

**I'M A SOLDIER...
GET ME OUT OF HERE!**

BY

TOM MCGREEVY

RB

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Poetry

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FLOW for ALL
www.FLOWforALL.org

And

FORCES POETRY
www.ForcesPoetry.com

Forces Literary Organisation Worldwide For All : who encouraged me to get my Military experiences down on paper.

FLOW for ALL was set up by ex-servicemen like myself, to help other ex-forces on leaving the Services, most of whom suffer in one form or another from P.T.S.D (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Although writing poetry, and expelling your fears by writing about them is not a cure for P.T.S.D, it certainly goes a long way to help on the long road to recovery. FLOW for ALL is a must visit site for anyone suffering from the effects of war and the many conflicts around the World.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my lovely wife Paula, who put her life on hold to nurse me through my cancer. Without her I wouldn't be here today, and 'I'm a Soldier ...Get Me Out of Here!', and my first book 'Poems for Paula' would never have been written.

This book is also dedicated to Alex Roissetter, and to my sons Damian, Jonathan, Sam and James for keeping me busy!

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I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

SOLDIER FOR HIRE

Don't let me die like this
Don't let me die alone
Bleeding out and paralysed
A thousand mile from home

A mercenary I'd become
An answer to an 'Ad'
Missing military life
A 'Civvy' going mad

No jobs for former soldiers
With killing as their trade
The tools of their employment
The rifle and the blade

So eagerly I 'snapped it up'
A dangerous job abroad
'Adrenalin' kicking right back in
Ignore the things I'd heard

I'd thought that I was 'bullet proof'
'Not me mate, I'm too fast'
I only lasted two short weeks
Those words could be my last

I lie here bleeding in the dust
My body feels no pain
My eyes the only things to move
No signals to my brain

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

My neck is broke, I know that now
The shrapnel tore right through it
The mine exploding near me
'Twas then I knew I'd 'Blew it'

My comrades fighting as they ran
They left me there for dead
Alone upon the battlefield
A crater for my bed

I 'think' a silent prayer inside
My lips refuse to speak
I need someone to hold my hand
My future's looking bleak

Someone notice, someone look
I'm not a piece of meat
Just say a kindly word to me
My Maker then I'll meet

A bird lands on my shattered limb
It's pecking at my leg
Through torn and blood-soaked combats
It's then I 'think' to beg

I'm forced to watch this gruesome feast
I cannot close my eyes
My eyelids they have burnt away
I stare toward the skies

'God help me now' I 'think' inside
Although I don't believe
It's funny how you turn to God
Religion you retrieve

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

My silent prayer is answered
My mind is fading fast
A soldier on the stage of life
Departing from the cast

My life it 'whirls' before me
I don't have no regrets
My end comes as a soldier
Back here amongst 'The Vets!'

'CONTACT, WAIT OUT'

'Big bird, big bird, hot zone'
I scream into the mike
Can't let the chopper land here
And let the enemy strike

Not fair to put their lives at risk
It's bad enough our own
Fifteen British soldiers
Ambushed and alone

'Helmand Province' we were told
Was quiet this dark night
'Patrol the eastern valley,
Till early morning light'

Then came the first explosion
'Big Jimmy' taken out
Walking proud one minute
He was our best lead scout

'Zero, this is Bravo-three,
Contact, hit, wait out'
I scream into my radio
So much noise I shout

'Gormless Eddie' next man down
Hit by one stray round
Though heavily outnumbered
He stood and fought his ground

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

'Medic, Medic' came the shout
A screaming comrade dying
A medic crying for himself
He died by me whilst trying

We were going down like flies
An ambush perfect set
Caught out in the open
No cover we could get

'Chippy, Chalky, Half-pint'
They went down one by one
By then I'd just stopped counting
My mind switched off and gone

This was my nineteenth birthday
My last year as a teen
A battle-hardened soldier
Such horrors I have seen

To watch your best friends blown apart
Their blood, and limbs, and bone
The nightmares of the battlefield
I just want to go home

Nine young soldiers lost that night
Though some of us survived
Four were badly wounded
But six of us alive

And in the next day's papers
Small paragraph's re-formed
'Nine brave soldiers lost their lives,
Next-of-kin informed!'

MY FINAL DREAM

Something woke me from my sleep
A footstep on the floor?
A feeling someone called me
A whisper from the door?

My wife she lies beside me
Her sleep I can't disturb
What caused me to snap wide awake?
I'm feeling so perturbed

The dim glow from the streetlamp
Leaks through the slatted blind
Not normal static shadows
But of the moving kind

I feel a presence in the room
Besides my wife and I
A pressure pushing down on me
Like from a darkened sky

Is that a tapping on the door?
The breeze it calls my name
'Please go away, leave me alone
I will not play your game'

I do not want to go tonight
Without a last goodbye
It isn't fair upon my wife
In sleep she gives a sigh

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I cant just up and go like this
To leave without a word
No chance to say 'I love you'
This really is absurd

A silent scream escapes my lips
My mouth begins to mime
'Just give me five more minutes,
Not now, it's not my time'

I drift toward the ceiling
My plea it goes unheard
Looking down upon my wife
I'll have no final word

She sleeps below so peacefully
Oblivious to my plight
The Angels coming for me
To take me in the night

I sink down slowly to her
And give her one last kiss
A smile appears, though deep asleep
My wife I'm going to miss

But time it waits for no man
My mission here is done
She'll journey on another day
Together joined as one

I know my wife will miss me
I know that she will cry
But she'll see me every cloudless night
Her star up in the sky

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I'll watch her in her earthly life
Protect her when I can
Walk always with my Soul-Mate
Her Guardian Angel man

On rising in the morning
You'll find my shell is cold
You'll grieve for me my sweetheart
Then join me when you're old

I'll be there waiting for you
To guide you on your way
To start your final journey
Towards our 'Milky Way'

I'll wait for you forever
Until your time is near
I promise that I'll come for you
And whisper in your ear

'I love you!'

THE BOMB DISPOSAL MAN

I kneel alone beside this bomb
The public they've all ran
They've put their trust in me today
The 'Bomb Disposal Man'

They tell me I'm a hero
The sweat runs down my nose
One small mistake from shaking hands
And up the bugger goes

I'm actually a coward
I dread the 'Walk of fear'
I picture now my headstone
'Corporal Smith rests here'

I can't tell them that I'm afraid
My bottle I have lost
I can't admit I tremble
No longer give a Toss

I switch my thoughts to 'Bertie'
That's what I've called this bomb
I always give them nick-names
It helps me get along

I stare at all the workings
The wires and the springs
The multi-coloured cables
The Death that all this brings

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

A devious man has made this
Assembled it with care
Built it like a puzzle
With everything a 'pair'

'On and off switch' there are two
Which one should I flick down?
I've seen this little trick before
Across in 'Castletown'

Whichever way you move the switch
A circuit you'll complete
A searing flash is all you'll see
You then become 'Dead meat'

Below the switches, wires
Labelled 'Cut me here!'
This also makes a circuit
So touch them if you dare

The builders sense of humour
A challenge to my skills
His tricks I will not fall for
His sense of humour kills

The clock is also ticking
Six minutes left to go
The timer on the bomb
Never running slow

So little time to make a choice
Return to base in shame?
I'd never stand their laughter
It's me that they would blame

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I flip a coin to help me choose
The normal 'Squaddie' way
But whichever way the coin falls
I know I'm going to stay

Now that I've decided
I've nothing left to lose
I wish it was as simple
As cutting through the fuse

I find the 'Detonator'
Stuck firmly in C4
My trembling hands extract it
And place it on the floor

Sometimes, you've got to chance it
A poker game from high
Put your trust in luck and fate
Or 'Kiss your butt goodbye'

They call me hero yet again
But if they only knew
I peed inside my pants back there
And now I need the loo!

THE MISSING PILLOWS

My Wife she ate her pillows
At least I thought she had
They weren't there in the morning
I thought that she'd gone mad

I questioned her when she awoke
'Where have your pillows gone?
You must remember something'
But answers, she had none

'I dreamed of large Marshmallows,
The one's that I adore
The first one tasted lovely,
And then I craved for more'

Her head lay on the mattress
The pillows missing, when?
'I think I may have ate them'
She recollected then

'You must be crazy Woman.
Not possible' I say
'You couldn't eat two whole ones'
But then again, she may

But I soon solved this mystery
With triumph I did roar
I peered across the mattress edge
And found them on the floor

COVER BLOWN

Alone and injured
Extraction requested
Cover blown
Survival tested

One in the shoulder
Hurts like Hell
Will I make it
Time will tell

Drinking in a pub
Eyeing the 'Players'
Patrol comes in
Becoming betrayers

"Hi there mate,
what you doing here?"
Try to ignore him
Drink my beer

His Corporal steps in
Gives him a nudge
Not his fault
Hold no grudge

Out they dash
Leaving me there
Did the 'Players' notice?
They're starting to stare

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

One's on the phone
Two others make three
They've all turned round
Eyeballing me

They've sussed me I'm sure
I look at the floor
But really I'm counting
The steps to the door

I know I won't make it
Too far away
No one to help me
Alone I must stay

The 'Players' they rise
So deadly they look
I must fight this battle
But not by the book

My 'Browning' comes out
"Back off you thick micks"
I'm watching their hands
Won't fall for their tricks

The crack of a gunshot
I'm thrown face down
Someone behind me
An I.R.A. clown

My shoulder is shattered
The floor stinks of booze
I run for the door
With nothing to lose

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I can't face the capture
The torture, the pain,
So I keep on running
I'm outside again

I'm losing blood fast now
But my senses are honed
I came to a phone box
My 'code word' I phoned

Then into the fields
The darkness my friend
Stupid squaddie knew me
Nearly my end

So now I wait for 'ex-fill'
Thinking of what's past
Where is that bloody chopper?
I don't think I can last

But soon I hear it beating
My 'Beacon' it will follow
In darkness it will land here
My body it will swallow

They'll plug the hole, and patch me up
Then I'll be 'Right as rain'
And when they've got me well enough
I'll be back here again

Another 'County' maybe
Up North where I'm not known
Where 'Players' will not know my face
My cover never blown

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I've learnt a lesson from this
Don't enter somewhere blind
Always keep your eyes in front
But always watch behind!

Footnote: Another time 'over the water' a long time ago

CRAZY COMPUTER

My car's got a computer
It tells me what to do
'Fasten up your seatbelt'
It starts its voice anew

'Let the clutch out now,
Press it to the floor'
It must be claustrophobic
So I open up the door

'The rear door it is open'
I cannot turn around
So loosen off my seatbelt
Try to make no sound

'Fasten up your seatbelt'
It shouts at me again
The stupid thing is twisted
My neck is struck with pain

Because the door is open
The lights are on inside
'Interior lights are still on'
From speakers on the side

'Please apply the handbrake'
I must have left it off
I turn back round to do it
The voice it gives a 'cough'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

'The rear door is still open'
The voice it comes again
I wish that I could turn it off
It's driving me insane

'Your mobile phone is ringing
Please pull in to the side'
I slide down low across the seat
Trying hard to hide

'Please fasten up your seatbelt'
It starts on me again
I lock the car and walk away
I think I'll get the train!!!

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

AUSCHWITZ

Will we be remembered
By future generations?
Or will there be a 'Cover-up'
Ignored by spineless Nations?

Inside Auschwitz time stands still
Each lonely day the same
Does the World know we are here?
While 'Nazis' play their game

I didn't ask to be a Jew
But now I'm here I'm proud
If I survive and leave here
I'll tell the World out loud

The evil men that beat us
Give death out on a 'Whim'
They have no right to kill us
Not me, or you, or him

The 'Kapo' sees me thinking
That's not allowed in here
I'm punished with a knotted branch
They rule by brutal fear

I give no satisfaction
My eyes betray no pain
There's nothing left to take from me
He beats me once again

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I take his beatings daily
For this I must survive
To tell the World about this place
I must remain alive

When this war is over
As one day it must be
We'll hang the 'Nazi Criminals'
From up the nearest tree

How can humans be so cruel?
The power to their heads
How can they go home each night
Sleep soundly in their beds?

Two years I've been inside this camp
And I can wait two more
The World must know this story
Caused by this senseless war

My Wife and Sons, they all have gone
'Selected' that first day
But I have sworn I must survive
'cause someone has to pay

To anyone who reads this
Though long dead I may be
Show it to your children
So all the World will see

Put a stop to all these wars
The 'Genocide' of nations
Let's live in peace and harmony
And ban these 'aberrations'

A WASP WITH A TALE

Why was I born a wasp,
What purpose do I serve?
All humans try to kill me
I'd say they've got some nerve

What have I ever done to them,
Why panic do I bring?
I'd never do them any harm
Apart from the 'odd sting'

Men treat me like a 'Hoodie'
Protect their kids and wives
I do not mug old people
And do not carry knives

Why are they all so frightened
Of a little thing like me?
I'm very thin and stripy
Not like those big old bees

Maybe 'cause I'm silent
Till I get near their ears
Then they hear the buzzing
That brings out all their fears

'A wasp! a wasp!' I hear them scream
As they all run away
Knocking over tables
And falling over trays

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

Such power over them I hold
For such a little creature
My Cousin 'Hornet' taught me well
He was a nasty teacher

Humans look so funny
Hands flapping in the air
Running round in circles
And pulling out their hair

Those big hard 'Macho' men
Who like to pick a fight
Run a mile from little me
Paralyzed with fright

So the moral of this story
Be you wasp or whale
It's not the size that matters
But the 'sting inside your tale'

THE RECRUITING OFFICE

'Come and join the Army'
A sign displayed outside
An office on the High Street
A Sergeant sits inside

I sit there grimly watching
The young lads going in
Hardly more than schoolboys
Devoid of most bad sin

The eager look upon their faces
Grins that turn to beams
'Don't sign up' I want to shout
But can't destroy their dreams

'See the World and have some fun'
The Sergeant will contrive
Then sent to some forsaken place
How many will survive?

The odds are not in favour
In 'War zones' where they'll fight
To stay alive in daylight
But worst of all at night

They see the life as glamorous
It's better than the dole
They'll see the World and have some fun
But will they come back whole?

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

It's not so bad in training
You know it's not for real
But once on active service
The fear inside you feel

You'll hear the shout: 'INCOMING!'
The whistle of the round
You'll hope it doesn't land near you
You'll pray without a sound

You'll think if you are quiet
And keep your eyes closed tight
The round will never find you
And 'Kiss your butt goodnight'

So forget the boozy NAAFI
The beaches and the girls
Ignore that deskbound Sergeant
As battle now unfurls

This is the reality
Of war in far off places
Eating dirt in foxholes
Deployed from lonely bases

But people make their own mistakes
You cannot tell them how
I was that eager soldier
But look at me right now

Wounded then discharged
My dreams they all were shattered
Confined inside this wheelchair
The end of all that mattered

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

So I watch them all go in
Their dreams are still intact
Decide that I won't interfere
I'm going home in fact

I'll see them on the TV
When 'Body bags' return
And cry a silent tear for them
Will young men never learn?

'OVER THE WATER'

Home on leave from 'Over the water'
Telling lies to Mum
Working in deep cover
Can't tell what I've become

What's it like in 'Cyprus?'
She asks without a clue
Can't tell her I'm in Ireland
Can't tell her what I do

Each week she gets a postcard
From Cyprus it does come
All written months ago by me
'Please forgive me Mum'

For lying to you everyday
To keep my cover safe
Protect you from the worry
Your second Son, and waif

I think my older brother knows
He is a clever man
'If you're based in Cyprus'
How come you've got no tan?'

He doesn't quiz me further
But looks at me with pride
Good job he's not IRA
The lies I couldn't hide

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

And when it's time for me to go
Back to the Belfast streets
He shakes my hand and hugs me
A tear sticks to my cheeks

'Keep your head down, you be safe'
He whispers in my ear
'If you're in trouble over there,
I'll come for you, I swear'

My Mum she hugs me next
My taxi it awaits
'Don't get burnt out in the sun'
She innocently states

Then across the Irish Sea
To Ireland and the strife
I wouldn't change it if I could
Because I love this life

No inspections, or parades
No Sergeants shout and moan
I live the streets a lonely man
Because this life's 'My own'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I'M A SOLDIER... GET ME OUT OF HERE

I live on different levels
Most days I'm not myself
One day John, next day Jim
It's not good for my health

I don't know who I am today
I could be you, or him
But when I enter 'Derry'
I must turn into Jim

My cover is all shaky
Been doing this to long
At home I whistle 'Danny Boy'
Or hum an Irish song

I want them to extract me
To 'Come in from the cold'
I fear I'll be discovered
And won't get to grow old

My task today, a watching brief
An 'Eyeball' on the 'Players'
But what if they all 'Suss me?'
And peel away the layers

First they'd find an 'Irish Jim'
But deeper they'd find John
A Corporal in the army
The British sent along

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

An infiltrator in their midst
To me they'd show no quarter
They'd torture me until I talked
A lamb sent to the slaughter

These thoughts I must chase from my head
Or I'll stand out a mile
They'll 'suss me' in an instant
And put me straight on trial

My bottle's gone, I can't go in
The pub door stands before me
I've seen too many deaths inside
No more I want to see

I turn around, the panic close
I want to run away
But years of training stop me
And I decide to stay

I turn back round, inhale the air
Expel the breath of fear
Although my hands are shaking
I really need a beer

I'll carry out my mission
And chance my luck tonight
I'll not show that I'm frightened
Not show I'm numb with fright

Tomorrow I shall see the 'Boss'
Tell him I'm a coward
I know that I'll be 'RTU'd'
My mates at me will glower

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

'Post Traumatic Stress' they'll say
What's that when it's at home?
They'll stick me on a desk job
No longer I shall roam

So I shall ask for discharge
Unfit for duty, sick
Leave the unit that I love
Destroyed by some 'Daft Mick'

I'll follow all the other lads
Off to Iraq I'll go
'Freelance Soldier' I'll become
Then no-one has to know

I'm not afraid of fighting
I have no fear of dying
But Ireland's not the place for me
To say so, would be lying

Just get me out tomorrow
An early evening flight
I'll feel the English breeze on me
If I survive 'Tonight'

THE AMOROUS SHOWER CURTAIN

Why does it always follow me
When I get in the shower?
I must act like a magnet
Exuding some strange power

It moves along as I move
Drawn to my skin
With threads that are invisible
The dance it does begin

We dance along the shower tray
Synchronised as one
Nearly touching, but not quite
The water plays a song

The curtain really fancies me
I'm sure of that now
Heading for my 'Nether bits'
I haven't figured how

I squeeze into the corner
But this has no effect
Tears run down the curtain
Of loneliness, neglect

The curtain rings stare at me
Like eyes afraid to blink
I slide across the shower tray
Just like a skating rink

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

Desist with your advances
I shout to no avail
But shower curtains have no ears
They're deaf upon the rail

I move to close, it captures me
Wrapped round me like a shroud
I feel just like an aeroplane
Swallowed by a cloud

It grips me just like 'Cling-film'
I whack it with the flannel
I can't stand anymore of this
I'll buy a 'sliding panel!'

I LEAVE YOU AS YOU SLEEP

I leave this letter darling
 'cause I am off to war
I said I'd never leave again
 My love for you I swore

I have to do this sweetheart
 There's no way I can stay
Our debts they keep on stacking up
 I need to earn some pay

So to Iraq it's now I leave
 A private soldier I
This time to fight for money
 Our bills are just so high

I couldn't tell you face to face
 You'd never let me go
I'll think of you both day and night
 Just thought that you should know

Forgive me for departing
 Without a last goodbye
I'll be back home by Christmas
 With presents all piled high

I'll keep my head down that I'll swear
 Alive to earn some pay
I'll brush my teeth most mornings
 Change 'Boxers' every day

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

Tell the kids I love them
I'll see them very soon
And if they want to talk to me
Just talk up to the moon

The same moon that I'll see each night
Up in that twilight sky
Just tell them that I've gone to work
When they keep asking why

I know you'll say I'm selfish
That I just want to fight
But have you watched me dreaming,
And screaming in the night?

If only I could tell you
The terror night-time holds
You'd understand I have to go
I cannot face 'The Dole'

I need to quash these Demons
Confront them once again
In this my final battle
At home then I'll remain

I'm crying as I write this
For leaving you behind
But let me do this one last tour
My life I'll then rewind

And if I don't return to you
To those I love so well
Be proud of me my darling
'cause I'll have been to Hell

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

THE PEA THAT SAVED THE BIRO

I'm a little Biro
I scribble night and day
I used to be a writer
But my ink ran out today

I'm what you call a 'Throwaway'
My ink has all ran dry
My writer's block has started
If I had ink, I'd cry

I know I'm destined for the bin
I'm no use to them now
My ballpoint is impotent
Where once I used to 'Wow'

The hand that once directed me
With fancy words I'd write
Has swapped me for a fountain pen
With writing neat and tight

It seems that I'm a 'One-off'
Useless when I'm used
Given to the dog to chew
Oh, how I get abused

But then my prayers are answered
A child he rescues me
He pulls out all my insides
And then inserts a Pea

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

My thin end wrapped around his lips
I'm aimed at Father's Hooter
The pea it travels at such speed
I'm now a great 'Pea-shooter'

So now I've been Recycled
A new career for me
Please excuse me, got to dash
I'm dying for a 'Pea!'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

RHODESIA/ZIMBABWE 1980

The Township buildings etched out sharp
 Against the orange Sun
 A silhouette of blackness
 The colours slowly run

The morning mist is melting
 Exposing ground so dry
 The bones of fallen soldiers
 Picked clean by vultures high

Who did these men belong to
 What stories could they tell?
 Silenced now forever
 These men have been to Hell

We've been out here for two long weeks
 Patrolling in the heat
 One more week till we go home
 Then comrades we will meet

We 'Selous Scouts' have seen it all
 The dying and the dead
 The women raped in villages
 The children killed in bed

The men with amputations
 Cut off to teach a lesson
 To instil fear amongst them
 But still alive, a blessing?

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I've grown immune to all of this
The casualties of war
Walking past the injured
The screaming I ignore

But soon I will be out of this
Unemployed and free
When 'Mugabe' comes to power
Disbanded we will be

We'll then disperse around the World
To war zones far and wide
Our memories they will follow us
There's no place we can hide

Rhodesia was my Motherland
But now it isn't mine
For when you visit in the future
'Zimbabwe's on the sign!

THE REDUNDANT SHED

My roof is leaking badly
My floor is soaking through
My wooden boards that used to lap
Are warping, long since new

My only view out to the World
Through windows once so clear
Is now obscured by the grime
And slugs that climb so queer

I've heard that they're replacing me
Old age has shown my years
And when the raindrops fall off me
I can't hold back my tears

I've served my purpose, now I'm full
Of 'Junk' from 'Him indoors'
A pile of rubbish, six feet high
And spilling out the drawers

I was dismantled, bit by bit
Where once I stood so proud
Then stacked upon the decking
And covered with a shroud

Then yesterday, reborn again
Recycled as a fence
I now stand proudly once again
At no cost, no expense!

NEVER TRUST A CAMEL

I slowly sped away
To travel and be free
To feed my dream of 'Nomads'
Upon the sandy sea

'Ships of the desert' I did sail
A right hump they did get
Rode through an 'Oasis'
Boy, did we get wet!

A surly camel I did meet
One hot and dusty day
It looked just like my Sister
Don't tell her what I say

With great big eyes, and lips like tyres
Nostrils all a flare
Ears just like a 'Boxer's
With shortish curly hair

It looked at me with 'Googly' eyes
A veteran of the sands
I couldn't show the fright in me
So stroked it with my hands

This seemed to calm the camel down
It snorted with delight
And when I scratched its floppy ear
Its eyes became quite bright!

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

It snuggled up beside me
Its leg crossed over mine
A funny look upon its face
For me it wants to 'Pine'

But when it tried to kiss me
From drooling lips, the smell!
The Fetid breath it hit my face
It's then I ran like hell!

I think it fell in love with me
Intentions mis-construed
but I was having none of it
How could it be so rude?

What a sight we must've made
Me racing, running blind
Followed by this camel
Very close behind!

The moral of this story
When you get wandering feet
Is keep out of the desert
You don't know who you'll meet

But if you meet a camel
Still searching in the sands
Just tell him that I've left for good
'Then stroke him with your hands!!!'

THE V.C.P

(Vehicle Check Point)

The Irish Border lay ahead
A half mile to the south
'Bandit Country' this was named
Passed on by word of mouth

Our job to stop the smuggling
Of 'Arms' from The Republic
Arms used by The IRA
To kill and maim the public

This was a dry, but frosty night
A full moon lit the road
An unmarked border crossing
A car appeared, and slowed

The 'Intel' warned us of this car
An 'Escort', rusting red
We 'cocked' our weapons, waiting
A sound the players dread

The car was 'four-up', Army code
They wound the windows down
A smell of 'Hate' came from the car
Miles from the nearest Town

'Why 'yer stopped me Soldier boy?'
His eyes they showed no fear
I watch his hands beneath the dash
His mates move in the rear

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

'Please step out the car Sir,
And switch the engine off'
His face remained impassive
He raised his hands to cough

I knew it was a pistol
Encircled in his palm
My weapon didn't hesitate
This 'Player' meant me harm

My 'round' went through the driver
And through his mate as well
My lads all opened fire
The road it turned to 'Hell'

'Gone Noisy!' Screamed into my 'Mike'
'Have contact' I did shout
'QRF requested,
ASP, wait out!'

We cannot set an 'Ambush'
The politicians say
But once we see a weapon
It then becomes 'Fair play!'

Four more 'Players' lying dead
Four less to kill and maim
The game was on, they knew the risks
And lost their deadly game!

PEACE AT LAST

The Summer-hols have ended
The schools have all gone back
The house is very quiet!
Of noise there is a lack

Shouts of: 'What's for lunch'
Their washing on the floor
'I don't clean teeth on holidays'
Their friends queue at the door

Money for the cinema
Theme parks and the like
'Mother's Taxi's Limited'
They wont go on their bike

Glued to their computers
The chores they go ignored
Then have the cheek to say to me,
'I cant help you, I'm bored!'

I am their slave from Dawn to Dusk
I cook and clean till late
Then have to iron their best clothes
Because they've got a date

And do they thank me for all this?
Of course not, don't be silly
The kids take me for granted
Demands come 'Willy-Nilly'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

But now they've gone I'm lonely
The house is just too quiet!
Bring on the next school holidays
And let them all 'Run Riot!'

A MAN WILL DIE TONIGHT

Have you ever had an inner voice,
A sixth-sense or a hunch?
I had one late this morning
Whilst travelling to lunch

Sitting on the upper deck
A London bus below me
A man was sitting opposite
His face as sad could be

I couldn't tear my stare from him
Death hung round his face
A dark and swirling aura
My thoughts began to race

An inner voice it told me
'just follow where he goes'
I felt a death surround him
I shook down to my toes

The voice it kept repeating
'A man will die tonight'
Could I change the future?
Follow out of sight?

Oblivious to my mind games
The Man got up to leave
Down the stairs I followed
Unable to believe

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I shadowed down the pavements
Across deserted streets
He never saw me stalking him
He never heard my feet

Then an engine roaring
A screeching from the grave
Bearing down upon the Man
Tonight a life I'd save

He didn't see it coming
He stepped out in the road
The car was nearly on him
I switched to 'Hero' mode

I run and push him in the clear
To live another day
He's lying on the pavement
His life I've really saved

He comes across, stands next to me
A body's on the floor
His death mask now has gone from him
His face alive once more

We look down on the body
Wide eyes stare back at us
Why won't this man just talk to me?
I wouldn't cause a fuss

I try to touch his shoulder
My hand it disappears
I shout at him to answer me
It falls upon 'Deaf ears'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I look back at the body
The face the same as mine
It's only then I realise
Tonight had been 'My time'

My inner voice had warned me
My hunch had turned out right
A pre-ordained event in time
'A Man will die tonight'

CAPTURED

Captured by 'The Taliban'
Locked up in this cell
Kicked and tortured daily
This has become my Hell

They think they have me beaten
I cry and plead 'Okay'
But all the time I'm thinking
Of ways to make them pay

My fingernails are torn
My bruises red and sore
They've knocked the stuffing out of me
My Spirit lives no more

Why don't they come and rescue me?
They must know that I'm here
Or have they give me up for dead?
It's that alone I fear

Escape is now beyond me
To weak to even walk
They've stitched my lips together
I cannot even talk

I'll die alone inside this cell
With no-one here to tell
No headstone for the Mourners
Of where this Soldier fell

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

My captors have grown tired of me
Today they'll take my life
'Missing, killed in action'
That's what they'll tell my wife

She won't know any different
They will not tell her more
Not how I died in 'Rags and filth'
My vomit on the floor

My only weapon now I use
My captors to confuse
I stretch a huge grin on my face
I've nothing left to lose

My killer looks bewildered
His blade held to my throat
And when he draws it back and forth
My eyes at him they gloat

So I have had this Victory
He'll dream of me each night
He's killed a 'Smiling' Soldier
Who'd lost the will to fight

My smile will stay inside his head
As long as he shall live
Until he goes to meet his God
This scene he will relive

NO MAN'S LAND

(U.N. Cyprus)

Blue beret, blue beret
Where have you been?
A tour in Cyprus
To stand in-between

A paradise island, out in the Med
Across the crystal sea
A U.N. posting offered
Was tailor made for me

A sun-soaked island, split in two
A 'Green line's' the divide
The Cypriots made to live down south
Not north, where Turks reside

And in-between, a no-man's land
Abandoned trucks and cars
Hotels they all stand empty
No people in the bars

It's like a 'Wild west' ghost town
Thick with sandy dust
The cars still in the showrooms
And not a sign of rust

For years no-one has touched them
Each marked upon our map
But none of us go near them
For fear of 'Booby traps'

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

The hotels we can't enter
What treasures lie inside?
I wonder who the guests were
That ran away to hide

It's stood like this since '74
The Turks came down this far
But then The U.N. stopped them
With soldiers from afar

I shiver in this eerie place
I jump at every sound
But nothing ever happens here
A 'Dead zone' on the ground

I came here full of laughter
But now just get depressed
Whilst driving through this lonely place
My energy suppressed

I'm glad my tour's over
Tomorrow I go home
Tonight I'll sit down on my bunk
And finish off this poem

Perhaps I will return one day
When peace comes to this land
To see it in its glory
When all live 'Hand in hand'

I BETRAYED HER TRUST

Six-month undercover
Living in 'The Creggan'
Got myself a girlfriend
An Irish girl called 'Meggan'

Sometimes forget I'm 'Army'
No 'Sirs' out on the street
No bullshit with the uniform
No Officers to greet

A 'Handler I've not seen for weeks
No word from him I've had
I'm living on my wits out here
I act like 'Jack-the-lad'

But inside I am terrified
I might talk in my sleep
My girlfriend's Father's I.R.A.
I know I'm in too deep

It took six-month to gain his trust
Informers, Touts run rife
His Daughter then convinced him
"I'm soon to be his Wife!"

I'll break her heart when I have gone
And 'Come in from the cold'
I really have grown fond of her
With her I could grow old

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

To live with them, you turn like them
I'm trying not to change
Each day I feel more sympathy
I'm working out of range

I can't forget I'm Army
A mission to complete
To infiltrate an A.S.U.
Whilst thinking on my feet

I can't get near her Father
Protected by his men
The Top Man in the I.R.A.
Who plots to kill again

Then one day we are all alone
Her Father and myself
I look around for weapons
A bread knife on the shelf

He turns his back, his trust complete
I'm family now at last
The knife it ends my mission
He gives a final gasp

I left him on the carpet
His Daughter she would find
I didn't leave a note for her
I couldn't be unkind

I walked away through 'Derry'
Another rainy day
At last back to my comrades
And a posting far away

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

I sometimes think of 'Meggan'
And things that might have been
Does she know I killed her Dad?
Since then I've not been seen

To be a 'Black Ops Soldier'
There's no-one you can tell
I do what I am sent to do
Someday I'll go to Hell!

MY ANGEL VALENTINE

Our love has lived forever
Across the sands of time
I travelled through the Universe
To be your Valentine

But when I reach your earthly home
Without me you have found
I watch you from some distance
This time I'm not around

For I was just an Angel
You now in human form
We couldn't be together
It wasn't quite 'The Norm'

You running through the golden corn
Beside you Bluebirds sing
My love for you so powerful
My tears they wet my wings

I wish that I could reach out
And hold your velvet hands
But a frontier lies between us
We exist in different lands

But every now and then you pause
You sense, but cannot see
An Angel close behind you
That my love is me

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

You listen to the silence
You stare into the void
Your instinct looks right through me
Your eyes I still avoid

My heart screams out to be with you
If only you could know
If I could make you understand
My seeds of love I'd sow

My hand glides through your golden locks
You sense there's someone there
My spirit hands caress you
The breeze upon your hair

Enchanted by this moment
Beside my love this day
Your image getting smaller
A force pulls me away

You're gone and I can't see you
I'm travelling so fast
Am I in some future,
Or in some distant past?

I beg them not to take me
Away from you so soon
My vision ends quite suddenly
I'm lying in your room

You're sleeping sound beside me
Your hot breath I can feel
Your arms are wrapped around me
My vision wasn't real

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

Perhaps it was a warning
To cherish what I've got
A spiritual reminder
A strange 'Forget-me-not'

I wake you with a tender kiss
You ask me "What's the time?"
I whisper that "I love you!
Please be my Valentine!"

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

YESTERDAY'S SOLDIER REBORN

Yesterday a Soldier
Today I'm cast aside
I used to be a Warrior
Now I just want to hide

I drove around on four-wheels
'Gung-ho', without a care
I used to wear a uniform
But now I wear a chair

I curse that day out on patrol
A land-mine lay in wait
Hidden in the desert track
I wish I'd got there late

The flash came first, and then the bang
Then instant searing pain
My legs no longer with me
I'd never walk again

I miss the sport and comradeship
The B.F.T's and such
My life had changed with one bleak day
I don't get out now much

My friends they used to visit
But as the months went past
They spoke a different language
Of one hurt by the blast

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

They tired of hearing 'Grumpy'
Being sorry for myself
My Wife she's even left me
Just pictures on the shelf

There must be someone out there
To help the lads like me
Who sacrificed their life and limbs
To fight the enemy

So come on all you people
Show me there's some hope
I know support is out there
To teach me how to cope

I'd heard of 'Forces Poetry'
I may give them a try
Set up by some ex-forces
To help us desperate guys

In fact I'll 'Log-on' later
To see what they can do
To help me through this nightmare
To help my thoughts unglue

Maybe I'll find some comrades
To talk to and to chat
Remember our old Army days
And stories of combat

Abandoned Soldiers just like me
Together we will band
And helped by 'Forces Poetry'
United we will stand!

MOTH OR MYTH?

Am I a moth, or am I a myth
Of this I'm having doubt
I've lived all my life in a closet
But now I'm coming out

I really am a mixed-up moth
I flap about all night
Heading for the ceiling
Because I've seen the light

All wrapped up inside myself
When I was a cocoon
But now I'm out and flying
To insults I'm immune

Humans try to swat me
And knock me to the floor
Then scoop me up on paper
To throw me out the door

But I am having none of this
I twist and turn in flight
Straight out through the window
Into the cold dark night

They roll a big round stone at me
For eating all their cloth
But everybody knows
'Rolling stones gather no moth!'

JUNGLE PATROL

Inserted high above the trees
From 'Choppers' we did rope
Heavy with equipment
For handholds we did grope

We're swallowed by the canopy
Of trees so high and thick
Devoured by the darkness
And branches hard as brick

We drop onto the earth below
The ropes they pull away
The Chopper rotors fading
Our mission starts today

Three weeks out on this patrol
Away from human sight
Hacking jungle through the day
And lying-up at night

We aim to lay an ambush
Without the sound of gunshots
To take the enemy one by one
For this we brought 'Garrotes'

We aren't supposed to kill them
Although we've got the knack
We're not out on a 'Firing Range'
These blokes would shoot right back

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

So here we lie in wait for them
A line of them appears
A voice I know I've heard before
I can't believe my ears

Their leader is an Englishman
I've served with him before
He'd left us in the Regiment
To fight in Foreign wars

We cannot kill old comrades
Whatever's in the past
So we just hide there silently
And let their unit pass

They never knew how close they came
To dying in those trees
An English voice had saved them
A whisper down the breeze

I then requested 'Ex-fil'
This mission I'd abort
And when de-briefing to the Boss
I'd nothing to Report!

We may be different Armies
Their goals we may despise
But never kill a comrade
'Cause friendship never dies!

MARCH OF THE CONES

Cones appearing everywhere
An Army of them now
Called up on 'Conescription'
To take their sacred vow

To hassle all us drivers
To make us swear and curse
To block the roads and slow us down
To make our journeys worse

I phoned the new 'Cone hotline'
I said, to cone a phrase
"They're scattered on the highway,
Forming some strange maze"

Their office, run by cone heads
Won't listen to my plea
I'm stuck inside this traffic jam
And desperate for a Pee

Those pointed little rubber things
Are making my life Hell
They dominate the motorways
Dual-carrigeways as well

A Government 'Conspiracy'
To wear us drivers down
From in The House of Comics
Led by Gordon Brown

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

So I'm heading off the highways
Cross-country I will roam
Return to home and sanity
'Cause 'There's no place like Cone'

HE WHO WALKS BESIDE ME

Who is it walks beside me
As battles I do fight?
Who is it that protects me
Whilst marching through the night?

I've been in conflicts round the globe
And he is always there
He's at my side both day and night
I've seen him someplace, where?

His features are familiar
Most similar to mine
His uniform is of past age
Like from another time

In all the years I've known him
He's never spoke a word
Yet he's become my partner
Although that sounds absurd

Yet no-one else can see him
A phantom by my side
I never tell my comrades
'Cause that they wont abide

Some Soldiers have a 'Good luck charm'
But me I have my friend
To guide me and protect me
Until the very end

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

But now I've left the Service
No injuries sustained
In all the Wars I fought in
With me my friend remained

The day arrived of my discharge
To home I did return
Whilst sitting with my Sister
My friends name I did learn

She pulled out some old Photographs
All faded, brown, and worn
And showed me a young Soldier
I wasn't even born

My friend's face stared right back at me
It made me kind of sad
For the face that seemed familiar
Turned out to be my Dad!

LEAVE THEM WITH A SMILE

I look back on my distant past
The things I've seen and done
The trials and tribulations
The battles I have won

The price of beer when I was young
I can't afford it now
Existing on a pension
As I take my final bow

Chips inside Newspaper
Fingers black with Ink
No health & Safety those days
Much better, don't you think?

Sherbet dips were wonderful
The Liquorice licked and coated
With Chestnuts on an open fire
Consumed till we were bloated

Tinned food had some colour then
The beans all deep and red
But now, without the colourants
They all look pale and dead

Matchbox cars we pushed along
On rugs with roadways on
Remote controls unheard of
No 'Karaoke' songs

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

My 'Hornby trains' were wind-up
They raced along the rails
They're now run by computers
And crawl along like snails

And where has all the snow gone?
We played in long ago
Built igloos and snowmen
And felt the cold wind blow

I lie here thinking of those times
The fun we had back then
Building forts from rotten wood
And playing in 'Our Den'

I don't regret a minute
My life was full of fun
Now old age overtakes me
I know my life is done

I'm way past my 'Expiry date'
I've ran the final mile
It's time to shed this earthly coil
And leave life with 'A smile'

ANOTHER BORING NIGHT IN BELFAST

'Q' cars painted yellow
Next week painted red
Have to keep then guessing
Or we'd end up dead

Driving through the 'Falls'
Two-up in the car
Following 'The hit-men'
Heading for the bar

Every night for one long week
Their pattern stayed the same
The 'hit-team' going in the pub
They're playing deadly games

But not tonight, they drive on past
A quick change in their habit
Are they on the mission,
Or just out shooting rabbit?

The 'Divi's Flats' sweep by us
The 'Dickers' on the street
We follow at some distance
Peering through the sleet

We check our ammunition
The magazines are full
We place our pistols on our knees
This night is not so dull

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

We head out of the City
Past homes in leafy lanes
Into the Lisburn suburbs
Where no one here complains

A lonely house their target
No street lights down this path
The occupants oblivious to
The coming Gunman's wrath

The 'Hit team' knock upon the door
Their pistols drawn ready
They don't hear us behind them
Our pistols aimed and steady

Two rounds into the gunmen's backs
Two double-taps then follow
The blood flows from between their lips
They had no time to swallow

Then silently we leave there
As quiet as we came
Two bodies left outside the door
Two pawns lost to the game

The R.U.C will come soon
They'll know what we have done
But blind eyes
will be turning
'The Det' has been and gone

They will take the credit
The praise they will collect
For saving someone's life tonight
Ignore us, I suspect!

I'm A Soldier.....Get Me Out Of Here!

We didn't come for 'Glory'
We're told 'Don't shoot to kill'
But we're not Politicians
So justice we instil

We drive back to the City
Another 'op' complete
And live to fight another day
The silent ones, 'elite!'

