.....THE WAY IT FEELS...THE WAY IT FEELS...THE WAY IT FEELS.....

.....A BROADSHEET OF POEMS FROM IN AND OUT THE BIN..
.....BY PETER CAMPBELL....BY PETER CAMPBELL....BY PETER CAMPBELL.....

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THE PAIN OF LOVE

The pain of love is terrible.
Coasters slip in unseen
Before the hoot of dawn.
They weigh against the knuckled piers,
Oily water lisps at their sides,
And seagulls eat the cake.
The pain of love bites like an early squall.

The pleasure of love is terrible.
We untie the world.
Bookham,Egham and Dorking fields-
They are listed with Barbary.
Poppies snag the nearest corn,
The rooks wheel down.
The pleasure of love bites like harvest mice.

The pain of love is terrible.
Why should he die and be lost to my touch?
Only in agony now do I watch him.
Only the deathless tie
Linking us between the eyes.
Only that heart which cannot stop
Nor can ever be made to.
The pain of love bites like a benison.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE

New evidence suggests that hitting people over the head repeatedly with muffled sledgehammers may be benificial to their health. A survey on manic-depressives who have been recieving this treatmen Claims that in 95% of cases there is a marked change in their patte of uncontrollable mood swings. A spokesman for the Institute of Psychiatric and other Misunderstandings commented:

" This practice is not unknown to us. We have been under-taking research on this subject for some years. At present there is no Statistical proof of permanent damage to the recipients. We find th very heartening."

When asked to discuss the subject a leading manic-depress Said " I'd love to,but I've got this terrible headache. ...."

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---------- -Peter Campbell

We look in.
We polish our shoes as if for a long journey.
We pop in and out with presents from home.
There is always a clock,
A nameplate by a dry fountain:
A definition for the garden that does not rattle in the April win

Behind the rituals
Of rocking at the corner,saying aye-aye and grimacing
There is no mystery,
No savage concord of a different palate.
Our nobility is of no other order.
Our hearts and jaws the same,
Excepting separation and dominion make it so.

We have planted here with care-
A shady empire for our nicer affectation.

Inside an asylum garden
There are Surrey names,posted on gable-ends.
There are Surrey notables in busted profile.
But this is not Surrey,this is not noble
And there are no smiling natives.

NOBODY STRIKES AGAIN

There was a hill
On Melksham Green.
Nobody Knew it was there.

It grew so high
It blocked the sun.
Nor did they really care.

It spoiled the village cricket team.
So they skied
On the middle air.

There was a hill
On Melksham Green.
Nobody knew it was there.

They swarm
In behind the doors,
Lagged to their ears with tobacco smoke and porridge,
Tinkling us for favours,
Shanked up like ricketty ponies
Out of sight of the fairground,
Yellow,mournful,dull.

Laughter brays here-
A maiden run to mud.

The food
Comes from a central place in cylinders,
Hustled between the lawns in unapproachable convoys,
Arriving smashed and waxy.
They hover in porches,hungry before the bell.

The horticultural detail
Plant onions in the old walled orchard.
They squat aming thmato frames,sharing boiled sweets.
Seventy-five per cent non productive,
Holding the barrow and rakes,
They tip their heads at nurses
In brief colonial tribute.

We have farmed here with care-
Not wilderness nor oasis.

A green and pleasant fourteen acre wood;
A cricket pitch with magpies ffeding
And a clubhouse for the membership.
A little England for ruling of the mad,
An exhibition for the sane and unbelieving.

They have sat beneath the banks of rhodedendron
With their fly-buttons undone.
They have played croquet,
Unravelling themselves backwards in sight of the flagship.
How fine the paths are in May-time,
How red the bricks from Bagshot.

Unease is wrapped up here
In a plain manilla.

TASTE IT AND SEE... TASTE IT

Psychiatry - Where the first person singular meets
the third person plural and gets mugged.

SONG FOR THE SENSIBLE..

The bird that oogles in the street
Is never to be trusted.
The only way to take it in
Is on white bread and mustard.

It looks a very friendly thing,
With jaunty crest and feathers.
But it will always smile non-stop
And help you hardly ever.

It reads the news at three o'clock
From on the minster belfry.
The voice of doom floats through the streets,
They ought to post a sentry.

It says that oogling is no crime.
That all it wastes is people's time.
It fills its home with balls of twine.
I know --its house is next to mine.

The bird that oogles in the street
Is never to be trusted.
The only way to keep it sweet
Is in a dish of custard.

INSIDE THE GARDEN

In a Surrey asylum garden
There are paeonies,large and showy.
There is quercus robur,shading the hollows.
There are butterflies,colours founded in Eden.
But there are no smiling natives.

(Continued)

The chinking of the chamber-pot,
The creaking where the night-staff watch,
To walk with escort after evensong.
Cold water with all lunches,
The disinfectant washes,
Grey flannels that are always just too long.

Mister Brown is the dumb waiter
By the budgie cage.
He has read all Conrad's novels
He has lived through every page.
He has kept the golden prospect of a very long old age
Since he came here from Elgar Ward
In autumn '62.

Forty years is no fit distance
For an epilogue.
Forty years to nest in armchairs
And to pick at food.
Packing gift ribbons into cardboard box,
Safe
Under all-round care.

The scuff-marks on the passage floor,
The safe-lock on the bathroom door,
The tea-urn that is always over-boiled.
Those tight smiles from the morning staff,
The man fron Oakwood Villa who has never laughed,
The get-well-soon the boys from Kandy mailed.

The rage,the rage,
The voices stilled.
The damming in the white sheets of the human will.
The stories left unfinished when the ink ran out,
Again they play Gay Gordons and they bell the cat.

Mister Brown is the old soldier
At the top end of the ward.
HE likes his tea with tinned milk
And he doesn't like it stirred.
He has seen the shiftless seasons
Of a most especial world
Since he came home from Rangoon
In the spring of '42.

Our selves are not unchanged.
We did not ask for this:
A casual hand, one tea,
A name in red upon the escort's list.
This does not air our questions
Or our needs-
A course of seven treatments and Godspeed.
That's how it feels.
We touch the cold untruth.
We do not need the textbooks or the proof.

We speak as man,
We would be spoken to.
Our souls are not machines
That needs be broken into.

BACK WARDS

Mister Brown is the old soldier
At the top end of the ward.
He likes his tea with tinned milk
And he doesn't like it stirred.
He has kept a cloth-bound volume
Of each event that has occured
Since he came home from Rangoon
In the spring of '42.

Forty years is no fit sentence
For the Burmese war to bring.
Forty summers for a misplaced scream.
Cutting out pictures for the Day Room wall,
Loved
By a specialist team.

The Arakan pagoda,
The smooth faces of the Buddha,
The Latin names of South-East Asian flowers.
Those grey faces in the albums,
The hidden bronze medallion,
The cricket team he lead at Carlton Towers.

WAITING FOR ECT - VERSION 85

Waiting for ECT
Is like waiting for a train.
A non-stop Inter City
Flashing
Through the tunnels of your brain.

We trace descent to Frankenstein,
To Wolfman and the Zongoid from the Marsh.
We pinch at chair-arms in our unrefined condition.
We are broke down
And someone called the electricians.
Are there some questions still too rational to ask?

Waiting for ECT
Is like living on the pale
And wondering
Cannot hands and voices heal me?

We should not wait in fear.
The net dimensions of our treatment are writ clear:
Our heads gripped in the vice,
Then someone throws the silver spanner.
A subcutaneous bruise-
Psychiatry is young science
And must proceed in such a meretricious manner.
That's how it feels.
And who controls our heads
Must lose our hearts.
No sapient man revives in answer to such coldly judged kickstarts.

Waiting for ECT
Is like searching for the light-
But not via alternating current
Thank you.

(Continued)

THIRD DAY OUT.

The wood, the wood is burning
And the smoke slips out to sea.
They are cutting thorn brush at the water's edge.
Up start the magpies.

The hills, the blocks of colour
And the canvas straightened thin.
The voice of God on the water's face:
Come on in, come on in, come on in.

You can watch the trains forever
As they weave among the shells.
Coating the chalk with diesel grease,
Drowning the bells.

You can walk the clouds to thunder,
Can mark them as they bunch
Like cows upon a dirty meadow,
Their purple tongues hung out.

The salt upon the marram grass,
The rock pool swill.
Our Lord has never played with these;
Not yet and he never will.

The hills with chokes of silver,
The woods with chert-stained feet.
There are cracks in the holy order
On the third day out.

QUESTION.....QUESTION

What is the difference between psychiatry and teaching elephants to balance on their trunks?

-- Elephants sometimes forget.

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NOT THANKS

I have ploughed the stoney in-field of the carse,
Walking on the machair, skimmed pebbles on the sea.
Followed at my father's hearse,
Spied sounding whales from on a rowan tree.
And yet I am some other animal to men.
My face not fully fleshed but burnished with the stain
Of masks worn hot in holy wars
Against man's reason and his reasonable laws.
Those flags are not yet down.
Our penny whistles in the dark
Will drown
A landsmen's chorus in some future Ark.
We'll launch the falcon at those alien peaks
And as the anthems break
The craft will land
Not thanks to their command
But thanks to us.

DECISIONS

I tell him I am Zeop the Centurion.
He writes it down into my case-notes.
In the green room he plays with paper-clips,
Talks to the girl from the Migraine Unit,
Decides he will sleep on it.

Next morning the staff team convenes.
Porcelain cups for psychiatrists,
Plastic for everyone else.
Decisions have to be reached:
'We don't think that you are Zeop the Centurion'
He says.
'I know that' I say.
'Why else do you think I'm in here?'.