

Poetry Series

Ivan Donn Carswell
- poems -

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Ivan Donn Carswell()

...If I said I wrote poetry for a reason I'd have to defend my reasoning every day. So I don't. I write for fun – and if it isn't fun it's better than being bored or feeling useless. I admit to feeling bored and useless occasionally.

But there is more to Poetry than one man's opinion of it.

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There are many views – no less especially here. Most, sadly, are neither original nor particularly new because that is what we've come to expect as an unforgiving characteristic of this Site.

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But occasionally there are gems to be found, wicked nuggets of gold garnered from sparsest sands. I'm tossing in what I can. If you've encountered something of mine you consider worthy, congratulations. Toss me a line. I'll understand!

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My arbitrary decision to limit poems posted here to 100 will stand as long as Poemhunter continues its childishly innocuous and anonymous censorship practises. I have seen no sign of it improving yet.

If
you're
bored,
Try reading: -

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ivan_donn_

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' Ruddy Shame

A Ruddy shame they've shafted
Kev this way - he's always been
a decent man, a nicer bloke you
understand in politics is rarity -
a precious gift disgracing all the
dirty depths these pollied pace

He's plain for sure, of vapid flair
inflated by sincerity to where it
makes you cringe; it's cruel - he
cannot lie convincingly, concede
or hide distress about duplicity in
lives his nearest colleagues led

With due regret it made him tick
I'd guess; his interest isn't power
of status misapplied, the game's
right of reply he sacrificed for air
to breathe that's clear and freed
intrigues of other's perfidy

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Ivan Donn Carswell

A Smile At No Expense

dwelling in uncertainty
that vacillates between
despair and hopelessness
swamped in depths of
darkened introspection
edged with silver chalices
dispensing only misery
– oh, is this figure me

cannot reach beyond good
yesterday where joy at no
expense conspires with glee
to free at least a winsome
smile – but wasted in this
hapless halophile
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Accomplice

a day spent assiduously
avoiding events ordained
in a bigger universe than
this tiddly one seems

but like an accomplished
gymnast I manage to do
handstands on one arm
while clutching the means
to remain upright –

if you could imagine
cleaning your glasses
with a single hand you'll
be close to what
I mean;

and if you can –
<i>and be entertaining</i>
– you're the perfect
accomplice

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Achieving Holiness

A bare moment's cleanliness warns
of imminent death; no question that
virtue comes at the obtuse end of a
duster wielded deftly - there are no
accolades to ring in this room swept
clean of poetic debris, no carolling a
desk conscience-clear, of farewells to
hook and feather littered aspirations

But eyes feast on space wondrously
free of disparate signs someone else
lived here - discarded skin cells and
detritus of defoliate hair, of oblique
insights estranged, compliments to
order as change achieves holiness
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Adversaries

Why bother with a reply that leaves
the question alive? By firing blanks
survival isn't surmised in a gesture
of obeisance rather than defence;
old timers say, to keep your hopes
alive aim where ricochets play the
odds sweetly and defiance means
you can't be swayed by deference

The firing line isn't a place to stay
without an abundance of the best
copper-tipped epithets - you don't
need any direct hits to make your
antipathy evident - and that has a
way of discouraging adversaries

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Ivan Donn Carswell

After The Rain

Resurgent greens and stronger hues
combined within the colours in-between
will spring again, the reddish brown
has nearly gone and all the silver
greys erased in darker shades
that shine with slickly natured stains
after the gentle, gentle rain.

Clouded skies unite and demonize
the dry and dusty plight of days of brutal
beating sun and scathing wind,
the thin veneer is quickly peeled
and puddle-swamped in bloodied muddled
swirls of coloured slushy earth
that tinge the tracks of heavy wheels.

The welcome cold at first conceals its
damp and chilling steel, and in the icy
shades of night the frigid bite ignites
less welcome sentiments until the wrap
of insulation seals the warming heat,
sanctifies the stolid feet and frigid toes
with subtle sweep of warming blood.

And in the morning when the sun returns
to claim the earth the mist surprises, rising
unabashed and clean again to grace the
nascent waiting skies after the rain.

Ivan Donn Carswell

After The Recession

The bitchin' never stops does it...!
If it's not for becoming a Republic or
Remembrance to be preferred over
ANZAC Day its speakers stirring
about '*refugees*' aka '*boat people*'
expediently deemed '*asylum seekers*'

And then there's a lobby to suspend
fiscal stimulation immediately with an
equally vehement counter-claim that
to do so will kill the economy despite
it being pretty much back on its feet
and nearly in the black again

Concerns regarding carbon tax and
global warming echo insanely in a
chamber of confused debate fuelled
by entrepreneurs straining to abet
a sure way to make money out of
the most catastrophic event yet

If I wasn't such a sceptic with less
than profound views of essentially
septic scenes of commonplace I'd say
we are back where we were before,
on track, and that rabid self-interest
rules supreme once more

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Aliana Grace

A message came from Aliana Grace
to say the thongs – okay, *'havaianas'*
were unerringly what every little girl
would need first day she walks outside.

Aliana reached three weeks today, tho'
very sweet and much advanced I think
her chances of a promenade outdoors
in pretty pink will be a while delayed.

Yet judging her dexterity in SMS I'll
have to think again – if she's a prodigy
her *'havaianas'* I deduce will certainly
be graced as well as glissé ballet shoes.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Angela's Poem

letting moments like this slip
regales a dream's allure
insubstantial drifts of form are
sure as melody to inner ear

thoughts are clear and echo
in the bells' carillon clarity of
massed accord – resonate to
peerless themes of simple call□

wonderment entrapped in family
gauze has kept this seemingly state
attentive to each living breath –
and that's the awe

your caring words are piety to
void the sphere of blasphemy
epithets of selflessness are
where I'll make accord
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Another barbeque tonight

It rained throughout the night, a truly welcome sound that eases sleep although we barely slept - we were distressed by other things. Today the kitchen's centre ring, the kitchen of Anita's dreams. It's had a long gestation, twenty years it's taken just to reach this actual day (that's in this iteration, there's been some trial versions in the past), and now at last the preparation is complete.

I had already penned a verse called 'Camping in a kitchen', a bit of whimsy yet to be released, I'll post it in the week and let it rest, assured it says what was intended. The work indeed was never easy but it rendered unto Caesar what was hers, now it is the measure of Anita's dreams. To see her vision vested in an emptiness that isn't will be cream upon her cake, a cake she'll bake which time will make her reputation awesome.

Even as I write the rain remains a subtle, soothing sound within the aura of Anita's dreams, a complement surrounding where we live, a sign that what we scheme is timeless in itself, the wealth of what we have and do includes the kitchen soon to be restored to life, includes relief in sight from crippling drought, includes returning green, the birds who flock and scream their joy with mien delight and, good Heavens, another barbeque tonight!

Ivan Donn Carswell

Australia Day

might have been a consequence of
three strong coffees or the splendid
isolation but woe is me, did I forget
which was our National Day?

'tho every day's a holiday out here
when living green, in landed hearts
seasons tend to rule the roost while
celebrations merely lend a hand

so when I made apologies to friends
an allergy prevented me attending
there today (a barbeque no less)
they kindly told me where and when

National BBQ Day's next Tuesday
I'm advised as I sneeze vigorously, a
wet disclaimer of hay-fevered eyes;
good heavens, how could I forget!
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Australia Day was Tuesday 26 January

Ivan Donn Carswell

Backbench Democracy

LNP shenanigans delight the native crowd again – but geeze, Wilson Tuckey quoted in the same shrewd sentence as His Royal Shyness, the Front Bench Opposition Health spokesman, Peter Dutton is beyond belief.

Who'd have seen a semblance of connect between the two except the ABC? That Peter failed a pre-selection bid for the Dickson Seat he holds doesn't have too much to do with Old 'Ironbar' unless you're real short-poled for words.

Senator Barnaby Joyce, a sort of born-again neo-evangelist with National(istic) leanings said, 'relax, it's just Democracy in action', and he may be right; it's that *odd thing* only we and backbenchers in Opposition might get to exercise.
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Beaching Free

If this is the way to celebrate freedom
from four walls of circumstance - then
I'm lost and confined as before; we're
driving to the beach - there'll be space,
open air and relativity more in tune with
liberty. My doggy mate Podge shares

Some of these as suits he can wear if
his cortège of haberdashery fails appeal,
raising a greater case for emancipation
than I as he sees the car's confinement
merely an extension of now and not as
I imagined means to an end

In his way of thinking if opportunity is a
rare visitor, its not dissimilar to staying in
place - so here I am writing while he, in
good cheer, reclines on the rear seat
enjoying the change in his 'now' which
isn't a shared trait, not even vaguely

We alight at Bribie's Sylvan Beach, a
wry deprecation of deific meaning, into
reach of a debatable westerly sweeping
across Pumicestone; Podge doesn't see
anomalies, breezily pees everywhere
with incredible dedication

Birthday girl, Ms Munificence, disagrees
any sense of direction so the wind luckily
escapes rational categorisation - she slips
sylph-like into a trance of contentment and
we are recompensed grandly for making
this the journey of the day

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Bed Of Roses

Who stole your scented memories
pot-pourri's of your youth with
vacant promises – a charlatan
a superficial swain with wisdom
urging platitudes you should
believe in beds of blooming roses

The blooms shall wilt more
quickly than the dust can gather
scent will fade before the fragile
petals lose their colour – even drops
of fragrant oil cannot engender
dying blooms to rise again

Phantom forms pretend in ravaged beds
embraced by brittle thorns and blighted
leaves of pruned and trenchant covenants
pallid petals rust in aromatic pots amidst
an endless trust of odds and ends that
matter like the photo frames contain
a past we nearly missed together

So come with me my love ascend
to watch the shadows lengthen
on this special day
lie reposed and reminisce on pillows
stuffed with petal blooms and be
amazed our marriage bed is still
a bed of blooming roses

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Being Frank

Let's call you Frank,
Josaia Voreqe is a bit too,
putting it mildly, Fijian

I might add Bainimarama
is a mouthful of unsolvable
vernacular but I'm used to it

Frank, what can I say? Ensign
when we met and now you're
Commodore CinC FMF

Not to mention Prime
Minister, acting President,
Chief of Defence Staff, etc

You've come a long way
from the shy, self-effacing
mild but good mannered boy

Become a martinet for truth
and loyalty to a Service ill-used
by its corrupted political chiefs

Today you've paid your Pacific
neighbours a fair compliment
in eminent diplomatic sense

Bugger off you Envoys you say
it's my pseudo-coup and I'll
get it right my way

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Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama
prime minister of Fiji
also called Frank Bainimarama
born April 27, 1954, Kiuva, Fiji

Fijian military leader who led a 2006 coup that resulted in his becoming acting

president (2006–07) and later acting prime minister (2007–) of Fiji. Although Bainimarama was a Methodist, he attended the Roman Catholic Marist Brothers High School in Suva, Fiji. From 1975 he pursued a career in the Fiji navy, rising to become commander (1988), captain (1994), and chief of staff (1998). On March 1, 1999, he was appointed commodore and commander of all Fiji's military forces.

On May 19, 2000, a group led by disgruntled businessman George Speight overthrew the coalition government headed by Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry. Bainimarama persuaded then president Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara to resign on May 29, 2000, and took over as head of an interim military government in what many considered a counter coup. The Muanikau Accord, signed by Bainimarama (as head of government) and Speight, led to the release of the insurgents' hostages (including Chaudhry) on July 13. A few days later Bainimarama returned power to an interim government led by newly appointed Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase and Pres. Ratu Josefa Iloilo.

Following elections in 2001 and again in May 2006, Qarase was returned to power, but the dissension between him and Bainimarama continued, particularly with regard to what Bainimarama perceived as the prime minister's soft treatment of high-ranking chiefs and politicians who had been convicted for their roles in the 2000 coup. The government tried to oust Bainimarama while he was overseas visiting troops in October 2006, but the government's alternative commander declined to take over, and senior officers rallied behind their commander. On his return to Fiji, Bainimarama purged the army of senior officers whom he considered disloyal and increased pressure on Qarase's government. In November 2006 Bainimarama demanded the withdrawal of two bills, one of which included the power to grant amnesty to coup leaders; he also demanded the dismissal of the police commissioner, Australian Andrew Hughes. Qarase said that the bills would be put on hold and Hughes's appointment would be reviewed. Unimpressed, Bainimarama's troops effectively took over the reins of power on Dec. 5, 2006. Bainimarama had the parliament dissolved, and he deposed Iloilo to become acting president.

While his supporters claimed that the military takeover was necessary in light of Qarase's corrupt actions, others believed that Bainimarama undertook the coup to avoid prosecution over his alleged mismanagement of military funds, which was then the subject of a government investigation. On Jan. 5, 2007, Bainimarama reinstated Iloilo as president and became interim prime minister; he also promised to hold democratic elections in 2010. In April 2007 he dissolved the Great Council of Chiefs—an administrative body of traditional chiefs with the power to appoint Fiji's president and vice president—after it refused to accept his choice for vice president. In February 2008 Bainimarama reinstated the council and appointed himself chairman. He continued to put off the date for the promised elections.

Morgan Tuimalealiifano

In April 2009 the Fiji Court of Appeal ruled that the Bainimarama government had been put in place illegally after the 2006 coup, a ruling that effectively dissolved the government. Two days later Iloilo announced that he was abrogating the 1997 constitution, and he dismissed the country's judges. He appointed a new interim government with Bainimarama again as prime minister and postponed national elections once again, this time until at least 2014.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Belonging

that sense of belonging went West
wrapped in cambric with my dreams
I know I fit into the Land – it can't
get better than that but there were
moments when I saw through wider
eyes; now I stand where I only see
clear to the end of each tree row
without restraint and wonder why

there is no asking more than what
you gave unstintingly for love that
ate your grace and nascent wisdom
greedily – it went to feed without
complaint a displaced soul who's
spaced uneasy of his origins

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Bigrit/I/B

Yesterday's dust storm dashed
unrealistic pretension about
Nature's propriety – there's
nothing better expressed than
severely reduced visibility

Seeing just 300 metres at a pinch
suggests something akin to dusk
at midday; the stench of it rasped
crudely with each breath and eyes
vexed with the grit

It had come a long way, 3,000 km
from origins south blanketing towns
and cities delaying schedules playing
all merry hell up the coastline –
it wasn't just me complaining
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Bilove Ran Out/I/B

the simple account
- *love ran out*
no-longer sustained by
medieval bracelets charmed
with romantic favour

you could see it
as attributed by fate
grafted in years of hard labour
sold down the river by
impossible dreams

they were fairy tales
too deeply inured in
endless mythologies
unsecured debentures
naive fantasies failed

and it's slaughter day
with a willing cancer
in the shape of me
behind a mask for
a heart broken

love ran out for you
and you were freed
while I am nailed
unrequited
for eternity
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Birthdays

A Ladies Day not far away
from where the singing's
never done – a place where
bliss extends its hands
in gracious greetings and
two birthdays weigh as one

Freja Jean is just a year today
Patricia May a little more
but they are borne in harmony
by joy that joins them
each to each as only
dearest family can

We wish you well and wear a
smile that tells our feelings
fair – I'd be there in an instant
all and am indeed a rare and
privileged fly declared upon
this celebration's wall
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Blame It On Pollen

The teary eyes do not surprise
though faerie dust will disagree
that it disposed a runny nose
or ever caused a chary sneeze

'Rhinitis' you say a mite amazed
as if a comic malady
with focus on a mucus to
effect a balanced sanity

You are for sure it's not your
war and try to counsel warily
but this disquiet begets a riot
and rages on distressfully

Immunity or harmony would
hardly seem germane to me
but histamines are warring things
repelling motes you cannot see

You are fatigued in aching need
to find a healthy end agreed
within a pill to calm an ill which
seethes dissent disdainfully

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Blonde

Brazil nuts and
home brewed beer
an alliterative feast
for the aesthete; too
fine to let by without
annotation

It's where gourmet
fancy plays loose and
the feet slide easily
into discrete stirrups
astride discerning taste

An adaptation of the
once infamous *'Blonde
Australienne'* tamed
in a riot of dissent
<i>we don't drink that here</i>!

Well Bluey, me old Mate
we do, I called it Lager
which you liked yesterday
& Bitter the day before
but today it's *<i>Blonde</i>*

Now drink `n stop
yer bloody whining
anyone 'ud think it
<i>wasn't cold enough</i>
– or something

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Breathe Again

keeping a day ahead when
space occupied by those
preceding still reeks of
waste is deemed vagrancy

and planning non-events
because your life depends on
it does not explain why no
demand exists in any case

living in expectancy of a
life-changing phone-call
doesn't bring order to the
chaos surrounding you, so

unleash suspense, be an
angel freed of tyranny
leave the mess, hide the
phone, breathe again
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Cabbages And Beans

Like the dunny door it
simply bangs incessantly
until your patience thins

You can refuse to hear
it if you fry your brains
in oil with vapid apathy

A fear is that it might be
right and sadly true but
then again it might be wind

You've clearly had enough
if you accede too meekly
to its patent bullying

This cringing metaphor is
brazenness acclaimed
as an incipient authority

While all I see's a pannier
of *cabbage leaves and
salty beans*

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Candour

survival questions
candour in what once you
held as dear – dumb
mementos jousting displaced
souvenirs of time and space
silent smiling faces snapped
too long ago now nuance
in a different way

pictured here you see an
enigmatic man you knew
belittled by a subtlety of
wisdom's barefaced grin
the gaze of his eyes drawn
backward to a day etched
thin by changes anxious as
his rumpled clothes

a new-age nexus price is
paid in stunted growth and no
respite for agonies sustained
his days are now betrothed
to tending trophies stuffed
with frugal dreams aloofly
kept alive as hopes entombed
in timeless infancy

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Cappuccino smile

Ah, the aromas of that conversation,
the brimming, cappuccino smile
swirled in chocolate rich and cinnamoned,
the gentle coffee curlicues interlaced
in arabesques of creamy foam, redolent
upon your lips, lilted in the cup of your
countenance, glazed in syrup gilt.
Your words were velvet plumes
of soothing, honeyed dews
you tea-spooned in my mind,
the flavoured greetings savoured
fleeting glimpses of delight,
the jasmine scented night tasting of Swiss
pastries, sugared and freshly baked.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Catch-Me-Now Cachet

been searching for
an absolute pose
where pain disappears
and sleep's sweet

it seems less battered
in a moment's
disconnect by eyes
stochastic shuttering

if it's there I know
it will be brief
to capture just or
ever hold your peace
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Changes

'strangely'

says the way is seldom clear;
there is so much to fear from
past events where death
competes for living space

emptiness defeats all
claims to commonsense;
you freely vacillate in
seamlessly complete
and utter vacancy

conceding you are beat
could ease this dissonance
of harmony estranged – but
weirdly, knowing that means
nothing's changed

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Cleaned And Purged

Rising from a raucous sleep at 4 am finds
nothing much has changed. PC takes an
age in start-up sequencing, reveals a raft
of system safety checks have failed – it
then reboots but can't or won't explain.

You could remark intrigued the similarity
to life is underplayed – but callously a
disrespect for standards long established
still engages greater minds in ugly dreams
of the infallible though deemed unstable.

'This is the here and now' it seems to say;
whatever else you wish will be in future
scenes for contemplation – if you make
priorities, submit requests in triplicate at
least one month advanced!

You'd think that waking up legitimised an
entrée to the day, that's but the first faux
pas; breaking flaky sleep would seem a
crime until the system's cleaned and
purged repentant souls of yesterday.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Cock Crow

Morning cock-crow mingles with
a dingo's trenchant wail; dawn in
breaking yawns and fakes a
clumsy smile as puffs of dirty
clouds against a drably linen sky.

Forgettably a dingy day begins its
present tense; perhaps a hint of
rain exists in coolness yet to be
expressed before the sun returns
and shames an aching metaphor.

If seeking faith in breaking dawn
then go to sleep again; there's no
relief in knowing truth pertains to
dreams in league with hapless
views retailed by sycophants.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Conscience

And if it is but pride
distressed no price of
pain will pay for such
absurd rigidity; an
obstinacy of thought
precludes less stressful
ways to make amends
as yet the mirror turns.

Agreed, it isn't hard to
see who's wrong and
fathom why accepting
that forever and a day
is bound to conscience
duly burned.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Crying to be written

Dawn has reached the ridges to the north and a thin line of light chased the night west; it is the best time of day for me - a cup of coffee, Benson & Scud pretending to sleep in their baskets at my feet, I am seated, ready to write knowing the lounge fire is glowing cheerfully, relaxing into profound thoughts. I had the opening lines when I awoke, a sharp couplet bought at no cost, bright and brimming with promise of more rushing on into an easy progression, and beyond. Sadly it is gone in the inward thrust of the day; a fleeting adoration lost, a whimsical compilation of lyrical brilliance - an amazing ephemeral meeting merely brushing against my mind and floating on, uncontained, wafting into an insubstantial nothingness. It is an image I will borrow nonetheless, a symptomatic consequence of the duress I live in, the distress of one thousand poems crying to be written.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Crying to be written

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Curator

My life's a museum of memories buried
in a mausoleum to matrimony kept
scrupulously clean – there is no distinction
between exhibits and things living

I am Curator as well as main exhibit in the
open-all-hours public gallery that nobody
views though entrance is freely exchanged
for tea and sympathy

I expect it stay this way until 'The Company'
gets made an offer it can't refuse whereon
I will merge with the grateful trees afforesting –
acknowledging arboreal dreams

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Dangling

dangling at the end of a rope
hanging from a helicopter
hovering a vast
distance from the ground
is the appropriate analogy

confidence is a firm grip –
belief that things will
be okay your safety net
but reality says you've
reached a new stalemate

though nothing explains how
this came to be the face
of your predicament
you are not being saved and
you're not going anywhere

actuality is a length of rope
and the whirling blades
holding you in place
your choice remains
to hold on or let go
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Day The Future Died

you see it in the wavering
there used to be a 'can do'
flame to power this man, a
light that burned the brightest
when the hard times came
– but now he quakes

hesitation rheums once smugly
eagle eyes – he looks away
taloned hands are bent like
crudely battered remnant
lips that can't efface
a righteous sneer

shambling gait explains
an ingrained fear of falling
set in place; for years he made
affection claim dependency
in she who gave with gracious
love but sadly went away

parody in awful taste or
phoenix in its ash, he knows
he cannot rise less crash with
no surprise or deep regret
– I can't forget the day
the Future died he says
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Delinquency

giving in to rage will not replace
the waste they idly wrought – instead
one has to sublimate the energy
in ways creating useful space

three hundred pieces lay in shreds
at least beneath the trees – fruit I'll
never see arise magnificent in size
and shape or ever take a penny for

though they've declared a raucous
war I will abate my animosity and let
the rancour brew; I'll have them stew
in pettiness afore I make `em pay

I will not start the feud today – I need
to scheme, assemble men with dreams
and arms and hopes renewed to beat
these jackass cockatoos

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Delinquency 01

You can do Web crosswords where
you know most of the clues already

Or sit distanced with headphones
attached, keep the World at arms
length in timelessness preserved
by '*Definitive America*'*

Or you can write, absorb more
of its waste, and listen – which I do

I am amazed at innocence buoyed
in pure voices of those young men
lyrically celebrating our age

Guilt was not invented by their music
and the words were the same used
to describe our visions

Tears well-up in soaring strains of
'*The Last Unicorn*', I am raised and
at peace with my delinquency

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** Audio CD (Jun 29,2001)
compiling 'America' tracks from
the 70s*

Ivan Donn Carswell

Democratie

They're only words
but I live where every nuance
clubs sensibility; you speak
of Democracy as if it's earned –
where on Earth did you learn that?

Here? Were you a convict?
I didn't think so – you're a Public
Servant, by no means the genre
who made Eureka Stockade
resonate in our History

Yet you say it is only
a matter time to a position
where the Internet will decide
whether you have a job
as an Electoral Officer

I am glad you've equated
public opinion with the state
of anarchy mass media creates
but have you learned anything
other than fear?

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Did I Forget

as if you paid the going price
you have delayed facing what
you know is patently pending
doing dishes merely suggests
creative avoidance and vanity
hand basin scrubbed clean for
first time ever may register to
discerning eyes but no air of
benign justification abides or
lends credibility

okay – in your defence the
clay oven chicken is on at
7: 15 am for a two hour bake
the day shows signs of relenting
it will be just another boring
Saturday with tomorrow's plans
imminent but entrenched – time
already spent suggests you've
given advantage to a quaint
but selective dementia

you were supposed to write a
verse today celebrating this
new-age of reason where the
key is acceptance – but I don't
see you doing it yet; it may be
a vestige of the old ways and
I apologise for driving hard at
stratagems I believe deprecate
that sense of being in touch
or did I forget something...

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Distance

If I stay
I will see less
of what I imagine most
as the face in the mirror
grows grey

If I go
there's no
guarantee I will greet
what hopeful thought gladly
feeds me every day

If I stay it
will present
loneliness as a
hard-wearing
consequence

If I go
still being alone
may see in me
the best company
solitude knows

If I go it will
at least condense
distance between dreams
and reality though
the gulf still stays

It is a fence
that keeps me here
the fear that you
actually wanted it
this way

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Distance Is The Mean

What is the sign beside the road that makes
the line dividing states of love as clear
as sigils blessed in your taxonomy?

I wonder what it is that bleeds the tease
of care into a lake of nothingness
if wayward love departs its flimsy scene

And are the ways to best express this grate
between the states of '*love*' and '*not love*' clear?
They're not I fear – and never ever were

If there's a border edge between the love
I bear for you and that expressed as *not*
a disaffection then where has it gone?

The cues are spare and far between because
you flew away; if distance is the mean
today of comfort's share – an answer's there
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Doa

Yeah I'm onto it you say,
no worries; you don't want
people getting ideas maybe
you're basically underdone

There's no way you're
going to admit to failure
that hasn't even happened yet
although it's inevitable

You're heading to the dump
of evolutionary conjecture
with it now – expecting to be
dead on arrival

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Dog's Life

He rolls in the rich red dirt
again – purest ecstasy, been
quite a while since true rain
fell so 'bathe' the man will
be thinking – 'shampoo'

Won't get in today he bets
but the weather's nice so I'll
nap by the door keep an eye
on things – I know in the end
I will win

He'll insist on a bath with
that queer shampoo; 'tho
these days there's only
me and no doggy remarks
to endure so I'll be ok

And best of all I'll be back
where the food is stashed
and all those cashew nuts
I'm a mite partial too. A
Dog's life? Sez who!
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Effluvium

you proclaim doggedly it isn't a blank
page only space undefined in potential
– but we're on the way to filling it

preferred ciphers need firm consideration
hence window-dressed anxiety which you
see as procrastination

not that we avoid writing – see,
there are tangible words echoed here
that hint at even greater things

like a case of lèse majesté – flirting in
the face of regal dignity lends less to
true treason than insouciant disgrace

effluvium, brief and out of place in words
expressed casually means more of what
I dream than what I sought to say
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Effortless Evasion

it rates as exceptional effort
hardly raising a sweat while
avoiding smallest commitment

yet guilt stays upfront and intact
can't play that off a straight bat
nothing allays ambits pedestrian

how long did it take you blather
realising the game is up and
where's the damning evidence

nothing's there and nothing
changed you digress despite
efforts to maintain pretence
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Epitomes Of Grace

sickness still remains a sting
that steals vitality, keenly fed
on anguish bled from trauma
deep, tension wed to agony in
thrall to grief; no pleasure left
to ease ambiguous disgrace
endured as much inured and
endlessly emphatic pain

treachery has schemed in wine
to solace-seek with shame;
I sip inspired on fine and aged
epitomes of grace – memories
weave lines embracing
features of your face

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Festive Irony

you might say I am
the Spirit of Christmas
driven by a steady hand
on the neck of a bottle
of Cerveza complete
with lime wedge

this year I gave my friend
three flyswats opining he'll
find superior utility in that
than a six-pack of said beer
– which he's never been
fond of anyway

it's a crazy time when
flies breed faster than Tahitian
limes can grow now Christmas
is a day away – he'll see
irony in plastic swats to
control global warming
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Few And Far Between

Friendship brakes where reckless
race regardless; it's not the scene
of magic mayhem where a greater
weight is placed on states of seeing
views unique and consummate

The pain of leaving always pays a
torrid price – when seen alone is
death; and keen a company as is
bereaved the torus speaks out of
that same mundane geometry

We're friends because we each
forgave ahead of vicious prices paid.
One cannot choose the cost before
the pact is made – true friends are
few and far between

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Figurines

the easy way is to not
recognise a finger in the
plate to mean a threat

there are no arched eyes
and the tongue licking is with
gusto not misconception of taste;

too real is a belief yet
unrealised, and these
are not your figurines
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Ivan Donn Carswell

First Tuesday In November

it isn't subtle but then
we're used to it although
the past month seems
to have been more equine
than influenza alone contends

it is a virus spread in a
series of controlled releases
gauged to culminate
on the first Tuesday
in November which is today

the fever hasn't gripped
me and my punt is clenched
fists kept in pockets
resistant to cues saying
Alcopop will win easy

but commonsense explains
a horse trained by
a Cummings has better
chances – there are
four of them!

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*for the uninitiated the Melbourne Cup
is being run this afternoon*

Ivan Donn Carswell

Focus

they say it won't be suicide
we've every rogue and vagrant
angle mapped on that unless a
finger flips accord – it isn't quite
unmatched to be exact; so crikey
he's a bit *eccentric* do you say?

in fact he's one and same as any
left to rot as refuse of the game
that failed to make a perfect World
his trust in god is not exemplar
of the faith he lost to voices of
divine dissent that led astray

he planned revenge in thoughts
that gift him views beyond the
scope of common man because
he can – and stands alone askew
of where he'd like to be but lost
to what the purpose of it means
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Grievous Air

Showers launder grievous air
redolent with anguish of an
allergy; skin that shrieks from
angry weals breathes easy
in the soothing rain

Atoms bleached from fastness
of the atmosphere are quelled
cannot soar or fuel a fantasy
of agony to itch and swell
into nightmarish days

Although too late to salvage
fragile buoyancy or make up
time that flooded out of sinuses
begrudged in manic flow – there
is a sense of hope reviewed

If everyone is suffered thus
could conscience but be teased?
A way with dignity I wish I knew
to ease the pain that didn't
mean I passed it on to you
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Harder To Catch

You could say TWO green tree frogs
in the dunny is a double blessing
or not an ordinary event whereas
one is a regular happening

Aha, difficulty with the term 'dunny'
I see – it means toilet, water closet,
crapper, can, whatever and that
paints an intriguing picture

GREEN TREE FROGS in the can?
Yes, water is a natural home to
them although the venue is less
than salubrious

I'd rather they sing in the evening
from trees as is their habit but
these chaps seem to cling to a
nether view by preference

It means I'll need to put a sign
on the guest toilet – something
clever like 'frog sanctuary – use
with sense of humour intact'

They're getting harder to catch...
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Having Each Of You As Friends

For more than 40 years we've been good friends,
since 1963 in fact, from college where we met
(and managed there to build a strong quartet
of campus friendship which kept those years intact,
still yet as clear as yesterday). The musketeers were we,
four sons of Nereid, or perhaps Persephone,
as different each from each as each could be,
all sharing camaraderie uncommon of the time
and fasting in the line to learn the pedagogic
trade. We graduated well in '64 and left that year
to fill the spaces our seniors had vacated in rooms
beyond the trainees' sphere, filled with probationary
year acuity. Our meetings in those days were great
events of poignant merriment and risque cheer
and exploits, when related, all too soon
extrapolated beyond the bounds of better judgment
(as considered by our management), and while
we often fell afoul we always brushed up well.
I recall the grande affaires of the early musketeers,
Aramis, Porthos, Athos and the eclectic Monsieur D'Artagnon,
but all along I never knew who was who.
I thought I'd be D'Artagnon, introspective, droll,
or Porthos muscled with a fork and dark intent,
singularly bent on righting wrongs,
but all the talk was wasted in a whirl of traded places,
perhaps we traded faces in the same, candid space.
I relive it now and then, I would live it all again
in hope of having of each of you as friends.

I.D. Carswell

For Scotty, Seal & Abo

Ivan Donn Carswell

Having Or Not

It wasn't a billion dollar idea but
the notion that going into the rain
without a raincoat and getting wet
could be connected was revelation –
plainly it was the raincoat's doing;

tried the same plan on a homeless
soul whose mackintosh had seen
better days but she demurred. Ain't
the case for me she says, more like
one of having or not – if I weren't
wearing mine then I wouldn't have
it rain or shine you see.

But I didn't and it still escapes me
how a waterproof can change duty
between ensuring you get wet in its
absence and simply not being yours
if you weren't wearing it!

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Hold Onto The Thought

In ending the whole notion of
permanence presents fresh
dilemmas; an 'if it is there
tomorrow it's probably real'
sense of shaken confidence
survives where solidity was
once so enduring in the
mind's manic games

If you think it is that way,
it is, you used to say and it
was for at least as long as
you held the thought; 'the
World must have changed
as I slept' explains why you
think you felt completely
different on waking

Hold onto the thought –
you've paid handsomely
for a dilemma you now
own outright, complete
with lifetime warranty and
unlimited on-site repairs
absolutely guaranteed to
keep you wondering...

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Ivan Donn Carswell

If It Proves Anything

A statistical arbiter
accords two discrete IP entities
with 100 hits on 45 poems
listed in review

One I know left a comment,
thank you HG, but the
anonymous one needs to
be thanked too

Such dedication to have
read so many – even if
popular reads, or so
said statistics say

fake IP address
generators explain why we
as poets fail and fungus freely
grows - if it proves anything
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IP: An Internet Protocol (IP) address is a numerical label that is assigned to devices participating in a computer network utilizing the Internet Protocol for communication between its nodes.[1] An IP address serves two principal functions in networking: host identification and location addressing. The role of the IP address has also been characterized as follows: 'A name indicates what we seek. An address indicates where it is. A route indicates how to get there.'[2]

Ivan Donn Carswell

In soothing, sweetened words

No, she said, I never knew it was your first. It doesn't matter anyway. I always had an inkling that we'd find a way. And then we did. I'm glad about it just for that. Whether it was good or bad, or would have happened had we made a pact or that it should have happened years ago won't alter facts; it was meant to happen, and it did, and that is that.

His ego shattered in those straightforward words, it was absurd, for years he'd suffered his attraction, never guessed she shared a common thread, and when it happened she had said it hadn't mattered. She recognised his sadness, smiled and hugged him close, I always liked you best because you held to every word I said, your soft grey eyes would stroke my face and never stray, your hands caressed my hands and drifted just a bit towards my breasts, and if your thoughts were centred in my pants I knew of your respect before I felt the hotness of your breath. What occurred just now is but a lusty cup of sugared tea, it does refresh, but once the cup is drained for me there's nothing left to keep except regrets, and leave. If it was your first it was the very best but be assured, I know I need you here to hold my hands, to listen and reflect, to softly talk to me in soothing, sweetened words.

Ivan Donn Carswell

In-Between

you caught me in-between
those things I didn't start
and the few that
simply got away

a dozen red ensconced on
dining table doesn't mean
commencement of a
monumental drunk

it's rather more intent
to read each label carefully
before I lay them down to rest

but somewhere in the middle of
a sandwich
planned for lunch and need
to bake tomorrow's bread

plus espresso machine
prepared coffee
– events
went off the beam

should explain I do
not see these things
as jobs to do but mood effects
which gladly seize the day

and yes, those are Xmas cards
maybe 2 (or 3 or 4) year's worth –
they kept arriving as it were
out of the blue...

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Indemnity

So many leeches preying
on the frail – a grey
industry veiled by claims
of justice in indemnity

A feeding frenzy alright
for anyone who's claim
spirals to major repair
from broken tail-light

Ethics lost set values
where ego judgements
gouge rather than be
deemed to make repairs

It's an insurance claim
they say – no-one really
pays so how's that a
breach of morality?

It is in inflated grins of
skimmers glibly taking
their prodigious share –
padded maliciously

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Indigestion

don't want to sound
smug about it but
<i>where on Earth</i> did
you get that belief?

you've couched
all that there is;
fundamental
uncertainty

as rational and
coherent structure
determined
extra-terrestrially

gee, was this another
random outcome
of something you
<i>ingested</i>?

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Information Plateau

you've graduated from idiot
to imbecile to moron and
sagely claim you are dully
normal

*by your standards
you are*

with less structure to get
in the way you're only
judgemental of those
whose thinking opposes
your unilinear
views

the simplicity of it
means everyone with a
plainly higher IQ is wrong –
leastways you say this
as if it is a matter of
commonsense

in deference to
dull but normal thinking
I agree – eagerly awaiting
your elevation to the
next *information
plateau*

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Iraison De /I

this is the house that you built
not the way you'd do it again
arguably – but nonetheless
a mute testament

you made the colours calm
and the walls permanent
at least I stayed free knowing
it was your design

if it was your choice; the
lonely days distance themselves
in fragrant innuendo, scents
that cloud reason

they grew here where you
used to be – do they plague
you too in your *raison*
de renaissance

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Is It Relief

If it is relief it comes guised too
speciously – am I reprieved or
may I take the cant to task?

Ambivalence like this breaks
rocks in a conscience disturbed
by shocking self-revelations

Agreed, mythology is reality
by dint of a naively innocent
tho' over-active imagination

What I see may not be the facts
but I know coolness when I meet it
and that leaves me abandoned
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Ivan Donn Carswell

I superwhirly/I

'<i>Superwhirly Turbine</i>' vents adorn
this roof as credos hyperbole in
'doohickey' ostentatious-ness

Given attic credence that hot air
will rise 'til trapped the rationale
would seem to be defensible

That is until one creaked incessantly
moaned for no visceral elucidation
upheld by ordinary reasoning

So three severe trips into confines of
superheated dimly lit roof space and
a precipitously steep learning curve

At least the noise abates such that
sleep may patch together a few more
moments of repose contiguously

Intense discomfort and some grease
learned this home repair recalcitrant
to conquer fear – balance on a beam
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Investment/I

A fête of decayed verse
engages these indigenes
of disgrace; there is no
sweet meat or bread fresh
on their plates but rubric
praise that '*if you succour
me then I will grace you
measures of the same*'

Though ego games and
make-believe at best it
still suggests the worst
is yet to come – embeds
their blinded heads
in disinvested bums
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Joys of the chase

Colours fade into nameless shades of grey
and where the tinsure of bas-relief crudely
stands effete, semantic symbolism degrades
into meaninglessness. The artefacts of an old
existence deny you humanity but you don't
recognise them anyway, they are not bound
to objects of power that bely access to reason.
In this flat world of monochrome un-ambiguity
and ceaseless movement you hear in a
spectrum of sound that defies tympanic
sympathy, sounds you feel in your teeth and
in the hair that covers your lean shanks
and in the scents that surround you.
You move in a world of here and now,
where yesterday was a stomach full
and tomorrow is an extension of
your hunger for tastes and sounds
and joys of the chase.

Ivan Donn Carswell

June Thirteenth

If I didn't mark this day in passing
if I didn't make this date a part of
solid History I'd fail – a day to fix in
memory and memory will prevail

June thirteenth, Gemini of Mercury
an element of Air – where hunger
for awareness rests, your love
therein is seen a proper reckoning

Measure of your length and breadth
despairs dimensions of your ardent
heart – cathedral blessed, especially
in loving – sets your warmth apart

I know and love your being as a
comforting, liberty from loneliness
of empty rooms, a candle light of
passage gleam safely leading home

Blessed I am to know you well for all
these humble years, your inspiration
wills me write of you – and I shall 'til
Lethe waters still my trembling hand

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Knowing

knowing what I know won't
make it an end but there are
things in a failure which intend
less – so that is where you stand;
the late dilettante illusory flame
elite with panache – derivative
high-class hype that is still yet
to be released

sadly it makes no difference
to me; knowing what I know
means I keep under wraps the
same things you seek in the
public domain – too little to
burn for such a bright light
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Lacy White

Nothing will placate the so-called failure
of that night – the week before all pomp
and circumstance to take its due; you
lay in lacy white expectantly your eyes
aglow to consummate our unity although
arms of sleep reached out enfolding me.

Penance came at dawn in cheeks aflush
and blushes clean, delight applaudingly
embracing nuptial cries; 'tis where I'd
lay awake reprieved forever and a day –
you are the bride to whom I cede all of
my time's infinity.

You claim I'd been afraid to touch you as
a wife that night – and I agree, the waif I
lusted with upon a beach had fed me well –
too well to take this fragile angel in my
arms and bend her to my will she begged
in ways which made a mockery of me.

My lusting never faced as stern a test as
wanting you so much – a fear you'd fly or
run away distressed me such I couldn't
breathe that night; I slept imprisoned in a
fight for breath a taste a touch a slice of
what you promised me as cherished wife.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Last Of The Dinosaurs

A quaint case of an Abbott and
two Bishops on the Front Bench while
the rat Minchin is to be content with
resources and energy; Ruddock
back as shadow cabinet secretary –
hard to believe, but true, whereas
Barnaby Joyce is to head finance!

Shaking one's head in bewilderment
suggests the mix is a heady cocktail
of head-in-sand incomprehension
about where the future stands;
unless one views it as already
behind us, being unattainable
and therefore sacrosanct

I like the way Abbott says 'if I'm
proved wrong I'll be marooned
on an island of stupidity but I
might be right and a hero'
He could be, I agree, and still
doomed to extinction within an
hierarchy of dinosaur proclivity
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Late

It was 2am
by your day clock
meaning would be lost
contractually in
that reasoning

But, hey, be
in the span of this
conscious patronage, no
moment is misplaced
feel the heat

Re-considered
in a trust reviewed, the
new regime essays
forgiveness is
remote as 2am
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Laughing Apace

a silly little cameo to
tease a smile from otherwise
engaged nonsensicalities

teeth bared in a taut-lip
caricature of a grimaced grin
caught out day-dreaming

yep, that's me, barely inured
to rhythms within but seen to
be responding to procedures

it wasn't what I failed which
made the grade but how I
lived with such certainty

laughing apace kept peace
stable and made this
love of life consummate

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Liberty Of Trust

not my plans as such but residues –
ideas that never flew for want of
gravities' largess; and yet a taste
of camembert between suggests
maybe they did

one needs to fail in little ways to
learn success; as yearning grows
it plays a subtle tune within, a
harmony to spurn an easy score
– of sun-drenched lazy days

therein a ripening begins for
those whose egos never dream
as adulation's slave; in learning
to be free of faux prestige a
liberty of trust is duly paid
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Living Frugally

I may be shy a few superlatives
but grant me space – the sound
of thunder rumbling and a gentle
rain that soothes maternally says
“*be at peace within this place*”

it is an observation voiced frugally
in desiccated choruses – unforgiving
failures played by sunburned
consciousness without a living
start or less forgiving end

clemency is nodding as you stand
shirtless simply listening in cool
raindrops to a sole koel calling,
“*hey, are you here yet?*” An
intimate massage of its majesty

today I cleaned gutters with hands
cut easily by edges I already knew
tacitly small sacrifices that drew
blood – deformed testimony to this
rainfall's munificence

and yet you claim there's no need
for change because anything as
godlike as this is plainly too good
to be estranged – or compromised
by further dehydration

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Loss

Which bit don't
you understand –
disappointment
or loss?

I used to say that's me
the dull bloke next
to the beaut Sheila
and they knew who I was

but now you're gone
they hesitate – was
I erased the day
you went away?

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Mango

tempted to write 'dork' for the
crossword clue *Stallone role*
suggests I didn't see much in Rambo

which is true but then I'd play
mutant Christmas Mango
if the price was right

so the first Kensington Pride*
consumed this year from my trees
attracted proper ceremony

twelve days to ripen seems
to fit this grand occasion
although ensorcelled in a bowl

and whichever way you view
that gustatory connection it's
still lost on Johnny Rambo
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* Mango

Ivan Donn Carswell

March Flies

Playing games
with *Tabanids* while
picking avocados surely
is one useful way to
stave off boredom

Tabanids you ask?
March or Horse flies –
those big, viciously
biting nasties that fly
like drunken sailors

Got twenty (at least)
today – bitten thrice and
felt it fair trade despite
being disgracefully
outnumbered

It's mated females who
get on the bite – males
are do-good vegetarians
withal, notwithstanding
it isn't even March yet!
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Market In The Rain

Bob's view was we couldn't run
away, rain didn't demand unilateral
surrender; we were men-at-arms
used at least to deprivation and
where was impending danger?

Didn't stop the weak and gutless
leaving but not many came. The
wimps parade to exits gave us
strength in a belief that we were
made of steely sterner stuff.

We fooled no-one but us I had to
say; in pouring rain who came to
buy our goods? True undeniably
it was, and if it ever stopped or
eased we'd likely get to see.

In the event it didn't and I packed
to leave; I know he envied me but
stayed to sell his dragon fruit. The
pilgrims earned his doggedness he
said by being resolute.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Meandering

so what do you do
have another beer, stir
the bolognaise or shoot
something? You can try
all without guarantee
ennui will abate

in a day mortgaged to
circumspect reflection
relief of knowing comes
after the cockatoo's 'kiss
this' salute and Mellencamp's
<i>"Way To Your Heart"</i>

I haven't lost the place
I marked in the Book of Life
the children are safe
and no news is good news –
so far it's merely me
meandering
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Mementos

No escaping them and
they are blessed by
origins survival true

A fleeting glance cannot
allay devotion beaming
through reminding me

There is a life they say
in tones and colours
of the palest shades

And these mementos
blaze above the pyres
of love's mislaid lament

Your sentence is to die
a thousand deaths with
each enamoured glance

I cannot look and try to
turn away – nothing left
but pungent memories

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Memories

It's been a year, a mood that
never leaves is hid between
the moments when I think of
you with clarity and those
where fear abrades a faultless
view of purity august

Did you ever dare adjust a
measure of this malady? No peace
in conscience known has dwelt
with such a trenchant loneliness;
I'd vet an answer candidly if
you despaired the same as me

I live alone in emptiness and
fear it for my sanity – I hear
your voice deceiving what I know
is not, admitting to an anxious
need too deep entrenched to quell,
a heritage of Hell replete

There is no joy in silent trees even
though they gainfully appease
my angst in noble quietude; it is
the wash beyond benign serenity
I need, the memories that bathe
in want of you prolonged

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Metastasis

If I am to return to this life it
won't be as a brown snake I
killed this afternoon or mosquito
that died violently this morning
no chance I'd make amends for
their passing by being them

I could be a straw that broke
the camel's back; maybe I am
and regret serial incidents
still happening – hard to say
the fact is I'm on a limb and
beyond wrack or reason

Thoughts no more suicidal than
random gusts of lambent wind
shirr dreams I'd rather forget
seems I'm bound in the shame
of your leaving metastasized
by letting you go

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Morning Coffee

coffee's a dream and warm
French bread compliments
where croissants will cloy a
sentiment already appraised
it is simplicity raised where
taste remains pure and origins
clear; no milk or sugar in the
cup, no jam or honey please

just a smear of butter to melt
of its own largesse on a bread
that gloats this early morning's
pleasure – already I sink out of
sight on the scents, drown in
expressive benevolence

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Movin' On

groovin' mind and mood to
'Cherry Bomb' won't make
me sing though breaking
bones of raucous sleep

my day begins nostalgically
to Mellencamp sung sweet
in simple words he's said
so well there's no recoil

morning's melancholy takes
the strain and says there's
room to move if you'd just
step away from memories

nothing left to wear as clothes
but past and prospect chic as
gay superfluties out of an old
rucksack – I'm on my way
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Mutations Of Self Interest

Besides dreary politics
the functioning of law
conspires to weary me
although I'm neither pro
nor con its song and dance

I see philanthropic
mutations of self-interest
in the claim: *"Vote for
ME and I'll give you
what YOU want! "*

I know that what it
really stands for is a
statement of intent:
*'Vote for ME and I'll
give you what I want! '*

On the other hand law
is less an Institution than
an Ass who sits absorbed
in rictus on an egg-like
ego contemplating self

Regrettably the hatch is
neither planned nor heritably
compatible *but nonetheless*
protected it will be by full
force of an Ass! *</i>*

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Ivan Donn Carswell

My Enemy My Friend

My enemy my friend
whom I know without compromise,
when I listened to the
deconstructions avowed of you
as your brand of pernicious
lies I was ashamed.
I know where you situate
in matters that joined us
in vigorous hand to hand
(and at times bloody) debate,
I know where you opposed my
belated philosophies you would stand
as firmly of the same belief as I
that they needed to be uttered freely.
But you never said those things
you are unjustly accused of by the
makers of plastic peace,
you only claimed they could be
said in a free and democratic state.
And in a few hysterical moments
your worthy sentiments were crushed
by the heel of the much vaunted principles
you said would take your noble life in
denying the freedom to oppose them.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Need

I see the cherub's grace in this
expression strained with angst
I know it less than as it seems

she's reined by circumstance in
ways unveiled by able chance
that preys on gravid sympathy

although we held her warming
tight in gracious arms embrace
in basics of her need we failed
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Ivan Donn Carswell

New Year's Day Reflections

New Year's Day and
I am tired picking avocados
thoughts expanding beyond
caring foliage concealing
the self-same fruit I seek

is this really you, a voice asks,
more from morbid curiosity than
intent I guess, but I am lost
for an answer; can I get back
to you, I say

only if you see better reason
for hanging there precariously
scaring the sh*t out of your
absent family it says, and the
least of all, *me*...

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Nod To Agree

going to be
a day where
the plan is stated
upfront
agreed
progressed directly
beginning to end

nothing simpler
no diversions
delays

no excuse things
to be done: *</i>*

wash the Ute
vacuum and scrub the cab
(needed it for years)
polish the dash

easy

I see you're
shaking your head

you NOD to agree
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Not The Same

I noticed recently that people
move away from me like I'm
diseased he sadly says

At the grocery they'd greet me
with a smile and ask 'how are
you today? ' Now they turn away

I feel an antique ache inside that
hollows me – you know I'm shy
does that surprise?

The lonely man they think I am
has died for sure or stays away
too far beyond a certain cure
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Nowhere To Run

I had wanted to say scathing words about ideology germane to female genital mutilation; I could not see justification pertains for an act only inimitable as barbarous. In diffuse debate I learned how little I knew.

If preservation of innocence is taken to extremes there are ways I couldn't dream to perpetuate that blissful state; clitoridectomy is just one which screams the loudest distaste to my hormonally challenged ears.

I did the reading, looked up diagrams saw pictures of unsightly scarring too horrendous to accept as imperatives of racially deemed social distinction. Innocence isn't preserved by cutting pre-pubescent's non-consenting flesh.

I rested my case. Then in an easy afternoon I learned of circumcision and a host of procedures utilised to raise breasts and reduce wrinkles including genital modification not too dissimilar. And there was nowhere to run...

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Nuptials

Occasionally I am impressed – it doesn't mean I can be bought by tawdriness which scoops the cream too easily yet today I saw evidence where men who usually ignore ceremony were bound by its circumstance

The scene; a campfire of durable lineage in the middle of the day and four men. I knew from the previous evening's debris there's no escape – littered wine bottles some nearly empty kept counsel in ritual silence

The beer we drank excused why we were there and the Marquee for Saturday's wedding said it more eloquently; I guessed your company is somewhat sullied by the event of a daughter's nuptials I say ingenuously

Yeah sure – but the bugger's this fire, it's too hard to invent another way of everyone seeing where we are at, like it's a traditional tract that says *'gather round and look at me you tossers, this is the only thing that matters'*

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On Your Birthday, Today,

On your birthday, today, there is time to reflect
On the essence of our intimacy,
From a beginning in the spring-tide of youth
To an afterward secured in the distant mist,
And for what reason and to what end it endures.
Each year I feel the consequence, keen
With up-welling of sentiment,
Where new love springs before the old
Has run its course (but its course is never run),
And each day adds its weight to the sum
We bear on that date this day in June,
To solidify with birthdays gone by
In an endless, banquet bequest.
Today we take time out to renew
And revisit the mood of our youthful love.
Tomorrow, with the same tremulous excitement
As beset us when we danced on its eve 'til dawn
We will wed again.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Order

intoxication of the previous
evening plays callous games
not so much a classic hangover
as a sense of disappointment
that evades capture and
categorization

what on earth were you thinking
sounds more like Mother talking
than a rational grip on morning's
reality yet you tidied up and put
the empties away before
you went to bed

waking to last night's dishes
usually says things are much
the same but today's greeting
frankly puzzles – you can't
explain the sense of order
decide what must have changed
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Otter Dreams

it is the same recall that
bathed in your maternal stream
an otter sleek and quick
in play – a timeless dream

too swift the years that
weighed against a buoyancy
of thought and deed – too
late to claim offense

and then you went away
to seek another you - the
one that grew apart in days
of darkened dissonance

otter dreams suspended
in a trance of tenderness
liquid memories enhanced
by waters calling agelessly
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Patch Of Weed

I'll cede at worst a patch of
weed explains the workings
of our minds to me – you
see a garden there that
needs its share of TLC and
fair enough it works quite
well when offered it; but
deep within lurks onion grass
that hasn't gone away

flowers and shrubs have
been addressed by diligence
at best explained in photos
that suggest you're right; the
stunning views declare per
chance a scene of classic
elegance to hold the sway;
but deep within lurks runner
grass that bides its time

in chaste array I see today a
renaissance of plan; Mother
Nature's chicken weed with
sticky seed has run amok
it dies designed by industry
of making me to strut and
prance its tune in fluency
of knowing we'd have never
had an even chance

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Paternoster

they were not words I chose
but echoes ringing free of
circumstance; the wine gave
me an absolute and cast-iron
guarantee that I was not to
blame – as if I cared.

\$30 retail wouldn't seem the
cause by my acerbic happenstance
although enough I knew it wasn't
sole and only origin to where
the paternoster true
anomalies were born

if you will give me words
I know I'll pay your price
before you ever see the cause
of phrases jemmied from the
vault of what it was before
they made us nice...

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Pawn Played For A Fool

one thought kept
strong to traverse
a whole backbone
and return enriched
is beyond me

I am plagued
by insurrection –
demands stream
from places alien to
my mother tongue

feet do not obey
hands and this
abdomen swears
worse than the tongue
which enables it

thoughts come and
go erratically, management
fails dismayed in places
where sense used to
mean reason

it is a state of anarchy –
I am a pawn played for
a fool possessed by
intractable ideas of
new-age humanity
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Peace Enough

it is impossible to discern
real ties between unwritten
shopping lists, injured shoulder
and mild depression –
so I rest easy

I know, I know, the
tamarillos need picking
they glare from unmown
grass beneath the trees
with angst restrained

been a hard week, grass
growing out-of-control
social calendar stealing
what little poise remains
I could be excused

which I won't be, there's
always that self-righteous
bloody-mindedness playing
devil's advocate – defence
against deference, so I'll fail

but you will never know;
now if this shoulder would
relent maybe I'll find peace
enough and contentment
in your epic victory
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Pearls

Let me say less fear of
contradiction or dissent
the only food that I'd
refuse would be the
pap of politicians

I've heard it said by
better men as sustenance
of eloquence; the words
inspiring sense of worth
are made of mute consent

Give to those who lead
a freely sanctioned glory
and feed the rest who
carp and whine as pearls
cast-off to well-fed swine
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Phoneless

losing your mobile phone
in an orchard where trees
visibly rustle amusement
doesn't make finding it easier

observe; if Velcro fails to
contain Nokia's venturesome
free spirit and you're phoneless
time condenses dismally

sane reasoning won't restrain
spectral sphincters expressions
of disbelief; how could you be
so stupid they self-flagellate

yet you see it in mind's eye as
lonely and as clear as millions of
leaves littering – but you hear only
the birds twitter and the wind

seven times you roamed and rang
before the ringtone activates; seven
times in seven rows then melody
of Abba's winsome tune awakes

*"Money, money, money
must be funny
in the rich man's world"*
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Pictures

pictures jumble through a lucid
sleep without a patterned chain
indistinct ideas play millisecond
games inspired by chaos rules
I'm lulled into a fool's belief of
paradise but lost for focus of
reality – I sense but do not see
if anchors sure are holding
me secure in place

a face within the anarchy has
merged in peaceful dreams
and draws me in; on waking
once again the thought returns
too strong to rate as random
chance – I beg to see the
image vague reframed in
views of She with whom
I've always longed to be
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Plastic Providence

go back to bed at least
and stay in it; it is a
sanctuary for feelings
fleeing consequence

each day begins a
vacancy that's never filled
no applicants compete
for empty space

your doubt is spread on
wings which will inflate
the disbelief – as if it
always rightly is this way

you watch a petty thief
of time implicitly through
eyes deceived; complicity
conceives your plastic fate
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Pocketful Of Dreams

I need these lines to be
at least about those things
I meant to say, not words
selected for their odd
texture or dubious origins
<i>and there I go again</i>, just
words which equate a
sense of where a you
and I appear

I'm no grievous poet yet
and never hoped to be but
you are one who's free to
scribe to stars with whimsy
consummate

a consequence of reading
far and wide and thinking
on beyond and yet you chose
to make me one whose words
delight – a constant liberal
want to sense what's ever
shared

so be assured, faeries are
not myths of legends lost too
long from ancient times but
visions new with origins today

they insulate it seems
against a tawdriness of
structured thought - allay
all fear of being caught
without a pocketful of
complimentary dreams
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Privacy

Should I know your feelings
as you do and if I did would
it intrude in places where I
wasn't meant to be?

A notion we are boldly free
disposing bounds too intimate
and frail for public view inflates
the price of liberty to choose

If chains be set to where from
moments shared to moments
where you need to hide would
it efface that mutuality?

If disillusioned one could bear
the pain in open spaces and
again be seen embracing with
an elegance of pure romance

That truth is too obtuse to let
it guide the course you chose
is known and I'd impose in places
where you need to go alone

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Proof

Not knowing what to look for weighs
scales against finding what I would
not likely recognise anyway –
feels like certain failure

Yet the money paid rests easy
in a bank's ownership that fails
intelligence tests of what
I'd expect legitimacy to be

But stubbornness invades with
a brusque sense of 'Yeah,
Screw the Establishment'
I'll not give in yet

Examine ageing registers and there
vaguely familiar yet in cogent detail
Parcels of Shares I didn't recognize
I ever really owned

But the quandary remains
how in all honesty can I represent
a me I never was and what
would the proof of it be?

The preamble says
He whose name bears witness on
these Certificates of Ownership
I am to prove I am
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Reading Clouds

I just record these things, he
glibly said, it's what I see; if
you can take a meaning then
that's surely fine by me.

First, a face in profile, strong
nose, prominent brow crowned
in bouffant afro, an eye widens
blue – pursed lips exhale a puff
of smoke in cloud exude drawn
slow in hazy strands, features
last to fade the eye and nose.

And then a boxing kangaroo, a
caricature of cockiness with
head upraised and ears alert,
paw in fisted stance. It couldn't
be a dog as was my want initially
so commonsense and I agreed; a
strong and stable sight it stayed
in view for quite some time.

The last intrigued; a hollow in
the cloud allowed a view beyond.
Lighter greys and pastel blues
outlined the figure from a mural
which I knew; the scene a focus
on creation where just Adam's
hand and face appeared.

If Michelangelo had meant I see
this marvel in the clouds with
focussed clarity then you can
be assured I'm rightly proud.

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Recondite

if they're yours
balls in a garlic press
imply something recondite
and untenable

based, one proposes
in illusory oohs and
aahs as pressure
is applied

I suggest, sceptic
to the end, clarification
is in sizes – if they fit
<i>don't spare `em</i>
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Rejoice

Again rejoice, the golden
voice of godlike Barnaby
begets a view of National
spew reserved and
served as rustic
common sense.

On *'The Economy'*
his mien has been chameleon
yet say the least he now espouses
freedom from restraint
if votes ensue that dam
the shocking waste.

And is he Hockey's mate
who speaks for Treasury?
Well woe proposed to those
opposed to anal debt constraint;
as minister, may God forbid,
he'll feature as a laxative.

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*Barnaby Joyce is Tony Abbott's
Shadow Minister for Finance*

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Return

I'll make no predictions but
to say this flight comes closer
to the *'you'* you were than the
'you' you then became

There is a host of memories
some of them the same as
those you greeted glad in
cause of bonded family

They didn't realign or care
to run away, watched in
quiet, kept words still that
ached to comfort you

And they will with sober
views relate their warmth
unguardedly, share themselves
with thorough grace

The shame of it remains no
means can give you back those
perfect years – although they're
there and ever yours to claim

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Rise To See

an answer would stare you in
the face if your gaze could rise
to lips above those comely breasts
the sultry curving hips
the lissom buttocks swell

it is all's well in its place
you're caged mind's eye between
your hopes hard pressed and
thighs warming the love
alive's concealment of rank distress

it is so good to see you,
you say, meaning why can't I
see more of you please
I'd die to glimpse the
promised land

and she replies in tinkling
notes sweeter than water
ringing over ancient stones
the answer's in my eyes
if yours could rise to see
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Rite Of Change

the life that never went away
remains in silent piles of clothes
that stay awaiting gentle hands
to put them where they're meant to be;
I see a patent rite of change
and patiently do best I can
to balance themes

I never add an item shed
in sensing chance that constancy
will play a role; I understand
that keeping peace is goal and game
and match triumphant in this frame
of referenced complacency

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Roles

He goes on-stage to play
a role with histrionics
script-sustained in sneezing
misery he views
abhorrent to the craft.

It isn't affectation when
it preys upon a self he
can't renew, there is no
balanced sense of who
he is if guessing fails.

Cues are missed and lines
delivered lifelessly – a
deathly silence blooms
as faux applause in
every way imaginary.

He says in self defence it
isn't me on-stage but He
who lost His Faith; I'm ill
and know I cannot play
the role as well as He.

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Room For Two

I am centre of the Universe.
Let me explain; that is me,
a separate, unique entity.

Nonetheless it is also true
there IS no centre of Nothing –
how can there be?

But at least we exist, or
I know I do, recognisably,
because I am centre of me.

Were I centre of you
you might not agree
there was room for two.

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Rules Misread

So I was wrong
it proves I guess I am
the kind of guy whose
outside the square thinking
determines where he gets
misinformation

Helen Rowland said
'To be happy with a man you
must understand him a lot
and love him a little
To be happy with a woman
you must love her a lot and not
try to understand her at all'

It didn't reach me except
as a woman's oversimplification
of an impossible study and there
is the rub; I do understand the
woman I love but her happiness
won't stay intact

I saw where Rowland's words lead
in this infarct following exodus of the girl
who loved me a lot but understood
me not at all – and I claim foul
We were deceived by a call
from the rules misread
in another's game

Ivan Donn Carswell

Sacred Space

even sacred space has room that's
not invasion proof - there's liberal
confirmation raids incurring greater
anguish now occur most every day;
from where I stand the pathway's
trampled smooth by errant feet
competing in unseemly haste to
dump their woes and beat retreat

they ask of me a counsel I abide in
wisdom of the ages scribed in gothic
script declaiming options lost by
overcrowding private life; yet to
tell them where to go is not the
kind advice they'd want to hear
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Savoir Faire

if I have learned anything it is
the *savoir faire* of silence – not
that I can't say the right thing
but an innocent, all-over-in-an
instant keeping-the-peace guile
of a stilled-tongue wins. So let me
lick your lips – pierce that inner
sanctum you are guarded about

it is not an answer I know but
the drawn out groans of pleasure
suggest nerves much in need;
there is unwell denial where a
clear conscience prevaricates
awaits an anxious requital

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Saying Goodbye

my old dog is dying
he won't look at me
in a way that say's don't worry
this is just a slight aberration
asserts that no-fuss personality
I always relied on

I choke back tears try to
convey a strangling sorrow
but he wobbles away without
comment; it's so sad, he's
much more the man of me
than ever I am

just yesterday
he lay in my lap contented
again the eternal pup at home
with his earth and his origins
where fanged legends howl
frank admiration

today he knows he's dying
but he won't let me pray
for him or evoke icons
he'll die as he must
it's simply his way
of saying goodbye
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Scenes

isn't scenes of beastly screaming
voices drown a stasis bleeding
forcing choices vilely reeking
where I cling to my own debris

caught within I hear the chaos
chorused in a choral singing
bartered hubris numbs my senses
stripping me of all true feeling

solitary innovation
calmed by complex contemplation
choosing where it will be standing
how to save itself oblivion

no-one knows her more than she does
cheating them of goals outreaching
bringing me to where I'm ceded
alone inside a crowded room

entombed within a baleful vault
no-one leaves and doors are bolted
intellect has trialled and faltered
grieves it wouldn't have succeeded

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Secrets

I discovered you yesterday
excuse me for being flabbergasted
and somewhat trite

still recovering from a
vagrant thought you might
actually understand me

or do I misconceive
intelligence for the insight
of a knowing smile?

your grin replies
enigmatically, *"that secret's
safe with me!"*

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Seeing With Clarity

it's only been since March
you protest – just nine months
not a lifetime wasted

not as if I didn't want them
repaired but a day expended
thus seemed too much to pay

Heaven's sake *sunglasses* don't
make that much difference even
if they're tinted reactively

one wonders what I missed since
seeing with great clarity and this
miniscule perversion of shame
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Self Interest

it is as good as your word
which wasn't good anyway
a cut-rate ticket to nowhere

you claim sentience and a
stake in charity – a tall ask
for a turd whose insight ends
where self-interest wanes

ask yourself which fixations never
change – and count your blessings
the centre of all things that matter
defines terms of engagement
not where you think you are

for this sleight of hand you'll
pay in grandiose pretensions
rendered dust – it was never an
option to posture over

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Seminally Explained

wine stains
cabernet merlot I guess
on the desk where dust
accumulates and I write

the one an excess
the other a Sapphic
expression seminally explained
in grains too small to reason with
but no less an influence
on thoughts of a friend
obsessed with not
getting any

won't let dust rest
believes declaring disillusionment
with one-sided abstinence
validates trading places as a
strap-on making inroads
into monastic celibacy with
his born-again 'coming out'
as a new-age lesbian
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Sense Of Worth

Barely concealing emotion and tentative as if mutely accusing me of complicity she asked if I had seen her little dog. We've known each other seven years; while she displays at times an artifice beyond her age I knew that this was tender-raw and real.

She explained unenthusiastically of the six loose at home it was a tan and white Jack Russel male, cheeky nature but disposed to truculence. I agreed I had; a week ago he'd boldly entered the back yard, indecorously peed on flowers then ran away.

Missing since morning, looked everywhere she said. The pout and rising lilt suggested sentiment suppressed by doubt concerning my veracity. If I did I'd let her know, I said and was sincere – unless he went near chooks who had survived the last calamity.

Her innocence and pluck combined to make me sad. This dog was raised in anarchy, a barefaced terrorist never trained, properly leashed, or ever obeyed a simple command. If there was to be a grim prognosis on its end, why then for it sure it would be bad.

I'd prefer she did not see her dog again or know its fate. Guiltless of the act I share a view protecting her which stays my sense of righteousness; she's blameless in her narrow view by dearth of parenting – a lack which skews an anxious sense of worth.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Shopping Trip

So when are you going to go
fishing then? 115 mm of rain says
nothing's getting done while the
anticipatory pleasure of still more
to come remains discrete

And it's not as if it wouldn't rain
weren't you there – although, agreed,
enjoyment couldn't be the
same as standing out in it
soaking up your privileged share

Eight days now you have delayed
a shopping trip in case you miss
a passing shower. Claiming *'I'm not*
that obsessed about it' doesn't quite
ring true somehow

This pique of moribund despondency
paints your thoughts grey and makes
you live anxiously; it's not for me to
say but you to do – at least shopping
takes the legs off such unease

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Spill

His Grace,
Tony Abbott, MP, made the
grade today - one vote in it
though he'll crow with manic
majesty that he's true
saviour of our plight

or in an dearth of
drought-worn selfless
accolades from lesser
lights be forced to
clench his fists and
bully-boy his views

Malcolm Turnbull
graciously amused that he'd
been done and dusted well
but with integrity could
say at least Joe Hockey
stayed unbent

so why are we who
need intelligence on
climate change through
Liberal dreams about to
see extinction of the
Dinosaurs again?

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Stardom

i wanna be popular
she cries i don't care how
i get there i wanna be top
of a tree with a star and
adulation dripping
off of me

then lass he says
change your ways
be less yourself and more a
vague but persistent rumour
writing verse is a
pathway to fame

i'll do it she says *i'll*
write nite and day and read
and revise and excite admirers
with the best rhymes
and nicest annotations
you can think of

then gather admirers
from friendly conspirers
he says - quality matters
but masses of like-minded
drifting together will
make you a star anyway

i want to be cried over
after i'm dead and bathed in
the same adulation i had
when alive - i want to be
held in enduring
affection

sadly he says there's no
guarantee that your fate after
death will be properly weighed
the same crew that made you

a star on the tree will also be
dead most irrevocably

Ivan Donn Carswell

Straw Hats

Try not to see them as
ideograms; they are just
straw hats hanging on the wall.

You see vacant space for a
head intended but it doesn't
persuade personality is gone.

A silk scarf wound around the
hat demanding most hangs
gloomily, memories are no relief.
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Succour

I cannot claim to share your
view or see a scene the same
as you – or where it was and
when with who

it was a set of fickleness to
best your sober sense in ways
I saw as gaming plays against
an unrelenting deference

be assured I'm on your team
as true as you in thought and
deed – tacitly I'd lead if you
in fact agreed to follow me

I know that you have gone alone in
seeking things you've never known
discoveries of who you are and
where and what you've grown into

sadness is I'm left bereft to dull
routines that make me deaf
suggesting your largesse I miss
as succour only you express
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Surrender

This is more than punishment
there's no relief, bones bared
will shatter easy echoed clean
purgatory's superior, at least
a chance to expiate and win a
place in Heaven; here callous
stasis maims mobility only
graven silence imitates

If you knew just how you
sentenced me I'd reason to
progress beyond conjecture
set in stone; it is more comfort
than not knowing whether you
saw thus before surrender

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Surrender (Rev)

Resolve collapsing in upon
itself enfolds mythologies
unbarring blemishes – no
energising oddity is manifest
in making light of sense
impaired directionless

But nothing's there, no
glimmered passing shadow
shrouded breath of fragrant air
echoes of a lilting laugh
mellow tone so redolent
an absent presence sensed

I'm lost to what I knew
before you grew apart
and flew away – yet still
estranged from whence it
came to grant this daunting
gauntlet you passed on

My loneliness despairs and
knows no reason to prolong
a vapid sham – no motives
weigh defence against my
giving in because it makes
the better sense

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Sympathy

Bandaging the wrist of the hand
that cries foul plays mind-games
look at me it says with a white
flag emblazoned – you can't miss
this face of vulnerability or fail
to see the pain nobly etched
bravery's for fools tamed to
the taciturn god of reticence

Faced with plague-like aches
contumacious in persistence
do you choose silent obedience
or vicarious praise in sympathy
from insecure watchers who
jealously self-flagellate

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Tactile Cues

Well he said
the worst that can happen is
you fall down a disused
elevator shaft because
the sign's in Braille

meaning I ask – you
shouldn't have
been there

meaning
you don't
read Braille

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Teabags

it isn't coping but it is a way
to keep pace with how little things
change, I count teabags
used since you had a cup with me
700 is my guess
averaging two a day
but not counting coffee

one wonders if I've lost the
plot in an introspective rut
too deep to see both sides of –
believing time is measured only
in residue of past events; okay
so what, I have at least 700
reasons to know I'm lonely
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Ivan Donn Carswell

That View

that view made sense when you
espoused it – a “*here and now*”
philosophy with hairy bits extant;
although today’s composure
won’t relent

it says we didn’t know the World
back then; can’t cavil or consent
or least equate to scrutiny that
lent us this – acerbically I’ll wont
concede

we knew the needs as well as they
who played equations with their
stocks and shares – but we were
less imbued with vanity; my fear
was only love of you

and there I am besmeared; to
whom do I owe sustenance? If
it were you I’m free of guilt I
fondly think – you needn’t say
a word

and now these views conspire
to bleed the life of you to whom
my admiration knows no bounds;
our freedom paid no dues for sure
but truly you are not in need
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Ivan Donn Carswell

The Covetous Edge

8 am, been up since 6 busy
cleaning inboxes, checked the
top tank bore water return
all's well in a World of searing
wind-raised fire danger

So far anyway, yet to make
that cup of coffee which takes
me to the covetous edge of
this day's being – it is a delay
not easily explained

The idea I *<i>need</i>* to be where
sh*t hits the fan reflexively
engages lower gear – more
a fail-safe cut-out switch than
a self-contained expression

Coffee will make me believe
I *<i>am</i>* the difference whether
awake or merely imagining
it; though in another way I'd
really prefer disconnection
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The Other Half

it is not the way you planned
to begin; an admission before
positing this solemn submission
seems less a canny route

saying, "you are never less
than half my thoughts" sounds
profoundly inexact – if at all
possible though cutely quaint

there's a *je ne sais quoi* 'pure
vulnerability' in those words
for sure but their import might
be too easily misconstrued

a statement of intent with which
one proves truth by well meant
and easily observed activity
the Saint in you assumes

while the Lawyer asks wryly and
with *sang froid* of long standing
familiarity, "well then, what is it
that occupies *the other half*? "

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Ivan Donn Carswell

The Thing Is...

the thing is I knew
why I stayed
it made more sense
than simply giving in
besides there's nowhere else
I'd rather be alone
with memories

oh, for sure
it's true that
you can claim
estrangement isn't
new it lasted in
suspension more
than forty years

and took the same
redressing vows it broke
as tragic words unsaid
while mending novice
wings to fly courageously
without a map and land
on one leg blind

but nothing's really
changed my mind
except this new reality
wherein I see the
fracture is the leg
you broke as sacrifice
in finding pain

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Ivan Donn Carswell

The You Of You

It doesn't go away – no shelter
from the emptiness; a pure
and empty space invades what
used to be

A presence that was here remains
in truth, evades the cleaning broom
as easily as air – dispersing in the
face of it

And yet it stays as cogent as a place
preserved – a fortitude of memories
a physicality exposed as
naked truth

Senses are seduced in echoes from
a past reduced to ashes spread and
hasty footprints traced through
nascent dust

But emptiness still grows when lust
consumes an empty eye for touch
and tooth and smell of it that
sadly fled

No sound can fill the space you
left so patently contused; without
the You of You this place
is badly deficit

5 August 2009, I. D. Carswell

Ivan Donn Carswell

Thinking Survival

Distancing yourself is brave
it takes more than a Devil's chance
to face scars of burdened conscience
without bearing similar marks

A bizarre maxim of
read-between-the-lines intent
gained your attention too easily
admittedly you were a pushover then
though now you refuse to reason

Today I have to ask again – what
is the sense of continuing the farce?
it proves nothing to be right
or wrong or ashamed – loneliness
is still the end event

Thinking survival in a blue funk
dressed in nothing more circumspect
than faded positano T shirt and
pair of green ocean one board shorts
hardly makes me a guru

Nor am I blessed with optimism – could
one find lesser fashion sense so obtuse
it doubles back on itself becomes
<i>de rigueur</i> because so <i>fait accomplis</i>?

Wearing ugg boot slippers you'd
approve of for security hugging
my feet with tenderness absent
in this monastery

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Ivan Donn Carswell

This House Which Is Lived In

This house which is lived in resounds
with the chorus of voices bound in the press
of its generous, unconcealed blessings;
affection is neither distressed nor restrained,
nor caught in the intricate mesh of wicker
and wire-ordered veins of its living construction,
contained within gentle, carbon-breathing walls.
The halls are hung with wooded reminders that ask
your forbearance - the task is benign
and in the heartbeat pulsing rooms
you find an arcade of worthy mementos
defined. The rooms are clothed in guises unique
and disconnected each from each,
yet oddly unified, resting easily before eyes
sorely seduced, wearing tenant characters
deduced in muted shades and crafted shadows
folded into thriving colour and softening drapes
hung or flung in wide, comforting curves revealing
the objects ordinarily placed in ordered disorder;
this space is so soothing and yet it deceives
in the ease that it steals your heart.
Where do you start in derisory word
and hackneyed phrases to describe this house
which astounds and amazes?

Ivan Donn Carswell

Those Early Words

Reading those early words wryly
brings fragile pleasure - a spare
grin lingers, there's a rare uplift
in spirits usually dour to baseline;
seems we're almost reconciled in
denying the same consequences and
concealing a leer long lost from
fabulous ages past and gone

And they were treasured times for
sure - flair omnipresent, no doubt
concerns and we could never fail;
purity of thought pranced casually
on pages, frolicked in open rhyme
and aired rhythms in a burlesque
extravagance - nothing mattered
but the words and what we were

Cheered by pure innocence and a
heart of gold it shocked to learn
not all shared the same nature; it
was there we forged armour worn
as bonhomie - swallowed all the
elixirs dictionaries contained and
swore allegiance to a glamorous
view of our brand new unity

Yes, the power sprang again from
the same words - it meant we're
still in resonance, less upbeat but
in tune nonetheless; these days
we'd allay others fears with more
circumspect consideration but we
still agree with that oblique leer
and a caustic tongue in cheek

Ivan Donn Carswell

To Win A Game

How do you win a football game? Not by skill alone or clever plays,
in modern days the game has changed and subterfuge and actors
ways will pave the path to glory. Fitness pays a fair reward to keep
a fleetness in the feet, a clearness in the head, and special food
and clever drinks recharge the cells when batteries are low or dead.
But referees are certain keys to all the famous victories.
Linguistic tricks of lunatics in soccer strip are even matched by
hieroglyphs from coaches dressed in two piece suits, with
hearts on sleeves, grieving for the chances missed, pleading
with the referee for plays he did or didn't see, for ploys that failed
to turn his head, for verdicts made and judgements dread.
And referees are equal keys to infamy or certain fame.
Then there's the crowd, a seething throng of attitude and energy,
baying for their chosen team, living in a plastic dream of cinematic
death or glory; dressed in kind and cheering on, drinking, singing,
chanting long and loud the songs expressing hopes and fears of masses
pressed in servitude, praying for a famous win, praying to the soccer rood.
But referees are willing keys to all the prayers and eulogies.
How do you win? Why do you care? Theatrics grimace everywhere,
a game so crafted for the stage with pathos, bathos, great despair,
actors playing parts and reading scripts with human traits, protagonists,
antagonists, depicting gallant characters with artful flair,
it's all encompassed there, entwined in referee maturity, so grin
and bear it friend, you see, it looks so good on home TV.

Ivan Donn Carswell

Toilet Seat

I am a man and need not change
the way I am; I'm free of toilet
agonies and trained by mother's
hand to competence. I disagree
the toilet seat resolves how one
should pee no matter what you
ladies think – my male design
precedes the toilet anyway.

Come to think of it our genders
were established long before this
damn debate began; today no
sanity exists in claims that vanity
is compromised to see the seat
upright. It never bothers me!

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Too Late

Allegorical? No way
it's the stone age
truth coming out
in a rash

It's where you
chose to be by
run-out-of-gas
dead reckoning

Plain as the nose
on your face if
you can't deal
with the facts

Looking askance
won't change where
you're at on a raft
of excuses at sea

Too late to mend
years choked by
self-preservation
too late to grieve

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Too Wit

The things that hatch through narrow cracks
are not the enemy we must believe; to see
them in their plenitude as opportunists who
have little choice, soloists out flying all alone
are males, they'll die for pheromones which
promise paradise. Cannot find a solid source
for their largesse, suspect it doesn't have a
cause for brains and yet they'd die for sex?

Mealy moths again are trying my propriety
I must admit I do not know what motivates
the little twits; all processed grain is double
sealed and yet they breed. I freeze the items
where their signature is clear, feed it to the
ravenous and stay too wit, ashamedly naive
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Took Forever

it took forever to reach a point
where *forever* wasn't relevant
like three sips more than originally
intended; even revelation asked
on someone else's behalf – still
debating whether or whom,
"...WTF's this all about? "

not a response that downplayed
every nuance, indeed a clever and
erudite reply that's got me wondering
whether I can cope with another tot
of The Black Douglas – tonight's
answer to scholarly speculation
in a poet's glass

if I knew the answers I wouldn't be
asking the questions you are; it never
mattered before whether you understood
because you never knew me and
as much as you think you do now
whether you are prepared
to share the same fate

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Top Dog

We're simpatico Benson and me
his views of our new life mesh
sweetly though I see in him a
greater change; he used to be
a canine as***le with wannabe
pretensions aired in fang-bared
assertions of theatrical
dominance.

Yet in an instant he'd be the
cute face-licking bosom buddy
expected of a dog at the foot
of the tree. Now there's only
him and I so I say, '*you're top
dog Benson*' and wince at his
dry '*why does that sound so
unconvincing*? ' reply.

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Tune

Tonight I miss you
tears are just a blink away
robust thoughts of you which
kept an emptiness at bay
have fallen short too easily
and hopelessness
invades

I know you'd say
I need a focussed way
outside myself by caring less
and being more in tune
with other vibes but I
am deaf without
your ears

Habit surely
weakened what had made me
strong and fears of insufficiency
prolong a pain I must endure
because you're gone –
tonight has simply played
that tune again

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Un Australian

I dunno if I'm being ridiculous
but the term "*un-Australian*" is
as un-Australian as our origins allow.

Because a few poofers from Lygon
Street or the ABC might conclude
differently doesn't mean I'm wrong.

Our diverse History says we're
not the same; any mug can see
we're *'hundreds & thousands'*.

And thank whomever for that! Now
if you want to have a few beers and
a barbie this arvo then go on...

It's summer and this is Australia –
just don't go round calling others
un-Australian 'cause they won't
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*non pariels or 'sparkles'

Ivan Donn Carswell

Vestiges

Watching you die old
friend is the hardest bit
you're suffering – it is hidden
in your eyes though you
will not admit the
light grows dim

Darker tendrils slowly
choke your power to live
sadness grips me like
a prophet's eyes so
bloodied in relentless
vision

Everything we ever did
together rings with
free and careless energy
yet abject you lie abed
was it surely meant
to be this way

You'll leave old friend
I'll try to take it light as
you command; you don't
say yea or nay that it's
right to me – only that
it *IS* your way
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Vision

Crossroads of change these moments
of lucidity; startlingly clear visions lasting
nanoseconds each but you are there
transported through incomprehensible
dimensions glimpsing an instant

It may be an easy view where sense
comes complete; my fragmented scene
showed tawdriness in what I do sadly
explained in simple words why joy flees
revealed sotto voce how it pitied me

I cannot complain I try to say, there's
a cheap and easy explanation! Like
the hair on your unshaven face hides
what you wanted to say – cringes
when you can't speak the words
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Visionary

not a matter of choice
more prospects of maturity
yet to be attained

they're future things - scenes
glimpsed or guessed from
mutable presentiment

and yet you're here and
now - a malignant portent
waiting patiently

where direst signs lack
authority to make malefic
mayhem out of contempt

so you're biding time
debating whys and wherefores -
a prophetic sage

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Warmish Day

'nother warmish day, 34° on the patio
irrigation underway in an Orchard too
easily dehydrated by parable to deny

deeply ingrained psychology sprays
delusionary water where precious drops
of rain would soothe sun-savaged weals

inane ideas afoot in arid contempt of
what makes the debate germane is
amply evidenced but I'll save the trees

so save yourselves wear buoyancy
vests learn how to float between
troughs and crests of arrant treason

warming is merely a warning before
the downpour begins and a freeze
proceeds to inaugurate your pain
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Wary Lines

they're wary lines thus traced
in contours of your face – I'd say
apologia for ageing not
the way we've done

I see those youthful signs
in places where we crème to
stave a caving in and wonder
who you were

I know – you are eternally
a breath of air, the who of whom
we were before these corrugations
came to stay

the word *Adonis* doesn't mean
a thing to you I'll bet
and yet it's you for sure
and therefore also me

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Weighty Advice

Giving me room to decide you think subtly suggests key words causally linked to effects known – for instance ‘too much for one to do alone’ actually means ‘quit’; I know it could suggest a bit more too, like ‘get help’ or ‘make room for some-one else’ but there is a true history to this cryptic advice

As nice as it is to know you do care there is still an impasse to deflate in a predicament less intended than unsubtly rash; clear thinking initially would have seen weight was being added where none ever used to be
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Wet Sunday

a shaker of margaritas sipped
slow after a whimpered Sunday's
soaking but no pain evident yet
he says to the swathe of damp
clothes now hanging – grins at
Saturday's sanguine effigy

how bloody little you knew he
muses – like anyone can read
weather maps but you when
we could have philosophically
stayed in bed listening to the
rain instead of being in it

I suppose the cockatoos got a
laugh – but today even they
were less vociferous, which had
me thinking maybe they suffered
too and that nearly made up for
a damply dismal ending

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Ivan Donn Carswell

Wither Away

a way to piss
yourself off thoroughly
and guarantee morbidity
is by trying to please

even if you want
only one significant murmur
of appreciation it will be
denied as culpable guilt

attaining satori through
pleasure expressed vicariously
in others' rapt satisfaction
is fantasy

you cannot feed off
expressions dressed as
giveaways after the
banquet has ended

your appetites are the
ones which need to be
satisfied in every available
gustatory sense

as the saying goes - if
you don't eat emotionally
you don't shit nor do you
pee but you wither away
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Wordless

I guess we ran out of talk –
the who's that and what does it mean
stuff we used to survive on

and the unrequited repartee
which burdens silence still
as tacitly cynical clichés

this debris seems greater
than leavings of
just two disaffected souls

like take-away scraps
balanced on the lips
of wordless garbage bins
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Wrong Side Of The Rail

If it wasn't for the Melbourne Cup
coming up Tuesday, November third
we'd be stuffed for exhilaration, otherwise
closure of Beerwah's rail crossing this
weekend has a few hearts dismayed

I heard one 30 year resident planned to
parade nude along the road in protest on
the day it closes; it's no business of mine
what she does with her clothes but that's
patently a ridiculous extreme

Commerce on the wrong side of the rail
would seem to be opposed to closure for
purely business reasons - complaining
they face ruin when customer numbers
fail to ring their tills enthusiastically

Wasn't it always that way (and who gives
a damn now our bespoke overpass - see
diagram, is to be put into use) : if they fail
it won't be from lack of access but the way
they displace their businesses acumen

And the benefits outweigh the whining
although the Pub may not agree; their
modernisation seemed a cue for the
protest to flourish on the other side
of the town's conflict-ridden rails
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Ivan Donn Carswell

Your Gift

keeping track of time while
emotionally configuring a
response to it meant I missed
the window where I may have
weighed what the future is

needless to say what I lost
has been repaid in a show of
largesse out of proportion to
promises and no calculable
deficit in quality received

but I still need to discern how
it fills your being with a glow
of contentment which evades
me; I have no way of knowing
what I am seeing

was that your gift to me?
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