

## OH THE BLESSED ONE AND NINES

Sometimes, as it's getting dark,  
I sit in half light – and remark,  
Silly things – along the lines  
Of “Oh! The blessed one and nines”.  
Recalling times – so long ago,  
When we were young, and tender. Oh!  
How mists of time can complement  
Old friends, old times, of sweet content.  
The simple things would please us most.  
Like ‘dining out’, on beans and toast.  
Then see two films, for one and nine,  
Romance – or weepie – Ah! Divine.  
As the story, or the plot unfurled,  
We entered into another world.  
Romance and glamour – gloss and sheen,  
All there upon the silver screen.  
We’d leave the building in a dream,  
Hankies damp – and eyes a’gleam,  
And walk home through the darkened streets,  
Finishing off our bag of sweets.  
To find we’d travelled to our door,  
With Tyrone Power or Roger Moore.

Those times are past, but Oh! How fine  
To go again, for one and nine,  
To Gaumont – Regal – Odeon.  
To queue outside was half the fun.  
Even if it blooming rained,  
Knowing we’d be entertained  
By buskers – singers – one man bands,  
Baked ‘spuds’ and chestnuts warmed our hands.

Those times are past, and what a shame,  
The film stars now, all look the same.  
The girls like Bimbo’s – frizzy haired,  
The male leads ugly – Oh! Compared  
To well groomed stars, whose smartness set  
A good example – even yet.  
Their lovely hair styles – gorgeous clothes,  
Glamour girls – or English rose.  
We tried to emulate their style,  
And copy hair do’s – clothes – or smile.  
Now the cinema’s beyond my means,  
And who wants sex, or violent scenes,  
Sadism and dirty tricks,  
Actors that amount to nix.  
Best to recall the golden days,  
And girls with ice cream on their trays.  
The usherettes – with torch, to show  
Us to our seats – perhaps ‘back row’.  
When settled – sorting out the muddle,  
We’d have a cosy kiss, or cuddle.  
But nothing nasty – understand.  
We never had to slap his hand.

We’d queue for hours in ordered lines,  
To join the blessed one and nines.  
A different world – such happy times,  
Oh! How I miss the one and nines.

Hilda Jones, 2001