

B R I C K S A N D M O R T A R

Friday evening rendezvous
In local drinking haunts;
Roll in drunken splendour
To our favourite restaurants;
Waking up on Saturday
With sore and heavy head,
Would give all I spent last night
To spend today in bed.

But weekends are just two short days,
Now here, next minute gone;
Sunday grabs for Monday,
And nine to five is on;
But onwards, ever upwards
Climbs the bold executive,
To earn the means to keep him
In the style he loves to live. And he ...

 Gives his life to bricks and mortar,
 Weds his wife with bricks and mortar,
 Builds a world of bricks and mortar,
 Calls that world success.
 Does his bit for bricks and mortar,
 Eats shit for bricks and mortar,
 Never asks why bricks and mortar
 Causes such distress.

Days turn into weeks and months,
The months fade into years;
Friday evening outings
Seem to calm the latent fears
Of rising expectations
In a game of trading up:
A bigger job, a bigger car,
A bigger house and hup! We go to ...

Treading time on bricks and mortar,
Walk the line on bricks and mortar,
Just fine on bricks and mortar,
Hey, St George has got it!
Clink your glass to bricks and mortar,
Break your ass with bricks and mortar,
Never asks what bricks and mortar gives,
And do you really want it?

Bricks and mortar built a fortress
That became a stranglehold;
Lulled with its false promise
As the fire of love turned cold;
When the prospects looked so rosy,
And the future beckoned bright,
The powers of discontentment
Took that fortress one dark night. And you ...

Sell your soul for bricks and mortar
Give control to bricks and mortar,
Sacrifice to bricks and mortar
All that you may prize.
Build your wealth on bricks and mortar,
Break your health on bricks and mortar,
Kid yourself with bricks and mortar,
Smoke gets in your eyes!

... Bricks and mortar
... Bricks and mortar
... Bricks and mortar
Makes you strong and whole

... Bricks and mortar
... Bricks and mortar
... Bricks and mortar
Swallow up your soul.

Paul Hemphill

(c) Sydney, 5 October 1985

T H E L I T T L E M A N

A song I will sing for the Little Man
Who, though mightily he strives,
He'll never make his million,
Though a million years he lives.
But he'll find the greener pastures,
Where those he knows grow thin,
Please come along into his song,
Be introduced to him.

The Little Man in a brave new world
Has quite a hill to climb,
To acquire a reputation
He must then fight hard to keep.
But in a world which holds no meaning
In his thought out scheme of things,
'Tis certain that
He will not lose much lose much sleep.

There must be something better than this,
There must be a better way;
When the spirits are down
And the wheels of town are grinding.
There must be something better than this,
Some place I'd rather be,
Than to spend my days like a rat in a maze
Or a duck in a shooting gallery.

In praise of smaller people
Who can summon up a smile,
Through pressure
That can crush the strongest man.
And in the unforgiving minute
Of the unrelenting day,
He'll do his best
As only small folk can.

There must be something better than this,
There must be a better way;
When the spirits are down
And the wheels of town are grinding.
There must be something better than this,
Some place I'd rather be,
Than to spend my days like a rat in a maze
Or a duck in a shooting gallery.

In praise of smaller people
Who have smaller goals in life,
Than the action man
Who clogs his working day.
And more praise to smaller people
Who can bring their goals to life,
And find a chance
To make a getaway.

There must be something better than this,
There must be a better way;
When the spirits are down
And the wheels of town are grinding,
Grinding you down.
There's something better than this,,
Some place I'd rather be,
Than to spend my days like a rat in a maze
Or a duck in a shooting gallery.

Come on and meet the Little Man
Who still has strength to cope,
Who, fearing he may hang himself,
Takes care to lose the rope.
And in shouting no surrender,
Falls down flat upon his face,
And rises, thinking of the day,
He'll pull out of the race.

There must be something better than this,
There must be a better way;
When the chips are down
And the speed of change is frightening.
There must be something better than this,
Some place I'd rather be,
Than to spend my days like a rat in a maze
Or a duck in a shooting gallery.

And he will sing his song for us,
A barbeque chorus,
Everyman Jack of you,
No, you won't bore us.
The all-around everyman,
'Round since the world began,
Rained upon, snowed upon, sat upon, spat upon
Little Man,
The Little Man,
The Little Man.