

Poems by David Lindsay (monologuedave.co.uk) – Permission will almost certainly be given for use, but please contact him – he’s nosey and likes to know where his poetry is getting to!  
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### **I used to start by saying “Sorry”**

I used to start by saying sorry  
For my choice of verse  
For the words I was about to speak  
It was really quite a curse

I used to start by saying sorry  
That maybe I’d recited this before  
Or that another voice had spoken it  
And that I could add no more

I used to start by saying sorry  
That maybe I was wasting your time  
With my attempts to declaim or utter  
Some prose, or monologue, or rhyme

I used to start by saying sorry  
If I slipped up on a word or two  
Or even forgot my place completely  
As I’m sometimes prone to do

I used to start by saying sorry  
Before the first stanza had begun  
And that somehow left the poem ungrounded,  
Lost. Untethered. Too easily undone.

There’s a place for an apology  
If careless words cause pain  
If they whip and wound without context  
Or hurt. Or hunt. Or shame.

But I take pride in the words I craft  
When I get them to work out-loud  
When they trickle together off the tongue  
With form and meaning. And proud.

You see, I like reciting Shakespeare  
And Burns, and Owen, and Keats  
And Barker, Causley, Dahl and Elliott  
And sweet scores between them and Yeats

And I love listening to contrasting voices  
Of creative spoken word  
Of singers and musicians in folk clubs  
To talent that is largely unheard

This won't bring fame and fortune  
Won't see me at the Albert Hall  
But with like-minded folk, like those in this room  
It has meaning. So to repeat my call...

I used to start by saying sorry  
For my choice of verse  
For the words I was about to speak  
It used to be a curse

David Lindsay

### **French Invasion**

Since the bloody Battle of Hastings  
When 'Arold got killed by French Bill  
We've seen an endless invasion of French  
And I've just about had my fill

Don't we have enough words of our own  
In this wonderful language of ours?  
- To seek and find le mot juste  
Dunt take much linguistic power

It seems using French has been with us forever  
Passed down as a fait accompli  
Have we ever really tried to change that?  
Or have we always said "C'est la vie"?

But, to think that some long-dead bon vivant  
With a certain je ne sais quoi  
Used his chic tour de force to put words in our mouths  
To me, it's a shameful faux-pas

So, I think we need a tête-à-tête  
To form a clique, to mount a coup  
Working together, en masse, as a team  
We'll swap "Bonsoir" for "How Do"

Then <haute couture> won't be setting the trend  
We'll watch racing, not the Grand Prix  
No more art nouveau, or cordon bleu  
And say "Enjoy your meal", not "Bon appétit"

I never have the soup du jour  
Prefer prawn cocktail to poncy pâté  
And I'll sit in a coffee house or caff  
But never go in a café

Some say I should let it go and relax  
Say choice of words is all laissez-faire  
But can I stay calm on this bête noire of mine?  
No, mes amis ~ au-contre!

At British Wimbledon let's use "40-all"  
Instead of being at deuce  
And what's wrong with nil instead of love  
Or am I being obtuse?

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I know that we'll get nowhere  
I sense there's no going back  
That it's like being stuck behind burning sheep  
Trapped in a cul-de-sac

But I suppose that it is nice to share  
Good ideas and a word or two  
Like Liberté and Égalité  
And that feeling of Déjà vu

And with le weekend, le booking, le check-in, le spam  
And countless more, I say with a grin  
That when we look at our counter-invasion  
Even the French agree that we win!

David Lindsay

## Tree Time

Apple, Plum, Orange, Lemon, Lime  
All give us their sweet fruits  
Alder, Birch, Hawthorn and Sycamore  
Spread from solid roots

Elder, Fern, Ginkgo, Hazel  
Sweet Gum, Hornbeam, Fig  
Bald and False Cypress, Beech  
Grow their fearless twigs

There's Holly, Mountain, Ash and Pine  
Poplar, Spruce and Yew  
Elm, Eucalyptus, Cycad, Conifer  
Walnut. Monkey Puzzle too

Japanese Snowbell, Shellback Hickory  
Sequoia, Juniper, Larch  
Littleleaf Linden, Maidenhair  
Maple with darkening bark

Dessert Willow, Pussy Willow,  
Weeping Willows drooping low  
While Magnolia, Redbud, Whitebeam  
Let their colours show

Coconut, Fan, Fishtail, Foxtail  
- They're all types of Palm  
If you're getting sick of all these trees  
We're nearly done, so just keep calm

Air to breathe. Wood to build.  
Food to eat. Nature's beautifully bonkers  
If I had to pick between them all  
The Horse Chestnut wins - with conkers!

David Lindsay

## Two Suns

We're orbiting our star, the sun, at quite a decent speed  
We've been doing that for billions of years, scientists are agreed  
But apparently, many stars we know, have got a twin - they're binary  
So if our Earth had two suns, not one - how great would that be?!

Imagine how much warmer and how much lighter it would be  
As our two hot globes dance in the sky and we sail fancy-free  
Through the void between them, around them or above  
It sounds like fun, and twice the sun could mean we double the love

But then, what would happen to the moon? - I like to see her gleam  
Would we lose her for a while, when along our path we steam?  
If we did, I'd insist we pick her up again on our journey back to base  
It's rude to keep a lady waiting, especially in cold space.

What of the other planets, our neighbours round the sun?  
Would there be eight or nine of them, or maybe twenty-one?  
With double gravity a-pulling, that's possible I'd say  
But they'd have to form a queue or they'd get in each other's way.

We'd need some traffic lights in space, to prevent an awful jumble  
If Neptune cut in front of Mars, he'd make her trip and tumble  
Perhaps I'm worrying over nowt, perhaps they'd all behave  
To not do so with two "sun mums" watching would be rather brave!

Back on Earth in the early years, what changes might there be?  
Would the tides be any different, would there be more land / less sea?  
The plants and animals that grew around could've been so very different  
Would the dinosaurs still have come about, to then become extinct?

And what of jolly homo erectus and our other predecessors?  
Could they have survived and stayed alive to bring forth the same ancestors?  
If so, would we still have, in this fair land, Stonehenge to pave the way  
To measure out the seasons and the solstices today?

I could be wrong but 8 seasons a year we'd have - have I got that right?!  
And for half the year we'd also get pure days, i.e. there'd be no night  
And how long would a year be, how many months, how many weeks?  
And without the stars above to count, I guess we'd have to stick to sheep.

I like the thought of two summers, two autumns and two springs  
I'm not too keen on winters, but you can't have everything  
Without seeing all the stars and having planets all akimbo  
We wouldn't have astrology, so no daft TV bimbos!

Would we have sun-signs instead of star-signs, well who knows?  
But new calendars would be needed to match celestial do-se-dos

Two darling buds of May and two autumn falls would be quite nifty  
But longer years mean we'd leave school at 8 and die before we're 50!

Twice daily sunrises and sunsets would be beautiful to see  
So would watching Halley's comet double-looping like a bee  
But the whole thing could be chaos, there's a "Goldilocks zone" I hear  
Too close to a sun - we'd frazzle, too far - we'd freeze, I fear.

So let us not be greedy, after all, having one sun works just fine  
We've one sunrise and one sunset and a good grasp of the time  
We've LIFE and heat and daylight thanks to that single golden ball.  
I say let's stick to one, 'cause if we try for two, we might not be here at all!

David Lindsay

### O-U-S

Most of us find life difficult to avoid, in a way that I find quite curious  
Choosing the right path to follow at speed, makes some us quite furious  
The answers aren't easy, but O-U-S might just be a key  
It ain't the answer to life and everything - say "that's 42!" - I might agree

Well, life has its' ups and downs, it's fluid, we can hardly say it's viscous  
At times it can be troublous, torturous or even border-line pernicious  
But bad luck is like owt else, it can dangle all precarious  
Then it disappears and with three cheers, life's back to being tremendous

Now, there are folk who make me nervous, to the point of being ulcerous  
Whose behaviour to their neighbour is villainous and injurious  
Some are vulturous, some are dangerous and others felonious  
I find them simply treasonous and traitorous to all the rest of us

I'm not sure what to make of those who claim they're the "Righteous"  
And I'm puzzled with the superstitious, and those who say they're sorcerous  
The world can be miraculous without being idolatrous, I say  
Why not respect each other's views, get on with life - go for the middle-way

And while I'm on the subject of being good and kind towards our kin  
It's worth speaking well of friend or foe, whether it's a "her" or a "him"  
Avoid the language of a snake, it's malicious and poisonous  
And could be turned against you, to leave you vexed and anxious

When it comes to diets, take advice (including this!) with a decent pinch of salt  
Some are fictitious, some plain ridiculous and their authors are at fault  
Whether you're carnivorous, herbivorous, or plain insectivorous  
Just make sure your plate's not porous, and tuck-in to food delicious

I reckon it's worth trying to learn new stuff and being conscientious  
If you're vigorous and willing to be ponderous and studious  
Then ping! The "Big Idea" might come all a-glow and luminous  
So that with work you grow it 'til the world thinks you're a genius

It's fine to be ambitious, if you're not too bumptious or overzealous  
And get people on your side, don't try to leave them envious or jealous  
Be generous and gracious, not pompous and sanctimonious  
Might that be the recipe for a life melodious and harmonious?

There are those who strive with all their might, to be prosperous and famous  
If that is thee, then good for you, it's a drive I find quite marvellous  
To those who seek rapturous applause, and those who are industrious  
I say well done, but I like a quiet life - this poem was almost left anonymous!

When you look back upon your life, of course I hope you are longevous  
Will you remember all you've done and smile and feel just marvellous?  
I'm told variety is the spice of life, so I try to keep mine multifarious  
Why have it tedious or mundane, when you can make it so stupendous?

To conclude, there are innumerable paths - some hazardous, some gorgeous  
Some require us to be quite rigorous, some down-right polymorphous!  
But among the lessons we must learn and pick up in our subconscious  
Is that we can't get very far in life without O-U-S - it's obvious!

David Lindsay

## A Hug From My Brother

It's a magical connection  
It's a greeting, a sweet hello  
It's an acknowledgement of friendship  
Which says "we're good, you know"

It's a heartfelt appreciation  
Of all that's great in life  
And speaks an unspoken commitment  
That we help each other in strife

It starts and ends our evenings together  
It marks the passing time  
Of course, it says "I love you"  
Often enhanced with a little wine!

A firm grip, or friendly word in the ear  
Embellishes this still more  
These powerful seconds of connection  
Can give the soul a lift to soar

Strengthened by memories - old and new  
And experiences - bad and good  
It's a sign of the bond between us  
Shared history, values and blood

That loving declaration -  
May it last the rest of our days  
A hug between two brothers  
Is a hug that works both ways

David Lindsay



Would You Not Prefer A Chair, Mrs Atwood?

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
I'm sure we have one going spare  
You see that pink sofa that you brought with you  
Just won't quite fit up our stairs

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
I see you like it on the floor  
But the ground, whilst sound for bums big and round  
Could make your skinny bottom just sore

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
My! That's a fetching trampoline  
But whilst a bounce is good for your health  
It'll turn our other guests quite green

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
You're sitting in a bowl of fruit  
I'm not one to judge, or to try give advice  
But squashed peaches aren't good for your suit

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
Please don't sit on the cake  
I know it's delicious and the icing is firm  
But it did take me hours to bake

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
That's a smashing helter-skelter  
It's got to be said, though it hurts my head  
It really is quite a belter, but...

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
I'm wincing at your new choice of seat  
That rat and mouse trap, could make your bum snap  
And I've just got this place nice and neat

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
Where did you find all those balloons?  
44 on each arm and your legs in a hammock  
And assisted by 14 baboons?!

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
You've squeezed into a window pane  
That's quite a talent, and I'm truly impressed  
It's a sight I shan't see again, but

Would you not prefer a chair Mrs Atwood?  
I know it sounds boring and dull  
Compared to that bouncy castle you've brought  
But you see, the room's already full

Ah! Thank you for choosing a chair Mrs Atwood  
Please let's make amends  
I do like people with random ideas  
So, let's sit together as friends  
On CHAIRS Mrs Atwood, on good solid CHAIRS  
Yes, let's sit together as friends

David Lindsay

### 5 Miles to Home (written for the Milestone Society)

When I'm out walking and hiking free  
A milestone is often a friend to me  
They're solid reminders of where you are  
And t' next point of interest, they tell you how far

But I've noticed something when around I do roam -  
That I've never seen one that says "5 miles to Home"  
I've seen "5 miles to Bradford" and "Leeds - 5 mile"  
But a "5 miles to Home" one, would make me smile

So I've looked for them everywhere, up and down vale  
Searched each nook and cranny - but still I did fail  
I had to ponder real hard and ask myself "why?"  
Surely a "5 miles to Home sign" in't pie-in-the-sky

So I dug out some map books - no sign there too  
And that was the key, it gave me a clue  
Of course! Those milestone makers had the nouse  
Not to make signs sending all to their house

They avoided the chaos, they mastered their art  
And they have won my admiration  
And if we're wanting confusion, hassle and woes  
We've got Satellite Navigation!

David Lindsay

## I Wish I'd Had Candy Floss

*In memory of those sunny summer and indecisive days of childhood at Batley and Dewsbury Parks.*

At the side of the van with a window  
In the park  
I've a decision to make

Should  
I get an ice rocket  
or a cider lolly,  
a fab, a funny feet,  
or a 99 with a flake?

Candy floss!  
The thought flashes and dies  
Before I can grasp it

Then my eyes fix on my younger brothers ice cream in it's cone  
Mum made his choice for him  
as he sits in his pram

My cousins have all made up their minds  
and so have our mums, so  
BAM!  
Suddenly they're waiting for me

Now I have to choose,  
Whatever I pick will be eaten in no time  
Whatever I pick, I'll lose

I can never make it last,  
Not under these blue skies  
I want it to, but a voice says  
"Eat it quick or it'll melt"  
Or "don't you wanna play on the slide?"

Candy floss!

Again the thought was there  
But then, how long has that sticky bright pink stuff been there  
in it's sad little bag?

Could be 5 minutes, or 5 days.

Do I care? - Er, no!

I LOVE the feeling of eating a cloud,  
Even though it's probably stickier, gooier, and pinker than owt that's up there

Maybe real clouds would also  
make our fingers glue together  
and taste that sweet when you finally get the last mouthful  
off your thumb

Dunno.

But I suppose the bag is there to stop the wasps  
And the bees  
And we've not seen any of them today  
So let's be grateful

Safer with an ice cream or a lolly.

Aw, but candy floss!

Then I remember an adult's whisper. Something about 'E' numbers.

And somehow,  
I don't really know how,  
I've chosen a 99 - a fine choice I'm told.  
No doubt with eyes rolling

Dunno.

'Cos I was right - it's gone too soon  
Mostly eaten, but a dribble down my elbow

How did it get down there?

But then me brother has tell-tale white all round his face  
and mum is going towards him armed with a tissue and spit

And at least I still have my flake!

But candy floss would've been better.

I tell myself, NEXT time, I'll get candy floss.

But I know, I won't really.

David Lindsay

## The Word Gremlin

You're in the middle of the piece  
You're really on a roll  
You've mastered every syllable  
And built it to a whole

Every intonation,  
Every stress is well rehearsed  
You know it inside out and back-to-front  
Each chorus and each verse

You even know it side-ways  
You've swum through every part  
Can add to it your character  
Your voice, your mind, your heart

Any lazy alliteration  
You can smooth over with a grace  
And you can speed it up or slow\_right\_down  
And with comfort, set the pace

Just then, in the smallest pause  
The Word Gremlin sneaks in  
And quickly digs his sharpened claws  
Right into your thick skin

You feel a nip, a tiny pinch  
Which you wish you could ignore  
But you know fine well what's coming  
As the claws begin to bore

You're shocked and stunned  
And your brain's begun to panic  
Who can blame it?  
It thought you knew, but now you're screwed  
And knocked right off your game

It'll steal that word right from your tongue  
Then dance around with glee  
Or he'll hide it from you like an imp  
And just sit and smirk at thee

How did that gremlin get so close?  
Did it dash in during t'laughter?  
Was it hiding before we got in here  
Under a table or on the rafters?

I don't know how the beast gets in  
I'll find his secret soon,  
For now, I say let's work together  
And check often round the room

Whoever let that b\*stard in  
If you know who you are  
Buy a pint for each poor sod he got  
And keep HIM busy at the bar!

David Lindsay

Very Berry (or some Ribes in Rhyme)

There's Blackberry, Blueberry,  
Northern, Bog and simple Bilberry  
Lowbush, Highbush and Mountain Cranberry,  
Chokeberry, Dewberry, Elderberry, Guavaberry

Bearberry, Cowberry, Crowberry, Foxberry, Gooseberry and Mooseberry

Huckleberry, Jostaberry, Lingonberry, Loganberry, Myrtle Blueberry, Pineberry, Black  
Raspberry, Red Whortleberry, Squashberry, Tayberry, Whinberry and Wimberry

Yes, I've written a poem about berries,  
But please don't think I'm a prat  
'Cos Lennon sang "Strawberry Fields forever"  
And who can argue with that?!

David Lindsay

## Eggsciting Easter

I'm eggshausted and eggsasperated -  
I shouldn't have eggpected less  
But in fact it's eggsceded my worst eggexpectations  
I've had too many eggs - eaten to eggssess

I'm not one for eggsageration  
I prefer to be eggsact  
But, I'll eggspound and eggspress myself further  
For some sympathy, I wish to eggstract

Well, I took some advice from an "eggspert"  
An eggstravigant egghead, called Ed  
Eggstremely eggshalted in his field of interest,  
I listened. And now wish I was dead

Egged-on and eggscited by Easter  
No eggscuses - I ate more than I'd planned  
Inhaling chocolate was fine, it felt so divine  
But when I eggshaled - I began to eggspand

Eggspelling some air, looking downwards  
No eggamination was required to eggplain  
That the shape I'd become - was an oval  
Eggshaped I was - and in pain

Egg-bound - that's to say, in the house by myself  
My life flashed before me just then  
So hoping to prevent an eggsplosion  
I clucked like an old mother hen

I knew eggsercise was a non-starter  
I eggcluded that option right there  
"Was I doomed to be eggiled for the rest of my life?"  
I thought, as I rolled off my chair

"No, damn it" I eggclaimed (note - no eggspletives!)  
"This eggistance is not for me"  
And though Shakespeare's Omlette is somewhat  
depressing  
I thought "To be, or not to be"

But then, thinking of Easter and Springtime  
Of bunnies, of lambs and cute sheep  
With my eggsterior resembling a rotund chocolate egg  
I lulled myself into sleep

I dream'd of others, who'd been there before me  
Others who'd suffered my plight  
Of Henry VIII's eggscommunication  
Slept the rest of the day, and the night

I awoke at last, and with some relief  
I found I was able to move  
So eggstatic, I scrambled to my feet,  
Wiped the egg off my face, just to prove

That though my life's not eggsotic  
Easter Eggs do make me cheer  
The Chancellor of the Eggschequer can double the tax  
But I'll do it again, every year!

David Lindsay



## Leader of the Tribe

He's the leader of the tribe  
An elder, wise and true  
Blessed, perhaps, with fortune  
To live so long  
But he knows right from wrong  
And does his best for me and you

He's the leader of the tribe,  
A hero, brave and bold  
Blessed with learned insight  
The enemy saw  
Brought us through war  
With deeds and words of gold

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He's the smarmy baby-face  
With ego bold and brash  
Over-blessed with fortune  
A snooty kid  
Now making his bid  
To get the rich more cash

We get the leaders we deserve  
Our history simply shows it  
Those who fight for what is right  
And those who don't and bloody know it

David Lindsay

## Press Pause

Brave was our fight, just to survive  
To hunt, to gather, then farm.  
Our numbers so small, survival so special,  
Don't press pause now, or you'll cause us harm.

Our tribal ancestors rose and spread  
Touching and burning each day  
Through land and resources, learning some balance,  
Can we press pause now? - No way!

Centuries pass, and we learn to master  
The nature around with our brains.  
Civilisation, industrialisation. Don't press pause now  
- for the sake of our capital gains!

Empires. Left and right-wing warfare  
Ignoring the poverty gap  
20th century pause for reflection?  
We're too busy killing - don't talk crap!

Now we number some 7 billion and more  
Yet we still refuse to pause.  
Mother Nature might choose to blow her whistle  
Call time, upset that we broke all her laws

She might pause and take a good healthy breath  
Maybe freeze, burn or polish the earth  
If we're lucky enough, a few would survive,  
And with huge pain and suffering give birth

To a new generation, forgetting the past  
Forgetting to pause to stop harm. They'll say  
Brave was our fight, just to survive  
To hunt, to gather, then farm.

David Lindsay