnage  
begun so long ago.

Old soldiers can be stubborn.  
Joe sat, and waited for  
a lad named Tommy Atkins  
to march in through the door.  
For Joe and his pal Tommy  
had walked through shot and shell,  
their loyalty and friendship  
surviving years of Hell.

Old Joe recalled the moment  
his leg was shot away,  
and good old Tommy Atkins  
had saved his life that day.  
Tom carried him to safety,  
and then, an old spent round  
caught Tommy in the temple.  
He fell without a sound.

Both of the wounded heroes  
were invalided home,  
they swore that they'd be comrades

wherever they might roam.  
Now, at their last reunion,  
Joe sipped his tepid beer,  
and waited with a deepening dread,  
for Tommy wasn't here.

Joe looked around in dark despair,  
his heart was sick and sore,  
and then his face lit up with joy  
as Tom walked through the door.  
Joe gasped in sheer amazement,  
for Tommy's face was clean.  
The blemish of the bullet's scar  
was no more to be seen.

Tom stepped up, young and sprightly,  
saluted his friend Joe.  
'Come on old pal, the bugle blows,  
its time for us to go'  
Old Joe stood to attention,  
they marched out side by side.  
Out to the waiting regiment.  
Those comrades who had died.

The barman watched Joe's corner,  
and said with some dismay,  
'Old Joe looks awfully quiet,  
I think he's passed away'  
But Joe had had a miracle,  
he'd found once more his feet,  
and rank and file with his soldier Pals,

marched off to the drummers beat.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Satanic Verse

A poet sat in melancholy,  
morbid, self-reflective folly  
in the iron grip of writer's block.  
He found no words to grace his pen  
and thought he'd never write again  
Then Lucifer himself came by to mock.

"Oh Poet. You have had your time.  
No more will you carouse in rhyme,  
no more will metric musings reign supreme.  
The days of formal verse are done;  
The world has faltered then moved on  
without the cadent essence of your dream."

The poet answered in reply,  
"Not while there lives one such as I;  
For poetry is of a form divine.  
To me a verse is all the sweeter  
couched in modulated metre.  
Drafted to fulfil some grand design."

The ozone reeked an odorous smell  
that leaked out from the jaws of Hell  
Ten thousand imps leaped out to take the stage.  
The air filled with ferocious frizzle,  
simmering sounds and sulphurous sizzle  
Spitting snarling clamourings of rage

The leaves from trees fell to the ground.  
Birds ceased from flight without a sound,  
as demons plied their parody of verse.  
Lightning flashed in an acrid sky,  
grass turned brown and seas ran dry  
in fearful response to Satan's curse.

The poet viewed the face of Death.  
He cleared his throat and drew a breath.  
His words rang out in semblance of a prayer.  
They resonated, crystal clear,

encompassed all he held most dear,  
spreading like perfume through the tainted air.

He stood before the evil throng,  
his voice uplifted in his song,  
and every word rang honestly and true.  
Each fashioned facet of his art  
a mirror of his noble heart,  
in exhibition openly on view.

The Poem spread Her wings and Blessed  
all of the Love his words caressed.  
The Devil turned away with manic scream.  
Left to observe and contemplate  
that Love will always conquer hate,  
so long as poets hold on to the dream

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## Second Childhood. One For Joe

The sun lies weak and cowering  
underneath the frozen hill,  
defeated by the winter's icy blast.  
Old Joe sits by the fire,  
warding off the fearsome chill,  
and reminiscing on his winters past.

The days of childish laughter,  
when the world was fresh and bright,  
and snowballs flew in innocent affray.  
Imaginary counterpanes of infantile delight,  
while sheer enchantment  
kept the cold at bay.

His arms and legs were fresh with youth,  
so firm and sprightly then;  
Untarnished by the passing of the years;  
Old Joe could feel this yearning  
to review these sights again,  
unfettered by the mist of ancient tears.

A young voice cuts across his thoughts,  
disturbs his reverie,  
'Grandad! Are you coming out today? '  
Joe's heart soars to the Heavens  
in a fit of childish glee,  
as he leaves his fire and hurries out to play.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Solilquoy In Samarkand

Lament of the Khan

In Samarkand my world is harsh and hot,  
while sand and grit prohibit naked lust.  
How can we ask the girls for what they've got  
When all their nicer bits are caked in dust?  
The desert doesn't care for Nature's call  
It takes delight to find it can entrammel  
the passions that can overcome us all,  
and I must find my solace with a camel.

Terse reply from a Mongol

Da Comrade. This is very true. But once again the  
bourgeoisie get all the privileges while the proletariat  
are left with the dregs. You always get the prettiest camel.  
Mine always runs the fastest,

Dospadanya.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Song Of A Lovelorn Welshman

Oh Cariad! My Cariad!  
My soul is black with loss  
remembering those moments  
that we shared;  
but now you're gone forever,  
and my eyes are drowned in tears.  
For Love is dead!  
and all else seems absurd.

Once, you and I were wild winds  
who could ride a cloudless sky;  
Immortals in our magic wonderland  
while secret whispers sang for us  
our own sweet lullaby,  
in words that only we could understand.

You left me in one moment,  
and the world turned cold and grey.  
Our Summer sunshine  
turned to Autumn rain;  
my life is in suspension  
since the day you went away;  
and love must pause  
till you return again.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Sonnet Fever

Once Sonnet Fever takes you to her bed  
your every thought becomes expressed in rhyme.  
You're in her grasp and cannot break the thread  
which binds you to a mellow metered time.  
No more the hard insistence of I AM!  
No arrogance nor mad machismo roar,  
instead the soft persistence of iamb,  
like gentle wavelets lapping at the shore.  
Surrender then and fall to her embrace,  
Relax and let her soothe your fevered brow,  
Accept your fate with dignity and grace,  
a willing slave bound fast to till her plough.  
This gentle mistress lays on you her curse.  
You'll nevermore like writing in Free Verse.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Spring Song

The end of saving daylight hours  
The sound of starlings on the wing  
The nodding heads of yellow flowers  
This is the bright new song of Spring.

Those birds that sing at break of day  
The robin with his breast so red  
I only wish they'd go away  
Before I shoot the whole flock dead

The gentle sun shines down so bright  
To warm the earth and hidden seed  
And to the gardener's 'delight'  
It quickens the pernicious weed.

I know that once that sun comes out  
My life becomes eternal toil  
There's not a shadow of a doubt  
I'll have to double dig the soil.

This sombre mood won't go away  
For certain things must come to pass  
And long before the buds of May  
I'm out there cutting endless grass.

This time of year was meant for youth  
That Love's sweet song may sweetly sing  
But if you want to know the truth  
I absolutely hate the Spring.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Tales From A Passing Cloud

I see you all from here!  
Little ants, scurrying around in  
a chaos of your own creation.

Each one too busy for the beauty  
in the world.

I see great mountains, wearing  
snow capped hats, tipped to greet  
their friend the sky.

I see deep oceans, dressed in  
green and blue, garnished with silver  
flashes of shoaling fish, and  
rippling waves, like little horses  
running home.

I see our Mother Earth  
who binds us fast in a whirl  
of green fields and shaded forests.

But you, little ants, tear down  
the mountains and pollute the  
sea. The sky is darkened  
and the stars grow dim  
before your touch.

While we, the clouds,  
created to refresh the  
world, pass on by,  
shedding our tears  
in a scalding cascade  
of bitter rain.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Texas Lament

I stopped off at a roadhouse in Ohio.  
I bought myself a glass or two of beer.  
I heard an old song playing on the juke box  
And wiped away the whisper of a tear.

I listened to this tune that told of Texas,  
It made me wish that I were back at home.  
One day I plan on going back to Texas,  
And when I do I never aim to roam.

I figure I'll go back to Water Valley  
To find the folks that I once loved and knew.  
Perhaps I'll find my childhood sweetheart, Sally;  
I'll ask her if by chance she's missed me too.

The old fort still sits silent by the Concho,  
The river holding waters fast and deep.  
Miguel will still be there in his old poncho,  
Sombrero tilted forward in his sleep.

I still recall that day in Tom Green County,  
I drew my gun and shot a cowboy dead.  
The sheriff and a judge put up a bounty.  
They laid ten thousand dollars on my head.

One day I'm going back to Water Valley,  
Although the sheriff's men may hang me high.  
I need to see once more my sweetheart Sally,  
And kiss her one more time before I die.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Beast

The beast is upon us,  
I hear him outside  
His fumbling claws at the gate  
The hinges creak open,  
now he's in the drive  
In fearful repression I wait

The beast is much nearer,  
he's at the front door  
He's forced it and opened it wide  
Then as the door closes,  
I listen for more  
Oh God! I'm afraid, he's inside

The beast is so close now,  
I hear his deep sighs  
I'm sobbing and saying my prayers  
I clasp both my hands  
and I shut tight my eyes  
I know that he's climbing the stairs

Oh pray for this sinner,  
for I'll soon be dead  
Oh Lord! Save my soul if you can  
He's entered the bedroom  
and fell on my bed.....

.....Good God! It's my drunken old man.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Beginning

The finger beckons every girl and boy.  
Calls them to skip through carefree childhood joy,  
through halcyon days of adolescent bliss.  
The mystery of the first sweet teenage kiss,  
pushing them firmly to the marriage bed,  
speeding along to see their children wed.  
Prodding and poking gaps in teeth and hair  
till feeble frame is ushered into care.  
The finger turns and then becomes a hand  
that flicks away the final grains of sand.  
The palm upturns to claim life's final tithe  
then raises up the fist that holds the scythe  
and in the final moments of that hour.  
We face at last the mystery of God's power

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Children Of The Night

The moon is full and shining,  
it fills us with delight.  
It's time we went out hunting.  
We children of the night.

Listen to us calling.  
The night is clear and still,  
and nature sits with bated breath  
as we run down our kill

The mystery of our Moon Song  
will fill your heart with dread.  
We come as bat or werewolf  
to take you from your bed.

The screaming of our victims,  
beaten, bloody, raw,  
is music to our monstrous ears  
as we regale in gore

And once we take your virtue,  
betray you with our bite  
then you must come and join us,  
we children of the night.

Come join in the love songs  
we render to the Moon.  
Come take part in our ritual  
and dance the Devil's tune.

For we are Satan's children.  
We run before the light,  
delighting in dark kingdoms,  
we children of the night.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Dance Of The Little People

There's going to be a party,  
we've made a fairy ring,  
to celebrate the birthday  
of Finn, the fairy king.

His majesty announced it  
for everyone to hear.  
I'm making the arrangements  
while Murphy brings the beer.

I've invited cousin Michael,  
Himself from Donegal,  
the scrawny Sean McCafferty  
and Padraic Mor McCall.

The Queen of Connemara  
has promised she'll be there,  
wearing her best tiara  
and moonlight in her hair.

Mick Doyle will play his fiddle  
while Connelly calls the tune.  
We'll dance a fairy two step  
beneath a fairy moon.

And any mortal, passing by  
will never hear a sound,  
for deaf the ear and blind the eye  
when fairy folk abound.

Each tiny elf and fairy,  
each magic Leprechaun,  
will dance the dance of angels  
until the break of dawn.

Then, when the evenings over;  
Before the brand new day,  
the toadstools and the clover  
must all be put away.

Though Humankind may look askance  
upon our fairy ring,  
they'll never know we held a dance  
in honour of our king.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# The Dear Departed

We started off at the church.  
Our Holy Lady of the Immaculate Conception.  
He was Catholic, and a good friend.  
Then down to the graveside.  
A hole dug by this guy  
who sits in a machine opposite us  
The Priest stands next to me.  
He says  
'You can be my altar boy'.  
Oy Vey.!  
An altar boy?

ME?

I'm just a shmuck.

This isn't Kosher.

The priest hands me  
an aspergilla of Holy Water  
which I hold in my hand,  
eyes shut tight,  
concentrating on my bar mitzvah.  
Hoping that Jehovah isn't watching.

This doesn't even feel kosher.

Words of Prayer.

Amen!

Then he takes from me the aspergilla.  
He sprinkles Holy water into the grave,  
gives me the aspergilla back;  
So I sprinkle water into the grave,  
then I pass it to the dead man's wife  
and his sister..

And the family!  
Didn't forget the friends.  
They shake and splash.  
Frantically, trying  
to get the last drops  
from the empty vessel.  
The Priest looks on blankly  
The gravedigger has fallen off his machine.

He's laughing.

Hysterically!

Something tells me,  
this isn't

kosher.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Drunken Spree Of Ritchie Flanagan

If you're into drinking Guinness  
and you hate an empty glass,  
if you'd rather sup a barrel  
than trade kisses with a lass.  
If you drink for hours and hours,  
and you wake up worn and wan  
if you need a bit of company  
then Flanagan's your man.

I remember well last year  
when we went out on a spree.  
There was Monaghan, O'Cassidy,  
and Flanagan, and me.  
We began the night at Casey's  
where the drinks went down a treat,  
until at last, just Flanagan  
and me were on our feet.

We staggered from the barroom  
while we sang a bawdy ditty,  
but Flanagan sang extra loud.  
He'd pocketed the kitty  
Unhappily, our little noise  
brought out a Dublin bobby.  
Then Flanagan grew angry,  
stating drinking was his hobby

He threatened the policeman.  
The poor young guarda ran  
with Flanagan in hot pursuit;  
a most ferocious man  
He screamed abusive language,  
the guarda turned quite pale.  
He thought he's found a sanctuary,  
he locked himself in jail.

Policemen came from miles around  
To join in the fight.  
It took a dozen guarda

to subdue our man that night.  
His ranting and his raving  
would make a mother weep  
until a well placed truncheon  
put Flanagan to sleep

The next day, in the courtroom,  
his head was stiff and sore.  
The magistrate looked down and said  
“ I’ve seen your face before.  
I’m teaching you a lesson  
I’m not going to grant you bail.  
You’re a dirty, drunken reprobate.  
I’m sending you to jail.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Extraordinary Tale Of Thomas Vaughan And His Never Ending Quest For Unfailing Good Humour

In miserable circumstance  
with heart and spirit low,  
Poor Thomas is disconsolate  
and knows not where to go.

He has entered into hospital  
and finds to his dismay,  
there are those who lurk in ambush  
as he goes upon his way.

There are pretty little nurses  
who would bathe his weary head,  
but some others, more malevolent  
who haunt his lonely bed.

Here's a confident consultant  
with a mildly manic grin,  
who declares that they will operate,  
once they can fit him in.

There's another dreadful creature  
who emerges from the gloom,  
giving cause for consternation  
when she comes into the room.

For she waves a monstrous needle  
which she brandishes with zest.  
She declares she's going to steal some blood  
and take it off to test!

She already had an armful  
and she's coming back for more  
while he shakes his head and wonders  
what on earth she wants it for!

But the ultimate in horrors  
superseded by a squeal,

like a soul in mortal torment  
or a rusty trolley wheel

Is a cartload of emetics,  
which attendants serve with glee,  
telling unsuspecting patients  
that it's just a cup of tea.

I avoid a confrontation  
as I bow my head in sorrow,  
and I pray in desperation  
that things might improve tomorrow....

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Fall Of Julius Caesar

Once, when the world was filled with Rome,  
through long gone mists of time,  
there wasn't any poetry  
for Romans couldn't rhyme.

They spent their days in other ways,  
their legions loved to fight.  
They stooped to conquer everywhere,  
and Roman Law was Might.

The legions were victorious  
returning back to Rome.  
The fun waxed fast and furious  
the moment they got home.

Their leader's name was Julius,  
a very wily geezer.  
With great intent this man was bent  
to be another Caesar.

Our Julius loved politics.  
He was a fine orator.  
With deep dismay, some heard him say  
he'd be the next Dictator.

But first he had to woo the crowd;  
The Proletariat!  
To coax them, and to hoax them,  
to show them where it's at.

Some Senators were not impressed,  
they mentioned their concern.  
They'd heard so many prophecies  
that Caesars let Rome burn.

They caught him on the Senate steps,  
where Julius got the chop,  
although he cried before he died  
and begged them all to stop.

He stood there in confusion,  
his toga red and bloody,  
until he took the final blow  
from Brutus his old buddy.

He died before the forum  
in manner most malicious,  
which only shows you what you get  
for being too ambitious.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# The Fire Report

A tiny office in the Fire Station,  
remote from all the bustle  
and the racket of firemen  
replenishing equipment;

Another noise

The insignificant chatter of a typewriter,  
cold and uncaring.  
Processing records of the passing night,  
oblivious to death and devastation.  
Simply providing Statistics.

When did the first flicker of predatory flame  
light upon it's unsuspecting prey,  
engulfing, devouring,  
absorbing energy.  
And when was it found out?

The typewriter, cold, unmoved,  
yet moving on the page,  
at a professional distance,  
reports in bland officialese.

Room and contents damaged by fire and smoke!

No recognition here of personal loss.  
A favourite armchair turned to ash,  
a hard won carpet,  
carbonised and flat.

The treasured hi-fi,  
melted in the heat,  
observed by the blind unseeing eye  
of a broken television.

Who called for aid  
Then waited, in mindless,  
all consuming fear

for that blessed relief?

The moment of arrival.

When did those scarlet engines  
give their braying challenge,  
and bright blue eyes  
circling relentlessly;  
Seek out their foe.

While heroes in shiny helmets  
engage in a wild efficient chaos of action.  
Till smoke is steam,  
the crackle, the scream,  
and sounds of shattering glass are stilled.

More heart stopping yet, the child's doll,  
melted, broken on the floor,  
while perfect face,  
and lovely sightless eyes

contemplate a ravaged ceiling.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Last Love Song

Time has spun its mystery  
The world falls fast away  
Descending in a turning ball  
Returning into clay  
Please sing me one more love song  
Enchant these waiting ears  
Revive that magic melody  
To serenade our years  
Hold out your hand and touch me  
So that my heart will know  
The songs we sang together  
Once more, before we go.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Legend Of The Lost

Deep in the heart of Texas,  
one chilly, starlit night,  
somewhere along the foothills,  
a campfire burning bright.

A dozen boys sat huddled  
around the dancing flames,  
singing their songs, as boys will do,  
and playing boyish games.

From Palo Duro Canyon  
a lonely coyote cried;  
A breeze sprang up in answer,  
and whispering ghosts replied.

They told about the legend,  
a battle that was won;  
An Indian tribe was vanquished,  
a way of life was done.

But sometimes there are moments  
they come back from the dead.  
They dance the Dance of Darkness,  
where Indian blood was shed.

The plains ring out with chanting,  
the war drums sound their beat,  
and all the world must tremble  
from dancing, pounding feet.

The boys were stiff with horror,  
their breath framed in the frost  
They heard the coming demons,  
and knew that they were lost.

In Palo Duro Canyon  
there lies a secret grave,  
where rising in miasmic mist  
there came a warrior brave.

His brow was lined with hoar washed ice,  
his eyes a living hell;  
A palace of eternal cold,  
where frozen souls must dwell.

The children huddled closer,  
some held a friendly hand,  
But one by one they stiffened  
underneath the Demon's brand.

The sun came up next morning,  
revealed a ghastly sight.  
A ring of frozen children,  
in postures pale and white.

Then from Palo Duro Canyon  
there came a coyote's call.  
The land lay quiet and deathly still.

Came answer - none at all.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Leprechauns Lament

Me name is Mick McGonagle,  
a man so rare and bold.  
I live beneath a rainbow  
with my pot of fairy gold.  
I have seen the Kings of Erin,  
from a thousand years ago,  
and I watched them fall and perish  
in this land so full of woe.  
I have danced the dance with fairies,  
and I've loved a Fairy Queen  
in these trees, and fields, and forests,  
dressed in forty shades of green.

Now the land is filled with strangers  
preaching shame, deceit, and lies;  
and false patriotic glory  
with Old Ireland as the prize.  
They care not for love or honour  
who would rule by club or gun,  
And see not the grave dilemma  
when a father grieves his son.  
Can they hear not the mother,  
or the wife or sister's cries  
every time a son or brother  
or a faithful husband dies.

When the battle cries are over  
and the folk are free from fear,  
take a peek beneath a clover  
and you'll find that I'm still here.  
Then the world will ring with magic bells,  
and fairy folk will thrive,  
in a better world and greener,  
when Old Ireland comes alive.  
Me name is Mick McGonagle,  
and one day I'll be free  
to play again my magic flute,  
and dance in Innisfree



# The Love Song And Lament Of The Head Louse

I have espied a lovely head of hair,  
Where every follicle is fresh and clean.  
I will arise and take my loved one there  
And couch a mattress fit for any queen.

We will carouse, and live a life of ease  
Excelling in abandoned, wild caresses  
Indulging in each moment as we please  
Laying our fruits within those shiny tresses.

Fleeting our love before that final sleep  
Life may be short, but Love will have its way  
Sweet is the consolation we will keep  
As all too soon we face our Judgement Day

For when at last, our eggs begin to hatch  
Our children bring untimely consternation  
And when our host begins to itch and scratch  
Attention will discover infestation.

The nurse arrives, and now we have to part.  
Cast to the ground, dispersed by cruel hand  
Farewell my Love! My ever faithful heart!  
We fall, like scattered raindrops in the sand.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# The Male Chauvinist Parrot

Percy the Parrot, so pompous and proud,  
perched on his perch and he proclaimed aloud,  
"I've said it before, and I'll say it again,  
women will never be equal to men."

He gazed in his mirror and he was entranced.  
He preened and he postured, and preached as he pranced,  
"I've said it before, and I'll say it again  
women will never be equal to men"

Until one fine day, he awoke from his rest  
to find a large egg snuggled close to his breast;  
at which time poor Percy grew quite melancholy.  
He wasn't a Percy at all, but a Polly!

No more would such crudities come from her beak.  
She never could find any spare time to speak,  
no more would she mutter in masculine rage.

For she was too busy, just cleaning her cage!

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Omen

There's a clatter of hooves on the dusty road,  
then the strident sound of the old school bell.  
For a stranger stands in the village square  
and he has a terrible tale to tell.

His jaw hangs slack as he tries to speak,  
with his eyes glazed wide with unbridled fright.  
His shaking hand points to the west  
through the deep dark depths of impassive night.

His head hangs down in abject fear.  
His face is drawn and ashen pale.  
His voice holds the quiver of aspen leaves  
as he starts to relate his fearsome tale.

'My love is taken by the beast  
He has bound her fast in the finest gold  
He has stolen away her wedding gown  
and dressed her corpse in a graveyard mould

He came to her in the dead of night,  
no signal marked his silent tread,  
no voice, no footstep marked his course,  
and his visage marked one who was long since dead.

We were only married for but one week  
and my bride was full of the joy of Life,  
but the spectre carried it all away,  
and left me weeping for my wife."

The message he gave was softly passed  
like the whispering leaves in a willow tree,  
as he bade me take it to the world  
that nothing remains for Eternity.

No love no joy, nor foolish jest,  
no comfort found in passion's pleasure.  
Nothing to mark our earthly past  
once we depart from life's last measure"

His eyes locked tight in a grievous stare,  
the stranger's voice was wracked with pain,  
and speaking thus fell to the ground.

Nevermore to rise again.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Perils Of Laughing In Church

The Parson read his sermon to the folk he thought had sinned;  
Some listened - sadly others nodded off.  
He stood prepared for snoring or the sound of breaking wind,  
or the stifling of a surreptitious cough.

But he almost lost his diction when somebody made a gaffe  
which caused his brow to bead with consternation.  
He could scarce believe his ears, for he'd heard a hearty laugh  
from a member of his solemn congregation.

The pulpit shook and trembled to the Heavens' thunderous roar.  
Forked lightning flashed around the old church bell.  
There came a fiendish hammering upon the old oak door,  
and from the earth a most malodorous smell.

Beelzebub came bursting in and rolled himself a smoke  
from pages of an ancient Holy Psalter.  
Then to the consternation of the watching parish folk,  
unzipped himself and peed upon the altar.

A hundred grinning gargoyles danced a dance of dark desire,  
then set upon an unsuspecting hassock;  
They ripped it into pieces, which they promptly set on fire  
then shoved them up the poor old parson's cassock.

The choirboys cried and whimpered in a state of mortal fright;  
Parishioners were paralysed with fear,  
The eagle on the altar spread its wings and took to flight,  
Madonna graced a solitary tear.

That drop of holy water stopped the Devil's dread intent;  
The Daemon and his henchmen fled away,  
But he laid his curse upon the holy house before he went,  
and the roof fell into permanent decay.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Phantom Horseman

Over the mountain and through the dale,  
under a dark and moonless sky;  
A sobbing scream, like a banshee's wail.  
The phantom horseman's riding by.

Galloping, galloping through the mist,  
eyes as red as satanic coal,  
Straining to meet an ancient tryst.  
Riding to save his long lost soul.

The wraith of a shadow in the night,  
seeking to find his golden bride.  
His lady's cowl is cold and white  
and the love he had has long since died.

Thunder along the Chisholm Trail  
The deed is done and the die is cast  
He rides like the Devil was on his tail  
But he'll never outrun his shameful past.

When first they came to the Golden West  
they had high hopes for the life they'd planned;  
But he met his fate and failed the test  
for the terror he felt in this savage land.

When strangers came to his house one day  
he looked on them with a fearful eye;  
Then like a coward he ran away,  
leaving the girl he loved to die.

With fear an all-consuming flame  
he had no strength to help his wife;  
The strangers ravaged her feeble frame  
and stole her honour then her life.

The terror of her final scream  
pleading for help that never came,  
Burns in his brain like an awful dream  
and his heart is torn and wracked with shame.

Thunder along the Chisholm Trail  
The deed is done and the die is cast  
He rides like the Devil was on his tail  
But he'll never outrun his shameful past.

He rode the plains for many a year  
living a life of misery,  
With many a heartache, many a tear,  
until he came to the hanging tree.

He thought he could leave his shame behind  
by ending his sad and feeble life  
But the echoes of his poor mad mind  
still call in longing for his wife.

Galloping, galloping without end,  
and never the touch of a friendly hand,  
Or the cheerful voice of a loving friend,  
but the whispering hush of the shifting sand.

Over the mountain and through the dale,  
under a dark and moonless sky;  
A sobbing scream like a banshee's wail,  
the phantom horseman's riding by.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Prejudicial Planet

Picture this globe, a mass of hate and greed,  
as humans kill themselves on Planet Earth.  
Why do we claim to be the only creed?  
What difference colour, faith, or place of birth?

Take credence of the nearest pulsing star  
which gives us warmth and light, and night and day;  
an energy, a life force from afar,  
bestowed on us from countless miles away:

And while we give our thanks to Father Sun,  
think of the planets dancing in his wake;  
Could there be living beings on any one,  
some secret species waiting to awake?

Now count the stars that decorate the sky:  
Each one a sun, sustaining in it's light  
a planetary system nearby;  
substantial, real, though they avoid our sight.

And every planet that we cannot see,  
that we have not the power to explore,  
could carry life as sentient as we;  
A billion life forms just outside our door.

So why exist in total ignorance?  
This miserable spasm called the human race,  
choosing to live in blinkered arrogance.

A teardrop in the infinite eye of space!

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Tale Of The Ancient Rhymester

I sat in my small corner  
reading some poetry  
and then I felt a ghostly hand  
had taken hold of me.

It was an Ancient Rhymester  
who fixed me with his glare.  
I could but watch and wonder  
Transfixed beneath his stare.

'Who are you, Ancient Rhymester?  
Why do you look so pale? '  
The Rhymester sighed, a ghostly sigh,  
and then began his tale.

'I came to tell my story  
In poetry and rhyme,  
of how the Muse's glory  
has stood the test of time.

The many themes and formats,  
the pleasures to be shared  
and yet, to my amazement  
I found that no-one cared.

I wrote of ancient legends  
couched in an ancient tongue,  
of all the many facets  
that make a poet's song.

I told of all the wonder  
that lay in poetry,  
and all I found was silence  
reflected back to me.'

Thus spoke the Ancient Rhymester,  
then floating cross the floor.  
with eyes fixed fast upon me



passed through my shuttered door.

When once the spell was lifted  
I called to bid him stay.  
Alas! His spectral presence  
Had drifted far away.

Nothing to mark his visit,  
only an icy chill,  
and a tiny stain from a tear drop  
that marred my window sill.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# The Well

Deep in the human heart there lies a well,  
Holding our richest thoughts and dark desires,  
And if we tend it wisely who can tell,  
What quality of life the heart inspires.

If we can fill our souls up to the brim,  
With purpose, knowledge, and a thirst for life,  
Then we maintain a light that will not dim,  
That guides us when our time is filled with strife.

If we cut off the spirit at it's source,  
And drink the waters till the well runs dry,  
Then this dull life will run a sterile course,  
While all our dreams and hopes will fade and die.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Tiger On The Prowl

The Tiger flicked his whiskers and he smiled maliciously  
He was feeling rather hungry and considering his tea;  
His appetite was raging so his heart was filled with joy,  
When, with eyesight most splendiferous, he saw a tasty boy.

His stomach growled approvingly. He felt this dark design  
that told him indisputably that it was time to dine.  
With giant strides he stalked his prey, this striped malicious cad,  
anticipating dinner with a sweetly tender lad.

This little boy was foolish and just would not go to bed.  
He preferred his new computer and computer games instead  
so it's very understandable to see it wasn't hard  
to toddle up and catch him, for he wasn't on his guard.

He wriggled most dejectedly within the Tiger's claws,  
and he didn't feel too happy when he saw the Tiger's jaws,  
for the Tiger opened wide his mouth to show his Tiger Teeth  
with a Tiger's tongue that nestled in the cavern just beneath.

"I've come to eat you, little lad, I know you think it's tragic  
But you really shouldn't meddle with a tiger who is magic."  
The boy cried out "It's very late, I'm only half awake  
You'll find me indigestible, I'll give you tummy ache."

The Tiger pondered for a while. The boy thought 'Will he buy it? '  
The Tiger, by good fortune, had just started on a diet.  
He bit a boyish finger and he gave a growl, "OK!  
I'll chew on this a little, and then I'll be on my way.

Just promise me that you will never say another word,  
for a splendid child is silent, often seen, but seldom heard."

But a boy's a boy, that's obvious, and maybe by September  
the Tiger will come back again to help him to remember.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Tiger, Tiger, Sparkling Bright.

(With apologies to William Blake)

There's a tiger in my bathroom  
fixing me with feral grin,  
golden eyes and shaded menace.  
Who the Devil let him in? .

He's been sitting in my bathroom  
probably at least an hour,  
I've just come in from the garden  
and I'd love to take a shower.

Why is he sat in my bathroom?  
I just haven't got a clue.  
He's been there for simply ages,  
and I'm busting for the loo.

There a tiger in my bathroom,  
looking smug, complacent: (STOUT?)  
Hope he hasn't ate my missus!  
Strange! I've not seen her about.

Great sharp claws within my bathroom,  
long white teeth, look like they'd hurt.  
Licks a morsel from his whiskers.  
(Hope he doesn't want dessert.)

There a tiger in my bathroom.  
He's been sitting there all day.  
I just nurse my stricken bladder,  
nothing else to do or say.

What a friendly little tiger,  
that grim smile is just a fake.  
He just wants to read my poetry.  
(Thought that I was William Blake.)

Now he's sitting, quite contented  
in his fearful symmetry,

while I sit upon the toilet  
spouting awful poetry.

Soon he stretches mighty muscles,  
stands up, says to me“ Good Day!  
Sorry that I ate your missus.....”  
Then he softly walks away.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Tigers And Unusual Habitats

There's a Tiger in the cupboard  
at the bottom of our stairs,  
and you'll get a chance to see him  
if you catch him unawares.

If you creep down really quiet,  
you may chance a careful peep  
through the keyhole of our cupboard  
and you'll see him fast asleep.

When he isn't feeling hungry  
he's as friendly as can be.  
He'll sit still for simply ages  
while I read him poetry.

And I never have to feed him  
for I find he's quite content  
just to snack on bill collectors,  
or the men who come for rent.

Or the double glazing salesmen,  
and those vacuum cleaner men.  
They all disappear completely  
and are never seen again.

Not to mention all those poets  
who refuse to write in rhyme.  
They seem to whet his appetite.  
He scoffs them every time.

Regretfully it seems I have  
misplaced the mother-in-law.  
She was keen to find what secrets  
lay behind our cupboard door.

I asked my friend the Tiger  
if perhaps she'd ventured in.  
He responded with a knowing wink.  
and self contented grin.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Too Late

The street was dead and dusty, the man was old and grey  
His mind's eye wandered back in time, a thousand years away  
When every day was summer, and all Love's dreams were new  
When lips and limbs were supple, and hearts were warm and true.

They'd walked this street together and never once looked back  
To see the dreadful Nemesis that followed in their track.  
Until there came that dread decree, he could no longer stay  
But summoned by his country, he had to go away.

A year is such Eternity for youthful love to wait  
When he returned, she'd journeyed on, and passed the wedding gate.  
For years he dreamed about her and held her in his heart  
And cursed the years wasted while they were kept apart

For him there was no other, to him she was supreme  
His life was sad and lonely; no one could share his dream  
Now, many years later he stood there on their street  
And then, as if in rendezvous, they chanced again to meet

Her sparkle now had faded; grey hairs replaced the gold  
He gave a nod, then walked away  
For Love had grown cold.

Thomas Vaughan Jones



# Uncle Henry

Uncle Henry, in a corner,  
sleeping by the fireplace.  
Dreaming of his long gone childhood  
firm of form and fair of face.

Uncle Henry cries so softly,  
thinking of those days, long gone.  
Childish pranks and long dead friendships  
in the warmth of Summer sun.

Growing into early manhood,  
quickenning to maidens' charms,  
Henry brings them love and laughter  
in the comfort of his arms.

Smooth - skinned girls with golden tresses  
charming him with female guiles.  
Henry stirs to their caresses,  
slowly, Uncle Henry smiles.

Once again his limbs are supple,  
once again his heart is young  
He looks back upon his future  
and the songs yet to be sung

Henry's heart soars up in gladness.  
Gone the pain, and winter's sighs.  
No more fear, and no more sadness,  
softly, Uncle Henry dies.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# Valentine

Let's venture to our special hiding place  
Where gentle layered passions hold us fast.  
As willing thralls who hold each other's hearts  
Secluded from the world and lovers past.

There are few words to tell you how I feel  
There are no reasons I can comprehend  
Why you can raise me up to boundless joy  
No other joy or pleasure could transcend.

I treasure you in all the things you do.  
Although I know you never could be mine,  
My pleasure comes from simply loving you  
Existing as your secret Valentine.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## When I Am With You

It isn't that my heart seems so much lighter;  
Nor does a songbird flute a different trill.  
There is no reason why the world is brighter;  
No lonely place is here for me to fill.  
So why do senses dance in desperation?  
What is this stirring that I feel inside,  
a sense of gain, a joyous jubilation;  
An ecstasy I can no longer hide.  
Could it just be a chemical attraction?  
Electrons in the heart of cyberspace.  
A trick of light; an optical refraction  
that paints the smile transfiguring your face.  
We have no substance in this time or season.  
Mere molecules within a master plan;  
But stronger yet than any valid reason;  
You are a woman.... I am just a man.

Thomas Vaughan Jones

# William's Petrarchan Sonnet About Earl Spencer

Anne Hathaway awoke to find that Will  
had crept out from his bed so he could write  
a sonnet, penned by feeble candlelight  
which caused her to exclaim both loud and shrill  
'Why is it that you will not write a play,  
instead of wasting everybody's time  
with reams of paper, squandered on your rhyme  
The rent is due and we've got bills to pay"

Poor William peered above his reading specs  
His shoulders shrugging ruefully, he said  
'Prithee beloved; Hie thee back to bed  
I really haven't got the time for sex  
I have to reinforce the English norm  
Ed Spenser has been fiddling with the form.'

Thomas Vaughan Jones

## Winter's Limbo

Thoughts drift by, mindlessly,  
dreaming of summers that have been,  
and springtimes yet to come.  
Mellow, mellifluous, metaphors,  
stirring in the lazy afternoon,  
seeking for solace,  
in the maelstroms of the mind;  
But no words flow,  
No new ideas are born  
to pose a question,  
or challenge  
an eager pen.

Thomas Vaughan Jones