

Quatrains of Chess and Life



Gillian A Moore

Quatrains of Chess and Life

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my fellow lovers of chess and life

Copyright © Gillian A Moore, 2023

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Quatrains of Chess and Life

FOREWORDS

I admire the technical quality of Gillian's quatrains. She has sustained the rhyming formula in every one of them without anything that I find to be strained or jarring or artificially forced. That is no mean feat!

And all the different sentiments that she expresses, yes I sure can empathise: they reflect the wide range of experiences and emotions that can come from playing a game of chess or series of games.

Jerry Dowlen Insurance Chess Club

In her collection of quatrains, Gillian offers profound philosophical thought as she artfully juxtaposes the game of chess with the game of life. Her deep understanding of the nuances of chess is embedded in her verses, as is her joy of the game.

Gillian tugs at heart strings and touches on the ethereal when she points out time binds us all, and tells us that even those who love timelessness find they are "subjected to the clock and never free." She offers inspiration when she invites the reader to dare to aspire to the highest of realms, but points out, in the face of defeat, one should not get downhearted or give up; simply play the next game.

Anne Perrotti Chess aficionado

Quatrains of Chess and Life

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
<i>Author's Acknowledgements</i>	5
Reminiscing	6
To Be a Champion	9
Competitive Chess	12
The Battle Within	15
The Battle on the Board	18
My Opening Strategies	21
Balanced Living	24
A Deep and Noble Game	27
The Pawn in Us All	30
Chess and Life	33
The Hope for Humanity	36
My Latter Life Review	39
<i>Illustrations: Pictures of Gillian</i>	43/45

Quatrains of Chess and Life

INTRODUCTION

My readers who are familiar with The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam will recognise the pattern of the 73 *quatrains* in my book. Each verse has four lines, in which three rhyme and the fourth does not. This book is intended to be complete in itself, but at the same time can be a companion to my earlier, longer poetry work entitled 'In Praise of Chess'.

Both my books deal with many similar themes of interest to me regarding chess and life. My approach is that life is a game, play it well, and that chess has a sort of life to it that mirrors our own. In the last analysis, we know that chess is not 'just a board game', but a great deal more. I invite you to explore these themes with me.

Gillian Moore, January 2023

Author's Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to my two ardent chess player and writer friends, Anne Perrotti and Jerry Dowlen, for their Forewords; also for their helpful critiques and suggestions about my work when in progress.

Both these special friends suddenly turned up in my life two years ago. This just shows the power of the chess world to connect people of like minds all over the world!

As Anne lives in the US and Jerry in Orpington, I have not met either of them, *yet*. We keep in touch by regular emailing and/or instant messaging on Lichess.org.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

1

*Herewith is a kaleidoscope of thought
That colours of my life and chess have brought,
For you who could regale me in return
With pleasures of the game and lessons taught.*

Reminiscing

2

*Who was it in my youthful distant past
Who set alight the flame of chess to last?
My father taught me, then my special teacher
Mentored me, and progress happened fast!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

3

*And of the highlights of my chess career
In all these decades, this I hold most dear:
At Sunderland in nineteen sixty six,
Joint British Ladies Champion that year!¹*

4

*Apart from competition of the play,
The game has given me many a holiday,
For relaxation in-between the rounds,
In congresses all over the UK.*

1 A photo of me with the rose bowl trophy is shown at the end of this book.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

5

*From Edinburgh to Hastings, all along
To Aberystwyth in the land of song.*

*In many English towns and cities too,
I've pitted wits with players keen and strong.*

6

*As I grow older, faster seem the years,
But I feel fine and have no future fears.*

*Though helter skelter through the months I fall,
My love of life and chess our Caissa² hears!*

2 Caissa, the goddess of chess.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

7

*My moves in life have not always been best,
With brilliant acts and blunders too expressed.
But if I live to four score years and ten,
What I've become by then will be the test!*

To Be a Champion

8

*Regarding the success of games we play,
There's something that the ratings fail to say:
To be the greatest version of oneself
Is to be champion in our own way.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

9

*Since Caissa came by your abode, to bless
Your days with her supernal light of chess,
You have the chance to cherish and pursue
The path to expertise in it, no less.*

10

*It's not too late or early thus to spend
A lot more time in study, to extend
Your prowess of positions and the fight,
Which will reward your efforts in the end.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

11

*And keep on going, never give up hope
Of climbing back from losers slippery slope.
Get busy now and ever; lo, anon
Surprise us all with your potential scope!*

12

*If openings you favour prompt your smile -
You love their systems and they suit your style,
Then play and persevere to learn them well,
Polished and perfected in a while.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

13

*We each possess a hidden power, to bring
Majestic reigning of our inner king,
Whose latent glory can prevail at last
From dedicated work and nurturing.*

Competitive Chess

14

*What is this fascination that we know
For alternating victory and woe;
Are we ensnared or liberated thus,
Wrapped up in passion for this pastime so?*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

15

*The thrill of competition strange allure,
For which I find no healing balm or cure,
Is it a vice or virtue, beckoning
No matter what the outcome we endure?*

16

*Our goddess, Caissa, surely she is good
Who longs for our true welfare as she should,
With many noble qualities enshrined
In her pure heart of perfect motherhood!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

17

*Come, she says, and I will show the way
To learn from countless chess games that you play.
Win or lose, just keep the faith in me,
And patient perseverance wins the day!*

18

*For I am ever here as your surveyor,
Wishing you the very best, dear player.
Although unseen, upon my presence call,
And I will help you banish the Betrayer.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

19

*Betrayer of wisdom hides within your mind,
And often to his presence you are blind.*

*It is this enemy within who halts
Or banishes success for humankind.*

The Battle Within

20

*The driving force to play at serious chess;
Is no compulsion that we need confess.*

*It is for finer goals we love and seek:
The culture of our inner selves' finesse!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

21

So let positions too complex for some

Kindly test our power to overcome.

With deep analysis in mellow mood,

Solutions at our beck and call will come.

22

We need not fear his rating or his might,

Or feel we're lost before we start the fight,

Nor be too certain of our victory,

But just look forward to the game's delight.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

23

*A player's strength or weakness fluctuates,
And games have wondrous ever-changing states.
We can't foretell the outcome of the matches;
Many factors will decide the fates.*

24

*So sit up straight as masters do, and best
Is back-drop of our hearts and souls at rest,
As gathering up our soldier thoughts in line,
We do inspect them during the game's test.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

25

*Any Bill or Brendan, Jill or Bridget,
With steady focus and no mental fidget,
With aptitude and ardour can prevail -
As giants can be toppled by a midget!*

The Battle on the Board

26

*When sitting at the board in calm content,
The atmosphere might suddenly be rent,
As foreign soldiers come our way, and soon,
We're dealing with a tactical event.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

27

*A drawn-out battle might decide who wins,
With ambushes and skewers forks and pins.
Both players fight to quell disturbances
And make each other sorry for his sins.*

28

*I ask again, can chess ever be more
Than a mere game of mean intent and war?
Of course it can; we devotees know well
The goodness it sets out to underscore!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

29

*For though it is a game, but what a game!
Our human lives are seen to be the same,
 With gains and losses, joys and sorrows mixed.
We're players of a game within a game.*

30

*Though chess is combat, casualties are none:
No loss of life or limb or sound of gun.
 Our competition is a mental sport,
And all for our advancement, joy and fun.*

31

*The buzzer³ blasts and pieces move en masse -
No time to think, so many of them crass -
 In lightning chess they are not serious games,
With just ten seconds for each move, alas!*

My Opening Strategies

32

*I've learned some opening systems that I play.
I will not name them here and give away
 Their secrets and examples of success,⁴
But I am happy this much here to say:*

3 Southampton club holds these lightning tournaments thrice yearly, sometimes with the buzzer or else with 5 minutes on each player's clock.

4 My previously published book, "My Chess Revealed – Selected Games with Commentaries" gives lots of information about my play.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

33

*It helps us to preserve a knowing smile,
When choice of opening suits our playing style.
Myself, my choice is fast development,
With pieces poised for action in awhile.*

34

*There are some gambits that I like to play,
In which at first a pawn I give away,
For sake of speedy piece development
And space, to help the game to go my way.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

35

*Whether I am Black or I am White,
And if the chosen opening is right,
I keep some gambits 'hidden up my sleeve'
For lively moves and fun that I invite.*

36

*Never a dull moment with such schemes,
Creating what we wish for as in dreams.
It's good to have in mind distinct ideas
For final gain, though loss at first it seems.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

37

*And if with tempi we can get ahead
Of the opponent, we have heard it said
That the position tends to augur well,
If we continue with our careful tread.*

Balanced Living

38

*This board game with its squares of sixty four,
We players know it is a great deal more.
Hallowed in antiquity, and now
A great futurity it will endure.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

39

*If sadly some in ignorance berate
Our chess, and to an idleness equate
 The playing of it, when there's so much work
We should not shirk, then I will thusly state:*

40

*All of us need healthy recreation;
Without it many suffer the damnation
 Of overworking, with its ill effects
Of stress and emptiness of tired frustration.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

41

*My chess acquaintances are no less sure
Of balanced living as a needed cure
For overcoming sloth. They're practical
As well as ardent players furthermore.*

42

*Whatever in this world we know as deep
And beautiful, let us its value keep
Within our hearts, and never give it up
For sake of shallow, passing pleasures cheap.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

43

*Importance of this great pursuit is plain,
The argument in favour my refrain,
And I'll continue diving in the deeps
Of chess, to find its pearls again, again.*

A Deep and Noble Game

44

*With intellect and longing in full sway,
And idleness and folly kept at bay,
Some grander purposes are seen to be
The driving forces of our chess, I say.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

45

*For when our hearts are in it, not just mind,
It is endeavour of a higher kind,
 With lifeless figurines upon a board,
Quickened into seeming humankind.*

46

*Imagination too, what splendid thing -
A forerunner of truths we wish to bring
 Into reality for all to see -
Our hopes and dreams declared and triumphing!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

47

*For we are artists. What shall we create⁵?
What are the longings we would activate,
As move by move with patient peace and will,
A fatal knight fork or a bank rank mate?*

48

*But in this universe, how can there be
A worldly thing like time, for you and me
Who love the peace of timelessness, yet bound,
Subjected to the clock and never free?*

5 “I am still a victim of Chess. It has all the beauty of art and much more.”
“Not all artists are chess players, but all chess players are artists” – Marcel
Duchamp

Quatrains of Chess and Life

49

*In chess and life, we cannot stop the play
Of hours and minutes coursing through the day,
 Though when we're truly happy we transcend
The view that hurrying time is holding sway.*

The Pawn in Us All

50

*The tiny humble pawn points out the way
To keep our hopes and dreams alive, I say,
 By plodding with great purpose straight ahead,
To reach the height of his success one day.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

51

*How pawns depict potential of the soul
To live with longing for our highest goal,
 Whatever that might be in life or chess,
To be transformed into a royal role.*

52

*In ordinary guise with powers unseen,
And working constantly forever keen,
 To reach the eighth rank of the heart's delight,
The mighty pawn in us can be a queen!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

53

*Your 'royalty' might be your own career,
Or other purpose that you hold most dear,
 Aiming for the best that you know how
To bring you rich rewards throughout each year.*

54

*Perhaps you'd love to win a tournament
With shining trophy and entitlement?
 Then be that player who can show the world
The truth of talent wed with great intent!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

55

*Finally, perhaps you live for love
Whose value you hold high all else above?
Then spread that love from one to many more,
And love's supremacy and purpose prove!*

Chess and Life

56

*When in my morning walk in tranquil mood,
Where birds are singing in the bluebell wood,
Even tiny living things as these,
They know I'm friendly and my vibes are good.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

57

*Now when our chess opponent has resigned,
Not to his blighted hope let us be blind,
 But softly tread around his tender heart,
Extend the hand of friendship and be kind.*

58

*The ups and downs of life we all do know,
And it takes training to reduce the blow,
 Suffering knocks and shocks 'full on the chin',
Yet still with heads aloft our poise to show.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

59

*Similarly in our lifelike game,
How quicksand fate can turn on us the same,
 When good positions crash and hopes are dashed.
But let us rise again, not sink in shame.*

60

*To gain a win we labour hard and long,
With moves that swing and feelings sing along.
 But just one serious slip, more than a blip,
We're down at mouth: the game has all gone wrong.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

61

*But sometimes fortune swings the other way.
With adamant will and careful play
 We turn the table on the winning side,
And snatch a victory to save the day.*

The Hope for Humanity

62

*Divided by our clubs and leagues are we,
Yet bonded by the chess community.
 How troubled countries need to know they share
One precious world and one humanity!*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

63

*Our chess is not the only joy I know,
As yoga meditation lifts me so,
With music, writing, happy friendships too.
These all are aids to help my spirit grow.*

64

*Then as the pages of my life are turned,
I'll find what debts and merits I have earned.
On balance I do aim for much success,
With wealth of good and old omissions burned.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

65

*A depth of spirit hides in human souls.
No matter what our outer seeming roles,
A lifelong quest perchance can bring success
Of highest joy and wisdom, our true goals.*

66

*With worldly power and honour small or great,
Façades like this to nothing do equate,
Like humble pawns upon the seventh rank,
Facing glory past their heaven's gate.*

67

*Saint Teresa⁶, patron saint of chess,
You reached the ultimate of joy, no less,
 With raptures of the spirit known to few.
Such blissful life I'd love my own to bless!*

My Latter Life Review

68

*Of life and chess I am a devotee,
As both are ripe with sweet profundity -
 The way to live and way to play provide
A lifetime study in philanthropy.*

6 Saint Teresa of Avila, 28th March 1515—4th October 1582, a Carmelite nun. Teresa advised her sisters to play chess in the monasteries, even against the rules, in order to “checkmate the Lord.”

Quatrains of Chess and Life

69

*For I delight in peaceful nectar taste
Of timelessness in preference to haste.*

*Though in our world and game we often languish,
Bound with thoughts that there's no time to waste.*

70

*Oh where to place each piece, and when and why?
This needs to be our constant battle cry!*

*And what to do each moment of the day,
If we do truly live for love and joy?*

Quatrains of Chess and Life

71

*Reviewing many highlights of my past,
I see how failures and success contrast -
For us as humans ever was it thus –
But triumph over trials won out at last.*

72

*Now I am on a course of great endeavour,
Learning, growing as a person ever⁷.
In life and chess with keenness shining bright,
I feel the dimming of my life force never.*

⁷ I am a long-time practitioner of the ancient science and philosophy of Raja Yoga that includes daily meditation practices, controlling the life force and hence states of consciousness.

Quatrains of Chess and Life

73

*Looking ahead to each advancing year
And ending of this life draws ever near,
I'm still serene – as souls we conquer death,
To live again upon some higher sphere.*

Quatrains of Chess and Life



Gillian Moore

With the Rose Bowl Trophy

BRITISH LADIES CHAMPION

SUNDERLAND 1966

**Picture taken 1967 in
Southampton**

Quatrains of Chess and Life



Gillian Moore

TORQUAY 2002

On holiday for the chess tournament

Quatrains of Chess and Life



Gillian Moore and Dinah Norman

With the Gibraltar Cup

TORQUAY 2013

JOINT BRITISH SENIORS'

LADIES' CHAMPIONS

Quatrains of Chess and Life

OTHER BOOKS BY GILLIAN MOORE

My Chess Career and Holidays -
A Book of Memoirs

My Chess Revealed -
Selected Games with Commentaries

In Praise of Chess
(Poetry)

These books can be read or downloaded either at:
<https://hampshirechesshistory.co.uk/player-profile-gillian-moore/>

Or at:

<https://www.hampshirechess.co.uk/tag/books/>