

***Ma Cinquantaine (My Fiftieth).***

Dr Roger KA Allen 8 September 2001

The Ardèche and Lascaux's caves  
Walls with frisky bison filled,  
Life so rich of a frozen age  
Prancing antelope and hunting bear  
Woolly mammoths, and tusky boar,  
Plenteous pantheon,  
Perpetual drip,  
Of purest water and coolest lime,  
Endless mix of man and time.  
  
Yet this is all our inner world,  
The hidden life without much sun.  
Endless vaults for us to explore,  
Some with smoky sunlit shafts,  
Others dark, where rock falls of pain  
Have buried the past from the light of day.  
Emotion's rainbow paint long galleries of stone,  
Narrow sun-streaming shaft,  
Blind lizards and chirping bats,  
A waterfall beneath the earth,  
Passion's red,

Warm happy yellow,  
And deep sombre painful blue.  
Experience has passed my way,  
Rejection's searing pain,  
Sweet love and deepest warmth of home and love,  
To have seen men die and babies born,  
The pain and agony,  
And the smell of death.  
The pride of courageous souls,  
The foolishness of false religious men,  
The peace and love of Wisdom's way.  
All life's riches gild these walls,  
Smokey lamps,  
Silent light.  
  
Language and books,  
A yearning to know,  
Childlike inquiry,  
A middle-aged man,  
The heavens and stars,  
God's in the cosmos,  
...we all hope it's so

This is my inner world,  
That only I go.  
To some, their inner sanctum is hell,  
Haunted by demons, rock falls and smell.  
But from our inner caverns issues forth  
from the night,  
To all those around us,  
Either darkness  
Or light.  
So what I have learned after 50 brief  
years?  
That now I must speak out; no fear for  
my life  
That courage is costly and better with  
tears,  
That as knowledge expands and the  
margins grow dim,  
So also does doubt, and man's innermost  
fears.  
That a woman's love's not for sale  
But lucky for man,  
It is with a dog and he'll stay with you  
through hell.

That life's one big paradox,  
Only wisdom can tell.  
For to lead one must serve,  
And true gain is to give,  
And in life's bleakest winter,  
Tis the best time that we learn,  
To sow seed for the summer,  
Until the huge harvest moon.  
Now life's richest blessing is a wife full of  
love,  
And loving children a plenty,  
A home and three dogs.  
There's Canis Minor and Major,  
Vulcanus Maximus too  
Who's now eating with slobber  
One of Linda's best shoes.  
So now I would thank you for your riches  
too,  
But not only for presents,  
But for the richness of you.