

The Houston Toad

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It's that old, familiar story: Boy meets girl. Girl tells boy about toads. Boy writes love song about toads instead of about girl.

Serious but not lugubrious (♩=180)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as 'Serious but not lugubrious' with a quarter note equal to 180 beats per minute. The score consists of seven staves of music with lyrics underneath. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Am, Dm, C, E7, Am, Dm, C, E7, Am, Dm, C, E7, Am, Dm, C, E7, Am, G7, C, G7, C, Am7, G7, Am, E7, Em, Am.

I flew down to Houston to visit a friend,
 To escape from the north and its cold.
 We met at the airport; we spoke of times gone;
 We remarked how we each had grown old.
 We drove to the city and passed through a park
 That was spread on both sides of the road,
 And as we passed through it, my friend's voice grew dark:
 "Have you heard? It's the last of the toad!"
 The start of the drilling is the end of the road.
 Let us show our respect for the last Houston Toad while we can.

I asked for the story: 'twas one I'd not heard.
 I repeat to you now what was said.
 The family Hogg left some land for a park
 To live after them when they were dead.
 The terms of the gift were accepted as fair
 'Till events in Iran and Iraq
 Reminded some folks there was oil in there
 And the contract was under attack.
 The start of the drilling ...

The companies think that I'm going to believe
 That an oil well looks like a tree,
 Disguised with green paint in an AstroTurf lawn
 That's been thrown down to hide the debris.
 They'll fancy it up — their intentions are noble —
 As a place where young lovers can spark
 Beneath a pierced heart reading "Exxon loves Mobil"
 That's been carved in its chrome steel bark.
 The start of the drilling ...

Now, oil means money and money means people;
 They arrive by the dozens and scores,
 And places to house them spring up from the land
 Like infections of ticky-tack sores:
 A spreading disease of these tiny estates,
 Each complete with its mortgage and deed,
 Displacing the males who call to their mates
 As the Houston Toad's trying to breed.
 The start of the housing ...

I flew down by plane and I rode in a car
 And I know that to travel takes fuel.
 I don't want to cut off the heat to the north:
 I am only concerned; I'm not cruel.
 But if our thirst for oil is so hard to reform
 That we must pump up every last drop,
 Our planes will fly high and our houses stay warm,
 But a voice of the forest will stop.
 The start of the drilling ...

The Houston Toad lives in a skin made of warts
 That has all of the charm of a stone.
 He's no choice but making his home in those parts
 And just wants us to leave him alone.
 So tear up the land where he makes his abode,
 His presence will never be missed.
 The passenger pigeon, the dodo, this toad:
 When will our name be next on the list?
 The start of the drilling ...