ACROSTIC POEMS: POE'S COSMIC ART?

WALTER SHEDLOFSKY
Saint Louis, Missouri

The following poems illustrate various forms of word-play. A common acrostic thread (the title is spelled out by the first letters of the various lines) unites all the poems; however, each poem contains additional features of logological interest. The reader should have no difficulty in discovering the unique feature of the first poem.

**PSYCHEDELIC**

Pyrrhic, phantasmagoric pandemonium prevails, propels; Subliminal schemata skyrocket; shrieks swell, Yammer, yowl, yodel; yellow yataghans Crash chaotically, cutting crimson chains. Hippies, hallucinatory (habitat: heaven-hell), Explore euphoric emotions, e'usive, erratic. Devilish drugs develop deliriums, disdains, Engender eerie, erotic, exotic, ecstatic Love-ins; lust-loosed, licentious leprechauns Indulge in iniquities, inane, insane -- Childishly, cruelly, corruption constantly compels.

The next two poems are termed an Acro-Duplex, and should be read as a pair. The two poems contain exactly the same words in the same order, but with the line-lengths altered. Such poetry is not easy to write when the additional requirement is imposed that the lines of the two poems must conform to the rhyme-schemes abbccddeea and abbccddeeffa. Furthermore, if one examines the sixteenth letter in each line of the second poem (counting spaces between words as letters, but ignoring punctuation), one discovers the word pyrotechnics, an anagram of the title.

**SECRET FIRE**

Sardonic Satan raps our whims which spell, compel, Evoke balmy moods of madness. Entrapped and spurred, Covert hou, s of gladness negate raptures conquered. Recklessly, we invite t· e trysts which engender
Ennui. Coarse becomes the promised rosy splendor,
Tepid the ecstatic joys, once tender, refined.
Fair truth cries love not lust brings peace. Obsessed blind mind
Ignites flames; yet release, poignant with excitement,
Rewards not whole heart. Satan reflects: Heaven-bent,
Each soul, yielding, makes its own sham and earth-bound hell.

SCENIC TROPHY
Sardonic Satan raps our whims which spell,
Compel, evoke balmy moods of madness.
Entrapped and spurred, covert hours of gladness
Negate raptures conquered. Recklessly, we
Invite trite trysts which engender ennui.
Coarse becomes the promised rosy splendor.
Tepid the ecstatic joys, once tender,
Refined. Fair truth cries love not lust brings peace.
Obsessed blind mind ignites flames; yet release,
Poignant with excitement, rewards not whole
Heart. Satan reflects: Heaven-bent, each soul,
Yielding, makes its own sham and earth-bound hell.

The final poems are termed Anachuttles in recognition of the fact
that they contain internal anagrams of the titles (as described above)
and shuttle rhymes (such as cocksure and sock cure). The reader is
invited to search for the hidden anagrams, which are given in Answers
and Solutions at the end of the issue.

AT TIMES I PONDER
Astringed, though happy Bells from Lakme rose,
Troubled soul implored some small rest or naplet.
Tired, whilst courage appeared on the wane, brave
Instincts still glimpsed hope, as I clowned the rock.
Musing. I contemplate: tough and rumble
Edginess often breeds fear, makes men bristle, call;
Suspect for perfection, each gnat I see
Invites death despite reason and sanity;
Prophecy some ultimate end with crystal ball,
Obstinate life exists, its rough-and-tumble
Nothingness but ridicules each quest round the clock.
Despairing grief clouds each twice nine hope and brain-wave,
Endless torment pains, all alone on this planet,
Robot of uselessness, my plight is lachrymose.
PRINCELY HAT SHEEN

Placate my approach with gems whose praised glints marching
Reflect imposing hauteur, pride. Subjects, loyal, right,
Insure flashing brilliance with a rare miter, worth
Nine times quality of nobles at doll conga:
Carnelian red offsets my visage, pallid, airy;
Emerald beryl green if I hold cap on knee;
Lapis lazuli chills, I like not its magma;
Yellow topaz impressed as gold and carat act;
Hyacinth and sharp quartz in jewelled cataract;
Agate touched with ruby and radium gamma;
Tourmaline black as the huge ballroom’s canopy;
Sapphire to enchant the heart of a lapidary . . .
Hampered by poverty, with land no Golconda,
Empty financed friends, four square, with a whiter mirth,
Excavate old crown with a tarnished royal light.
Nonetheless all decree him their glazed Prince Charming.

MISSING TOY

Maniac and enigma, bound by no mastic,
Impelled to reside alone and sleep in short kip,
Sacrosanct, he assumes no role as camp lover,
Shies from Romeo’s lines beneath some lamp cover.
Inveighing mad gripes, while on treadmill and wary,
No luscious plaything will break his will and marry.
Geared to barrenness, he never has roared of the load.

Troubled but quite pleased at times as lord of the road,
Obstinately, he shuns the fortnights of courtship,
Yet ever content to live his life monastic.