

Mature

By Don C Harris

Hey old man. You in the mirror
What did you do with the boy?
The fresh faced kid who seemed much nearer
Before you came to annoy?

You look like him - and I know sometimes
You feel you still may be
In fleeting dreams and thoughts sublime
You may even think you're he.

But you're not, old man; the boy is gone
Never to see the sun
Never to kiss his forever love
Or play, or jump, or run.

Time (that thief) caught him away
Dimmed his smiling pearls
His giggle, his songs, his carefree way
His eye for pretty girls.

Time bartered for strength, gave him fatigue
White teeth for dingy rocks
Soul gambled and lost to selfish intrigue
Baldness he got for his locks

Cheated was this little guy
He never stood a chance
That Time would be kind, and pass him by
He stood - no shield, no lance.

Thoughts like bubbles of looming troubles
Effervesce behind your eyes
Hey old man what's left for you
Since time demands, then flies?

You sorry you ran the lad at a lope?
And spent up all your youth?
The boy you chased could help you cope
Now that you're long in the tooth.

Your eyes once light with future bright
Now red with dust and years
The sparkle's darkened for want of sight
They're hard for lack of tears

Is that our boy behind you?
May I talk with him?
I know, all too soon I'll find you
Eclipsing him once again
You see, that's me, What am I, Ten?
Though I can hardly remember
The boy I was, way back then
Too green to cut for timber.

What do you think of the road we took?
What do you think of your end?
We paddled our boat to the end of the brook
Avoided some rocks and bends.

Mature

By Don C Harris

The old man there, is us, little guy
No worse for wear I found
Did I do okay, did I do alright?
Did I get us there safe and sound?

I cheated you buddy, it wasn't just age
I chased you away in fear
Your innocence kept me from turning the page
You seemed to keep God so near

Sorry, pal, for the man you see.
It's you - after I got through.
I thought I was the best that I could be
Yet, giving no thought to you.

Blame me, selfish me
I knew better and did it
Before I knew, life was a spree
I felt I couldn't quit it.

He's quite a mess, that old coot
You and I turned out to be.
Ugly, broken, dying to boot
But, like it or not it's you – it's me.

Sorry ol' pal, it's the end
There's still plenty to do
You'll never be back to try it again

And I'm the old man - not you.

“Hey ya’ mind if I say somethin’?”
The youth appeals complaint.
“I know you feel like it's the end
But I'm here to tell you - it ain't.”

This old guy? I'm his biggest fan
Life ebbed his naiveté
When I played boy - he played man
While I stayed young everyday

In defense of my future - your past
Defending poor Tempus Fugit
You did well – we made life last
We wasted no time - we used it.

Drank to the dregs did we?
I hope that you enjoyed
Yours was a plan! – “no ennui!”
And we did it – The man and the boy!

You worked hard, I made you laugh
We found what girls were for
You tasted the life of God's favorite sons
What want you yet? What's more?

I had to hide, for the man to be bold
Yours is to stop complaining

Mature

By Don C Harris

You wouldn't want to live as a seven year old
Not know to come in when it's raining

Like medals of honor, your scars, are to see
And with 'em you still have grin
You're my hero, dear image of me
Uh, your eyes are twinkling again.

You can show me what's wrong with the old man you
are
All the stuff you may never do
But I'll not slam him; to me he's a star
After all - he's *me* too.

The years are lean and scattered?
No, they're fat and full of song
Want my complaint about those years
None were ever too long.

As far as making us enemies?
I'm afraid you are wrong because
Unavoidably he, is what I will be
And I am what he was.

The ol' guy and I are one and the same;
Neither of us can gloat
We're partners in life - no one to blame
Neither more worthy of note.

He doesn't hate me for what I lacked
I don't hate for what was done
It makes his smile when he looks back
And makes my future fun.

“Like... *un*ringing a bell
Is regretting the bygone past
Making the present and future a hell.
For only the end is last.”

Hey old man, I'm lacking insult
You look better now that I'm sure
The boy has only become an adult
As I embrace “mature”.

~DCH/2016