

Published Poets section:

1st place winner: Lorna Wallace, Kilmarnock, Scotland

A Scot's Lament fur her American Fellows
(Oan their election of a tangerine gabshite walloper).

America, aw whit ye dain?!
How could ye choose a clueless wain
Ti lead yir country? Who wid trust
A man sae vile?!
A racist, sexist eedjit
Wi a shite hairstyle?

Yet lo, ye votit (michty me!)
Ti hawn' this walloper the key
Ti pow'r supreme, ti stert his hateful,
Cruel regime.
A cling ti hope that this is aw
Jist wan bad dream.

But naw, the nightmare has come true,
A curse upon rid, white an' blue,
An' those who cast oot Bernie
Must feel sitch regret
Fur thinkin' Mrs. Clinton
Was a safer bet.

So noo we wait ti see unfold
Division an' intolerance, cold;
A pois'nous bigotry untold
Since Hitler's rule
As the free world's hopes an' dreams
Lie with this fool.

Alas, complainin' wullnae change
The fact this diddy has free range
Ti ride roughshod ow'r human beings
That fall outside
The cretinous ideals borne of
His ugly pride.

Awch USA, we feel yir woes
An' pour oor wee herts oot ti those
Who ken this oorange gabshite isnae
Who they chose,
But jist sit tight; Trump's cluelessness
Will time expose.

Fur sittin' there beside Obama

Efter the election drama,
Trump looked like reality
Had finally hit:
Aboot the role of president
He knew Jack shit.

Poutin', glaikit through this farce,
His mooth wis pursed up like an arse,
His Tangoed coupon glowin' like
A skelped backside.
Despite all his bravado
Trump looked keen ti hide.

Let's therefur no despair an' greet,
Or see this outcome as defeat.
Let's wait an' watch this bampot
Flap his hawns an' squirm
When presidential pressures
Crush him like a worm.

Hawd oan ti values you hold dear,
Don't let this numpty bring yi fear,
His chants of hatred don't speak fur
The human race.
Love will endure despite this
Oorange-faced disgrace.

So USA, in ma conclusion,
Know we Scots feel your confusion:
We are also chained ti those
Not of oor choosin'.
Stand firm fur unity will break
Through Trump's delusion.

2nd place winner: Dave Watson, Inverkip, Scotland

Tam O'Shatner

“Last orders,” calls the barmaid fair,
Aw tinned tan skin, peroxide hair.
Ma last five quid’s ma taxi ride,
But thoughts o coin, dram won’t abide.
“Wan for the road, doll, if ye please,”
I say, tae ragin thirst appease,
And decision made wi a drunkard’s ease,
It goes doon fine, the moment seized.
John Barleycorn, ye warm ma soul!
Ye fire ma blood, ye make me whole.
Nae care huv I for cabs forsaken,
Noo o yer sweetness I’ve partaken.
But noo wi transportation spurned,
Tae windy street I must adjourn,
So tae the tavern doors I weave,
And wi regret, I take ma leave.

Oot on the street, in whisky daze,
“G’night there, Tam,” the bouncer says.
For Tam O’Shatner, that’s ma name,
Akin tae Bill o Star Trek fame.
But tae this fact I must attest,
Spock and Picard, I sore detest,

A shiter show there never was,
And Doc McCoy can suck ma baws.
Riker, Data, Worf and Troi,
I'd shoot them deid, and dance wi joy,
Aw Trekkie things, I'd gladly burn,
Then place their ashes in an urn.
But whit could spawn such vicious hate?
The reasons here, I'll noo relate;
The Star Trek cast, I'd burn and maim,
Because o fun made o ma name.
Aw through ma youth, wi great delight,
Intentions mean and gleeful spite,
They ca'd me 'Kirk' and took cruel fun,
In kicks and punches 'set tae stun'.

But noo, ootside the pub I'm stood,
Penniless, cauld, but feelin good,
As winter's gales bare branches rattle,
And thunder rolls in heavenly battle.
Intae the storm I boldly stride,
And walk alang Clyde riverside,
Through Glesga toon, through rain and chill,
Doon windblawn lane, up darkened hill.
Ma spirits warmed wi single malt,
I care nane for the night's assault,
As blithely tae ma gaff I stroll,

In bevvv powered cruise control.
But even so thus fortified,
The tempest wullnae be denied,
In nae long time ma mood is soured,
Droont in cauld November shower.
Like vessels lost in ragin sea,
Ma lightened heart and mind carefree,
Are swamped and sunk tae fathoms deep,
And in ma brain, grim musins creep.

Doon east end streets o reddened stone,
Wi edgy haste, I walk alone,
As tae ma mind come tales o old;
Ghost stories that ma Grandma told.
The bare trees stripped o summer's green,
Noo seem tae whisper things unclean,
And reach wi branches, hooked like claws;
An idea fit tae shrivel baws.
Past alleys deep wi shadowed murk,
And quickly by the auld High Kirk,
Where in the grounds, a man takes heed,
There walks a priest, a lang time deid.
I raise ma eyes, and feel a chill,
The Necropolis looms on yonder hill,
Fair Glesga's City o the Dead,
Where efter dark, nae Weedgie treads.

Nae mental bam, nae hardman brave,
Wid dare tae walk amidst the graves,
In case they meet there, in the gloom,
Thon wraiths that slink atween the tombs.
Like the mother o the stillborn bairn,
That cut her throat beside his cairn,
Or Jimmy Weir, fae Govanhill,
A ned long dead, who'd stab ye still.

Ma bones aw cauld wi growin dread,
The Royal Infirmary's up ahead,
Where Grandma worked for fifty year,
And saw some things that brought the fear.
For in the wards, some do believe,
Walk those who've passed, but cannae leave,
And here on Earth their shades remain,
Bound by grief, their spirits chained.
Like Matron Gray, who some still see,
Although she died in sixty-three,
Or Archie in ward twenty-seven,
Who speaks wi patients bound for heaven.
A short cut though Mount Vernon Park,
Where long ago, deep in the dark,
Pete Manuel stalked wee Izzy Cooke,
Her blood he spilled, her life he took.
A killer born, a mind depraved,

He hid Cooke's corpse in shallow grave,
Her strangled, mangled body found,
The day the cops dug up the ground.
Barlinnie jail saw Manuel swing,
From hangman's noose, but here's the thing,
Avoid Mount Vernon Park at night,
For on their throats, sae icy tight,
Folk swear they've felt cauld bony fingers,
For in the dark, a presence lingers.
Though Manuel hanged in fifty-eight,
That park's aw his when day grows late.

Noo soakin wet, and fairly scared,
I weep for squandered taxi fare,
An curse the thirst that led me here,
Betrayed by whisky, shots and beer!
But as O'Shatner is ma name,
By hook or crook, I'm headin hame,
For ghouls and ghosties can't compare,
Tae Maggie's dagger throwin glare.
Ma dearest wife, ma heart, ma muse,
She knows when I've been at the booze,
And thoughts o phantoms cannae inspire,
The fear I haud for Maggie's ire.
Nae daemon sly, nae devil horned,
Hell hath nae rage as wifey scorned,

And so I walk the homeward path,
Tae bear the brunt o Maggie's wrath.

Across Mount Vernon green I dash,
While in the sky the heavens flash,
The rain like nails as thunder rolls,
On winds that shriek like hellbound souls.

When aw at once, through veil o night,
I see ahead a curious sight,
Shinin doon fae stormy sky,
A glowin beam that draws the eye.

I raise ma heid and turn ma ear,
Nae polis chopper dae I hear,
So mystified, I pause and ponder,
The source o ghostly moonbeam yonder.

Then in ma breeks I nearly shit,
As 'cross the green the spotlight flits,
And pins me in a shaft o light;
A shinin blade that stabs the night.

And blinded in its brilliant glare,
I shut ma eyes, ma sight tae spare,
And though I try tae turn and flee,
Ma legs have baith forsaken me.

I cannae move, I cannae scream,
I'm paralyzed in spectral gleam,
And then, tae ma extreme dismay,

The grund beneath me draps away.
Intae the air I'm quickly dragged,
Like windblawn Asda poly bag,
Wheeched above by shinin shaft,
I'm pulled towards a disc-shaped craft.
So in ma panicked, screamin mind;
Encounters o the closest kind,
And dire accounts o space abduction,
Hoovered up wi alien suction!
Ma brain unwinds wi terror stark,
Ma eyes go dim, ma thoughts go dark,
As tae the U.F.O I'm drawn,
I fade away, and then I'm gone.

Fae dreamless sleep, I slowly wake,
Ma heid's in bits, ma body aches,
Ma skull thumps like an Orange walk drum,
Ma mooth tastes like a badger's bum.
I raise a hand tae shield ma eyes,
Fae glare above that I surmise,
Must be the sun in mornin sky,
But then, wi most unmanly cry,
The memories o the night's events;
That freaky light, ma weird ascent,
Are aw recalled and then replayed,
And aw at wance, I'm right afraid.

Wi panicked lurch, I'm on ma feet,
I look about, and want tae greet,
For ma surroundins seem surreal,
A seamless room o stainless steel,
Where buttons flash and dials glow,
Wi functions that no man could know,
It seems I'm trapped in sci-fi hell,
Some freaky space-age prison cell.
For aw aroond, like fish in bowls,
Float other poor abducted souls,
In goo-filled caskets stood upright,
And lit wi greenish inner light.
And staunin there, against the wa,
Each nae mair than four fit tall,
Three wee grey men, black almond eyed,
As abductees have oft described.
Slight in stature, nae real nose,
Wee spindly legs, and just three toes,
Wi fingers six and heids humungous,
Pallid skinned like poison fungus.
When one steps forward, I jump back,
Mere seconds fae a heart attack,
And staun in stricken culture shock,
As the wee grey beastie starts tae talk.

*“Puny Earthling! We, The Greys,
Have travelled interstellar ways,
From deepest reach of cosmic space,
To now enslave the human race!
For aeons long, we’ve watched and waited,
Now mankind shall be subjugated,
But first things first, you must disrobe,
For standard practice anal probe.”*

The Grey then reaches oot a hand,
One finger like a red-hot brand,
I start tae shake wi nervy fidget,
I want nae part o probin digit!
But fears o sphincter violation,
An planetary domination,
Then aw at wanst are slowed and stilled,
As in ma bones vexation builds.
The thought o humans bowed and shackled,
Fairly raises up ma hackles,
And Glesga under Martian rule,
Is no a thought wi which I’m cool.
And as I’ve heretofore related,
Star-trekkin beings I’ve always hated,
And noo it seems the Fates design,
Tae cast ma arse in Deep Space Nine?
So then a thought, fae oot the blue;

Whit would James T Kirk dae noo?
For though I fair despise that show,
Big Jim enjoyed a good square go.
And as ma rage displaces fear
The battle fever, right severe
Is in ma blood, so tae the Grey,
I smile and laugh, then calmly say;

*“Away ye go, ya Martian tosser,
Fuck you and yer flyin saucer!
Yer plans for conquest are a farce,
And you’re no goin near ma arse!
Enslave mankind? Ye must be jokin,
Whit the fuck have you been smokin?
For naebody rules the Weedgie race,
Ye’ll never take oor Dear Green Place!”*

Then wi a cry o “Tongs ya bas!”
I set about his alien arse.
Intae the fray, I boldly go,
Tae rammy in a U.F.O.
The first Grey’s puss I cannae miss,
Wi sudden divin Glesga Kiss,
And no expectin swift attack,
Ma heidbutt puts him oan his back.
The other two just staun and stare,

For Weeie rage, sair unprepared,
Then in a rush, they turn and flee,
But they'll no get away fae me!
Their wee short limbs in want o pace,
Ma longer stride soon ends the chase,
Wi grim delight, I trip their legs,
And stamp their heids like saft boiled eggs.
I wipe ma boots upon the floor,
And see ahead an open door,
I hurry through and there behold,
The cockpit where the ship's controlled.
A fourth Grey freak sits at the wheel,
His neck snaps 'neath Doc Marten heel,
The pilot's corpse devoid o life,
I turn ma thoughts tae ma waitin wife.
I make attempt tae land the vessel,
Strange controls I push and wrestle.
First left then right the saucer veers,
Cause U.F.Os are a bastard tae steer.
Then intae divin barrel roll,
The spaceship falls, oot o control,
As fae the sky, like dyin crow,
I plunge toward the Earth below.

I wake face doon on garden path,
And in ma ears - sweet Maggie's wrath.

“So where the bloody hell you been?”

She starts tae rant and vent her spleen.

“Dear Maggie doll,” I beg for pity,

“Yer husband brave just saved the city,

Fae space invaders, cruel and grey,

Yer hero Tam has saved the day!”

“Away ye go and don’t talk shite,

Ye’ve been oot drinkin aw the night,

So don’t come hame wi that pish patter!”

The front door slams wi mighty clatter.

On doorstep here, I sit and sigh,

Ma eyes turned up tae mornin sky.

I ponder thoughts o time misplaced,

And monsters fae galactic space.

The very last thing I recall,

Directly after plungin fall,

Is lyin in Mount Vernon Park,

As tae the endless cosmic dark,

I watched the Greys make quick retreat,

A path for hame, they swiftly beat.

And though at ma tale, the wife may scoff,

I think I scared the bastards off.

But will they ever come again,

Tae take revenge for those I’ve slain?

Well if they may, then come aheid,

Star-trekkin pricks, I'll see them deid.

So fae this day, friends, watch the skies,

And scan the stars wi wary eyes,

And tae any Grey that yet exists;

Remember Tam O'Shatner's fists.

3rd place winner: Nigel Brown, Roslyn, Dunedin

The Turning

For Robbie Burns {1759-1796}

Don't turn your back on me
Robbie don't turn away.
A'that, an a'that
I'm not worthy of yer gaze.
Don't turn your back away.
In the Octagon in Dunedin fair,
don't turn your back away.

When I was a child up north
The Tauranga place I tell
I saw men toss the caber.
I saw Caledonian games.
I saw the crests of clans ,
I knew them well.
I saw tartans , pipes and laughter.
A 'that, an a'that.
Don't turn yer back away Robbie,
don't turn yer back away.

My fathers friend was Mr Mc Tainsh
a white haired vigorous fellow.
But we as family didn't mix,
my mother being poorly.
Mc Tainsh on New Years Eve
to our house the pipes did bring.
He blasted through and out again.
Ignored my surly what's this stare
and really didn't seem to care.
It's a fond memory now
of life and sound!
A 'that , an a'that.
Don't turn yer back away Robbie,
don't turn yer back on me.

Later In life I read the poems
of my great grandfather James Smith
one of too many of that name.
he lived in Naseby but had
a Gaelic turn of phrase.
Much put off by their Scottishness
I read them with distain.
But then you feel it's part of you
And have to read again.

A 'that , an a'that.

Don't turn yer back away Robbie,
don't turn yer back away.

For I was raised with little
sense of Scottish blood
unlike my wife of Fraser Clan
and Lovat locked away.
Although a score of years
I highland beasties raised
and could see it in their stare.
A 'that , an a'that.
Don't turn yer back away Robbie,
don't turn yer back on me.

So turn your bronze head now
Robbie, turn your back from me.
Give the dying trees a helping hand
and hand a little mouse to me.
Show me an honest man
and a luvie like a red red rose.
No one knows, strange weather grows.
I'm sorry Man's dominion
has broken Nature's social union.
A 'that , an a'that.
Turn turn, turn, turn.
turn back ,turn back,
turn back with Robbie Burns