

## 'Twas the night before Christmas 2018

'Twas the night before Christmas, twenty-eighteen  
English despair, or not as bad as once seemed?  
Brexit remains a national farce  
Yet the Maybot insists that we must persist with this task  
Left and Right leaders, mere critics till she fails  
But no one can drive a train, once it derails  
Come on Lammy, or Cable, perhaps even Miliband senior?  
Time to replace, your self-serving inferiors  
But while entitled guffaws create political pollution  
On the football pitch, a more mannered revolution  
Southgate quiet, respectful, smart  
Kane and co, ambassadors of their art  
Even during penalties, the goals go in  
Who knows, perhaps, in Qatar, we'll win...

It's an irony that leaders elected  
have proved to be less wholesome, than expected  
Although while the power of royal love should be remembered  
Annoy the Saudi Crown Prince and you might be dismembered! (Allegedly)  
Orbán is 'hungary' for Putin-like control  
Assad gasses, a new Syrian death toll  
And is Xi Jinping a modern day Caesar?  
Acquiring powers to make his job easier  
There is something Orwellian about Han Social Credit  
Disagree with us, (or be Uighurs<sup>1</sup>), and your WeChat we'll edit  
To top it all Trumpton, crazy-house white  
Who knows what truth he'll tweet wrong tonight  
This man-child blimp needs to be immediately deflated  
But what dreadful legacy has his tenure created?

This year I've binned, all social media  
I'll stick to the Guardian, Auntie, and perhaps Wikipedia  
Facebook 'Nix'-ed, I don't wish my data  
To be sold, sway elections, or haunt me much later  
I prefer face-to-face, a postcard or letter  
An un-Instagrammed life, is one led much better  
An expanding Amazon and trillion-dollar Macs  
Will real shops and services ever come back?  
Make no mistake, I love computers, use the 'net more than most  
But the art of conversation, mustn't be replaced, by a post

I admired the ascent of Chazelle's First Man  
Watch stars being born, in a Shallow film can  
Here we go again with Mamma Mia potpourri  
And raging billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri  
Saoirse<sup>2</sup> Ronan beguiled with her Lady Bird looks  
And the Widows were slick as all-female crooks  
Black Panther was right-on, and awesome too  
But as BlacKkKlansman showed, there's still much more to do  
We Marveled at the scope of Infinity War  
I get a migraine thinking about what's in store  
But perhaps McMafia and The Bodyguard were the best on screen  
Better than GOT season 8? Well that remains to be seen...

Who would have thought, back in twenty eleven  
That Brits would win *Le Tour*, six times out of seven  
But Team Sky's at limit, a sponsorship curtail  
Will Thomas and Froome, continue to prevail?  
With Hamilton's talent, he was bound to thrive  
I doubt he'll park his Merc at five  
But when he does, there's, another with hunger  
An unstoppable boy, is young Billy Monger  
The netball girls won the best team

One more goal towards parity, in our sporting scene  
But my heroes are athletes, I like to keep it pure  
Bravo Asher-Smith, Farah and Muir

It's been a year of a different view  
Be it a swim round Britain or a female Dr Who  
Mourinho, 'The Chosen One,' is no longer fêted  
Philip Green's knighthood, almost certainly regretted  
Facebook welcomes, the perhaps unfairly maligned Clegg  
I hope he'll be more effective, than a Goop vaginal egg  
Macron is not Napoleon, the yellow vests don't like him  
Merkel's time is nearly done, will she be swapped verb"i"tim? (!)  
For myself, I saw K2, a truly awesome mountain view  
A landscape raw, beauty, staggering  
Behold the spires where clouds are gathering  
Juno probes and Jupiter revealed  
But what mysteries do its storms conceal?  
Inspect the Cosmos and see our future  
Heal the planet, with a scientific suture  
Trump and May, but a stitch in time  
But inaction now, a far greater crime

Written by Andy "Dijon" French.  
Winchester, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

*"The man who can drive himself further once the effort gets painful is the man who will win."*  
*"Every morning in Africa a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must move faster than the lion or it will not survive. Every morning a lion wakes up and it knows it must move faster than the slowest gazelle or it will starve. It doesn't matter if you are the lion or the gazelle, when the sun comes up, you better be moving."*  
Roger Bannister (1929-2018)

*"History teaches us these lessons for the interveners: leave your prejudices at home, keep your ambitions low, have enough resources to do the job, do not lose the golden hour, make security your first priority, involve the neighbours."*  
*"There can be no place in a 21st-century parliament for people with 15th-century titles upholding 19th-century prejudice."*  
Paddy Ashdown (1942-2018)

*"I sing to the realists. People who accept it like it is."*  
*"We all require and want respect, man or woman, black or white. It's our basic human right."*  
*"I've always felt that rock & roll was very, very wholesome."*  
*"The milk of kindness flows through my body, I shall follow Jesus to the Taco Bell and give thanks."*  
Aretha Franklin (1942-2018)

*"Life would be tragic if it weren't funny."*  
*"Without imperfection, you or I would not exist."*  
*"One, remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Two, never give up work. Work gives you meaning and purpose and life is empty without it. Three, if you are lucky enough to find love, remember it is there and don't throw it away."*  
Stephen Hawking (1942-2018)

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced "Weegurrs"

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced "Ser-sha", like "inertia"