

Clio's Poetry

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Sonnet for Jesse

We did it, Rainbow Dragon! Take 'em home,
Back to trees and ocean, far from here;
Guide them, lead them, mighty beast of Rome,
Fly them through the gate, for home is near,
Near as burns my heart that fires them through,
Near as I am far, near as I stand,
Stand alone against all fear with you,
As near as victory's gem is to my hand.
I fall with no regrets; I vanish grinning:
The last you see of me, proud blue-green eyes,
Friends, will follow you, for I am winning,
As I watch you fly beyond the skies.
I win to see you safely home to stay,
And with you soar to duel some other day.

* * *

A Glimpse

When everything appeared to end
And fate was so unclear to me,
I thought that I heard you, my friend,
Reply, 'it doesn't have to be.'
The vision that I then did see
Of you and I at play once more,
Brave and mighty, proud and free,
Was something well worth fighting for.
Our spirits, although tired and wore,
Cannot accept our journey's done
Until our hearts can rise and soar
Beside the golden rising sun.
Though only I was there, just one,
I knew you were right there, my friend,
And knew, when all was said and done,
There we'd be at the end.

* * *

I Fight For Thee

Can you see me standing here?
Do you know my face at all?
Will you feel me shed my fear
And for your sake stand proud and tall
And do what I could never do
If I fought for just foolish pride;
I owe it to both me and you
To face the overwhelming tide
And find you where the shadows stay,
Where evil dwells and hope ne'er was.
Though this may be my final play,
I'd never run away, because
You're more to me than anything,
Than soul or mind or strength to fight;
I'd gladly lose them all trying
To bring you back into the light.
To know the person I once knew
Will once again return to me.
No matter what, I'll see you through.
How can I fail? I fight for thee.

The Eve of Battle

So comes the eve of battle
The final task is nigh
As every life the tale has touched
Raise souls up to the sky.
As all both wise and clueless who
Were destined from the start
To play a role in fate's hand,
Connected to one heart,
Share a solemn moment
To remember one they knew
Scattered world over,
Lost into the sky's deep blue.

So comes the eve of battle,
The final fateful fight
The hour draws ever closer
As (the) sunset turns to night.
The time to part or back down
Looms nearer into view
The test of whether destiny
Can conquer friendship's glue.
For one last solemn evening,
Combatants stand as one,
As they to the final resting place
Pursue the dying sun.

Upon this eve of battle,
Which I swear shall be your last
Before your spirit finds its peace
And ends its fateful fast,
I also pledge despite that I
Can't bear to see you go,
Shall help complete what you began
Centuries ago.
After four years with your guidance I
Must learn to stand alone
And it all begins right here and now
As I fight to send you home.

So here's the eve of battle,
At last, and yet, too soon
For to me the thought of winning
Is as lonely as the moon.
For although I know that your true place
Is not here by our side,
I dread tomorrow's battle and
Your future's sweeping tide
Will carry you away from me
Forevermore, and I,
Even though I care for you
Won't have even said goodbye.

The restless eve of battle,
The calm before the fight
No soul can rest in slumber
As e'er onward plods the night.
While some brood on the battle
And others lie awake,

And others strengthen their resolve
For conflict come daybreak,
They journey ever onward
On their final fated quest
Together as they sail toward
An island in the west.

So comes the eve of battle,
It's finally here, at last!
It really brings me back to our
Adventures in the past.
From a boat like this from Domino
To Duelist Kingdom's shores,
To Battle City's tower top,
The credit's all been yours
To change me from the guy I was
To duelist of today
But there's one whose life changed even
more,
And it's both of your big day.

So here's the eve of battle,
Though the honor should be mine,
For I don't believe in magic or
In destiny divine,
But I do believe between us
There is something incomplete
For as long as I have known you,
You were e'er my one defeat.
I shan't say (tho' it could be true)
That you and I were friends,
But I feel the need to help you
As you near your journey's end.

So comes the eve of battle,
My final duel at hand,
And even though it's opposite
My goal that I must stand,
I trust that you will see me through
Unto where I must go
Even though I shan't hold back,
For this duel will also show
Whether we can separate
And part forevermore
And only this ability
Unlocks the hidden door.

So comes the morn of battle,
As sunrise grows to day
And preparation finishes
For final, end-all play.
Although it's true the stakes are set
As high as they can be,
Although it's true a win or loss
Would hardly be woe-free
Although it's true it's grief to stay
And equal grief to part,
Stand proud and say, "Come what may!"
For the cards have their own Heart.

The Eve of Battle: "Bridge" and Alternate/Additional Verses

Poet's note: For the most part, The Eve of Battle was kept as-is after the Final Duel began, out of an unwillingness to destroy the feeling of the piece with retrospect. These were the feelings of the characters, and my own feelings, going in, and that's what I was out to express. However, the line in Téa's verse, "Is as lonely as the moon" was modified approximately one year later, because I had often felt that the original line clunked and I seem to recall that the moon was solitarily beautiful that night. The line in the final verse, "And equal grief to part" was modified also, out of a retrospective opinion that the original line was out of spirit with the situation. In addition, I attempted to add the "bridge" directly below in response to exposition regarding the duelists' decks (which would have been part of this story) in "The Final Duel II", but they never quite fit, so they stand on their own. Directly after the bridge are a couple more verses I ended up coming up with because for a while after I penned this, my brain was set into composing in this rhythm and format. I had decided that the original Eve of Battle didn't need complication or embellishment with more verses, but they can be added, before and after the final verse respectively.

You showed me that I can be brave
And what courage is all about
You taught me never to give in
And what it pays to stick it out;
As I select my cards tonight,
I know this debt I can't repay
You've given me the greatest gift
And made me who I am today.

You showed me heart can conquer all
And the extent of friendship true
You taught me kindness, sympathy,
Compassion that I never knew;
As I complete my strongest deck
For what will be my final play,
You've given me the greatest gift
And made me who I am today.

* * *

So comes the eve of battle,
Though late, no longer night;
The villages along the shore
Stir in the dawn's dim light.
The dawn of what shall either be
My last day in this land
Or the first of fifty centuries more
My spirit must withstand.
And which depends on you and I;
I've built my toughest test,
To make this battle one to see
And truly show who's best.

* * *

So came the day of battle,
As Items gold were placed.
As two sides of the same great soul
Against each other faced.
The Gods themselves did rise and fall,
As did sorc'rer dark and true
But the real test was whether
Both could bear to see it through,
For once the final duel was done,
The matchless one is two,
And the two must go their separate ways:
To rest; to something new.

Other End Game Poetry

(written, along with The Eve of Battle, for the Final Duel, the Yu-Gi-Oh! series finale.)

Sonnet for Yugi

When I was shy and frightened, all alone
As Puzzle's challenge set I to pursue,
I wished just for a friend to call my own,
And more than I could ever dream, came you.
And now we stand, lone, strong, and face-to-face
One final play to prove we are now whole
Who knows which one will win this ult'mate race:
Two equal sides, across time, of one soul.
I guess I knew the moment this unfurled
This priceless gift would not be mine to keep
Tho' you, my dearest friend, will leave this world,
Forever, evermore I do not weep
For what those who are watching cannot see
Is simply that I'm you, and you are me.

* * *

Modified Sonnet for Atem

This duel was an honor, the best of my life
A champion doesn't belong on his knees
For you've set me free of my soul-shackled strife
And together we've realized our destinies.
Forever I waited, trapped, clueless, alone
Until I met you and you opened the way
We've proven we're ready to be on our own
And all that we've been through comes down to today.
And when first I met you, you couldn't have been shy;
A lost, lonely soul who wished just for a friend
But I've known you to stand strong through Shadows and fire,
And I knew I could trust you to duel to the end.
And although I'm gone, I will always be here:
If ever you need me, just look in a mirror.

* * *

Millennium World Riddle:

My brow is a seer, my forehead a spy,
My features are blind with nine eyes, seven wise;
My left hand unlocks and my right hand controls
Both my heart and my knees merge together two souls.
Great spirits reside in both stomach and heart,
But when I am whole they must with these shells part.
Speak 'loud one word when I'm as I should be:
If you seek soul's release, I'm the lock to the key.
Name me.

(Answer on page 36)

* * *

The Duel Academy Pledge – based on episode #106 of Yu-Gi-Oh! GX, “Jewel of a Duel I”

We, the students of Duel Academy,
Solemnly promise to obey the rules,
To solve all spats and slights by dueling
(In this school that teaches duels),
To show respect for our peers and teachers,
Unless the world’s demise they scheme;
This we pledge for true, we students
Of this school of dueling dream.

* * *

A Chant For Ra

O great protector of the sun’s warm glow,
I pray you may my reverence know
For bringing noonday’s piercing light
Even to the dead of night;
For miracle in ray of gold
That saves the lives of heroes bold;
For glory and for majesty,
For might no one can truly see.
Our work is done, no fight, no game,
But still my heart must call thy name:
Winged Dragon of Ra!

* * *

Parts of an Animal Cell

or: The Terrifying Result Of Staying Up Way Too Late Studying For One’s First High School Biology Exam

Centrioles, Microtubules,
Vacuoles, and Lysosomes
Microbodies, microfil-
-aments and also ribosomes,
A cytoplasm with hyaloplasm
And cytoskeleton,
A nucleus complete with nucleolus
And some chromatin.
When talking ‘bout the skin of cells
(Which isn’t really skin,
But still it encloses the cell,
Controls what’s out and in),
I’m afraid you’ll find out that you may
Have a small dilemma:
You see, it goes by different names:
Membranes plasma, cell; or plasmalemma.

* * *

The Mighty Kuriboh

A strong and mighty ally is Kuriboh,
For truer friend or spirit’s rare to find;
Though smaller than your average gazebo,
They dwell in hearts that are both brave and kind.
Though small and hairy fuzzballs to the eye,
The wisest duelists have far more in mind:
They gang one-thousandfold with Multiply,
Withstand the blast to build a strong defense,
Explode on contact, toughest foes they fry,
For monsters they sure have a lot of sense.
Some think they’re weak; you wouldn’t want to be those
They’re never right, it’s proven, and so hence:
‘Curse you, King of Games, and your Kuribohs!’

The First Round of the Battle City Tournament, Summarized in Limericks

Yugi v. R-H was first
In B.C. we're quickly immersed
Exodia was tamed,
Said "remember my name",
Keep my Red-Eyes and tackle the worst!

Espa Roba v. Joey came next
A psychic charade has us vexed
Though things may turn dire
Young siblings inspire
And Jinzo is easily perplexed.

Arkana is next in the stack;
Another mage on the attack
Yugi's deck has a pearl
Come forth, Dark Magician Girl!
And there's something upon Marik's back.

Next, Playing With a Parasite;
Weevil never would duel a fair fight
Joey wins the day
With an Aerosol Spray
And young Kenta braves coming to light.

Next Yugi is dueling a mime
And his monster (too bad that Red rhymes)
Can this failure be?
Get up and show me
What you've got, turn this duel on a dime!

L-F was then fought. Mako's fish
Joey's Giant Trunade would out-dish.
Two villains unite,
Two wrongs don't make a right,
Two R-H's stop Kaiba? They wish!

Two-on-two for the fate of our souls
(Battle City's most common duel-toll)
Mokuba gets away,
Joey's mind Marik plays,
And Tristan and Serenity roll.

Joey's brainwashed to duel 'til one dies
Against Yugi to win Marik's prize!
Yugi must save his friend
Or it's close to the end
And Serenity opens her eyes.

Now, Bakura and Marik have teamed
And Bakura wakes, just as they schemed
"It's not a nice place!"
But Bakura's an ace
And that red fog was not what it seemed.

J.C.M. and his ninjas crowd-please 'em,
But his duels? Mai declares she could sneeze 'em!
Tries to fly her away
But Joey saves the day—
The only true star right now sees 'em!

Bring your locator cards! The Battle City Finals begin on page 33!

Could you tell my brave self that I'm looking for him?

Please say, if you meet him, that it's sink-or-swim
And if ever he'd show, now's a very good time
For this moment of terror's still my chance to climb
And become the bold hero I wish I could be.
Oh, if only the strong Sy would come and find *me!*

* * *

Tournament Fireworks

Fireworks light up the morning sky;
Duelists gather here from everywhere;
Fans wait anxiously, intent to spy
A mythic duel to shake the very air!
Some contenders come just for the chance
At glory, others for the test of will.
Some for friends, relations, some romance!
And some for even nobler causes still.
Who will leave in shame, who will prevail?
What will they learn, what do they yearn to claim?
For though it's true some triumph, some must fail,
The real joy is how you play the game.
Prepare with skill and heart, prepare to play
For another tournament kicks off today!

* * *

Who's There?

O Ghost, are you a shadow of one gone
Who stirs from time to time within his grave?
Was life unjust such death has turned out wrong?
And is there any way to such repay?
Or art thou merely fantasy, thou vision,
Pure madness, crazy mind tricks, in my head?
Or are you demon, devil come to haunt me,
And lure me into strife when I am dead?
Are you, spirit, friend who's come to guide me?
Do you speak truth, or good advice, or still,
Will you always be right there beside me,
To face life's challenges with double will?
Although you're see-through, I can't see through you;
'Tis you that sees through me — I know it's true.

* * *

Sonnet For Pegasus 1

My Duelist Kingdom contest's underway
And wars of dueling are a true must-see.
However, for the best, it's more than play,
And, as I plan, they'll fight their way to me.
I've taken those for whom they care the most
And they have me to beat for their return;
This makes for duels that any fan would toast,
But in the end they'll all feel failure's burn.
For 'neath my locks a secret weapon lies,
A glowing golden power sure to tell
More swiftly than the most adept of spies
Their every single monster, trap, or spell.
One copper eye, one gold, both penetrate
The mind, the spirit, too, and seal their fate.

The Ballad of Day of Black Sun (Avatar, Book 3, Chapter 10: Day of Black Sun)

Our army, they arrived at dawn,
A ragtag and determined band
Shrouded in a conjured fog;
Here's the day we make our stand:
Swampbenders from marshy wilds,
Wrestlers who once were foes,
Earthbenders no longer mild,
Warriors from icy floes.
Our one big chance to end this war
That tears our very world apart;
We can't fail now, our faithful corps
Of iron will and caring heart.

For eight minutes, the sun is black,
Eight minutes to win our attack;
Upon this day that day is night,
Courage spurs the brave to fight.

My arrow can embrace the sky,
My brand-new glider lets me fly.
Here I stand, myself from far—
Thus returns the Avatar!

My princely crown I wear no more—
My own true self I can't ignore.
I'm leaving now, though I'll miss you;
My life will finally ring true.

For eight minutes, the sun is black—
All's on the line, no turning back
Upon this day that day is night,
Once more myself, I'll make it right.

We bluffed our way into the cove,
Beyond Azulon's fiery gate,
Beneath the churning seas we dove,
Prepared to meet our mighty fate.
We landed then upon the beach,
Our cunning, varied team struck land,
And it seemed vict'ry was in reach,
Oppression's end within our hand.
And when commander fell, his son,
Our own Sokka, black sword held high,
Led us in a mighty run;
His reck'ning was his battle cry!

For eight minutes the sun is black;
Our enemies will power lack.
Upon the day that day is night,
Courage spurs the brave to fight.

You always have been kind to me;
You brought me extra rice and tea.
I warn you, be gone after noon—
You will not want to be here soon.

My day is come, my moment here;
No longer shall I cringe in fear.
How can this be? It can't be true!
Firelord Ozai, where are you?!

For eight minutes, the sun is black;
Eight minutes, then our foes fight back!
Upon this day that day is night,
Every plan must play out right.

Behind when we thought we're ahead!
But should we run and plan again?
We all knew we could end up dead,
And if there's hope, let's not say when!
Onward to the capital,
We reached the peak as skies went dark
And firebending's sword went dull—
Just eight minutes, on the mark,
To take the foe's stronghold by force,
Before they could try to strike back.
We'd have to win 'fore then, of course;
Defeat them while the sun is black.

For eight minutes, the sun is black,
And when it's dark, we must attack!
Upon this day that day is night,
We can't afford to lose this fight.

For eight minutes, the sun is black—
All's on the line, no turning back!
Upon this day that day is night,
Power's mine to make things right.

But when the Firelord thought I'd face,
Instead it was Azula, who
Loves to lie, she's quite the ace,
And never *would* reveal what's true.

I'm ready, now, to confront you
And tell the truth—I'll speak my piece
And you will listen! It's not true
That the Avatar's deceased.
I thought my honor was at stake,
But what I sought was your good will--
That of someone who would bake
A child's eye! I've had my fill.
They say our mighty Nation's great,
We spread prosperity with our wars,
But we're the ones the world hates,
And peace is what we must restore.
Uncle's finally got to me,
You say? It's true, and not a mar.
Goodbye—I know my destiny:
I'm going to join the Avatar.

These eight minutes, the sun is black,
You said, and once your strength comes back,
Upon this day that day is night,
If I had guts, I'd stay and fight!

Besides, you said then, I don't know
What happened to my mother when
She disappeared those years ago.
I had to know—you roped me in.
She sacrificed to save my life
Everything except her own;
A traitor exiled, though your wife,
And you rose to the Firelord's throne.

Azula was just playing games
While the moon concealed the sun.
She said she'd heard of Sokka's name
From prisoners—her favorite one,
Sokka's girl, a warrior,
The daring Suki, brave and fair,
Swore that he would rescue her,

But soon she gave in to despair.
Where is she, he demanded
Of Azula, but she wouldn't talk.
Her mocking gaze his rage withstood,
Cunning running out the clock.

The sun came out, the sky turned warm,
And you attacked with coldest flame!
Power found, I faced the storm
And vanished, though 'twas clear I came.

For eight minutes, the sun is black;
Five, four, three, two, one—fire's back!
Upon this day that day is night,
We can no longer win this fight.

The fire back, the tide was turned;
Advantage gone for good, we ran.
The ships in which we came were burned,
And we were cornered on the land.
Too many were we to away
By air, and so they told us go;
We kids escape, adults would stay
And surrender to our foe.
We may have fallen short today,
But we tasted victory.
We can't give up; we'll find a way
To set them, and the whole world, free!

For eight minutes, the sun was black
Through deception, turned us back
Upon this day that day is night,
Invasion was turned into flight.

Uncle's prison looked as though
An army hit it, or rhino.
I could have warned them: never mess
With the Dragon of the West.
I followed in a red balloon;
Avatar, I'll see you soon.
Our fates were always intertwined—
To help you fulfill yours is mine.

For eight minutes, the sun was black—
I nevermore shall honor lack
Upon the day that day was night,
Became myself, and walked in light.

For eight minutes, the sun was black;
A misadventured, brave attack.
Upon that day that day was night,
Courage spurred our souls to flight.

**Are you up for a challenge? I thought so.
Can you name all of these ghosts I know?**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Small, with fur and wings, I'm known to coo;
"Something just tells me it belongs with you." | 13. By the river, I am melanch'ly;
Can you bring my children back to me? |
| 2. A friend? A foe? Constrained to serve, a fool?
No—I know you, a river swift and cool. | 14. My forest home is dead, my heart bleeds
But hope is still alive in scattered seeds. |
| 3. Every Turn on Turnover we fly;
Winter nights, <i>between</i> is in the sky. | 15. We ride the wings of mumpers in the street,
The wingéd ones around their feeders' feet. |
| 4. You whose heart is bitter and greedy,
We'll show you what is, was, and what will be. | 16. Avenge me, lion of thy prophetic soul!
I died besmirched and painfully; uncle! |
| 5. I'm real though you wish I were a lie;
Remains of friendly foe—or did he die? | 17. Tell her I love her, ow, my spine,
Freedom's a pickle in the brine. |
| 6. My memories of life are under latch and key
But end with someone reaching out to catch me. | 18. Because my home is what I love the most,
I'll linger like a damn ol' graveyard ghost. |
| 7. Seven are we bells that walk cold stream;
The eighth is collared, ninth buried to scheme. | 19. A monster though I seem, I'm just in need;
Thank you for the bath, a noble deed. |
| 8. My mission is completed, journey done,
And when I was defeated, all had won. | 20. My doom was a volcano, but my end
Was the betrayal of a lifelong friend. |
| 9. The moon that gave me life I life repay,
And turn the darkest night to white-beamed day. | 21. A chilling film, July of SDC:
I'll ask this only once: where is Bald E?! |
| 10. I stole the diadem my mother wore;
My sweetheart who killed me wears ghostly gore. | 22. Gentle giants, fuzzies of the trees
Look around for lots of acorn seeds. |
| 11. It is my charge to guard the Items gold,
Until the final story has been told. | 23. A dark mage that is loyal to the light
Fallen, but will never leave the fight. |
| 12. I know I was kind of a klutz that I fell off a roof,
Please, lay me rest; 'twill your journey home behoof. | |

Not included in original turn-in:

Our blood, combined with gold, will serve first fate,
And in our ghostly village, we all wait.

Your daughter oh so dear who shares my name
Really should be lowly tailor's dame.

(Answers on page 36)

Sonnet of the Millennium Items

So long ago, 'fore pyramids were old,
Five thousand years from world of today
Were fashioned seven Items, blood and gold,
And thus began the battle's fateful play.
Brave Necklace, show me what future Fate wills;
Bright Ring, unveil me others of your kind;
Gold scale, combine two hearts, two minds, two wills;
Millen'ium Eye, betray the shrouded mind;
Strong Key, unlock the thoughts' evasive door;
Courageous Rod, this battle foes shall rue;
Great Puzzle, bond six friends forevermore
And where there was one mind let there be two.
O Items, although born of deepest night,
Return our world to the hope of light.

* * *

The Song of Madness

(from *Munchkin Cthulhu* by Steve Jackson Games; sung to the tune of Waltzing Matilda.
Now also available at <http://www.sjgames.com/munchkin/munchkincthulhu/verses.html>!!)

Once a creepy cultist waited by a pool of slime,
Under the sway of what you cannot see,
And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his ichor boiled:
'You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!'

Along came a Ruggoth, its spawn, and sev'ral other things,
All armed with weapons that weren't meant to be,
And he killed them and took their treasure and some levels, too—
You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!

Chorus:

*Munchkin Cthulhu, Munchkin Cthulhu,
You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!
And he killed them and took their treasure and some levels, too—
You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!*

He got a slime-proof poncho, a tentacle, a sweater-vest,
All out of space and time (that's plus three!),
And he sang as he loaded his Official Mythos Tommy Gun,
'You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!'

Up came a slimy tentacle from in the slime,
Grabbed him by the windpipe all burb'ling with glee,
And it roared as it picked its sharp teeth with the Tommy Gun,
'You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!'

Chorus:

*Munchkin Cthulhu, Munchkin Cthulhu,
You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!
And it roared as it picked its sharp teeth with the Tommy gun,
You'll play a Munchkin Cthulhu with me!*

I Discuss My Aversion to Free Verse, in Grossblank Form

I don't know why I tend to verse that rhymes. I could
Choose any form to master but I choose balladic.
I've thought of several reasons, though, and good ones, too,
Among them being that I never have to worry
Whether it can be considered art or only
Called dramatic, angsty, avant-garde, too hip
For rhyme or meter or control, for some can write
Free verse yet not call lazy word splats poetry,
Like those professional who think with care of each
And every word they write and how they write it, too.
I turn to writing sonnets, ballads, structured stuff,
To compromise; it takes some skill but not too much.

* * *

Sonnet For Pegasus 2

Have you any notion what you aim for?
Would you dare to hope if e'er you could?
If you knew you'd fail at what you came for,
As I can know, would you run like you should?
Or will you stay, despite all things against you
And triumph o'er them all with honor bold,
Showing that no cheat or scare can best you,
And, as I hope, discover power gold?
Well, Little Yugi? Will you play my game, then?
It's not as though you'd dream to walk away;
Not when the world needs you so, and not when
Your friends and family are my helpless prey.
Will you triumph, will you dare to challenge me?
We both know that it's so: we soon shall see.

* * *

Ayers Rock Sunrise

Prize was just too much for me,
Vies were not my greatest show.
Fly I did, then stopped to rest.
Skies in morn began to glow.

Sight that I saw on that day,
Light of pink and source all golden,
Incited me to turn around,
Gave might for me to try again.

* * *

A Sonnet to My "Sacred Notebook"

Although your life spans only few short moons,
I labor to prepare you for your job;
I patch your sides 'gainst future fraying wounds
And when it comes to usage I'm a snob.
For you're my sacred paper mind and heart,
My close companion and my staunch ally
Even outside school we rarely part
And inside you blend theirs and truly mine.
I like you now because you're shining new
And chance is mine for life at fingertips
I'll love you soon 'cause all I need is you
For homework, guide, or just exchanging quips.
Four pounds or more of precious work are there
Yet you fit upon my arm as light as air.

Chazz the Phoenix

Struck down by expectations
By pride and childish par
Rise once more from the ashes
And learn finally who you are.

Dwell not on social carpings,
Nor on others' cheap demands
For you know you are a champion
And your life is in your hands.

Blue is not your color;
They care only for your might.
Yellow, neither bad nor good
And for goodness sake not white!

Red does not quite suit you,
May you effect a school-wide shakeup
Rise, Black Blazer, thunder, phoenix—
Chazz Princeton, Chazz it up!

* * *

A Parable About Parables

Muse, please, if you've got a minute,
Help me sing a tale to teach;
'Tween we two, we're sure to spin it
Well to counsel, not to preach.

Let us tell these foolish folk who
Lie baldfacedly each day
Of a girl who never spoke true
And who wound up lions' prey.

Or let's speak, then, of the truthful,
Trusting fools with no mistrust:
Such naïveté, such youthful,
Vulnerable people bust.

Then let's tell them poor, scared louts
Of one who fears and shuts away,
No lies or truths, just fear and doubts,
And lives, e'er painful, day by day.

And with them scared to tell a lie then,
And more terrified to truth,
And scared to hide from either, why, then,
What's left? A disappointed sleuth

Of what one's life should truly be;
Truly, Muse, we have besieged them...
What they now learn for themselves
Is better far than what we teach them.

The Doubloon—based on a chapter of Melville's *Moby Dick* of the same name

Day after day, the shining coin stands nailed.
Who will win it? Will he live to spend?
Who will sight the whale we will have whaled,
Whale for which we sail to world's end?

The tow'ring peaks, as proud as devils bold,
Just like me, and valleys, doom to doom;
Man only sees himself within the gold--
A mirror to the soul is this doubloon.

Why stared he so? The coin must have been cursed
Whilst we weren't looking. Three high, lofty hills
Upon the coin, what can that mean? The worst
In valleys deep the blessed mountain kills.

Now, two of them! What is to stare about?
I'll peer at it, and see: the Zodiac,
From Aries' harsh birth, life's to tough it out--
A yearly sermon written, points on black.

What are they staring at? All I can see
Is hundreds of cigars, all for me, Flask,
A sixteen-dollar piece, that's good money,
And so go I to do this valued task.

One by one they come to peer and look;
The Quito gold has cast a potent spell.
The symbolism fares both thought and book,
But what its true face is, no one can tell.
One will say it tells when whale we'll meet,
Another's sure it spells our certain death.
Fair or foul winds, victory or defeat,
The prize for he who spots that bubbling breath.

I look, you look, they look, says madden'd Pip,
At *Pequod's* bellybutton, boat a'gluin';
And when the gold doubloon comes off our ship,
It won't; they'll find it in our watery ruin.

* * *

The Disaster Dorsimbra

What sort of poem can dorsimbra be,
With one-third sweet in rhyme and two-thirds not?
Perhaps it may fit some catastrophe
And lose its rhythmic rhyme as things get hot:

For
When disaster strikes
It
Could be a shock!

And when the threat is over, in its wake
Destruction and debris are scattered 'round;
The world regains its rhythm, but not rhyme.
What sort of poem can dorsimbra be!

Chazz's Tale – A Ballad of the School Duel

Note: This is a dialogue, complete with flashbacks (lines thereof denoted 'FB'). Chazz is sitting in the Slifer Dorm composing this ballad one day, and soon first the Ojama brothers, then Jaden wander in and, ignoring Chazz's objections, join in.

Chazz:

Once I knew no cruel defeat,
Reveréd by the school's elite.
I knew I would become the best;
To challenge me was to get beat.
Soon I knew though, and I fled,
Escaped the *friends* whose laughter bled,
And greater foe than all the rest,
Fled Jaden, who still would've said:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Get your game on, Chazz it up!
I know you're kind, your heart is strong
Rematch in mind, so bring it on!
Get your game on, Chazz it up!'

I woke upon an icy beach,
Far from the Academy's reach,
Another school before my eyes;
A fateful lesson it would teach.
All my cards were washed away,
Except for one, to my dismay:
Tiny, yellow, likes to eat flies,
Annoying, true, who e'er would say:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Let's go get 'em, Chazz it up!
I may be weak, but we're a team
However mismatched we may seem!
Let's go get 'em, Chazz it up!'

Snow before a lonely gate.
To shiver there is one soul's fate
With thirty-nine of forty found;
Can't find the last in his poor state.
And a dueling deck's the key
So I must swim the frozen sea,
Scale every hill and every mound
To gather cards all scattered free.
Once I'm no longer down a well
And find them, kindness casts its spell
But then I find cards on the ground—
I can just *hear* Jaden yell:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Get your game on, Chazz it up!
I knew you're kind, your heart is strong
Rematch in mind, so bring it on!
Get your game on, Chazz it up!'

Entered I this outpost drear;
I wasn't done, it would appear.
A solid run of fifty duels—
I s'pose they thought I'd quake in fear.
Need I even say the rest?
They needed me 'cause I was best
To win the game between our schools
And cheered me proudly to the test:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Show no mercy, Chazz it up!
Beat 'em down and toast 'em char,
Academy's clown and our big star!
Show no mercy, Chazz it up!'

Indeed my duel was against that fool;
Jaden wouldn't be so cool

Once I beat him like whipped cream!
Then the Chazz would surely rule!
Returned to school from which I'd flown
A hero, but not near alone;
My scheming bros have plans to beam
This duel worldwide; I should've known.

FB Slade/Jagger:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
You had *better* Chazz it up!
This is your chance to not be lame
And make an advance for the Princeton name!
You had better Chazz it up!'

Chazz:

And so what could I do? I 'fess
That I freaked out; who could do less?
To lose for me was less than great;
It's true that I became a mess.
As I sank, sobbing, to the floor,
How could I know beside the door
Someone saw me in that state!
While outside the crowd did roar:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Show no mercy! Chazz it up!
With you on point, we're sure to see
A win, a joint school victory!
Show no mercy, Chazz it up!'

Jaden:

Jaden here. Hey Chazz, what's new?

Chazz:

It's how I left the Obelisk Blue.

Jaden:

The School Duel? Cool! Can I help out?

Chazz:

Of course not—we'll confuse with two
Narrators.

Jaden:

So where we at?

Chazz:

I *don't want help!* Go bug the cat!

Jaden:

Okay, I'll help, no need to shout.

Oh! So we left off at *that*?

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Show no mercy, Chazz it up!
That's what they cheered all right, and loud, so
Of their champ they sure were proud! So—
'Show no mercy, Chazz it up!'

So we were set to duel, we two,
But who could tell what was eatin' you?
It seemed to me a great shame, Chazz,
That one would win, one would be blue.
You thought you knew me well, I cried,
But the old Chazz is gone, erased, has died!
Boys, start the show with some pizzazz,
'Cause Jaden here's as good as fried!

Chazz:

FB North Academy:

'Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Show no mercy, Chazz it up!'

FB Chazz:

'I've changed so far beyond their ken—
They don't know me! Now say it again!'

FB North Academy:

'Show no mercy,
Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
Smash 'em! Cream 'em! Chazz it up!
This is your day! This is our year!
Another loss we'll never fear!
Yes, right here, we'll
Chazz 'em up! Chazz it up! Yeah!'

Jaden:

E-Heroes and their kids, too,
Matched Arméd Dragons, monsters who
We placed our trust in, coming forth
To whirl blades or fuse like glue.
As monsters and magic match brawn,
This duel could never be a yawn!
Slifer, Obelisk, Ra, and North
Shout and cheer and egg us on:

FB North Academy: Chazz it up!
FB Sheppard: No, *Jaden* it up!
FB Chazz: You tell 'em, boys, it's Chazz it up!
 Between we two, the best is !!
 It's time for *you*— to go bye-bye!
FB North: Tell 'em, boss, let's Chazz it up!

Jaden: Remember how our headmasters
 Both fought to get that prize in reach?
Chazz: I said it then, I'll say it now
 That those who cannot duel all teach!
Winged Kuriboh: Coo!
Ojama Yellow: 'Member Jaden noticed I was
 There, your spirit?
Jaden: / sure do!
Chazz: Of course I do, and while we're talking,
 That's about enough of you!

Ojama Yellow: Chazz it up, Chazz it up!
 You know you love me, Chazz it up!
 I may be weak, but we're a team,
 Can we be beat?
Ojama Black: Well, in your dreams!
Ojama Green: Let's go get 'em, Chazz it up!
Ojamas:

Jaden: For me and my E-Heroes, such
 An awesome duel is just too much!
 I gushed, and meant it, from my heart.
Chazz: 'Oh, who could be so out-of-touch!'
 I snapped, 'you'll never win, because
 Duels aren't all fun, they come with laws
 That set the champs and chumps apart,
 Like duty, plans, a goal, a *cause!*'

'Chazz it up, Chazz it up,
 You had better Chazz it up,'
 They'd said, and so what could I do?
 If I lost then I'd be through!
 So I'd better Chazz it up!

Jaden: And it was then, Chazz, that I knew
 Your brothers had been pushin' you.
 The only thing to duel for's fun—
 No one should be in that stew!
 I had to show you that, to wow
 The whole crowd, I would win, and how?
 By making us *both* number one—
 I *gotta* win this duel *now!*

Chazz: 'Let's duel, Chazz,' I challenged then!
 And I fired back, 'what have we been
 Doing all along?' All laughed, yelled
 'Chazz it up! Chazz it up! Beat 'im!'

FB Chazz: 'Listen up, I've something to say
 That I've wanted to day after day:
 I *got my game on*, fool,'

Chazz: I yelled,
FB Chazz: 'And *yours* won't make it past today!'

FB North: Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
 Show no mercy, Chazz it up!
 With us to cheer, with you the boss,
 We'll never fear another loss!
 Show no mercy, Chazz it up!

Chazz: The duel went on, matched play for play,
 The Arméd Dragons had their way
 With wiping out all foes like cake
Jaden: Then my E-Heroes had their say!
 Special Hurricane unbound
 Turned this duel 'round and 'round and 'round
FB Jaden: Then Wildheart, with some—heartbreak!

(Pause. Crickets chirp.)

FB Jaden: Oh, just attack, and knock him down!

FB North Academy: Chazz, get up! Chazz, get up!
Jaden: North cheered like it was Chazz it up,
FB North Academy: Don't stay down, get to your feet
FB Foster: Or we will all face grim defeat!
FB Sheppard: Ha ha!
FB Chazz: My turn! Let's Chazz it up!

Jaden: Long story short, Jaden here won.
I did, but still the duel was fun,
Right, Chazz?

Chazz: Speak for yourself; my two
Big bros were on me like a ton:
How could you lose,
Chazz: they jeered,
FB Slade: you stink!

You're not our brother; did you think
You'd let us down and make it through?!
To us you're nothing but red ink!

Jaden: Leave him alone, I said, he may
Have lost the duel, that's so, but hey—
He won the fight against *you* two!
Tight duel, Chazz; we both won today.

Chazz: You're saying that, I said. I mean,
No one else in this whole scene,
Or anywhere, believes it's true.
Sobbing answered, soft then keen:

FB All: Chazz it up! Chazz it up!
We believe it, Chazz it up!

Jaden: More and more rose to their feet,
And tears did pour to salve defeat.

FB All: We believe it!
Chazz it up, Chazz it up!

Chazz: We believe it! Chazz it up!
Every student from the North;
Academy's three Dorms, four years,
Slifer freshmen, Obelisk fourth,
The whole crowd on its feet in tears:

FB All: We believe it! Chazz it up!
Chazz it up! Yeah!

Chazz: My bros then said, 'forget this!'
And left. Only one thing amiss.
(By the way, as for that prize?
The winning chancellor got a kiss!)
All there's left is how it ends.

Jaden: You're in a school that's full of friends,
Though you'd ne'er say it! Right, guys?

Ojamas: Just as sure as we eat flies!
Chazz: How easily a beat heart mends.
I told North to go on ahead;
I wanted to live here, instead.
They sailed home 'neath sunset skies
And left me here...

(FB) All: In Slifer Red!

Slifer it up! Slifer it up!
Welcome back and Slifer it up!
Welcome here and welcome home!
S – L – I – F...um...

(FB) Chazz: Can't we stick with Chazz it up?!

What makes a hero more than just a cape
Or costumes bright or masks to hide a face?
Is it one whom evil ne'er escapes,
Or is it one whose mission has been ached?
Shall I say a hero's simply one
Unusual whose quirks are put to good?
Or is a hero merely one who's won
A battle (just as ev'ry hero should)?
No. A hero true is one with hero's soul
A selfless and forgiving heart of fire
A better world for all his utmost goal
With heart alone the power to inspire.
With soul alone, to let another see
What his heart has lost, what it can be.

* * *

Match of the Millennium Pantoum

Well here we are, a long-awaited trial
Just as the Glory of Opposite Hand decrees.
Why is it you can't seem to crack a smile?
Could it be your fear that my Eye sees?

Just as the Glory of Opposite Hand decrees,
We both have much to lose, but much to gain.
Could it be your fear that my Eye sees,
Along with every plan of yours made plain?

We both have much to lose but much to gain--
But, of course, I don't plan to do much losing;
Along with every plan of yours made plain,
This game would be the arena of my choosing.

But of course, I don't plan to do much losing!
How could I, with such pow'r at my command?
This game would be the arena of my choosing
For obvious reasons; can you hope to stand?

How could I, with such pow'r at my command,
Consider you, young Yugi, with such guile?
For obvious reasons, can you hope to stand?
Well, here we are: a long-awaited trial.

* * *

I'd like to be the hero,

The one who saves the day,
Who stands up strong for what they love,
Throws down that final play.
I want to be the hero,
Don't care to be the dunce;
I don't ask for forever—
Just at least for once
When I could be the hero!
Can't you just see it now?
I'd be the guy who saved the world,
The one who takes the bow.
But 'til I am the hero,
The one who turns the tide,
And even after that, because
Such friends you can't divide,
Forever and still longer,
Might just be millennia wide,
You'll always be my hero,
And I'll never leave your side.

A Prayer

Tonight, as night is falling, curtain rising,
As hushes silence and the stage lights dawn,
Tonight as band is tuning, we disguising,
As audience is rapt and breath is drawn,
Tonight as light is burning and we're sweating,
As glory fills our eyes and minds depart,
Tonight as we're in triumph or forgetting
As we give to words on paper a true heart,
Tonight as fight is waning and we're tiring,
As confidence is failing, doubt is come,
Tonight as we take on the awe-inspiring,
Which only death itself could e'er benumb,
Tonight, as we embrace the greatest thrall,
O, Heart of the Stage, please guide us all.

* * *

The Portal – based on Yu-Gi-Oh! GX episode #131, “All For One”

A portal glimmers in the dark,
To where, unknown, or why, don't care.
My guilt-bound hope, life's only spark,
Will be right there, right there, right there.
My only chance to make things right,
The battleground if I can fight,
Alone I'll vanish in the night
To be right there, right there, right there.

A portal shimmers in the night,
For whom this can't be how it ends.
We won't back down, but lend our light
Because we're friends, we're friends, we're friends.
We're there no matter what it takes,
And if we fail, well, them's the breaks,
For this is not about the stakes,
It's all 'bout friends, us friends, us friends.

A portal flickers, sparks, then burns;
—Coming, Jess, won't give—hang on!—
—This poor kid just never learns—
A flash! We're gone, we're gone, we're gone.
—Don't hold back, give all you got!—
—You'll rise with power as you ought—
—This chicken hat, it sure looks hot!—
Through space and time, we're gone, we're gone.

Zerglings: The Ballad of a Failed Terran Outpost

We Terran troops were scoutin'
One cold and frosty day
With ev'ry step more doubtin'
That trouble'd come our way.
We'd low'red our machine guns,
Our flamethrowers left cool,
When suddenly we saw a drip
Of green sulfuric drool.

*Zerglings!
Bursting from their hatchings' goo
Clawing!
To kill their foes and eat them too
Zerglings!
Anywhere with bloodshed nest
Zerglings!
Nature always eats the best!*

They numbered 'least a thousand,
Their eyes all glimmered red
Our luck they hadn't seen us;
If just one had, we'd be dead.
We ran to our commander,
We told him all we saw.
Small comfort there'd be payback
For that great guffaw.

* * *

First Pantoum

Note: My first ever pantoum, with some apologies to John Hollander and his wonderfully instructional book, *Rhyme's Reason*, for mimicking a bit too closely.

I sit one gentle day writing pantoums;
What sort of subject does the form convey?
The light, white-grey, shines into empty rooms
When rain is done and sun and breezes play.

What sort of subject does the form convey?
And not to write generic is my plight
When rain is done and sun and breezes play
And tree branch shadows drift across the light.

And not to write generic is my plight,
This pattern is superb to shape the clime
And tree-branch shadows drift across the light
As I talk about the weather half the time.

This pattern is superb to shape the clime—
Depict a picnic or foreshadow dooms,
As I talk about the weather half the time,
I sit one gentle day writing pantoums.

* * *

The Ghost Song

(To the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

Ghost, phantom, spirit, wraith,
Apparition, spook,
Ectoplasm, specter, presence,
Or maybe you're just a kook!

Chorus

Now, we men ain't deserters,
But neither are we dumb.
We slipped away that evening
'Cause the Zerg attacked at dawn.
We saw our base in ruins,
We saw our comrades et,
We saw the zerglings closing in,
A deadly living net.

Chorus

Our lives are all in ruins,
Our graves will not be found,
But buried will we be, in slime,
Pound on purple pound.
But bravely do we fight 'em;
We all must be insane.
Within some twenty seconds,
They'll feast upon our brains.

The Ballad of Battle City, Part 1

'Twas just a couple years ago,
Although it seems like more to me;
A tournament to end them all—
They called it Battle City.

Perhaps 'twas Fate began it all
Only few can say if so:
Those who learned of Egypt's past
And of the Chosen Pharaoh.
It's true that it began because
Of power, as things often do:
Three matchless cards of endless strength—
Gold Sun, red Sky, and Giant blue.
Three matchless cards; Kaiba got one,
And he sought the other two.

Kaiba's mighty Obelisk was
Mightier than his Ultimate beast,
And of the three Egyptian Gods,
Tormentor was the least.
He knew that if he threw
A tournament to draw the world's best,
Rare Hunters, thieves who had the cards,
Were vultures to a carcass.
And so began the tournament,
A duel of light and darkness.

So invitations were sent out
To tell of the event to be:
A tournament to end them all,
Known as Battle City.

And e'en as Kaiba set about
Arranging such a happening,
Another tale, though intertwined,
Was coming to discovering:
Two kindred souls had ever been
In rivaled, desperate battle locked
Five thousand years before the verdant
Duelist Kingdom ever docked,
As written there in Tablet plain,
Two rivals, friends, dueled—good or woe
Befall the Earth, brave guardian
Against the Chosen Pharaoh.
And these two great ancients looked just like
Fierce Kaiba and Yugi Moto.

Yugi was a shy young boy,
Until the day that changed his world,
When puzzling, his lonely joy,
A destiny unfurled.
His spirit then did intertwine
With that of chosen king of old,
Who knew no memory of past days
'Neath Egypt's sun's warm gold.
The two did learn of tablet's word
And evil still to tame;
Along with that, the Pharaoh knew
Not even his true name.
And so they joined the tournament,
A destiny to claim.

Of course they weren't the only ones
Whose tale is one to hear and see;
There is good reason that they all
Call it *Battle City!*

When Joey Wheeler heard the news,
He was furious at being left out,
But as Tristan said, Kaiba thinks he stinks,
And he's the one with clout.
Yugi told his friends of how
He had to follow destiny's lead;
Tristan bold, sweet Téa, and
Brave Joey; all true friends indeed.
So Joey joined it anyway,
To help a friend in need.

Weevil came, and Rex did too,
With bugs abuzz and dinos roar;
Espa Roba, psychic duelist;
Sea-champion Mako, fish galore.
Mai showed up, prepared to take
On two old friends, and this time true,
Though at Duelist Kingdom they took gold,
Yugi and Joey would be through!
For though they're friends, she always kept
Sweet victory in view!

A city full of dueling might,
A legendary power woke,
A mighty tale not unlike those
Which storybooks invoke.
Mighties came across the globe,
From 'round the corner, far and wide,
For glory, fate, for those they love,
To reclaim and salve their battered pride.
For with another chance to duel,
They might just turn the tide.

The Ballad of Battle City: Part 2 – WORK IN PROGRESS

And as the great event drew near,
Domino was the place to be:
Champions and thieves alike
Flocked to Battle City.

The tournament was made for pros,
Designed to be the ultimate test;
No amateur would stand a chance,
None triumph but the best.
Thanks to duel disks, would-be foes'
Battleground became the streets;
Six locators earn a place
Among the eight elites.
The skillful rules these duelists used,
Direct attacks and tribute sum-
-moning, 4000 points, and more,
Would be the way for years to come.
As far as we who watch can tell,
Nine years and prob'ly then some.

Legends came from near and far—
A city full of great duelists
Who had to bet their rarest cards:
What hunter could resist?
Indeed they came in violet flocks,
With decks stacked well and cards unjust.
Unfortunates who crossed their path
Would be left in the dust.
The cards they stole in cheated games
They sold for riches to the skies
Except the ones they kept so that
No gem escaped their eyes.
But Marik, though he led them all,
Sought a greater prize.

So this is where my tale begins:
Upon the eve of legend'ry
Tournament to end them all—
The brink of Battle City.

Joey Wheeler headed for
The hospital at blue twilight,
His brand-new duel disk 'neath one arm,
And got into a fight:
Three rare hunters in violet cloaks,
To steal his cards, they blocked his way.
They dueled late, late into the night
'Til hunters' fatal play.
And having lost, poor Joey was
Left there until the day.

To Be Continued!!!

The Avatar's Promise

For those of cool compassion,
Of warm and caring heart,
Whose close and dear communities
Are being torn apart;
For those of firm foundations,
The stubborn and the strong,
Whose iron-hard persistence
Has worn down far too long;
By those of flaming spirit,
Whose will lights up the night,
Whose power strays them falsely
To endless, bitter fight;
By those of airy freedom,
The wise in heart, the fun,
Whose spirit must live onward
In me, the only one;
In the name of those who fly free,
Whose souls can't be weighed down;
The name of those who stand firm
And never give their ground;
In the name of those who fight hard,
Whose will ignites their life;
The name of those who love deep,
Whose caring heals all strife;
The peaceful and the fiery,
The distant and the kin,
The ancient and the newborn,
By all these shall I win.

* * *

Space Panda – based on *Ribbitking* for Nintendo Gamecube and sung to the tune of “Greased Lightning” from *Grease*.

Go, Space Panda, the terror of Hypnotron! (Ooooh...)
Go, Space Panda, into the tuning forks like a gong! (Ooooh...)

*You're number one!
A frog-in-one!
The froggy flies toward the jewel
And straight into the pool
For Space Panda!
(Go, go, go-go-go-go-go-go...)*

Go, Space Panda, the champion frolder bear
Go, Space Panda, you don't need a helmet for air

Chorus

Go, Space Panda, the champion frolder bear!
Go, Space Panda, challenge him if you dare!

Chorus

The Solubility Rules: An Attempted Mnemonic

To start with, salts are always soluble
That have first fam'ly metals bonded in them
Or also, chlorates, acetates, and nitrates,
Or lastly, always solves, ammonium.
The next are those that sometimes will be mugged,
Like chlorides, bromides, iodides that solve
Only when they aren't with mercury
Or silver, also lead—with those they won't dissolve.
Also sometimes on the "okay" list,
Are sulfates, but not all of them, just some;
Not lead sulfate, nor mercury, nor silver,
Strontium, calcium, barium won't succumb.
These are the compounds that can be dissolved;
Know them and thy chemist's woes are solved.

These are the things that DON'T dissolve; they are:
Exceptions to the things that will dissolve,
Like lead, silver, calcium, barium sulfate
Or mercury iodide—*that* won't just solve.
Along with those, there's oxides that have metal,
That is to say, metallic oxides, um,
There's phosphates and there's carbonates—these three
Only solve with alkali or ammonium.
Hydroxides with a metal bonded on
Won't without these two or calcium down;
Sulfides won't unless ammonium
Or alkali or earth metals abound.
These are the things that won't dissolve, they won't!
And my advice to make them solve is, don't!

* * *

We golden items seven

That shadows bow before,
Created centuries ago
When blood and gold did pour
Upon the silver sands of home
That burn gold in daylight,
For chosen yield great power,
For unworthy only night.
Adventurers and travelers,
Game-players and thieves,
Lovers and deceivers,
All these destiny weaves
To seek us, find us, wield us,
For good and ill, a fight
That serves a greater purpose:
To return us to the night.

**Fun with “School Ghoul Duels”...
from my commentary post on Yu-Gi-Oh! GX episode #122, “Night of the Living Duelist”**

The next episode is “School Ghoul Duels”. Not to be confused with the School Duel, “Jewel of a Duel”, or even “Duel With a Ghoul”. Though I’m sure by now everyone is cool enough to realize that their duel school has become a school of fools, and it could be grueling to get it back to its normal self. At the moment, chaos rules, energy pools in the eyeball’s tank of goo, and cruel plans are woven on their figurative spools to use the students as tools to get revenge on Jaden. Indeed, this plan seems like quite a jewel, because as long as the zombies are stubborn as mules and can get people to duel, extracting joule after joule of energy, they have an endless source of fuel, and thus when they’re knocked down, instant renewal, and they can continue to drool right on until Yule, if they don’t need food. Well, this is the dual blessing and curse of going to the best duel prep school in the world; people who’ll rule the duel tend to attract trouble like Duel For Jewels did fools. Heeheehee... fun with rhyming.

* * *

The Candlelight Ceremony

*To the tune of the song “Shooting Star”,
which is traditionally sung at the last campfire of S.D.C.*

The only night at S.D.C. when the day is one-oh-three,
When the balmy summer night turns icy cold.
Our candles keep us warm, our eyes begin to storm
As we realize our story has been told.

*Chorus (unaltered from the original)
And I was thinkin’ maybe somewhere later down the road,
After all our stories have been told,
I’ll sit and think of you,
The dear friend I once knew,
Shot through my life like a shooting star.*

There’s nothing I can say; we’ve made our world a play
And here’s the closing night, the final bow.
It’s true we’ll meet again, that we’ll always still be friends,
But it’ll never, ever be like it is right now.

Chorus

A night of teary eyes, of waxen fireflies,
Of misty sobs and hugs to ease the pain.
The solemn poignancy, the firelit eulogy
Becomes this single powerful refrain.

Chorus

When I see you again—will I see you again?—
How different will we be from us today?
Will we once more share a time as a separate world sublime?
I hope so, but until then, I’ll just say

Chorus

So hold my shoulder tight as we douse the candlelight
And croon the final note of a sad, sad song.
Don’t care if we sang it well, for the moment casts a spell
That we sang it together, so it couldn’t be wrong.

Chorus

The First Round of the Battle City Tournament Finals, Summarized in Limericks

The finals await! Yugi, Mai,
And Joey arrive. In the sky,
They, "Marik", and "Namu",
Bakura, Ishizu,
And Kaiba for destiny vie.

First duel was Dark Spirit Revealed.
Since Bakura and Marik had dealed,
When red dragon wrapped,
Good Bakura was trapped
Against Slifer, alone on the field.
 Slifer's blast would be more than a ding
 To Bakura, whose arm needs a sling.
 Yami Bak, he came through
 'Cause he needs his host, too,
 And Téa got hold of the Ring!

Duke and Tristan, for love, are such clods,
And Shadi tells Yugi the quods:
Pegasus painted,
And when he created,
He knew he had angered the gods.

Next duel, Joey says, bring it *on!*
Soon "Marik's" lifepoints will be *gone!*
First round sure pays off
But Great Ra would just scoff
If Marik played, not Odion!
 In this duel, things are getting quite weird;
 Ra struck, and both duelists were seared.
 Joey dreamed and awoke,
 A new Marik first spoke,
 Not as kind as the one we have feared.

Next Joey and Mai have a fight
(Hidden crushes are good cause for flight!)
'I don't need all of you,'
Says Mai, 'I can win too!'
Against Marik, his forehead alight.
 In a warm-up to conquer the throne,
 Marik's cruelty on poor Mai would hone.
 Friendship in Joey's eye
 v. Great Beast of the Sky
 Leaves Mai among shadows, alone.

Clear the way—Let the torment begin!
Kaiba's sure with Tormentor he'll win.
Ishizu stands tall
With the Necklace's thrall
To save bro from the mess he is in.
 Ishizu sets foe a trap, Great
 Obelisk is perfect bait.
 But Blue-Eyes steps in
 And grabs Kaiba the win—
 Such are the perils of Fate.

A secret needs now to be told:
Marik's family lived down in the cold,
Discovered the world,
Bitter evil unfurled.
And Yugi gets Necklace of gold.

Next two evil spirits would fight
A dark shadow game late in the night.
Kaiba deciphers;
Obelisk and Slifer's
Counterpart takes phoenix flight.

Battle City Semifinals Coming Soon!

The Sestina of Doom

This is the sestina of doom.
It is the worst sestina ever read
By anybody, even by you.
This sestina is just so incredibly *off*
That there is no way you will ever
Survive reading this sestina.

I'm telling you, put down this sestina!
Don't say I didn't warn you this would doom
You to something the likes of which you've never read
In any fiction. Seriously, you
Must believe me and take your eyes off
This page immediately and never ever

Look at it again. Never ever!!
It's pain and turmoil as can only be penned in sestina
Form. It is doom
Beyond reckoning! Cease read-
-ing right now! Don't say I didn't warn you!
It's not my fault if your limbs fall off

Or if reading this makes you want to jump off
A cliff, or never ever ever
Read a single written word, or sestina,
Again. Doom! Doom! Doom! Doom,
I tell you! DO NOT READ!
I'm warning you!

Trust me when I say that you
Should take this sestina off
Your list of things to read now or ever!
The last person who read this sestina
Suffered such an unspeakable doom
That if you have a weak stomach, you shouldn't read

The final verse! Too late! Now you must read
Until the end! I kept on warning you
But you kept on blowing it off,
So *now* you've done it! Remind me not to ever
Tell you not to play with the dynamite, 'cause this sestina
Was just as bad and you fell for *it!* Now— your doom.

Queen Mab—Based on a chapter in Moby Dick of the same name

My dear King-Post, the queerest dream I had!
Last night as I swung sleeping in my hammock,
I encountered that sweet-dream-bringer, Queen Mab,
Who brought to me a whack upon my buttock,
A kick to my behind from Captain Ahab,
Well, more a caning, for the kick was bone,
And, fool I was, I kicked right back at him, and
The leg that then was severed was my own!
And Ahab was a pyramid quite grand,
And still kept I on kicking—what a dip!—
Kicking for a gentle tap!—the hand,
After all, is harsher than the whip.
A merman then appeared, and said to me,
“What are you about?” I said right back,
“Why should you care? Should I kick *you*, maybe?”
But seeing hooks all clawed into his back,
Decided not to. “Stubb,” said he, “Wise Stubb,
Stop all that crazy kicking! Don’t ye knock
That kick, it was an honor, not a snub!
He kicked you not with cheap wood, but with bone,
The finest bone that deigns to form a club.
Consider in an honor all your own
That Ahab kicked you and made you wise Stubb.”
And says wise I, Flask, leave the man alone!

The Comet -- based on episode #133 of Yu-Gi-Oh! GX, “Friend or Fiend?”

High above the cold night air
Shines the harbinger on high,
Soars the lamp that lights despair
And, burning, meets my widening eye
And searing light fast-strikes me there,
My fright-bound soul lets out a cry!
I knew ‘twould come; that could I bear,
But not how quickly time would fly.

* * *

ANSWERS TO THE RIDDLES

Page 8:

The Millennium Stone

Page 15:

1. Winged Kuriboh from *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX*
 2. Haku from Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*
 3. The Turnover Ghosts from Anne McCaffrey's *Dragonriders of Pern* saga
 4. The ghosts from Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*
 5. The "ghost" of Kaiba from *Yu-Gi-Oh!* ep#008-009, "Duel With a Ghoul" and "Give Up the Ghost"
 6. D from Nintendo's *Trace Memory* for DS
 7. The seven necromantic bells—Ranna, Mosrael, Kibeth, Dyrin, Belgaer, Saraneth, and Astarael—and the beings they embody, from Garth Nix's *Sabriel* trilogy
 8. Atem from *Yu-Gi-Oh!*
 9. Princess Yue from *Avatar: The Last Airbender*
 10. The Grey Lady, Helena Ravenclaw, from J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series
 11. Shadi from *Yu-Gi-Oh!*
 12. Elpenor, one of Odysseus' crew who chanced to fall off Circe's roof and met Odysseus in the Kingdom of the Dead in Homer's *The Odyssey*
 13. La Llorona, a ghostly figure who is somewhat universal in world mythology: a woman by a river who cries for her lost children.
 14. Hei Bai from *Avatar: The Last Airbender*
 15. The ghosts that ride the pigeons in Tamora Pierce's *Beka Cooper* trilogy
 16. The ghost that started all of this, the one from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*
 17. Bobby Strong from *Urinetown the Musical*
 18. Muley Graves from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*
 19. The river spirit from Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*
 20. Avatar Roku from *Avatar: The Last Airbender*
 21. The ghost from a Summer Drama Camp film
 22. The Totoros from *My Neighbor Totoro*
 23. Mahad, a.k.a. the Dark Magician, from *Yu-Gi-Oh!*
-
- The ghosts of Kal'elna, from *Yu-Gi-Oh*, whose blood was shed to create the Millennium Items
 - Grandma Tzeitel from *Fiddler on the Roof*