

## **A BROKEN WORLD: WHAT CAN BE DONE**

The Poems by Richard Bond

### ***Street Vendor***

Eyes downcast, hands not free, to wipe his  
sweated brow  
serving the almost poor like Lords for now.  
No time to read sign's fading prohibition  
that may as well say 'Cops Dine Free,'  
or to pity self, that ego now forgotten,  
just flowing with unjust reality.  
Surviving on the edge.

A life not chosen but weighted by  
the cruel roulette wheel's inequality  
of opportunities denied each day,  
all day hoping for one dollar two,  
surviving on the edge.

Mouths to feed everywhere  
hurried clients, kids at home, perhaps his own.  
A life both worker and drone,  
a life of choice, graft or trouble  
simple, fragile, vulnerable,  
surviving on the edge.

He fled the freedom of rural farm,  
stakes too high for credit's pledge  
with famine's threat, drought, debt and storm.  
Swapped rural frugality  
for destitution city  
to survive on the edge.

### ***Did we Make Poverty History?***

Coin dropped through slot joins weighty lot  
of change in beggar's bowl.  
For their cause a mite while we feel right,  
their benediction is always for sale.

Then who will make poverty history?  
Let us be their guardian angels,  
we look into their eyes and patronise,  
giving aid in perpetual cycles.

Freedom through trade, come grow with us,  
our profits trickle down to all,  
but paupers below will pull you back down,  
the bloated above will block you.

Cry out for justice and claim human rights  
all people are born equal.  
Stand and demand to be treated alike  
but the biggest beast makes the rules.

Who is this beast who beats the least  
whose polity leaches earth's wealth?  
Who breaks the broke, whose effluent chokes  
while it grows its cankerous self?

Who demands cheap and deny that they cheat?  
Why! 'Tis us in our affluence.  
We gorge too much and leave insufficient,  
while stoking the climate's heat.

So join the gentle, pass lightly through life,  
let's all make affluence history,  
meet the poor part-way in frugality  
and share in our common humanity.

### ***Tropopause for Thought***

High sky, vast void, that holds the stars in place,  
cushioned with Cumulus 'neath Cirrus lace.

Invisible winds wander, wild and free,  
caressing corn or breaking branch of tree.

Into this pearl we vent our noxious gas,  
transferring costs to nature's overdraft.

Gaia's thin veil of life must pay the debt,  
perspiring air beneath carbon's blanket.

Rise Mercury! Take Northern gales to flood  
those thoughtless consumers of earth's black  
blood.

## ***Efficiency***

The god of efficiency gnaws our bones  
dictates your work, invades our homes,  
wanting more for less and faster too,  
it burns you out, it leaches you.

Our God created a bountiful earth,  
enough for all, each one has worth.  
By the sweat of our brows and healthy toil  
we'll eat, get fat, enjoy, extol.

So I'll avoid debt and acquisition  
empowered in simpler position,  
watch the clouds sail by in frugality  
and potter inefficiently.

## ***Wrong Ways About***

That cleverness so fouled in Adam's pride  
seeks divinity in slick technology.  
The cancerous growth of Mammon multiplies  
such craft to make mere numbers exponential  
and gathers raw power to fewer.

Such dismal science, a grave new world begets  
society steered by the rudder of greed  
in Faustian pattern, corrupting  
morality to change our creed.

This inversion instigates perversion,  
for our souls thirst to put God first  
on the rock of His intention.

In the garden of loving care, blooms community,  
caring for weakest, the poor and the ill,  
finding no wealth but life.  
Reborn economy out of ecology,  
our wants are tamed, our needs fulfilled.

This baptismal science ordains  
honest labour and artistry  
joyously given in altruism  
to make us the best that we can be.

So let us start at the *right* end  
to reverse this diabolic trend.