

"A
PURPOSE
STRONG
AND
BRIGHT"

By Alexander Baron

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ERRATA: "THE TWO NATIONS".

Verse one, line four should read:

Now are they wrought asunder by the blade.

THE GOOD DIE YOUNG.

He burned so bright,
So briefly,
Like a shooting star,
And then was gone,
For chiefly,
The best men are.

ROOKERY.

Each nest a twigged conceit of selfish exploitation -
So unlike a bee-hive.

Suddenly, a murder of crows is upon us;
At the slightest invasion of their privacy
The birds caw and scream like banshees out of Hell.

Who but a hedonist,
A narcissus,
Or a pirate
Would live by choice in a rookery?

COMING OF AGE.

So many crazy hang-ups, passing fads
And mad fanaticisms sweep our lives
When in our youthful innocence, our Dads
And councillors all fail to recognise
The cause of hunger, want, and deprivation,
Within our own, and every other nation.

All governments and managements are blind
To what is fundamentally unjust,
Oppression of the workers, womankind,
The grinding of the poor into the dust,
And inequalities in wealth so great
As to quite rightfully engender hate.

We take a swift and scathing look around,
And in an instant put the world to right,
Not comprehending why they haven't found
In centuries, what we have over-night.
Such is the perspicacity of youth,
And such is age to obfuscate the truth.

But as into the world we wend our way,
The light of innocence begins to fade,
The black and white are blended into grey,
The game seems less and less a sick charade,
Until at last, we understand what seemed
So simple, is more complex than we dreamed.

THE TWO NATIONS.

Where men walked side by side, and stood together
As one, whatever be their class or trade,
On city street, or country lane and heather,
Now they are wrought asunder by the blade.

Where once were understanding and compassion,
And charity swift given, true and sure,
Now every man defends his meagre ration,
And those who prosper oft' despise the poor.

Where in the eyes of Englishmen there glistened
A pride and self-respect excelled by none,
And where their ears to whispered greatness listened,
Now are the same eyes dull, the same ears dumb.

Where once the landed gentry in their thriving
were held in reverence by the common man,
Now are they seen by paupers in their striving
As willing partners in a fiendish plan.

Where now one nation stands in twain divided,
By meadows green rewoven with decay,
The rich ensconced, the poor downtrod, derided,
The mantle of its greatness rots away.

CITY KID.

Lost in the subway; wandering in circles ever wider,
Upon, above, below the busy roads,
Later the night bus disgorges its solitary rider
Who treks home past a myriad abodes.

Key in the door at 5.30 a.m. then sitting thinking
About the things he did the day just gone.
Scratching a hasty meal, and in the semi-darkness drinking
An ice-cold coke; watching the lights come on.

Museums on the morrow, then the South side of the river,
Then back to Soho and the wild West End,
The city kid turns off the light and with a sudden shiver
Climbs into bed till half past nine or ten.

A family of one, so what, who needs a wife or lover?
No one to crowd him or to bar his way.
The "Smoke" is both his undemanding mistress and his mother,
And all he wants, this week-long holiday.

THE GAMBLER.

Orpheus descending,
He knows the chips are down,
But all the same, the gambler can't resist another round.
Madness never ending,
He antes to the pot,
This man is never satisfied until he's done the lot.

Once he was a winner,
He had a home and car,
And spent the winter evenings with his children by the fire.
Now he is a sinner,
To them and to his wife,
For throwing away everything they'd worked for in this life.

Now the deal is over,
He needs to draw an eight,
Just two of these left in the pack with which to fill a straight.
Four pieces of clover
Are showing to his right,
He knows he's beaten, but still calls, now the end is in sight.

The black man shows his hole card,
And gives a knowing grin,
The gambler tries to smile back, but his mask is wearing thin.
The game has been long and hard,
The pain shows in his face,
And all he wants now is to get the hell out of this place.

THE GAMBLER (CONTINUED.)

No money in his jacket,
He's blown it all again,
He hasn't eaten, so he'll walk home hungry in the rain.
Tonight he's lost a packet,
But he'll go on and on,
He'll keep returning till the day his final cent is gone.

He makes it to his bedsit,
And in the dark alone
He thinks of all the things he's lost, friends, family and home.
And then with his desk lamp lit,
He studies his account,
His savings now are almost gone, but debts and bills still mount.

Orpheus descending:
It's nearly over now,,
A look of tranquility has appeared upon his brow,
At last the nightmare's ending,
He won't lose anymore,,
He lies motionless on the bed,
The counterpane is damp and red,
His fingers part, the knife drops to the floor.

WATER BOATMEN.

Skaters or dancers?

Thin ice.....tight skin.....

Who else could walk on water without getting their feet wet?

Aren't they at all curious
at their seeming violation of the law of gravity,
and of common sense?

No, they are quietly unperturbed.

WHAT IS A FRIEND?

What is a friend? A friend is there in need.
In want and strife, when no one else is there;
Cry out his name and to your side he'll speed,
Make light your load, and half your burden share.
A friend is one who'll try to understand
Though your vices and faults he may despise,
He'll lend to you a firm, unwavering hand.
He'll counsel you, but never moralise.
A friend won't sell you short of what you're worth,
He'll tolerate you when you act the fool,
Though you may be the biggest dupe on Earth,
He'll never hold you up to ridicule.
A friend is like a brother, only more,
Has he not one, a billionaire is poor.

IN SNOWDONIA.

Astride the rock
And gazing down into the blue-green tarn
Where a mountain rill flows noisily,
And a solitary gull wings
Its'lazy way over hill and vale;

A group of girl hikers,
Fresh as lavender flowers
And sweet as summer roses
Wind' around the pathway to my rear,
And, with giggles
And smiles

Pass me by.

ANTHEM

Blue eyes won't cease to shine,
Blonde hair will never fade,
No foe, however malign,
Will break the Viking's blade.

Asgard will never fall
To servants of the dark,
However low they crawl,
However loud they bark.

For there's existing still
A purpose strong and bright,
A forcefulness of will,
Of Anglo-Saxon might.

A flame that's burned within
The breast, since time began
Of Scotsman, German, Finn,
And every Nordic man.

CIRCLES.

Circles: rings, self-contained, unbroken, discreet.

Top of the first division,,
Bottom of the fourth,
Small pond,
Wide, wide ocean.

Want to change?
Want to move on to a higher torus?
Want to rise?
Then jump.

There is no gateway;
No secret passage;
But neither is there a lock.

Jump!
Jump and move higher,
That's the way,
The only way.

All it takes is a little nerve,
A little talent,
A little self-belief,
And the will to win.

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