

Joanna Lumley OBE reads

A SONNET OF SORTS FOR A STAR

S HALL I compare thee to Sir Robin Day?
Thou wert more lovely and more temperate.
Earth has not anything to show more fair,
Hello, good evening, welcome, Frosty's there.

When you considered how our weeks were spent—
Those were the weeks that were; they came, and went.
The quips, the japes, the hasty hymn to Kennedy
And now your turn, as we compose your threnody.

For many a glorious morning I have seen
David, bright-eyed, be-sofa'd on the screen,
Or *Through the Keyhole*, or on Concorde's wing,
Bob Hope, a Pope, a President—and Bing.

You've known them all, nor lost the common touch,
Clerics and Thatchers, Screaming like Lord Sutch.
Prince of all broadcasters and the friend of princes,
Loved by the young, adored by the Blue Rinses.

The world's your stage, from Norfolk Broad to tundra,
You skewered Doctor Petro and Savundra.
Colossus in your field, ahead of trends,
Most generous of hosts and best of friends.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Said Richard Nixon; then, as David planned,
Disarmed and charmed by his insistent guest
Nixon let his guard down, and confessed.

No more TV-am, no Al Jazeera—
We end not a career, but end an era;
For now he's gone, ascended into orbit,
And 'I look up to him' (quoth Ronnie Corbett).

In Heaven, and awaiting David's call,
Is the greatest interviewee of them all:
'With Frost tonight, on Paradise TV
'Hello, God—Evening! Welcome!'''. We shall see...

Much have you travelled, with your Rose of Gold,
And left too soon, thus never growing old,
For you were young and sweet in heart and mind,
When Frost has gone, can spring be far behind?

Joanna Lumley (b 1946)
Richard Stilgoe (b 1943)