

Where Were You

Where were you at 12.51?
In the city having fun
Till the quake hit like a bomb

Where were you when the city shook?
In the library reading a book
Then under a table seeking a nook

Where were you when the steeple fell?
In the cathedral for a quiet spell
Till the silence was shattered by a falling bell

Were you in the shopping mall?
Watching the cans of Watties fall
Like skittles in a ten pin hall

Where were you at 12.55?
Under the rubble but still alive
In the choking dust trying to survive

Where were you at half past two?
In the dark, alone, as the panic grew
Trapped and squeezed from head to shoe

Where were you at half past three?
Still hurting and pinned down by masonry
Trying to move and wriggle free

Where were you at half past six?
Still trapped in rubble in quite a fix
But hearing people moving bricks

But where were you - I lost count of time
But suddenly a hand in mine
Gripped tight and squeezed to give a sign - of hope

Out of the rubble and into the night
Thank you rescuers for not giving up the fight
My first thought was I must look a sight

Who are you angel with a smiling face
Removing me from that dreadful place
Preserving my dignity with such care and grace

Who are you people braving the quake?
Your life for mine the risk you take
Providing some water - my thirst to slake

Who are the people still left in there
Crushed under a table beside a chair
We are alive; they are not - is this fair

Where were THEY at 12.51?
In the city having fun
Until the quake hit like a bomb

Dedicated to CDHB and other health professionals and rescuers

Source: Gordon Turner, Whitby, New Zealand