



***A Little
Artistic Collage***

Alexander and Eva Peck

Jindrich (Henry) Degen



A Little Artistic Collage

Alexander and Eva Peck

Jindrich (Henry) Degen



© 2020

© Poetry – Alexander and Eva Peck, Jindrich (Henry) Degen

© Artwork – Jindrich (Henry) Degen

Photography of art – Jindrich (Henry) Degen

Cover design – Eva and Alexander Peck, with artwork of Jindrich (Henry) Degen

Graphic design – Eva Peck, with artwork from Jindrich (Henry) Degen

Image selection of artwork –Eva Peck

Photo editing (Photoshop) – Alexander Peck

Preparation for print – Eva Peck

All rights reserved

Dedication

To Dad –
On his 97th birthday.

We wonder as we wander
Throughout this world
Of tragic strife
What is the answer to
The problems of life
The timeless answers
To our inner call
Love will transform us
One and all.

(C. Alexander Simpkins)

"To send light into the darkness of men's hearts –
such is the duty of the artist."

(Robert Schumann)

Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| How This Small Book Came to Be | vii |
| “Such Is the Life” | 11 |
| Time..... | 13 |
| Eye Operation..... | 15 |
| A Blessed Man..... | 19 |
| Jak Dlouho Ještě? | 23 |
| Whatever the Weather | 25 |
| Lunch on a Potentially Rainy Day..... | 27 |
| Deštivý Den..... | 29 |
| Oheň a Voda..... | 31 |
| Koncem roku 2019 | 33 |
| Po Novém Roce 2020 | 35 |
| New Year's Wishes and Aspirations | 37 |
| New Year Wishes | 39 |
| New Year Aspirations..... | 41 |
| Nový Rok 2020..... | 43 |
| From Morning to Night | 45 |
| The Cat on Call | 47 |
| Good Night 1..... | 49 |
| Good Night 2 | 51 |
| Pictures at an Exhibition | 53 |



How This Small Book Came to Be

We compiled *A Little Artistic Collage* to celebrate Jindrich's 97th birthday. This would be a special milestone for anyone, and in this case certainly is so when we consider the unexpected health challenges and multiple hospital stays that Jindrich experienced in the first half of 2019.

A truism is aptly expressed by these words: "Into each life some rain must fall, some days must be dark and dreary" (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow).

We journeyed with Jindrich as he was assailed more than once by a serious urinary tract infection (UTI). Alongside this and other health issues, the prescribed medications regrettably added to the havoc that the UTI was causing to his mind and body. With the UTI diagnosis, a sizable and spiky urinary tract stone was discovered. The doctors recommended to have it surgically removed. All this was understandably physically and mentally challenging.

After three months of in-and-out hospital stays, Jindrich began recovering. He is still able to live in his own home and to take care of most of his needs. We have been glad to see Jindrich return to artwork, writing a few poems, and taking photos in his garden with his iPhone camera.

We decided to produce this small book for him to rejoice in his recovery. And so, *A Little Artistic Collage* has been born and is intended to capture and celebrate Jindrich's creativity as he reaches the age of 97 years!

Jindrich's artwork from past years, and his more recent poetic expression (in Czech or English), as well as a few of our unpublished poems, have been divided into five sections of this small book as follows:

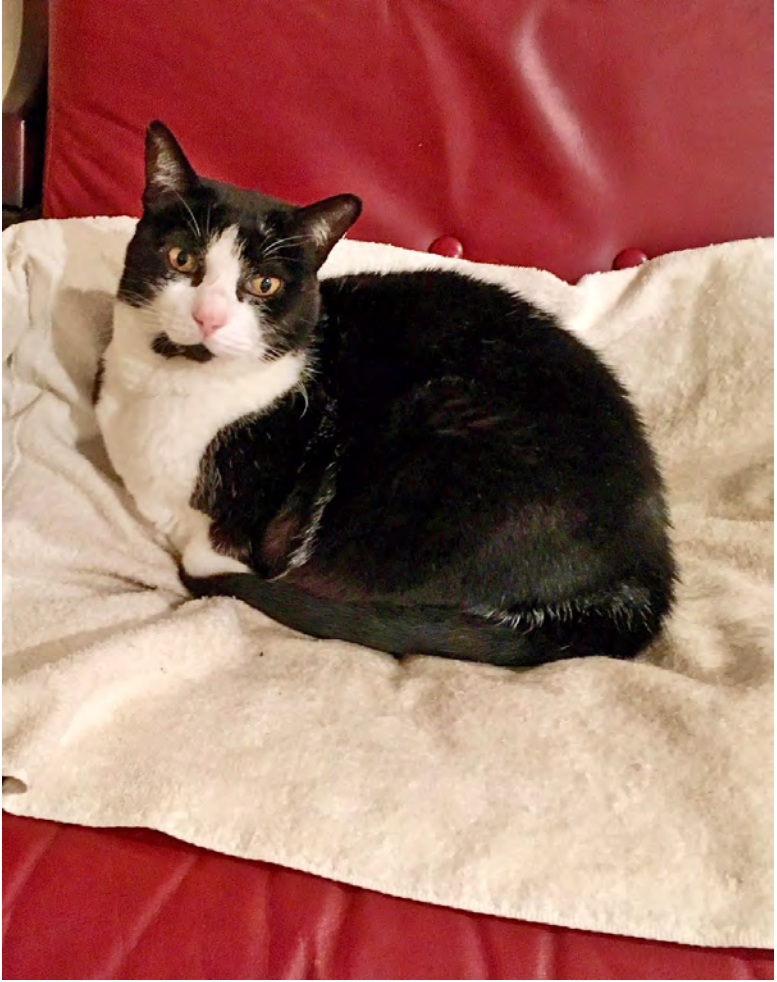
- I. “Such is the Life”
- II. Whatever the Weather
- III. New Year’s Wishes and Aspirations
- IV. From Morning to Night
- V. Pictures at the Exhibition

In closing, we both wish Jindrich ***all the very best*** for the rest of his life – may he enjoy health, peace of mind, safety and security, deep contentment, and ongoing joy!

Eva and Alex



Bravissimo! Bravissimo! Bravissimo!





J. DEGEN

"Such Is the Life"



Time

One, two, three, four and then five ...
Time flies fast and you are rife –
It is time to choose your wife.
Important it is a project
To find only greatest object!

Don't go after some big money,
She must be lovely and sunny.
It is a bonus in the looking,
If managing as well cooking.

Love is going through good food,
Inspiration for good mood.
Too much food means we need trimming.
So does yoga, walking, swimming.

Time goes fast and we are old
(Only numbers I am told)!
Such a speed we have seen never –
Impossible to stay clever.

Don't step in cacophony!
Persevere in harmony!
Singing all the time like dove:
LIFE IS LOVELY – IT IS LOVE!

© Jindrich Degen, 2017



Eye Operation

Tomorrow – Tuesday – is a big day.
We are with you every step of the way!

Try to relax and be at ease;
It should all go well, like a breeze.

By Christmas, your eyes may be as good as new.
May you be able to celebrate through and through!

We have a true story to share,
From Susan, an older lady fair.

Last week she had a cataract operation,
And is pleased – speaking with jubilation!

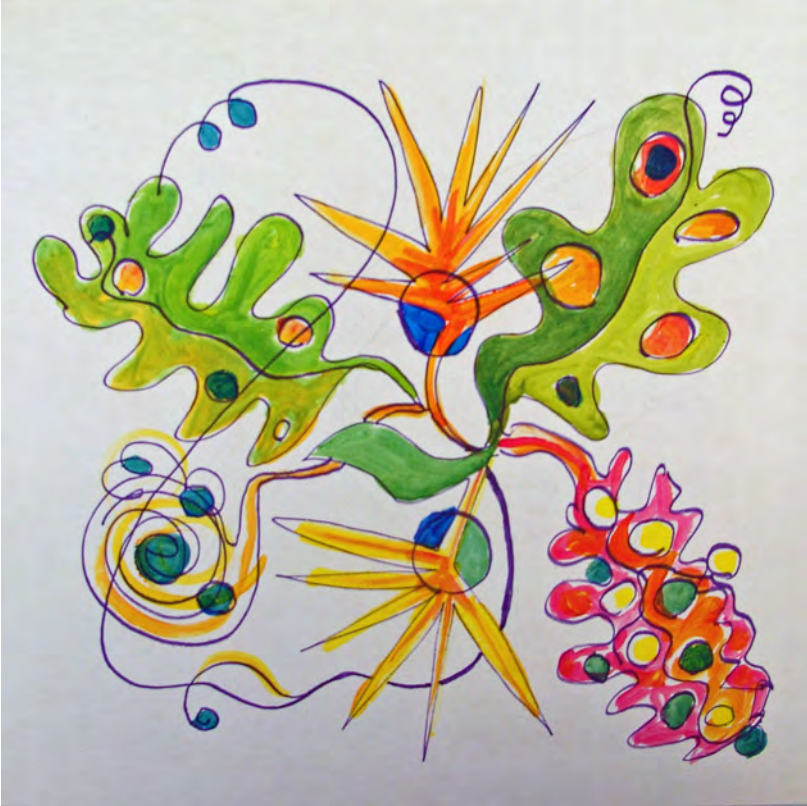
All indeed went very well,
She already sees better and feels swell!

And then Gloria’s story we must not forget,
From whom on Saturday some good tips you did get!

Like Marie, she said the operation was nothing to worry about.
It should go well and then you can happily shout:

“I can see much better now;
To my old lens, I say ‘Cau!’”

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2018



Brave Man

The world's "a stage where each man must play a part",
To quote poet William Shakespeare by heart.

I haven't often seen in my whole life span,
A man like Henry – such a brave man.

A physical issue, for about a month, caused him to be sleep
deprived;
Yet, bravely each day he managed to successfully have survived.

Despite his physical and even psychological pain,
Not once did he wallow in self-pity or to us complain.

Still, eventually, one Sunday, he got to the point of outright despair,
But with sleep loss and inner infection, it's understandable, to be
fair.

Having expressed heartfelt regret for his unfortunate step,
He's chosen to resume life in the present, recovering his former pep.

Through Henry's sore trial, his GP to him was encouraging and
kind;
It gave us all a much-needed reassurance and a peace of mind.

The time came for a painful procedure, causing Henry to moan;
While waiting, hearing each moan, we too did inwardly groan.

At the age of near ninety-six, Henry's weathered a great personal
storm;
Yet, through it all, in character he has remained true to his form.

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2019



A Blessed Man

When younger, Frank had been a successful real estate agent;
He had also built his own highset home to others' amazement.

Now elderly, some years ago, two small strokes he suffered;
In a very short time, these incidents left his life shattered.

Today, he really struggles in getting about;
Without assistance, it's impossible for him to get out.

Sitting in her luxury flat, in a prestigious retirement village,
Surrounded by quality items, we reflected on Susana's privilege.

From her balcony, she had a panoramic view to the sea,
Yet, now at ninety, her life had become meaningless and lonely.

Her health had been worsening, beginning with a bad fall,
Then a light stroke; and, now the onset of diabetes wasn't all.

We remember an older immigrant, Mario, who became wealthy;
Real estate at a low price he purchased when he was young and
healthy.

Land prices rose, and when he sold his land, he "made a mint"!
He had a dream home built in a nice suburb; no small stint!

Yet, we'll never forget him, sitting lonely outside his great mansion.
"Bugger the house!", he exclaimed, full of deep-felt frustration.

Katarina had studied at a prestigious European university;
She then went abroad where she lived and taught in a big Asian city.

Today, the sufferings of old age have begun to show;
Lack of energy and physical decline have come as a blow.

Once an attractive lady, today she is a shadow of her former beauty;
Now in her day-to-day living, she struggles to do what's her duty.

Then there is Henry, in somewhat of a contrast,
Many of these afflictions him so far have bypassed!

No heart issues, diabetes, stroke or other nasty things,
His mind is still good, and the iPad much joy him brings.

He loves the word games and at the long words he excels,
At level 1400 now, any fear of dementia he dispels!

Many are amazed how well at his age he looks and walks,
In conversations, always soundly and sensibly he talks.

Despite some aches and pains, he still keeps very busy;
It would make many younger than him nothing but dizzy!

He submits paintings to many a local exhibition,
Occasionally, he has even received a nice recognition.

His mind is sharp and he keeps on top of things,
Knows what is going on and doesn't miss anything.

What are the reasons for this being so?
Three answers, among others, often flow.

In other words, three schools of thought on this persist,
But there are many other teachings that also do exist.

Some say, in lives past, Henry was a kind, generous man;
So in this life, he enjoys a relatively healthy long lifespan.

Others would say, Henry has met with great good luck;
Many of the pains and ailments of others he's been able to duck.

For many years, Henry's taken few drugs and lived healthily and
well;
So, this is the reason for his long life, our friends and others we tell.

Whatever the causes and reasons, Henry's been a blessed man;
Not many his kind of independent life at ninety-six enjoy can!

He has a comfortable large house, not far from the sea;
Neighbours in his cul-de-sac are all kind and friendly.

He can still go out and enjoy good food;
And hear fine classical music to lift his mood.

It is true, that recently he did have a nasty fall;
But now, a month later, he's again starting to stand tall.

We wish him, for the rest of his life, nothing but the best;
May we, too, in old age, like Henry, with good health be blest.

And while here on earth, may we serve others with love;
So that we'll then have a great new life in the realms above.

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2019



Jak Dlouho Ještě?

Na hlavu dám pestrý bonnet,
Potom složím krásný sonnet.
To mě dnes nebude bolet –
Nechci tu být za těch sto let.

Myšlenky jdou – je to můra
A nápadů celá fůra.
Přitom ten čas tolik letí –
Těžko najít zlato v smetí.

A jak moudrá hlava praví,
Nutno zachovat si zdraví.
I když fantasie pluje,
Mozek ať jde do své sluje.

Kolik let tu budeš ještě?
Uzříš ještě příští deště?

© Jindrich Degen, 2020



Whatever the Weather



Lunch on a Potentially Rainy Day

Today we went close to Bay,
Rain was predicted this day --
We are lovely human bunch
So decided "Go for lunch!"

No to forest, trees and bark --
Today it is Club: "The Shark".
Choosing something not alien
Despite "Pizza Italienne".

We need only the right food!
That is always good health's root!

© Jindrich Degen, 2017



Deštivý Den

Dnes se nic tak nedělo --
jenom že moc přšlo.
Měli jsme se dobře přesto ...
V klubu pekly libě těsto --
pizzu pro nás tvořili,
a ta zmizla za chvíli.
Na křížovky dosti času
zbude teď – a vnímat krásu
nebe opět nad námi –
To je život Mon Ami!

© Jindrich Degen, 2017



Oheň a Voda

V pondělí večer, 20.1.2020, 5 pm

Zdá se: je tu plno kouře,
Tu nastává silná bouře.
Plamen se teď vodě koří,
Všecko plyne, nebo hoří.

Počasí zná neplechu –
Žijeme jak bez dechu.

© Jindrich Degen, 2020



Koncem roku 2019

Bylo horko celý rok
Až z toho byl člověk cvok.
Pořád teď tu vedro máme,
Kdy se zas deště dočkáme?

Na vánoce trochu skáplo,
Na chvíli nás to zas zmátlo.
Požárů je v zemi dosti –
To nám nedává radosti.

Snad pomohou všichni Svátí,
“Ať se to zase obrátí!”

© Jindrich Degen, 2020



Po Novém Roce 2020

Horka bylo dost a dost,
Teď zas prší pro radost.

Tahle bouře celou noc
Dává vody moc a moc.

Horko je zas – tahle změna
Bude deštěm vykoupena.

© Jindrich Degen, 2020



New Year's Wishes and Aspirations



New Year Wishes

(Happy New Year)

Happiness depends on your perception of and outlook on life.

Attitude is often as important as talents and abilities.

Passion will energize your work; discover what yours is.

Positiveness makes many challenges of life easier.

You are unique with special gifts to serve others; use them.

New implies a chance for fresh resolutions and beginnings.

Enthusiasm goes a long way toward achievement and success.

Wishes will more likely come true when turned into goals and objectives.

Years go by quickly; make the most of each day.

Everything changes all the time; learn to be flexible and accepting.

Appreciation is a secret to happiness and well-being.

Reflection is an important part of a well-balanced life.

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2019



New Year Aspirations

(Happy New Year)

Hope – never lose hope of a positive outcome in any situation.

Acceptance – learn to accept what unfolds in life, rather than fighting reality.

Pease – try to keep a peaceful mind, no matter what arises.

Patience – be patient and gentle with all people and situations.

Yourself – live your own life, not always swayed by others' views and opinions.

Newness – make this year a time of new beginnings and aspirations.

Effort – realize that steady, consistent effort will help you succeed.

Wisdom – take to heart and apply the good advice and wisdom of others.

Yesterday – let bygones be bygones, leaving behind past hurts and regrets.

Ethics – remember that a moral life with integrity is always the best in the end.

Appreciation – cherish each day, knowing that life can change, or end, quickly!

Results – know that thoughts, words, and actions always have consequences.

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2019



Nový Rok 2020

Léta stále ubíhají,
Člověk žije když se nají.
Máme tu zas po roce
Ježíška a vánoce.

Užijte je jak se patří,
Nejen pro dva, ale za tři.
A pak do Nového roku
Dejte se s chutí do skoku!

© Jindrich Degen, 2019



From Morning to Night



The Cat on Call

Each day, a few short hours after dawn,
We call Dad on Facetime in the morn.
It is always a positive chat,
And often he asks about “The Cat”.

After her breakfast, kitty sleeps on her chair,
We show her to Dad and leave her there.
He says, “Hello cat, have a good day!”
We smile, and wish Dad well on his way.

Sometimes we pick puss up to show her on the screen,
She purrs or just tolerates it, though she’s treated like a queen!

At one pm she goes back out in the sun,
Which at that time must seem a lot more fun.
Four in the afternoon once more,
The cat is again at our door.

She has for some food a need,
So we give her a little treat.
She pieces of cut cheese very much likes,
With little chunks of meat besides.

Or, small pieces of tuna fish
Are what she enjoys on her dish.
When yummy food she did receive,
She curls up and falls asleep.

In this world of tension and strife,
This cat’s brought much joy into our life!

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2020



Good Night 1

Don't stay up too long,
Or, tomorrow you won't be strong,
And you'll get everything all wrong.

Of course, you won't get along,
And you might even trip over your thong,
And on the ground fall headlong.

And before too long
Your story will make a sad song
Played to a mournful gong!

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2016



Good Night 2

Good night, and have a really good rest;
And, tomorrow you'll be at your best!
And, all your work will be blessed!

With these words, I do not jest;
No better wish can I suggest.
So, good night, and tomorrow ride the crest!

© Alexander and Eva Peck, 2016



Pictures at an Exhibition

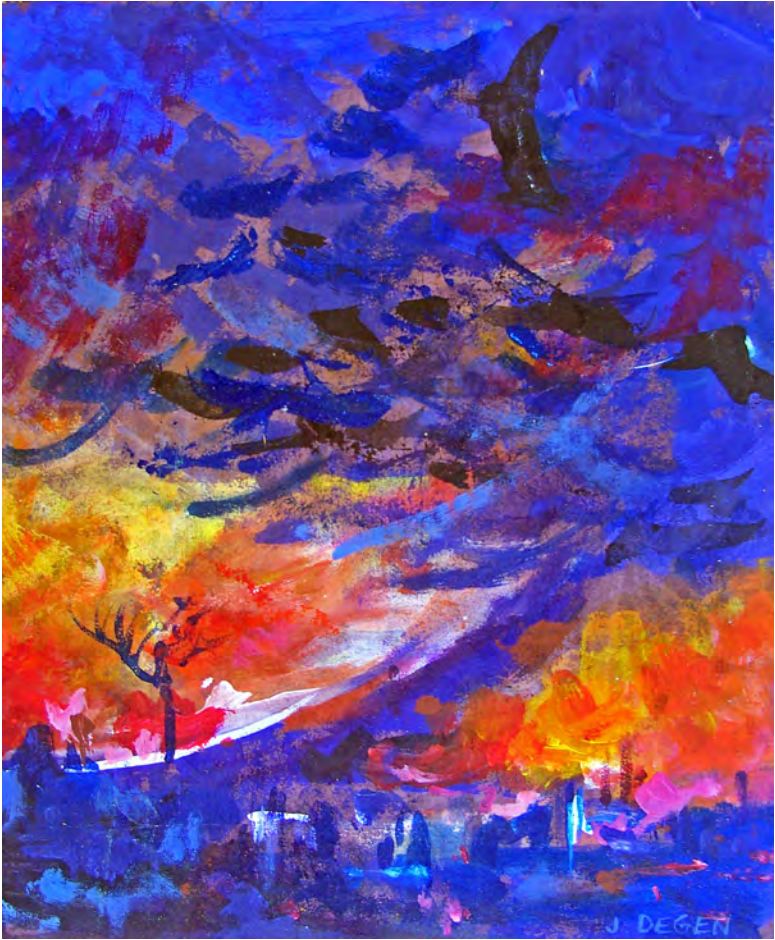














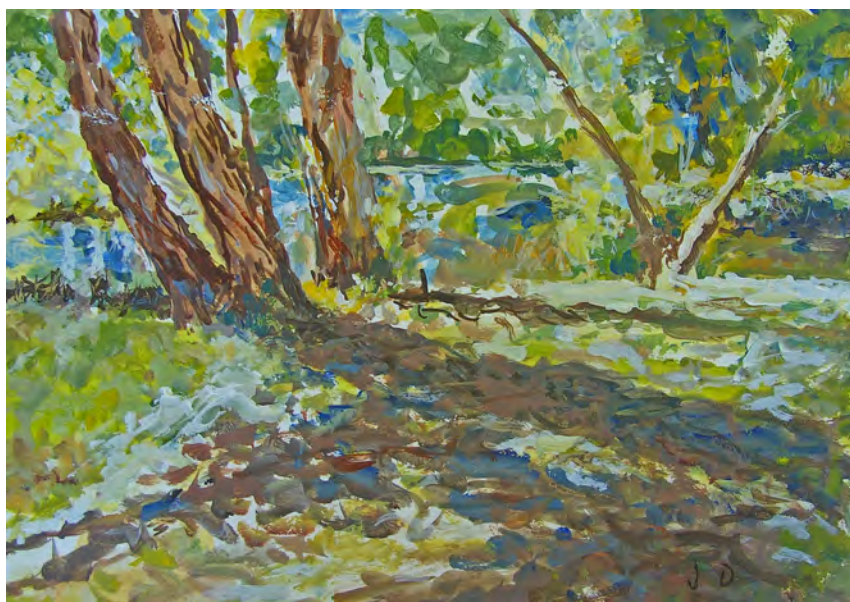


























Pathway Publishing

Seeking truth and beauty

