

What if?

January 2024

What If..

I were much kinder,
I would save
myself such inflammation
and possibly damnation.

So now my philosophy would be,
No more selfish folks in office to be held in high esteem,
They would have to prove to all their credentials are clean.
And that their intentions and plans are viable, to make us all stronger,
So that all folks can live longer.

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'What If'

What if the stars faded away, and the moon refused to glow?
What if the seas ran dry one day, and the grass refused to grow?
What if the birds forgot to sing, and the breeze no longer blew?
What if colour vanished from everything, and the sky was no longer blue?
What if sadness was all we knew, and laughter we forgot?
What if hatred spread and goodness withdrew, and compassion was but a thought?
What if we lost the will to care, and closed our eyes to see?
What if we failed to stop and stare, and appreciate life's gifts, freely?
But what if instead we loved more dear, and kindness bloomed anew?
What if we purged our guilt and fear, and lived each day more true?
Though the future's unknown and life is brief, each precious moment's ours.
Let's fill them with joy and not with grief, for we hold such wondrous power.

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WHAT IF I hadn't joined the U3A

What if I hadn't decided to join my local U3A
 What would I be doing Tuesday, Thursday or in fact even today?
 Well I wouldn't be at Poetry Group reading out my latest ditty,
 And I wouldn't have met you lovely lot, now that would have been a pity.

I'd have missed out on lots of events that MOTO group have put on;
 The meals, the theatre, a boat trip - the list is getting long.
 No Monday meet ups at The Inn planning what we'd like to do,
 Shall we have more meals, visit museums or perhaps try something new?

I wouldn't have joined Playreading Group, read plays of every sort
 And wouldn't have enjoyed the biscuits that our host Barbara had bought.
 I'd not have been in the panto at one of the monthly meetings
 Nor had trouble stopping laughing at the play "Season's Greetings"

There wouldn't have been the Book Club meetings on Wednesday afternoon
 Which reminds me I must finish that book as we're meeting very soon.
 I'd never have read that classic or that autobiography
 As before psychological thrillers were the choice of book for me.

I'd not have listened to the variety of speakers at Coronation Hall
 Where there's always free coffee, tea & biscuits for us all.
 I wouldn't have read the interesting newsletter each month on-line
 And felt rather proud when one of the poems printed was mine.

So what if I hadn't joined my local U3A,
 What would I be doing Tuesday, Thursday or in fact even today?
 I'm sure I'd have found things to do, develop ways to use my mind,
 But there's no doubt that Woodhall Spa U3A was an absolutely, brilliant find.

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What if...

What if I was a butterfly
 Free, free beyond my dreams
 Wherever I wanted to go
 Do whatever I wanted to do
 Would I really be free?
 People chasing me to capture me as their prize position
 Is there any difference with what I am now?
 !

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What if

I told you the moon was of cream cheese
Or I said that the earth was flat
Or I told you that I was just twenty
Well – You wouldn't think much of that

How about if I passed on an email
Saying that you had won on the pools
Just send me some money to claim it
Well really – Do I think you are fools

And what if I said I'd seen Elvis
Hard at work at the local chip shop
You'd imagine I'd gone off my rocker
And think that I'd been on the pop

What if I had studied at RADA
Would I be a big star in the flicks
Or join Ant and Dec in jungle
Surviving on insects and ticks

And what if I'd been an inventor
Creating a health-giving gel
Or maybe a house-cleaning robot
Which could do all the ironing as well

There's no point in dwelling on "what if"
Steps we might have made on life's way
Set yourself small goals and achieve them
To make yourself happy each day

But what if we hadn't moved to Woodhall
Seen the ad in the doctors that day
We'd never have made many new friends
By joining our own U3A

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What if....?

What if Sir Tim Berners-Lee
Had never been born?
Would we still inflicted be
With a Pandora's Box New Dawn?

Would we all be safe from the awful
Social Media plague that abounds
With its scorn of all that is lawful?
Often with no accurate grounds?

Would we still have our High Streets
With individual shops and businesses
Instead of Amazon and Conglomerates
With cheap goods and accessories?

Would our children safer be
Without 'Gender-Bending'
With teachers able to be more free
From Offstead's culture never ending?

Would our young ladies safer be
Without the pornography so rife?
Without explicit abuse for young men to see?
And the ease to purchase gun and knife?

Would our language be so corrupted
In written works and in spoken?
Would it be so interrupted
With foul innuendo and 'Woken'?

Would our existence now be so threatened
By Artificial Intelligence?
And will the human race soon end
With this robotic consequence?

I do not know - but someone please
Advise me of the good it's done
This world-wide web of Berners-Lee
That now affects everyone!

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A Study in Karma: Part I – The Nocking Point

This poem is predicated on the thought that the path of our lives is similar to the flight of an arrow, which is 'nocked' into the 'nocking point' of the bowstring.

Lying in bed, contemplating 'What if...?'; my thoughts turn to our bodies, lying close to each other, and how you and i came to be.

Back then, in a classroom in Liverpool...

This tale was nocked, the moment in Maths class John told me of his plan
His place in college was set and i had nowhere to go, so,
Like a child, blinded by future's bright light, i followed him there and that's how it all began

Another time, in Manchester....

You had secured a place at North Staffs Poly, on a computer science degree
But you worked for Shell and preferred a career there instead
Still, your Dad's mind was already decided... and so Stafford it had to be

John, meanwhile, went to London to get his degree; with flying lessons at the weekends
I was drawn to Stafford's bucolic charm and there is where i met you
We got married and bought a house, John flew high with his Airforce friends

Forty-odd years on...

It's nearly 3am and i'm awake, thinking of paths and time
Who, i wonder, might be lying beside you if John had taken another course?
Someone other doesn't seem right, and now the clock we chose together has just begun to chime

And who would be lying next to me if your Dad had taken your point of view?
Whose breathing would i sense, regulating the pulse of my thoughts tonight?
Where is she now? Is she happy? Did she find a forty year love, too?

And what of John, the prime mover of this episode, to date?
Shot down and killed in a helicopter in Iraq, his older face on the news
At his funeral there was his widow, another life. It's all too much to contemplate

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A Study in Karma: Part II – And what of my mistakes?

My thoughts turn to other lives; the impact of my words and actions on them, and a desire to apologise...

The unfathomable conspiracy of history; would these words have been written at all?
All our past is drawn to this very now; every future launched from its own nocking point
All of our helpless actions, electric twitches, rendered like graffiti onto time's labyrinthine wall

Cold words, frozen onto hearts, indelible now, a permanent rendition
Unrelenting, this terrible recording bears me no grace to return and erase
If only i could send a wave coursing back through these passages to carry my contrition

If i could live my life again, imagine if i had only done all these things right
These other lives, some lightly touched, others closely bound, weigh heavy on my mind
Let me make this plain: I pray for love to be eternal, that i might just sleep tonight

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What if?

A hypothetical question?
 A useless waste of time?
 A literary investigation?
 Or just looking for a rhyme?

Wasting day and night
 Pondering and seeking –
 Just hoping that I might
 Find the secret that it's keeping.

Finding an answer I cannot
 I have eventually decided.
 Pointlessly questioning one's lot,
 Just accept the route provided!

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What if...

What if the stars fall
 The Sun shines no more
 The birds no longer call
 And the planets stop revolving.

A terrible scenario – unthinkable
 But what if none of this happens
 Life goes on as normal, predictable
 And truthfully, sometimes rather dull.

What if the world suddenly becomes sane
 The fighting and killing stop, neighbour
 Befriends neighbour, countries come
 Together in peace and agreement.

But none of this is built on reality
 Because 'what if' is only a phrase,
 A saying which is used without rationality
 A throw away phrase without validity.

But what if I had pursued my dream
 Of studying to become an actor
 Might I now have risen to the top – like cream
 Might I (possibly) have become a Dame
 Judy Dench, Eileen Atkins, Maggie Smith,
 What exalted company to keep.

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What If

What if everyone thought like me.
Never argued and never fought,
Never found anything to disagree,
Only ever, ever sought
To think as I think, don't you see
If my optimism they all caught,
What a wonderful thing to be,
Agreeable all the time and ought
To have the whole world in tranquility?
One thing to this argument now bought
I missed it. Is it my senility?
No! It is nothing of the sort,
Because, now I come to think I see
That's how wars start; all conflict,
When somebody wishes to inflict
The answer only they have picked.

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What if...

Well, it rhymes with tiff, sniff and biff
which sometimes used with
imagination can lead us to the
consternation which flourishes
in times of strife~
say jealousy twixt man and wife
and then what have we done~
pray tell, but created a living hell.
perhaps it's true
things might get better
but surely clearer
to write a letter?!

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