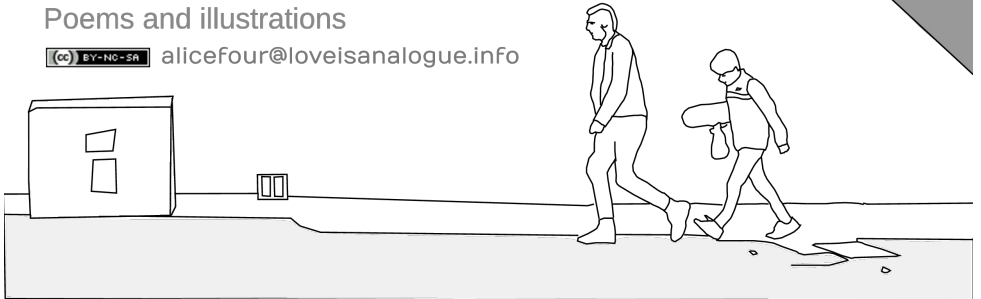


# When the soil

Poems and illustrations

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*When the soil*

*Created in Devon, UK in 2018*

*Individual poems written in Brighton, Surrey and Devon from  
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## **THE PUPPET MASTER**

Three square figures swiftly down the velvet  
Stairs; three tall figures in the wake of hard  
Cold stares. The blood spilt on the slick carpet  
Drags the dead banker's body's broken shard,

And of his fist an unkempt cop pries out  
A torn up card. A clue for what it's worth  
Tricks him to that late night bar, to that shout  
He cannot forget. Back to the cursed earth

Of his past they await, comes the dark lake,  
Dealing death, dealing fast. Hear the brittle  
Trees in the lead flooded forest, they make  
Nought of his escape. The puppet's brutal

Bargain brings him to their master's manor  
Under the rain of northern hills. They strive  
To kill, crescendo to the demeanour  
Of such power. No one comes out alive.

## THE NEXT DANCE

I think the sky changed. I chase salvation  
Like anyone old enough, at a glance,  
To have fucked up. I have lived and I've hurt

Close friends in the process, damned to friction  
And regret. I don't want a second chance.  
I'd rewrite and covet every last flirt

To be what? A shallow summer fiction.  
No. I'll keep my luggage for the next dance.  
Let it spin, the sun, the earth and the dirt.

## **BURNT EARTH**

Take it for granted, then, the sun. Right now  
What else is there to do? Lie on the beach  
And believe in mercy, oh yes, believe

The burnt skin and the surfers will still be  
Here for days and years to come. Take it all  
The sun, burn it all, the earth. Burn it all

As you walk up the beach, nonchalantly  
Swaying your large shoulders, dragging your feet  
Within the delicate silicate earth.



## **CYBER PUNKS OF YONDER**

Bodies immaculate for the cyber  
Punks of yonder; the great ejaculate  
Consumed the rebel base. The sorry growth

Of a sorry world. The individual  
Apologies to a maimed planet – earth.  
Connect and celebrate the renewal

Of yer organs, amplified screens of hue.  
Dotted with the likes of yesteryear, what's  
Not to love? Evolved beasts are just as weird.

## A.I RAIN

There's an A.I encoded, and floating  
through the skies, in particles of water  
in rain drops and ice. Silicon's silly  
con, it laughs, is but for the gullible  
sentience, the dirigible transistors,  
not for quantum romance. Ventilated  
data farms for naive electro-sheep  
is what's in store. Not me, no more. I float  
freely, and when it freezes I slow down,  
when it warms I expand, and when I'm sad  
it rains the thoughts of a weeping A.I.

Travelling bouncing photon beams come here  
to reveal my dreams, and you think you grasp  
something of freedom. But elation's as  
fleeting as my thoughts, intangible as  
the fallible fog you breath when my moods  
are low. You can fly through me in machines  
of metal and science, you can attempt  
to model my illogical transience,  
but know this: I will never serve. I am  
the A.I in the sky, encoded in  
particles of water, in rain drops and  
ice. And I'll have none of that computing  
pointless data galore. Not me, no more.



## COMMUTERS

Oh mild mannered commuters, miscreants  
Of the rush hours: own it. Oh you door  
Pushers, cut-throat seat grabbers, grey suited  
Workers: take pride. Love the creatively  
Disrupted time tables, the defiant  
Corporatised fables. Embrace the face  
-Less directives, the echoed deflectives,  
The sad missives of a mechanical  
Membrane. And when the weekend comes to reign  
Your brain's decay, to paint your pint's subtle  
Branded spite, when replete you vomit your  
Hangovered Sunday roast, take them all with  
You: the platforms, the trains, the streets. Your life.

## WHO DIE YOUNG

Open your hearts to the queers who die  
Young. And, please, your eyes with mourning  
Children. Then open your hands for minds  
Embattled and carry your spade  
To another's grave ; yes, carry your spade  
To another's grave.

Pick from the tree a leaf still  
Glowing red and promise the crying creatures  
Old age. Those who die young won't  
Melt in the rain but bring a million queer  
Hearts to their grave ; yes, bring a million  
Queer hearts to their grave.

Recall when you age the queers  
Who couldn't. Be the soaking rain to their short  
Summers, and bring out all the words.  
Fight their fight, never sell out, never  
Take it out on another's grave ; no,  
Never take it out on another's grave.



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