

Anonymous

In Defence of Evolution

I'm thinking up a theory to explain it—
Why Rhyme Royal is such a bloody chore.
I'm trying to be cheerful, but can't fain it:
With every line I hate the bugger more.
And so my theory for this open sore:
Verse forms, like fashions, fit the time they fix—
You can't revive a worn-out box of tricks.

Just like you can't wear medieval sleeves
Or habits while you bike your kids to school.
Pointy hats—and couplets—fade like leaves
In fashion's autumn, following this rule.
And well they do, for both were classed and cruel:
Embroideries and rhymes were fortune's perk—
They advertised who wasn't made for work.

Now, blank verse seems to break those systems down:
It's open and adaptive and it's free:
The dodo royals are dragged about the town
And rhyme's extinction means equality.
At least that's how it seems to those who see
Pentameter as breath from nature's throat;
To me it's just another tyrant's coat.

So, free verse, then, seems fittest to survive.
It's democratic, stylish, and it's deft:
Any half-taught infant can contrive
To lean a pile of lines towards the left.
You'd have to be a fool to feel bereft
Because old verse forms rarely see the light
The truth is that they're dead because they're shite.