Committing to the Path

The Stanzas

1. Lifestyle

Crowded in on all sides
By eyes that judge and make me small
The screen with the flickering taunting calls
to a life better lived by others
who seem to know it all.

A shinier life. A better life.
A life lived more thoroughly through.
And I on my own just try to exist
And walk in a way that seems true.

To the left there is money
And fame and impression
And beauty and handsome and smart.
To the right there is love and romance
And enchantment
And everything thrown up by the heart.

But for me there's longing and emptiness
And envy and wishes and hoping and dread;
That my time is just passing
Through a life that is lasting
Till I'm brought to the place where I'm dead.

Reaching out with a hand,
it just fills up with sand
And everything seems so unreal.

The shiny the new, the exciting and true
Seem like images that fleetingly pass.
Leaving me alone
To gnaw of the bones
That feed both my hunger and lust.

But beating beneath is a heart that demands
Another pulsation of blood.
That courses my veins and reminds me of names
and knows my existence has truth.

Each step that I take
Leads me further away
From everything I long for and yearn.
But the wind that is blowing
Brings relief from that burning
And makes me to know and to learn.

2. The Call

Climbing, climbing climbing,
I move forward and endlessly on.
But each place that I reach
Seems deserted and spent
With nothing left over to feed on.

Just leftovers, and left behinds
By others who have gone before

Slim pickings from which to exist.

Then suddenly a crest,
A height with no further
And now I look back on the scene
And everything in between
And all is in place and complete.

What once was just partial
Just pieces and bits
Is now a picture of perfect.
It falls into place
As if put there by grace
And a suggestion of motive and plan.

What once seemed apart
Is now molded together
As if seen by myself for the first.
Now the eyes that beheld me
And the judgements that made me
Fade away as I see it so clear:

That my eyes are the beholders
Of all that is done
And in seeing I dissolve their distain.
I hold in my hands the keys to the kingdom
The gateway to all that remains
The door to my destiny, the path to the future
The way that is given to travel.

That behind the great mess
Is an order of life
That can be followed and grown and matured.
That it is for me behold
And walk down the road
With no other to tell me the way.

And the screens are all gone
Replaced by a song
Which I hum as I look for the path
To dance to that song
And become part of that one
That is calling me on with a laugh.

3. The Search

I know there's a way
But I know not where it leads
Or how to find the path 'neath my feet.
The noise of the world
Masks the call to every soul
To follow and follow and follow.

This way and that
With nothing but chat
As to what is the best for the day –
This food or that look
This treatment that book
They all know the path to the way.

But nothing feels true
Just the sense that it is,
The knowledge that it was,
And the hope that it ever shall be.
That something is there,
I've seen a glimpse and no more
But I know that I'll know when I know.

And the noise it grows louder
As I search for some way
Of starting what I know I can finish.
Then suddenly a glimpse
In a book or a look
And the avenues begin to diminish.

And though voices shout louder
And the screens flashing faster
They no longer hold onto my thoughts.
I'm finding a way
In the corners of life
In the backrooms of everyone's minds
And that way opens up
In a pause between worlds
In the silence of nothing to see.

And the words they grow louder
"Wrong way" they all shout
"You're going along the wrong way."
But I know where I'm led
And it's not from my head
It's my heart that is showing the way.

4. Engagement

And now it is loud,
It is clear, it is high
And it drowns out all the noise.

I can sense a straight path
Hear its call to my heart
My compass is signing the way.

A way to move forward -
to tread with discernment
and passion, precision and trust.

I keep hearing the voices
"Wrong way" they all shout
But I know that my travel is true.
That the earth in its turning
Is led from within
And that same force
that it also leads me.

I can see in the books
In the looks from the teachers,
That have trodden this way before,
The path that is opening
Is the one that is present
And leads to good and true.

My looks become earnest
I reach out for the knowing
And everything is open and wide.
And new voices are calling
to make sure that I hear them
and follow the path of the past.

But I step out from the present
To take me beyond
where I imagine I can get on my own
And my life begins speeding
Now I am no longer needing
The approval of those once deemed wise.

Because now that I follow
A path that I borrow
From Giants on whose shoulders I stand.
"Go on" they encourage
"Keep going and follow
The way to the future that bore you.
Because now you are free,
Of the past that once held you
And now you can blossom and breathe."

5. Disillusionment

I move into the jungle of darkness
Not knowing the right from the left.

Dead ends they appear
Casting shadows front and rear
Go this way
And go that.
Take this as a sign, no that.
The cacophony of voices
Encourage and dissuade
I can no more tell hither from yon.

And the path keeps on winding
And the light keeps on fading
And I measure my way and fall short.
Past comforts appear
And persuade me to stay
But deep voices suggest I don't stop.
It all seems so hopeless
And I will never arrive
At a place where I am permitted to rest.

And the call back to silence
The following of breath
Makes one day merge into another.
The demands of a job
And the mocking of friends
Leads the eye from the path to the real.

But what is the real?
Is it stasis or movement?
Is it silence or laughter or what?

And the days they tick by
With no discernable thing
To suggest that I'm going the right way.
The sages of past
Say that all is of good
And that nothing obscures the right path.

But my mind struggles on
To make sense of what's gone
And what seems to be appearing again.

And the operator says 40 cents more
for the next three minutes

And I close my eyes once again.

6. Arrival

No sense of the way,
But determined to follow
I make my commitment most clear
To myself and whatever is doing it all
And press on with what needs to be done.

For to commit to the way is to follow the path
And allow it to open beyond
From counting the breaths
To welcoming the stillness
I lay down my anchor of trust.

And rooted in practice
I bob on the surface
And observe as the ships sail around
Their progress a lure
For ambition to follow
As I stay in one place
And go down,
To that depth neath the surface
Ignored by ambition
That calls to the soul of our being.

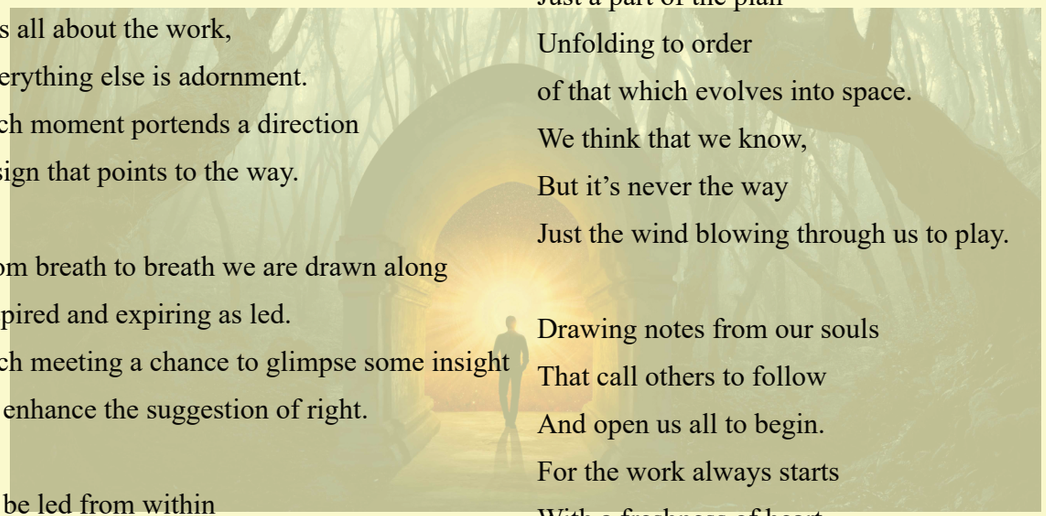
Then suddenly a moment
A glimpse of eternal
A shout from within that I'm found.
The curtain goes back
And the mind suddenly blank
And the play that I'm seeking begins.

To see the whole stage
And not just the audience
Is the prize for playing the game.
To follow the path
Opening up neath my feet
And being aware of the way it unfolds.
From one step to next
There is no working it out
Just taking that step, and the next.

Eternity arises, like the sun in the morning
And illumines the darkness of doubt

For never again will you not know where you came from
And never again will you fall.
For the path is now sure
As the tread of a step
On the concrete of a structure that's sound.

7. In the Zone



It is all about the work,
Everything else is adornment.
Each moment portends a direction
A sign that points to the way.

From breath to breath we are drawn along
Inspired and expiring as led.
Each meeting a chance to glimpse some insight
To enhance the suggestion of right.

To be led from within
With no judgement or whim
As to working out
What's to be done.

It's the wind in the sails
Blowing hither and yon
With merely a touch on the tiller.
For we know not the way
It just unfolds and displays
As we walk through the scenes of our life.

To a script not yet written
That appears in an instant
And demands to be put into place.
There's nothing to plan
There's nothing to scheme
No end we are bringing about.

Just a part of the plan
Unfolding to order
of that which evolves into space.
We think that we know,
But it's never the way
Just the wind blowing through us to play.

Drawing notes from our souls
That call others to follow
And open us all to begin.
For the work always starts
With a freshness of heart
And draws us to carry it on.

Beginning again, beginning again
We are always beginning again.

8. Following the Way

And so we appear on the horizon of dawn
As the wave that evolves all of life.
Rolling forward in trust
That we are called from the dust
To be molded and shaped out of strife.

As the world carries on
We embody the song
That's been sung since the beginning of days.
A tune being played
With notes that appear
In moments that follow each other.

And our task so simple
To embody these notes
And call all there is into being.
To trust to the melody
And be open to the harmony
That others around are creating.

Beyond thought of what's next
To improvise the text
We are given each moment we live.
Our breath is the gate
Through which connection is made
And then order appears as a dance.

One foot, then another
Then another and another
Right up to 10,000 miles.
Of rightness and trust
Of the good and the true
The beauty appears all around.
We're not the composer,
Just the instrument of choice
Both for ourselves and that which conducts.

It was always the way,
Whether we knew it or not,
And always the way it shall be.
The path ever sacred
Is beneath all our feet
And all we must do is to tread.

And the noise of our treading
Echoes round us vibrating
A loving and healing embrace.
To all you who hear,
Be you far away or near
Help us march our future into being.

9. Thanksgiving

It is joy we receive at the end of the day,
The joy of being alive.
Alive to the order
That brings into being
The good and the beautiful and the true.

To be part of the story
Is all we can ask for
And thanksgiving our natural response.
To be part of the story
That brings the world glory
Is more that we could imagine or want.

That there is such a story
Is the great secret that is hidden
At the center of life in the world.

It is so easy to miss
As we bowl through our lives
And try to attain our desires.

But to get what you want
Never works.
Our need is to be part
Of the unfolding of life
And to hallow that order within.

Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
Is all that will give us the joy.
And to pass that joy on
To our family makes done
All that could possibly make us complete.

Thanksgiving and joy
Are the sisters of mercy
That heal all the injuries of life.
Those wounded and fearful
Are the very bricks and mortar
Of the Palace of Nowhere we build.

And so we embody
That order within
And draw all that is wasted and spent.
We use this detritus
As the building blocks so vital
To roll a new heaven into place.

And all is forgiven
And that which is given
Automatically takes up that place

Our role is commitment
To the inner unfolding
That makes us move onto the next.
The next that is after what follows before
And none of it's known in advance.

One foot then another
One breath for a brother
Is all that is asked of the dance.

And the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

