

# Two Poems

by [Jeffrey Burghauer](#) (July 2021)



*Queen Elizabeth Viewing 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' at the Globe Theatre, David Scott, 1840*

## On Alexander Waugh

*Whose YouTube channel is devoted to the proposition that Edward de Vere wrote the works attributed to William Shakespeare*

Exhausted by the weight of heresies  
I can't but feel reveal the Truth,  
(How they have multiplied since youth!)  
I now must find the space in which to squeeze  
Another one. It brings me no delight  
That Alexander Waugh is likely right.

## During the Pandemic

*Spring-Summer 2020*

In the early 90s, when & where  
Human Struggle seemed to have attained her ends,  
There proliferated movies whose  
Preteen male protagonists were tough,  
Innocent & beautiful. They all had friends.  
Oh, they broke my heart, revealing their  
New cartographies of longing & despair.

We were blankly dwindled in the hind  
Part of seventh grade, approaching summer's shores,  
Under ceilings colored like a bruise,  
Packed into the gym's paternal, gruff,  
Headstrong, static heat (the hustled-open doors  
Were some optimistic joke) to find  
They'd arranged to show a movie of that kind,

Featuring a boy whose home was mean;  
Sadness, plausible; July face, freckle-flecked.  
It immobilized me that, among  
His available responses to  
Cruelty or pulsing, arduous neglect,  
Incapacity could not have been  
Anywhere deduced or fancied, much less seen.

And I prayed at length for Heaven's plume—  
Patterned grace to let me turn into some poor  
Creature with an amaranthish tongue,  
Sobbing in the arms of every true  
Man & woman simultaneously—or  
(Failing that) a Revenant of Doom  
Who may brood so as to hypnotize a room.



There's a cellar underneath the brow.  
Government is like an undercroft. The re-

Bounding voices resonant in both  
Long have been entirely devoid  
Even of that basic credibility  
Needed for the upkeep of a vow.  
This means History's reactivated now.

And those movies aren't coming back.  
No protagonist can be resilient,  
In that way, amid bereavement's math,  
Plausibly, serenely unalloyed  
With what God alone could possibly have lent.  
Now, the movies finish at a slack  
Outcome that's as doubtful as an almanac.

Now the world itself is as unfit  
As the type of pallid kid who will become,  
In adulthood, the arranger of  
Syllables into a poetry  
Engineered to generate a sum,  
*Any* sum, of *anything*—an "It"  
Generated facing the degenerate,

For my faculties of heart & head  
Notice nothing foreign in the novel norm  
Of a park where workers, draped in grave  
Polyester cassocks (chin-to-knee),  
Following a meal of peanuts, nearly-warm  
Pepsi & laboratory bread,  
Make a quiet inventory of the dead.

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educated at SUNY-Buffalo and the University of Leeds. He currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Appalachian Journal*, *Fearsome Critters*, *Iceview*, *Lehrhaus*, and *New English Review*. Jeffrey's book-length collections are available on [Amazon](#), and his website is