

Poetry Series

Robert Leary

- poems -

Publication Date:

February 2011

Publisher:

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

Poems are the property of their respective owners. This e-book was created by Robert Leary on www.poemhunter.com. For the procedures of publishing, duplicating, distributing and listing of the poems published on PoemHunter.Com in any other media, US copyright laws, international copyright agreements and other relevant legislation are applicable. Such procedures may require the permission of the individuals holding the legal publishing rights of the poems.

Robert Leary

I started writing poetry at the age of twenty at the University of Connecticut. At UConn I studied with James Scully and won the Wallace Stevens Award for poetry several times. While there I published poems in the Wormwood Review. Upon graduation I entered Harvard first studying with Richard Tillinghast in the summer. I then was introduced to Robert Lowell, submitted a manuscript and was formally accepted at Harvard to study with Lowell. At Harvard I published poems in the Harvard Advocate. I only recently started writing again for my own entertainment.

A Love So Deep....The Alligator and The Butterfly

It was a love so deep inside
That in his heart
The butterfly doth reside

When first she lit upon his nose
He knew she was the one for him
But when lips met
Their passion grew
And now
Forever they are together
For in his stomach she doth swim

Robert Leary

A Partner

A partner's got to have your back
No handshake cloaked handout
He's got to be there
Thick or thin
Holding up the space you're in
Through rapids
And perhaps a fall
To rocks below
Where able to climb out
You pick up and start again
A partner's got to have your back

Robert Leary

Alone

It feels awkward walking alone
Along this pier tonight
Shyly I stare at the screws
In the planking
Beating a rhythm to my shoes
Moving before me a young couple
Engrossed in love's conversation
Coming toward me another couple
With a dog
Everyone's attached
I think 'where are my screws'
What keeps me here
Held in the flash of the City
Plankton on a silent sea
Before my bow slipping
Through the waves unheard
But for the helmsman
My mind zooms out
It's me alone
The boat lists
I smile
And steer a course...

Robert Leary

Another Year

As if we were planets
Waltzing into another universe
We sit down to dinner
There's too much smoke between us
Your face locked in a mask
Betraying tears I've wiped from its cheeks
Passions we've unfolded in our soul's
Search for the right recipe
Spiral down the drain
....yet from the pieces left behind
We'll pick up and try again

Robert Leary

Autumn Comes

As autumn comes let us remember
The good that drew us to the other
Not the summer so miserably hot
Let us remember the leaves that fell
On flowers that were our love
For now they weep
Let us remember the happiness
In our laughs together
For they echo like shadows in our sleep

Robert Leary

Death Wait

Death, wait, wait I have more things to do
I'll take care of what's left of me
Just wait, wait, my son's not ready
The boat's not finished
Horses need to be fed, bridles cleaned.
Death, wait, wait I have more things to see
China waits, the Russian Steppes,
Wars will end and I'll walk though
The Khyber Pass on my way to you
Death, wait, wait, I have more things to do

Robert Leary

How Like A Bird

How like a bird you are
Heroic canary
In my heart's mine
Gull hung in the wind
Watching the sun rise
Fragile, I reach for you
Perhaps you'll fly with me
Two gulls held
In life's wind
Eagles
To soar again...

Robert Leary

Last Night

Thanks for last night.
For once I awoke and felt whole.
Not that we'll ever be together again
Only time holds the answer to that question
And time can be so mischievous.
There was a certain closure.
My giving you your Valentine Poems,
Our being able to be comfortable together
Joke, laugh and enjoy whatever it is
We have together and not feel the bleeding
Tenseness' that always left me empty
As I, perhaps more than you, tried to understand
And deal with my feelings.
There's a certain honesty about you that I admire
On one hand and deplore on the other.
It's you, and it's one of your most endearing qualities,
A quality you have almost to a flaw.
Sometimes in our conversation
I feel like we're walking through an English garden
And all of a sudden we stop
And we're staring down into deep abyss
Where one step more would mean death.
I guess we like taking things to the edge
And together standing there
Staring into the primordial emptiness that's life.
Is this the basis for a relationship? Perhaps,
Who knows....?

Robert Leary

Love Lessons

How do you teach someone to love?
They sit before you: "I don't feel the way you do".
"Of course not" you say..."you have to learn to love...
You knew it as a baby and lost it like a toy, broken.
It's in you hiding behind pain, spite, bitterness.
Move out from the shadows slowly
Placing one foot in the sand and then another.
Do not expect him to be perfect
And you'll reach the shore.
Place one foot in the water, then another.
Let it hold you like a wave,
Do not expect perfection
Letting the water embrace you slowly
Look up into his eyes and see he loves you."

Robert Leary

Ode to Artaud

Has the world become so incestually complex
that song no longer rhymes
that laughter is a sullen gesture to appease another
that being unique we're isolated
like one cube from another?

Is the heart frozen in a tube
to be shaken by a hand we do not see
forsaken to a destiny of prescription drugs
administered to a body
prescribed by lack of destiny
to endure a little longer
as if the truth be found in time...

Or is there something to say for patterns
that obviate from the past that say:
'listen to me or you will not last.'

Robert Leary

Pooch

As faithful as their hearts may be
Everyone shouldn't have dog
As some of us are riding hard
Headed for epiphany...

Robert Leary

QUESTION

I sit alone upon this beach
Two divers one close one far
Patrol the waters to the East
I ponder which one am I
Do I lurk with shells and pebbles
Or do I look beyond my reach
To uncertainties at other levels
Do I comfort in the known
Or choose the fathoms of unknown
Do I travel far and wide
Or seek the comfort by my side
Is it fair to ask her...
For my future's so unclear?

Robert Leary

Reflections in Carpinteria

Of certain sorrows places come
And life is a masquerade
I sit alone upon this beach
For I too have joined the parade
I adore you for the things you are
Abhor for the things you aren't
For you will always be
The girl who climbed the mountain with me
Your happiness when you look out to sea
Not the empty costume life's handed you
For in my dream we approach the floor
Our costumes' hung neatly by the door
And in each other's arms we dance
To a Yankee tune so Latin played
Our hearts filled with gratitude
That each found the other
And left the charade

Robert Leary

Return Blind

The rain growls on the roof,
starving, dog chew bones in the gutter.
All night the frightened trains gape
though the tunnels in my mind
eels heaving from a swollen corpse
the children count them from the bridge
all day the boats have passed this way
this man's been dead a long long time.

First rain they say for a hundred days
it washed the children from the park
the pups wet with mud and filth
their smiles alive with frightened grins...
The world opens up and they walk in
the pipes are lit the lights are low
a candle sings a lonely dance
and arms that reach and enable them
to prove that they were there
pull to refresh the frozen wind.

I have walked the evening, strayed
from an ambition to be warm,
walked the distant edge to check
the silent sharpness of an evening's tricks,
climbed the vines of vice,
tricked and have been tricked in every throw
of human dice.
I have lost forgotten and never won.

Robert Leary

Return To You

I awake
having rummaged the blind embodiment
of bloodshot credulities beguiling
search for clean veins, one stop
friendships, night trains
in the mind of some insipid highball.
Through all this your figure
on the bed oppresses, magestic
not only in the bare fact
it's remained these years...

Soft against thin ears or reception
the morning like a fevered child awakens
in the head dim pulse of recognition.
As light embraces shells of a sun-faced shore
far off the eyes come unto their own.

Sleep dredges from the body. A barge
on way to its tender, open and
moving in the grace of duty, alone
yet not seperate from a pace
that is the grace of waking.

The shore of rooms, doors shut
in shadows between tables of wood
and island devices of an idle day ignite
through windows fuses the sight that seems
at one with all seen and friendless

in the night we come from with our dreams
stuck behind moments yet forgotten to be
remembered only as chances to escape
the importance of action, the city of the mind
on duty behind car mirror remembrances.

Robert Leary

The Beetle

There is a world beneath a leaf
In which the beetle finds relief
There, alone, it ponders what could have been
Until it was too late to start again
It thinks 'perhaps another day'
But soon the leaf is blown away

Robert Leary

The Fly

In the garden
You sit upon my book
I look you in the eye
...receive a pleasant look

I think myself your master
Too bad you cannot read...
Ah...but kaleidoscopic eyes
See beyond what I've conceived

Now you are my master
And I am but your pet...
Remember me in your travels
For you I'll not forget

Robert Leary

The Pundit and The Puppet

The puppet has a vision
With many strings attached
A life for every season
Winter, Summer, Spring or Fall
Not liking one or all
He can ask the fingers for revision
If he wants to posture large or small
He can change for any reason

For personalities he might jest
Play the role of Rufus Rose
A modern version of Pinocchio
A rendering of Cyrano
Court the lovely courtesan
Princes Summer Fall Winter Spring
Turn the mirror on himself
Act out who he wish he was
Or with flick of finger
Play himself again

Robert Leary

The Road To Erato

I

Oh willow like a bird so fair
Your hair abloom ignites the air
Oh oak so solid stately strong
With only pathos for your song

And yet below the ground
Their fingers meet
Their arteries are one heartbeat
Their breathing but a single sound

II

Redeem the tide that draws us all
Our quest for touch is not so small...
Yet as pebbles on a beach
Our eyes are strung
On strings our hearts can barely reach...

Naked prawns upon a bed
Each searching for a meaning...
In Passion's lonely head
Fear's screaming
"Love is dead! "

III

Now love is lust in the wind
To the branch of a tree it give in
A neck in a noose
The horse is a friend
'Till slap of hand it seduce

Now maybe you say
'Life is short
Why not a toss in the hay'
But battles not fought
Are dreams for another day...

Robert Leary

These Barns

It's been over thirty years I've known these barns.
They've become a part of me like veins on the backs of my hands.
The sawdust and manure fragrant with spices of fresh hay
Waffled in my memories of being carried on to a field
Naked after a night of too much drink
Only to be salvaged by friends sober enough to realize
The mosquitos would have their way with me.
Friends grown too old to play the game
Exiled to Argentina as all persecuted by time.
How I recall the barbecues
Perpetrated by heroic knights
Now gone but for their Memorials.
The girls, oh the girls from California, London, Australia
How we danced away our youth like Bacchus' hooves
We bled the blood from every grape
And loved and sang as if it would last forever
Around the fires like Druids ignoring the Christians
We danced and now but for the barns it is remembered
And across the polo fields our amazing goals forgotten.

Robert Leary