



FUN IN MAY: POETRY AND HILARITY

Posted on May 1, 2022 by Mark Stocker



No doubt, in common with other *Postil Magazine* contributors, I get sacks of fan mail from grateful and admiring readers. One particular epistle deeply moved me. It read thus:

Dear Dr Stocker,

I am a 6th former at an exclusive private girls' school in the Cotswolds and I hope to read history of art at Oxford or Cambridge. My teacher, Miss Trevelyan, told me to read your Postil Magazine articles to improve my own writing. I think they are excellent. My problem is that the Pop singers you write about are often old or dead, and my parents say they are even before THEIR time. I am a real fan, however, of your poetry and jokes. Could you please write something special in this line? I would be so thrilled.

Thank you so much in anticipation,

Sincerely,

Stephanie (age 16)

P.S. I do think you're rather dishy!

Well, how could I possibly turn down a request like that? To please Stephanie, and many thousands more (not all of them nicely behaved girls of 16), I supply herewith two poems and four jokes.

The first poem is written in honour of my good friend Michael, an art historian, who recently attained a certain age.

The second one, I believe, will touch the hearts of everyone accustomed to condo or apartment living, and alludes to our sometimes faulty communal garage auto door, which opens to correctly swiped cars and drivers for precisely 90 seconds.

The jokes, I think, speak for themselves. I trust Stephanie and the rest of you will respond with gales of laughter and near ecstasy. If you don't, contact the editor.

To Michael at 80

For four score years thou'st nobly trod this earth
A man possessed with decency and worth,
Who solemnly regards it as his duty
To say sagacious things on art and beauty.

You're blessed with a shrewd aesthetic eye;
Of serious mien – and yet of humour dry
At a pinch that verges on the sly!

Emotions, no, you don't betray too much
Yet a cunning feline, he can touch
Your heart, just like a much-loved wife;
Salutations on your well-lived life!



Ode to a Garage Automatic Door

Coming from a lowly station
I approach'd in trepidation
Our reconditioned portcullis.
Would I find garagèd bliss?
Or would access be denied?
"Open, Sesame!" I cried...

At one fell swipe of card—it oped!
Had it not, could I have coped?
And then, count go—would it close?
It did! The air smells like a rose!



And now for those jokes...

I was listening to KD Laing, as one does, and suddenly a great name for a meat eaters' buffet restaurant occurred to me: **Constant Carving**.



An uncharacteristically clumsy painting by a great American realist caused him to be nicknamed "**ClodHopper**."



The famous and very savvy New Zealand artist Dick Frizzell proudly showed me his latest painting:
"Well, Dick, me old son, there's only one word for that."

"Pray what is that, Dr. Stocker?"

"Moneymaker!"



The woke art historian's dilemma:
Hogarth had a much-loved pug called Trump.
Should the artist's statue be toppled?

Mark Stocker is an art historian whose recent book is [*When Britain Went Decimal: The Coinage of 1971*](#).

Featured image: "Picasso's Tomato," by Dick Frizzell; painted in 2022.

