

## Holding It In

Clueless of where to put my suitcase on the train,  
I trundle to my seat and see  
A group of strangers who I want to get to know,  
Instead of trying to divert my gaze from for as long as we're all here  
In case I accidentally stare.

My "hello" to them is a futile attempt  
To shove my case up above their heads  
As I worry it will crash down.

So the man opposite does it for me,  
And down I sit, needing a pee.  
I'll go later, I assure myself,  
About to prioritise what others think  
Over my own comfort and health.

At least I'm on the outer seat —  
No extra burden of saying *excuse me*.  
I'll probably go at the next stop, I decide,  
But after the next stoppers get off,  
I just sit and ponder  
On whether to eat, then pee  
Or pee, then eat.

Because for me, it's not just the case of get up and go,  
But a search, a quest, an expedition  
Of where the hell is the toilet on this train?!  
Behind me, there is likely a sign,  
But I can't turn around to check,  
'Coz that'd be cheating —  
I wouldn't get my medal then.  
Just ask someone!,  
You're likely thinking,  
But that is cheating, too!

For a bit longer, I just sit,  
But then the hunger starts to hit.  
Hungry, and needing a pee, and needing to socialise with my charisma skill still locked??  
I'm like a Sim with all these needs!

Trying to take up as little space as I can,  
I take out the lunch my aunty kindly packed for me —  
A Marmite sandwich, biscuits, fruit, probably some crisps,  
And think,  
I shall wait 'til I've emptied my bladder to have a drink,  
Which I will definitely do after the next stop,

Which I did not.  
Maybe I took out a book or something,



I didn't even go when I reached the station.  
Instead, I waited the few minutes it took for my dad and sister to get there,  
Didn't speak to them the whole ride home, Except to say that I had managed to hold my pee  
in for  
At least six hours.

Then I was soon in and toiletted —  
A nose-blasting relief.

## Trying to Sleep

*Falling in love –*

Connotations of an accident,  
As if we were standing on a cliff edge,  
Not using our common sense.

It is not  
Stepping into love, sliding into love,  
But falling  
To be caught  
Or hurt.

Maybe that's why I can't fall asleep –  
That'd happen by accident.

## **Laurent and Aimée**

*Will you marry me?*

Laurent asks Aimée,  
Who, before the first time they held hands,  
Did not used to feel loved.

Making a moved expression,  
She answers him  
*No, I cannot.*  
*I know that you are perfect for me,*  
*I would be distraught if we separated,*  
*Why would we need the label "married couple"*  
*To stay together?*

Standing on a pretty bridge,  
They are surrounded by the glitter of the frost.  
If Aimée had simply said *yes*,  
The event would have seemed to be nothing but a beautiful scene.

But when one ponders on it,  
The elation which accompanies marriage is abstruse —  
What does it change  
If the relationship is fabulous?  
I suppose it is like not knowing  
How to explain why one likes cosy places, being comfortable —  
It is nice, but why?

The ring that Laurent wanted to give to Aimée is nice,  
But she insists that, seen as she cares about Laurent  
A lot more than a cute accessory,  
He should take it back to the shop so they can buy the oven he had been longing for.

And although Laurent would have cried with joy  
During the ceremony,  
Although he had been psyching himself up to proposing for a year,  
Although he would have announced after their vows that it was the best day of his life,  
He agrees with Aimée now.  
So, they admire the frosty trees.

The next day, with the new oven, they cook.  
Huddled up while they eat, they watch a film.  
In the film, a man gets down on his knee,  
And his lover says *yes*.  
Laurent and Aimée cry with joy for them,  
But that is because  
Engagement forms an emotional moment.

Love is a state,  
And not a moment.

## **My Dad Told Me I'm My Own Person**

My flower wanted to be his own plant,

But he would not be had he not been planted.

My flower would get frustrated by the realisation that he was in the process of blossoming —

He would need someone to hold the hose over him when the clouds had prioritised another,

Prioritised them so much that they

Seemed like salty sea.

That is, when he is finally accompanied by the others,

Outside on the big wide soil.

For the time being, he resides in his pot,

Like a baby in their cot,

Using it as comfort,

Yet crying out to leave.

## Untitled

Unscrewing a Marmite jar, I remark my phone ding. I check the notification as though the act is part of my reflex arc, and am disappointed to discover it's about someone posting a TikTok, an app I install and delete as one stands and sits, reaches out and in, goes from one room to the next. I can't get into it, don't know why I'm aiming to, either – just like how I have started drinking beer. I look at numerous shares of Instagram stories that I know are all important but pay attention to about one in ten, maybe even twenty. Twenty pounds was the amount in my wallet I was considering giving to a beggar four months ago, but I ended up lying that I had nothing, continued with my Christmas shopping. I've never believed in Christ, but for Christ's sake the Tories need to sort this out, rather than wasting two billion on a fucking boat for a dead guy. Then again, I walk as far away as possible from homeless people in the streets. The other week, I gave Azzie, the guy I told I had nothing, that twenty pounds I still had in my wallet towards a hotel. The other day, I finally gave a vendor three quid and a couple extra for a big issue that I'll likely never read, and I hope that neither of these people ask me for money again, because I'd struggle to say no now I have said yes once. A different guy asked me for something towards a hotel the other night, too – I lied that time. I'll likely put this on Instagram, but if someone told me in person that they support the Conservatives, I would act rather conservatively, move on to a more light-hearted topic, like TikTok or toast toppings.

## **Friends and Lovers**

Friends, when they meet up,  
Hug, not kiss or snog.

Lovers, pre-loving,  
Give it all they've got.

Friends love each other –  
Not amorously, mind.  
Though in some cases that might be blooming  
Silently inside.  
Many chums turn to lovers  
When they get less shy.

Chums come in bunches,  
But can look like couples when those bunches split.  
Lovers come in couples,  
But form bunches if they fancy it.

Romance –  
It sure differs  
From platonic appreciation.  
But will that difference shrink  
Within the next generation?



Friendship –

It sure differs

From romantic love.

I wonder –

Is the latter's

Intensity above?

## **Worries**

There will always be knives in the kitchen,  
Knives which could always cut whatever,  
But only with some pressure.

There will always be cars on the roads,  
Cars which could always kill  
With the shortest moment of contact –  
That is why we walk on the pavement.

## Untitled

Why is it more comfortable

To have more blankets on but the window open

Than it is to sleep with just the duvet

And the window shut?

Because it is cosier, snugglier,

But what exactly makes it so?

Why is it pleasant to be dry, not so nice to be wet?

Well, wet is often cold, why's it not fun to be cold?

What is fun?

Also, what used to go on in our minds

Before wet and cold were words to us?

If you're wet, you are not always cold.

Being soaked isn't so bad

On scorching sands,

But is that only because you'll quickly dry off

And because you know that?

Can anyone pinpoint

What is so unpleasant

About sand stuck to your skin?

Why is it so good to get it off

In a warm, bubbly tub?

It is a relief, but why?

And I challenge you also to describe

How *relief* is defined.