

Now and Then

Sometimes things get better and sometimes they get worse,
Sometimes you can laugh it off, occasionally you curse,
Sometimes you rush forwards, then you feel the tide reverse,
Sometimes you're the patient, and sometimes you're the nurse.

Sometimes things seem simple; sometimes, they're complicated;
Something that you thought you'd love turns into something hated.
One day, you pray to God; the next, you cast off all religion;
Some days you're the statue, and some days you're the pigeon!

Sometimes we don't live up to the standards we expected,
Sometimes we're not proud of the choices we've selected,
Sometimes we let others tell us what is right and wrong -
We lack the courage to stand up, we're so desperate to belong.

Some days we just give up, we can't take it any more -
We'll never reach the finish line; we're never going to score.
But giving up becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy:
You can't become the man you will not strive to be.

Some days though, we grit our teeth, despite our doubts still growing
And though we see no progress, we resolve to keep on going.
We battle inner demons and outside circumstance,
And struggle to combine hard work, hope and chance.

Some days we're disappointed, things just don't go as planned;
We're the last of the Mohicans; or it's Custer's final stand
Some days, we dodge a bullet and relief is all too real;
At other times, confusion is the only thing we feel.

Some days, things go brilliantly: you find glory and win fame;
Sometimes things go pear-shaped, or each day seems the same;
Sometimes we're not good enough; a fact that's hard to swallow,
Despite our desperation, we're left feeling rather hollow.

But now and then, we're better than we ever thought we'd be;
Our sense of pride does not depend on loss or victory;
Such moments are to savour; they are beacons in the night,
Signposts in the darkness when things don't seem so bright.

The things that really matter seem to fade with each distraction:
But it's not what happens to you, it's the shape of your reaction;
How long's it going to take you to get back up again?
How long's it going to take you to overcome the pain?

Will you languish there in self-doubt and lather in self-pity?
Will it take you long to clean up when life gets rather gritty?
Will you learn from that experience, looking forward to the chance
To do it all again, your reputation to enhance?

And if it turns out right and you get what you expected
Will you take it in your stride, universally respected?
Or will you rest upon your laurels and be self-satisfied -
A victim of your arrogance; a pauper to your pride?

Now and then, we're fortunate to glimpse just who we are,
Appreciate how much we've grown and see we've come so far;
The challenge that's before us is to be a better man
And to enrich the lives of everyone around us, if we can.

James Hindle [5th March 2017]