

### **The Jester**

**The jester knows  
why crabs walk sideways  
and stuttering crows  
descend on rooftops  
to do likewise,  
hopping clumsily on their toes.**

**The jester knows  
why some feel mighty  
and must impose  
their will on those  
who are much weaker.  
While all the earth bemoans its woes  
the jester from his high place crows.**

**The jester knows  
why mandarins feel  
a need for foes,  
and send out boys  
to kill their neighbours.  
Why the arms race forever grows –  
The jester is the one who knows.**

**The jester knows  
why some children starve;  
some have no clothes  
in this fat Eden  
that heaves with plenty.  
They die not knowing where it goes.  
But yes, the smirking jester knows.**

**The jester crows.  
Yet there is one light  
that ever glows  
from glittering palace  
to blackened slum  
while darkness festers as it grows.  
The jester may pose  
in his harlequin charlatan's clothes.  
But isn't the only one who knows.**

**John Bell**