

Poetry Series

Louis Payne
- poems -

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Louis Payne(1/11/72)

A Deaf Ear To Sirens

Because I never knew what to say
After you got tired of speaking,
I left after five years of marriage
And no response.

I made words - thousands -
But I never spoke of them,
Nor taught you how to bring out in me
Some proper meaning, some sense to all of this

When I was doubting the very paper we signed
As being happiness of sort.
Certainty, yes, at it's time
Was the reason for putting the rings on,

And mine; for not speaking too,
Was the reason for taking them off.

How much of love back then
I could say in my head was nonsense
Or excuse, being part of such paper and pen.
I wasn't signing myself

With heart
Or breath I drew then.
But grief out of wrong doings,
Put outside my tongue.

Sirens now; go off all around me
As I silence your name - the memory of you
Breaks in bits
Upon another's lips.

But soon it fades, the warning
Teeters out like a mist
Appearing for a short while,
Then disappearing.

They don't bother to call again, these sirens,

And there is no one reminding them.

Louis Payne

A Real Life

I marvel at how attentive you are,
With your little ballerina feet kicking
As the movie flicks and the real rolls.
Your mouth catching flies; coke stained,
Discarded popcorn prompts a world to life.

In here we are safe.
And yet my love, my Principessa,
How I long to tell you otherwise of out there,
Beyond the screen, exists no cuddly bear to great you,
No princess to set free; nor happy ever after.

To break this now, well, would be a death for both of us
When there is so much happiness before,
Yes, in watching your eyes hop and skip
To every scene and sound moves a response in you.
How this touches me and holds me back.

Like death, the end comes in here too.
There is no interval to hold it off.
The big screen gives out and lights, in due time,
Descend on us like vultures.
Picking and pecking our backs until we leave.

At least for now, we have an hour or so
Before the film, like life, rolls out
It's blank black curtain,
Before the long thin man at the end of the isle,
Blinds us with his spot light of exits and great escapes.

Just then, I imagine, I will have to drag you out of here
Screaming, like every father does at some point -
Wishing that the world would take over
And welcome you on stage with rapturous applause;
Throws flowers occasionally.

Instead, the world is dark
And old with love gone off.
There is no one telling us different.

Except for a distant cry
Of a world we lost, beckons us back.

Louis Payne

Aftermath

Coming back through the road
I use to turn off full beams
And headlights full of you,
You are here again

As cracks reappearing
Back in my mind;
Some rear view road
Closed off behind.

When, after coming out of this everytime,
Meeting you on some different route,
It opens up
And suffers all again,

The road
Stretched back
It seems to meet some common cause,
Some love in me I lack.

But I can't turn back,
These feet we used
To tread the tracks are tired out,
Like graves we visit now

But not with flowers
Nor any sentiments:
The memories
Are as dead:

Us going down and grass
Growing up instead.

Louis Payne

Moving

Having you gone,
Gathered up and leaving,
I watch you go trampling
The trodden track.

I am thinking of nothing now,
Not out of love or grieving,
Just you across
The open field

And nothing feeling.

Louis Payne

Overgrown Boys With Bigger Toys

What do wars do, really,
Except fill coffins
And long strong black cars.

The dead are their business,
Laying up death for rainy nights,
While in store houses stink

Of stories cut short at the slabs -
Stack up like crates;
Pushing to be going.

And yet these neatly packaged lives,
So tight with memories,
We trade off

For bigger arms that harm the sky.
Exhausted, the sky screeches
As bullies pummel the earth like jack hammers.

Outside the over crowded mortuaries fill up
New crisp coffins creep by
Long strong black cars.

Louis Payne

Running Through A Childish Age

Let us set off through the gates with pace,
Running at fields like joyous kids;
Then returning, telling lies to parents
About how lost we were in a world lost of trace
Or route to send us back.
We carried on and found the track
Open up our arms, busy with touch and embrace.

We didn't speak how much we fell to love that night,
Sitting down to tea that evening,
Our parents faces fill with blank disbelieving
As we chuckled and choked upon our food. Ah, the delight
In knowing the secret we kept from their world

Started a grieving for kids they new once as themselves.
It was that we knew when being excused,
How they had grown up too that evening, breathing
With time, gone old to age
And in amongst all the childish lies,
Began a gradual leaving.

Louis Payne

Sending Out Then Coming Back

My poems; all of them look wrong on paper.
Badly fitted, they are at best
Home to oversized suits.

Not much better, squashed up and enveloped
Cry out 'unruly child' sounds
The calling bell of a failed parent.

Oh prodigal son.
You neatly packaged affair,
With your one precise letter, so final,

Speaks of words once married together,
Now return as bitter divorce
I felt when letting you go.

'With compliments dear sir. Regrettably....'
Cuts of my right hand.
The weight of my pen falling, I go under.

Louis Payne

Some Vigil

This heavy shaded room,
Your rattle of difficult breaths;
I had to go out
And come back in correct,

To silent clocks
Tending your face
And lights gone out
All over.

Louis Payne

Stepping Out Slowly

I couldn't come to visit you,
After we followed up behind you,
And the four men carrying;
They really had no right to.

Some difficult path that was, wasn't it,
Putting you into box, then leaving you,
Lowered under turf?
I thought my gaunt expression then,
Would sink like turf should. Put away,
Forget; the buried soil, the rot.

And yet, it still catches me occasionally,
When I think of the last complete picture
Before this. I cannot go back
At you sticking up, erect; refusing death.

I will think some allusive thought,
That you are up and about walking
The mass of graves late at night,
Refusing to sink.

How do I handle your still fresh grave
And settle you to sleep in my heart?
I cannot bare coming back with you
Running rampant through my veins.
There is no relief in putting your face
Away in boxes where I do not cease to see
You reminding me constant;
As every beat, you add a murmur too.

When I have trouble finding your mark,
Your precise spot, I will visit again
Your plot that set you out from every stone,
Is ground, just land that settles down
And makes it right.
Everyone the same, today, and
Tomorrow's light.

