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opening extract from

The World at Our Feet

poems chosen by

Paul Cookson

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We Are England

Once more we think of glory
Once more we dare believe
The dream of great victory
The prize we could achieve
But will we end the story
And flatter to deceive?

On paper the appearance
The players on our pitch
We have the right ingredients
But do we have the mix
To echo the experience
Of nineteen sixty six?



The team that promises so much
This band of hyped up men
Have failed to find that magic touch
Time and time again
They've stumbled in a state of flux
And fizzled in the end

The team that's nearly burned so bright
Must now relight that flame
Our time is now, our time is right
To stand up once again
We have the prize within our sight
If we but live up to our name

We are England, we are England
Champions we should be
We are England, we are England
Potential in our victory
We are England, we are England
It's time to live the dream anew
We are England, we are England
It's time to make those dreams come true

Paul Cookson

Reasons for Winning

Win it for the fans whose happiness will depend on it
Win it for the gaffer whose career may well end on it

Win it for the nurses and local authorities
Win it for the poor and ethnic minorities

Win it for the girl awaiting the operation
Win it for the firefighters racing back to the station

Win it for the late train and the overcrowded bus
Win it for granny who can't understand the fuss

Win it for the dads who can't bear to lose
Win it for Brooklyn, Romeo and Cruz

Win it for kids in the playground, learning new tricks
Win it for old heroes at Wembley, the class of sixty-six

Win it for the ex-pats, all the fans overseas
Win it for the viewers at home. Please.



Win it for the ordinary man in the street.
But above all, win it for yourselves
You've got the world at your feet.

Reasons for Winning *(No Pressure)*.

Roger McGough

Mexican Wave

A sweeps across the seats,
Fans of both teams leap to their feet;
Straightening bodies and arms stretched high,
A human ripple against the sky.

Chris Ogden