

A Cliché Poem: To Coin a Phrase

[A month ago, when I was writing a silly poem, "Has-Beens"—which contains the phrases "old hat" and "yesterday's news"—I started thinking about clichés. That's it! I'll write a poem entirely out of clichés! As original as I thought this idea was, alas, "there is nothing new under the sun." In a recent *Poets and Storytellers United* blog, Magaly Guerrero had posted a contest for readers to turn clichés into poems (Magaly Guerrero, "Weekly Scribblings #6: Turn Cliché into Poetry or Prose," *Poets and Storytellers United*, Wednesday, February 12, 2020. Web.). In compiling a list of examples I might use for my poem, I made use of the comprehensive compendium of clichés: Lisa Lepki, "The Internet's Best List of Clichés," *ProWritingAid*, Dec 09, 2020. Web.]

He had a chip on his shoulder, a bee in his bonnet, and ants in his pants.
A diamond in the rough.
A bull in a china shop.
Strong as an ox he took the bull by the horns.

Snug as a bug in a rug and as cool as a cucumber,
He got up on the wrong side of the bed.
A man's home is his castle. Batten down the hatches.
Back against the wall. Back to the drawing board.

As far as the eye can see. As plain as the nose on your face.
Read between the lines. The writing's on the wall.
The calm before the storm. Every cloud has a silver lining.
The grass is always greener on the other side as the crow flies.

Let the cat out of the bag and spill the beans.
Cat got your tongue?
Curiosity killed the cat.
When the cat's away, the mice will play.

Led down the garden path,
The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.
Blood is thicker than water.
Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

Let's get this show on the road and down to brass tacks.
Get down to bare bones. Make no bones about it.
Out with the old, in with the new.
Out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Fall head over heels. Got you under my skin.
Looking at the world through rose colored glasses.
Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. Dressed to the nines.
Right up my alley. My cup of tea. A sight for sore eyes.

They were like two peas in a pod.
You scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours.
A flash in the pan, the whole kit and caboodle.
Like water for chocolate.

Eat, drink and be merry. Easier said than done.
Everything but the kitchen sink.
He knows which side his bread is buttered on.
Feed a cold, starve a fever. Food for thought.

He talks the talk and walks the walk.
A Jack of all trades and a master of none.
Give him a run for his money. Money doesn't grow on trees.
Put your money where your mouth is.

Foot loose and fancy free, waiting for the other shoe to drop,
He got off on the wrong foot.
If the shoe fits, wear it on the other foot.
Hold his feet to the fire.

Fly by the seat of your pants.
My way or the highway.
No if's, and's, or but's about it.
No way on God's green Earth.

Climb the walls. Cut the mustard.
Get your head in the game.
Stop and smell the roses. Strike while the iron is hot.
Shake a leg and get a leg up on it.

Bite the bullet. Bite your tongue.
Burn your bridges. Burn the midnight oil.
Have an ax to grind. Bury the hatchet.
Bury your head in the sand.

Put your nose out of joint.
No skin off my nose, by the skin of my teeth.
Cut off your nose to spite your face.
Put your best foot forward and into your mouth.

Don't blow your own horn.
Keep it under your hat.
Keep your nose to the grindstone.
Leave no stone unturned. A rolling stone gathers no moss.

Things that go bump in the night. A bump in the road.
Too many cooks spoil the broth.
You can't judge a book by its cover.
Swallow one's pride.

He got lost in the shuffle.
On pins and needles. A needle in a haystack.
Make hay while the sun shines. Hit the hay.
Grasping at straws. It's the last straw. The straw that broke the camel's back.

Between a rock and a hard place.
Carry coals to Newcastle.
By hook or by crook. The check's in the mail.
A day late and a dollar short.

A friend in need is a friend indeed.
People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
Haven't seen hide nor hair of him.
He has a screw loose. Lost his marbles.

A square peg in a round hole. Take down a peg or two.
Talk until you are blue in the face.
A taste of your own medicine.
A tempest in a teacup.

That takes the cake. That's how the cookie crumbles.
The proof is in the pudding.
The bigger they are the harder they fall.
The camera cannot lie. The darkest hour is just before the dawn.

Take it with a grain of salt.
Not for all the tea in China.
Where the rubber meets the road.
Finders keepers, losers weepers.

Damned if you do and damned if you don't.
Cost an arm and a leg.
Come in under the wire.
Cold turkey. Cold shoulder.

March to the beat of a different drummer.
Not worth a hill of beans. Nothing to sneeze at.
Stick out like a sore thumb.
Clear the air. For crying out loud.

Comparing apples to oranges.
A drop in the bucket. Kicked the bucket.
Lock, stock, and barrel.
He who dies with the most toys wins.

Don't air your dirty laundry in public. Mum's the word.
A skeleton in the closet.
Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.
Dead as a doornail. Gone but not forgotten.

More than meets the eye.
Bob's your uncle,
The fat lady sings,
And that's all she wrote.