

Roger Craik

## ENGLAND AND THE WORLD CUP

Two goals down and into time  
added on for stoppages,  
it never fails—the yeoman  
hoof and hoist, the ale-house ball. . .

And it's Sunday afternoon.  
The local recreation ground.  
The pub around the corner.  
There's a chill in the air.

(Banks, the Charlton brothers, Bobby Moore. . .)

**UK, 2016**

At its own assumptive  
empire's draggletailing end,  
it swiped its throat for spite  
with Brexit. . .

and of very dogma died.

**AN ENGLISH OAF REACTS TO ANDREW MARVELL'S "THE MOWER AGAINST GARDENS"**

I couldn't get the fucking motor started  
so I went for a pint.

**HEARD IN A RESTAURANT**

"Love and marriage, love and marriage,  
go together like a horse and carriage."

Of course. Just ask the horse.

## VARIATION ON AN IPHONE

Oh the glare, the garishness! Those  
“icons” (Is there anybody nowadays  
for whom the word gleams golden, Byzantine?)  
blazoning across the screen  
your every need epitomized, each one  
shouting into your eye!

Was life ever otherwise?  
Can you imagine  
one full day’s unedginess?

If you have a moment, please,  
find “Settings”  
(It’s the icon like a shaver),

and now “General”  
(As you see, the icon’s thinned  
to a single serrated wheel),

“Accessibility,”  
“Display Accommodations,”  
“Color Filters”—

and there you are,  
perhaps almost a child again,  
reading your father’s newspaper.

## COMME IL EST

He can't shut up.  
We can't shut up about him.

Heigh-ho, the wind and the rain!

## RUMMY WITH SUSIE

"50 me.  
0 to you.  
Shuffle 'em good!"