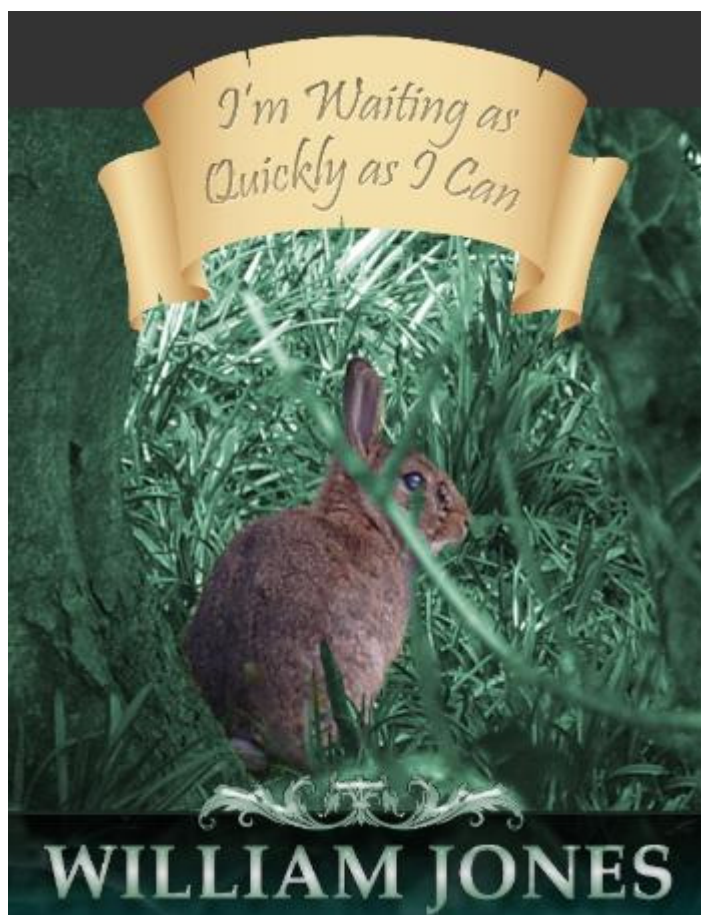


*I'm Waiting as
Quickly as I Can*



WILLIAM JONES

I'm waiting As
quickly As I can

William Jones

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CONTENTS

How To Use This book	Page 6
'Victor Delsouc Mort pour France'	Page 7
Catching Neutrinos in a Teacup	Page 10
Ifan on Top of a Mountain	Page 13
Colin's Mam's Teas	Page 16
In Company of Elephants	Page 19
Beautiful Truth	Page 22
Dad, Taid, Soldier	Page 25
Choice	Page 28
Doux Amer (Bitter Sweet)	Page 31
Gentleness and Constancy	Page 34
Heights of Madness	Page 37
High Marks	Page 40
Hugh Lloyd	Page 43
I'm in Heaven	Page 46
I'm waiting as quickly as I can	Page 49
I Wish and I Hope	Page 52
Lists	Page 55
When Shadows Gather	Page 58
'M' Intervenes	Page 61
MMB	Page 64
No Chit-Chat in a 'Souped-Down' Chevette	Page 67
Pennant Rovers - Easter Monday Competition 1969	Page 70
Ragin' Fury	Page 73
Ritual Behaviour	Page 76
Secret Policeman Requires Audience	Page 79

CONTENTS

Stage Coaches	Page 82
Sums It Up	Page 85
Tales	Page 88
Technophobe	Page 91
The Fear of Foxes	Page 94
These are my Words of Life. These are my Words of Death	Page 97
Tramps Abroad	Page 100
Tryers	Page 103
What if the Trees Began to Die	Page 106
Where Does the Truth Lie	Page 109
'Cymwynas' is a Dangerous Glass of Wine	Page 112
Frogs Lead the Way to Safety	Page 116
April 8 1984 - The End of the World	Page 118
Feline Nostalgic	Page 121
Mind the Gap	Page 124
I'd Prefer to be a Proper Sheep	Page 127
That Midas Touch	Page 130
Fear of Plenty	Page 133
My Tummy Tells Me So	Page 136
Guilty as Sin	Page 139
When Better Days?	Page 142
Trans-dimensional Spiders	Page 145
Crazy Leaf	Page 148
Fascists Shoot Eisteddfod Judges!	Page 151
Dem Bones	Page 155
Create Your Own EBook	Page 158

"Victor Delsouc Mort pour France"

A bird cries like a cat and draws me back to the flower meadow. High on the hill above heavy farm machinery harvests the hay while goats graze intently in an adjacent field. It is mid-morning and this Spring day is already pregnant with the heat that is to come.

I now stand at the wall looking into the cemetery, advised by Anne - warned, rather - that it would not be appropriate to indulge my habit of wandering about cemeteries in sad reflection.

'Victor Delsouc Mort pour France Octobre 12 1918' - at an age of 33 years. The most significant memories of your own existence, love and suffering you removed with your parting, now known only unto you and God.

Behind you, Mr Delsouc, there is a stone with no name. Only a robust agrarian face in Sunday best and a wife's smile dominating a strong matriarchal face. The clothes offer no clue of when the photographs were taken, or when they had lived their lives and how long between the longing and reunion.

Our time here is all too brief so best we choose companions who expand our lives and experiences and that we meet or acknowledge people who, like Monsieur Delsouc, would actually die for us.

I am lost in my reverie and do not notice a very elderly gentleman on crutches creep up on me. Clunk by clunk he has gained twenty yards on me across open ground from around the lower wall of the cemetery and I had not seen him. "Bonjour," I say. "Bonjour, Monsieur," he replies and staggers past.

I withdraw up a small track that looks down on Broussiac's single terraced house, church and a community hall, inside of which my friend is offering memory games to elderly ladies eager to keep Alzheimer's at bay.

A large friendly Siamese cat regards me curiously as I watch a big faced cow lick her calf within an inch of its life. The old man does his two legs around the church and its small elegantly framed cemetery. Not tired of life. It's just okay and that is adequate explanation. Tired enough to say, "What next?"

A Dachshund on the terrace bench looks on. Does the dog know it's getting old? Does it know that its master is getting old,

as he watches this once athletic gentleman shuffling on crutches when once he used to trot with no concern for graves, only duties.

I was halfway up Calvary Hill (*Escalier du Calvaire*) in Figeac before I knew it – which sums everything up, I suppose. At the top a young man sought to impress a girl by singing, “I Believe I Can Fly.”

I'm Waiting As Quickly As I Can

A survey in Ireland once revealed that a tiny part of its population is absolutely convinced they are going to win the lottery and they have settled into an assured lifestyle on the dole to wait. In the meantime they cut their cloth accordingly.

I wonder about their conversations on destiny as they tip another spoonful of sugar into their bargain Matzuka tea and of how they live in their own heads while waiting for Santa.

How many impossible events can occur in one country? Do they think that a triumph of highly improbable events will gather in one space and time to decide, "Him? Her? Oh, what the heck! *ALL* of them!"

Nonetheless, they wait. After all, they've probably achieved evolution's demands of them: food, shelter, warmth and reproduction. Apparently, you don't always need a herd of cattle to impress a potential partner. So, they just wait. That's what they do.

All of us have a bag into which we place our desires and fantasies and occasionally we pick it up for inspection or to add another item or two. But isn't there something missing here?

Engagement with real life, for instance?

Isn't that an important part of the human condition? Or should we give it all up in our mid-forties and retire to the pub in our fading denims?

Yesterday, I saw a heron on top of a warehouse in Holyhead. No frogs here, but at least it's an interesting adjournment from life's tasks and when bored it can head off to wetter pastures. How big the world is when we spread our wings and how desolate it becomes when we bind ourselves to the casual indifference of fate.

It's when our thinking shifts from fleeting fantasy to total preoccupation that we are doomed because life loses the necessity to plan. The occasional ten pound win must be scant consolation as week after week well-defined expectations give way to melancholia.

So, how do they feel when someone else wins the lottery? Do they raise a glass with good grace or resentfully wonder what's going to be pulled out of the winner's bag and what new burdens they are picking up?

There are many unintended consequences to our fantasies. Inertia above all, but, I suppose, life is longer for those who wait and too quick for those who get on with it. Life is so extraordinarily brief and it hurries away from us the busier we are.

Still, at least we can look back over those bundles of experiences that continue to guide us forward and make it all less of a lottery.

Dear Reader

I hope that you have enjoyed reading the two tales above and they have allowed you a moment or two to reflect on your own experiences. We just don't create enough of these little precious moments and really should create that special time to think about where we are going and learn lessons from errors.

There are many more tales like these two and if you would like to read the remainder of my ebook '[*I'm Waiting As Quickly As I Can*](#)' then I have provided a link below for you.

It's a ridiculously reasonable purchase to make I hope you feel inclined to investigate.

My very best wishes to you and everyone who is important to you,

Wil

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