

The Reader and The Writer

It always gives me great delight
When someone reads the words I write.
Recently a book I penned
Was bought by someone in Southend.

My friends simply refused to credit
That someone had *actually* read it.
They said he probably bought it as a peg
To support a wonky table leg.

To prove my doubting Thomas's wrong,
I set off on a journey long,
Aiming to findt that A.N. Other
Who'd read my book from front to cover.

I searched for months across the nation,
Stopping at every railway station,
Covering thousands of miles of track,
To find out who'd read my paperback.

And after many months of searching,
Into my carriage a man came lurching.
Wonder of wonders! In his hands he bore
My very own book called Echoes of War.

I told him I had written every word.
And hoped his imagination had been stirred,
Alas! when asked to sign his autograph,
He said my book was staggeringly naff.

Once put down he could not pick it up again.
Reading it had been a dreadful strain.
And he asked a truly insulting question:
"Why does your opus give me indigestion?"

I asked a friend, who said it would be best
From literature to take a rest.
'Listen to music, or make pottery.
Writing is far too great a lottery.'

Gall and wormwood Thomas Hardy tasted
When Jude the Obscure was excoriated.
He said: 'By God, I'll really show 'em,'
And spent his last years writing poems."

Which example I intend to follow,
Hoping it will be read tomorrow,
A monumental saga I have planned:
Consisting of one zillion verses in longhand.

Fate usually grants a consolation:
It is, after all, no great deprivation
To be among the myriad of unread writers,

When once I soared aloft on wingèd fighters.

Only one painting in his lifetime Van Gogh sold.

The rest were rubbish he was told.

Moses never saw the Promised Land,

The destiny he thought his God had planned.

Perhaps some alien far beyond our reach

Will one day find my MS on the beach,

And say Jay Raymond's story needed telling.

Pity about the grammar and the spelling!