

Poetry Series

**Richard Lam**  
**- poems -**

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## Richard Lam()

I inadvertently became drawn to poetry and this discovery sparked my interest of trying to write some myself.

Every now and then, a novel idea would surface, and words would flow quickly and easily. At other times, an idea would come up, but the words wouldn't go anywhere for days. For me, it's the process of trying to translate fleeting thoughts or momentary inspiration into something concrete and coherent that is most fun and exciting.

The poems that I write, I write for myself, I write for people who might have similar experiences, and I write for people who enjoy reading poetry because of its ability to capture raw feelings and genuine emotions.

There's a lot that I have yet to learn, so I simply hope that you enjoy reading what I have as much as I enjoy making them.

# A Dream's Song

Male:

I can give you more  
I can give you more  
I'll give you more

A fancy dress?  
That trendy purse?  
How about those lovely shoes?

Female:

You don't know me  
You don't understand  
You can make me humble things  
A simple meal  
A birthday cake  
A silly song  
And I'll still be happy

Male:

I can give you more  
I can give you more  
I'll give you more

I'll take you to Paris  
I'll take you to Rome  
How about Tahiti, Fiji, and Hawaii?

Female:

You don't know me  
You don't understand  
You can take me anywhere  
The beach  
The park  
The concert  
And I'll still be happy

Male:

I can give you more  
I can give you more  
I'll give you more

I'll buy you the nicest house  
I'll get you the biggest diamond ring  
Surely there's a way to wow  
With life's niceties

Female:

You don't know me  
You'll never understand  
I just want a home  
A wedding ring  
A vow  
I just want a family

Male:

I can give you more  
I can give you more  
I'll give you more

Female:

I don't need it anymore  
I don't need it anymore  
I don't need you anymore

Male:

I can give you more  
I can give you more  
I'll give you more

Female:

I don't need it anymore

I don't need it anymore  
I don't need you anymore

Richard Lam

# A Promise

You showed me warmth  
When the world was cold.  
You brought me light  
When my road was dark.

Because of you,  
I experienced joy.  
I endured pain.  
I felt love.  
I appreciated life.

Loving you is hard.  
Waiting for you is harder.  
But you're the reason that I am alive.  
But you're the reason that I feel alive.

I am willing to wait for you.  
A hundred years,  
A thousand years,  
And many thousands more.

I'm afraid I might forget your face, your voice.  
But I'll remember the rhythm of your heart,  
The warmth of your embrace.

The endless maze of time,  
The harshest cold of winters,  
Won't keep me from you.

I am willing to wait for you.  
A hundred years,  
A thousand years,  
And many thousands more.

Richard Lam

# Before Midnight

There's still time  
It isn't too late  
Board the train  
Settle in another town  
Make mistakes  
It's alright  
Get up  
Dust off yourself  
Look at you  
In the mirror  
Think long and hard  
Decide the person you want to be

There's still time  
It isn't too late  
Trace the steps all the way  
Back and back to that forked road  
Tiptoe at the edge of precipice  
Hold your breath  
Drown out the noise  
Find your peace  
Find meaning in what you do  
Learn something new

There's still time  
Don't let events groom you into a downer  
Or disbelievers smother your faith  
Instead  
Let the stars guide your way  
Let nature clear your eyes  
Cast away your doubts  
Your fears  
Fly high your kite of truest dreams  
It's time to set sail that adventurer's boat  
Do it now  
Do it for yourself

For when midnight does come  
And it surely will

It will be too late  
It will be too late

Richard Lam



# Chronicle

The early sun is behind my back  
Then it climbs over my shoulders  
A fiery ball burning  
Like it's been burning for the last millions of years  
My lips feel cracked and dry  
Like a well empty of water so long ago  
But I'm walking  
I must keep going

The ugly blisters  
The nasty sores  
They're bleeding  
They're hurting  
I am scared  
Like a fish forced out of water  
But I'm walking  
I must keep going

The ancient moon comes  
Then the stars begin to surround it  
A single lantern and countless little candles glowing  
Like they've been glowing for many many past millennia  
My heart feels peace  
Like a lost ship finding shore  
Or a mad sinner confronting his evils  
I can stop walking  
I can stop going

Richard Lam

# Complicated

Complicated woman  
I can't understand you  
One moment you're so warm  
Another so cold  
I think I know you  
I think I don't know you at all  
If you tell me what's on your mind  
I promise to turn those negative things around  
Making your frown into that lovely smile  
If you give me a single chance  
I promise to make it worth your time  
Never letting go of your hand  
In the meantime  
Give me a clue  
Drop me some hints  
That you do think of me  
Even for some fleeting seconds  
When I am not with you  
So that I can pretend  
That maybe you like me too

Richard Lam

# Expiration

I know many products come with limited warranty or expiration date  
But trust me when I say how I feel about you will never expire  
Because dear  
Years from now  
When your hair has turned white  
Your skin wrinkled  
Your eyes blurred  
Your teeth failed  
Your breasts sagged  
Your curves gone  
My love for you isn't gone  
I'll still love you and you alone

Richard Lam

# From A Girl

I don't know why I fell for you  
So hard,  
So long.

I did silly little things  
Hoping just to catch your attention.  
I felt happy to see you,  
Giggling even at your lamest jokes.  
And when you suddenly weren't around,  
I felt like nothing was right.

I know you'd never be mine  
Even after those girls broke your heart  
And tossed away your pride.

If there were a next life,  
Perhaps you would fall for me.  
Doing all silly little things just to make me smile.  
Hoping that I'd pay you attention  
Or spend with you a little more time.  
Maybe then you could understand  
How lonesome it could be to like someone.

Richard Lam

# Goodbye

How many times do you have to fall  
To realize what you've been searching for is in front of you?  
How many times do you have to be hurt  
To realize who you actually love has always been beside you?  
It must have been hard  
For you to wait for me without complaint, without asking for anything in return.  
It must have been painful  
For you to see me with somebody else.  
I am sorry, my love, for being selfish and thinking only about me.  
I am sorry for wounding your heart.  
You are just too good, too perfect for someone like me.  
You are just too good, too perfect for someone like me.

How many times do you have to fall  
To realize what you've been searching for is in front of you?  
How many times do you have to be hurt  
To realize who you actually love has always been beside you?  
My heart felt funny when I saw you with somebody else.  
The words that came out; they didn't match the feelings in my heart.  
But it's okay, my love, I know you deserve better.  
I can't turn back time, but I can let you go and find your happiness.  
You are just too good, too perfect for someone like me.  
You are just too good, too perfect for someone like me.

Richard Lam

# I Am

I am punctured  
I am torn  
I am fractured  
I am maimed  
I am betrayed  
I am played  
I am bruises  
I am scars  
I am water  
I am rain  
I am flesh  
I am bones  
I am that empty water bucket  
I am those mismatched passed down shoes  
I am that woman with missing teeth  
I am that sorry man with a wrinkled nose  
I am tears, sorrow, and pain  
I am laughters, joy, and pleasure  
I am memories  
I am air

Richard Lam

# I Am Done

You treated me like a toy.  
Baby, you left me with no choice.  
I am done with your lame excuses, your many lies.  
For once I'll get you out of my life.  
Maybe for you it was just a game.  
Soon I think you'll even forget my name.  
But for me this wound is so hard to heal  
Because every word I've said, everything I've done, they were all for real.  
My heart became this target of torture  
Many times over by darts you didn't care whether it's been punctured.  
I am falling, plummeting, plunging  
Like a plane without its pilot,  
A boat without its compass.  
Life was fine before you came.  
Now I'm not sure if it'll be the same.

Richard Lam

# I Die

I die

Before I get to name you

My boy and my girl

I die

Before I get to meet and make you fall in love with me

My wife

Today

I die

A body without movements

Eyes without light

I die before I live

I die before I actually live

I die for the silliness of humanity

The absurdities of the world

I die

And the world doesn't even pretend to be white

Richard Lam



# I Want You To Know

I want you to know  
I like your big eyes  
Your tender lips  
Your long eyelashes  
Your flowing hair  
Your generous hips

I want you to know  
I like your short legs  
Your funny nose  
Your prominent moles  
Your rough fingers  
Your modest chest

I want you to know  
I like you the way you are

Richard Lam

# Life

Life is brief.  
Life is precious.  
Life is precarious.  
Life is right in front of you.  
Life is behind that curious wardrobe.  
Life is the pages of a thriller novel,  
Full of mystery and suspense,  
That keep you on edge, impatient for what is yet to come.  
Life is an unexpected, improvised song  
With notes that challenge style,  
Structure that redefines conventions.  
And you are its artist, its real maestro.  
Life is an exotic kaleidoscope  
With shifting colors, myriad patterns  
Of creativity and imagination.  
Life is a pair of glass slippers.  
So light, so beautiful.  
But if you aren't careful,  
You can crack them.  
You can break them.  
Life can be a romantic sunset, an innocent rainbow.  
Life can also suddenly turn into a violent storm.  
Furious, unforgiving, and destructive.  
But if your heart is brave,  
And your will equally strong,  
You can withstand it.  
You can overcome.

Richard Lam

# Lovers' Story

We used to smile and hold hands,  
Telling each other  
That our promise would last forever.  
We used to stroll down the beach,  
Bare feet brushing against the sand,  
Like lovers lost in a dance.  
We used to watch fireworks,  
That popped and burst in all directions,  
Releasing colors of pure captivation.  
But why do waves that come rolling to love's shore  
Must eventually retreat with its dreadful force?  
When we refused to concede,  
Our relationship became sicker with the disease.  
What cord that fastens the future with plan for life's adventures  
Can stay strong when it has long been ruptured?  
Sweet love that turns into anger  
Is the cruel love that makes lovers strangers.  
Where there was life's greatest pleasure  
Or ocean's deepest treasure,  
Now all that's left is pressure.  
Will time grant us the gift of closure?

Richard Lam

# Lying There

Lying there  
Staring at the walls  
Breathing the sterile air  
In and out  
In and out

The machines and the busy people in white  
Do their jobs  
To keep me alive

Sometimes days last only a few hours  
Sometimes nights go on forever

The pain too comes and goes  
That is beyond my control  
My limbs stay with my body  
But they don't do what I want them to do  
That's also beyond my control

There's a photo near my bed  
A happy family  
Is that someone's else or mine?  
I don't know  
I can't tell

Why is that no one ever visited?  
Is it because they grew tired of me?  
Is it because they have important things to do?  
Or maybe they did while I was asleep  
And just didn't want to wake me  
I cry without knowing why  
I cry without knowing why

Richard Lam

# More Than Sisters

Whatever happened to us?  
We were close  
We were inseparable  
We used to talk about things  
Serious things  
Trivial things  
Anything

We used to share  
Our deepest secrets  
Our greatest fears  
Our highest hopes  
Our newest dreams  
We used to cry and laugh  
And fight and reconcile

Whatever happened to us?  
We were close  
We were inseparable  
Our eyes meet each other  
With sudden politeness and unexplained awkwardness  
We've drifted apart  
We've become two continents divided by a vast ocean

There are so many things we've been dying to say  
But the moment comes  
And they stay locked in our hearts  
Sealed behind our lips  
And we let it pass  
We let it pass

Richard Lam

# My Date

I lost my date.  
I sealed my fate.  
There was me, the one to hate and blame.  
The mistake all mine it's lame.  
There was nothing in this forgotten mansion,  
The place they called forever haunted.  
Only me the ghost, the pariah I forgot I alone invented.  
Why was it so hard to say  
Those three words that could have made her stay?  
And so easy to go  
For some other words that scored me zero, nobody's hero?  
When you had and lost the chance  
All it feels like is this endless trance.  
Days of getaway, nights of romance  
Down and down they went, straight for the drain  
Faster than the speed of a bullet train.  
That stupid pride, that silly fear  
Stopped me from saving me  
Pushed her away when she could've been near.  
Now she's far and gone and all too late.  
What I remember is how I lost my date.

Richard Lam

# My Love

I wanted you to be mine.  
I wanted you to know that you were my sunshine.  
My friends told me you were more like a landmine.  
I didn't care.  
I didn't mind.  
Your voice, your smile,  
They would make everything suddenly seem fine.  
Like a fool I kept waiting, hoping that slowly what you'd find  
Your way to me.  
I was too blind to even realize  
You were never going to be mine.  
You chose to be anybody's sunshine but mine.  
You were always like a star so bright  
And also so high.  
I tried to move on, run away, or simply hide  
So the pain would go away  
And the tears would dry.  
But time and again I found myself  
Coming back to you and that's when  
It felt like I was about to die.

Richard Lam

# My Mother

The slow movement follows  
The stooping figure  
Whose eyes have become so watery and sad  
Whose hands have become so rough and old  
All of this hides that once  
She was a lady of rare beauty  
With men wanting to court her  
And women jealous of her fame  
And before that a girl  
Happy and innocent  
Busy playing with water and picking precious seashells in that month of June  
What have the years done to her?  
How have life's unpleasant surprises worn out her body, heart, and mind?  
What has become of my mother?  
Who loves her children more than herself.

Richard Lam



# My People

My people

They carry their country on their backs

They wear its history on their faces

They pass on stories of the soil from their mouths

My people

They work every day

They wake up too early

They come home so late

Their hands feel numb

Their legs are sore

Their backs hurt even more

They get so few hours of sleep

My people

They don't know how to read

They don't know how to write

They don't know how to speak

But they love their children

More than they love themselves

It's for these kids' future

They accept

They endure

They overcome

My people

They are humble

They are brave

They are strong

They build things from empty hands

They start their lives in this foreign land

Richard Lam

# Psychosis

I am inside a room  
I touch the walls  
I stare at the ceiling  
I stay like this for days  
I look out the small window  
I see stars and a crescent moon

I am inside a room  
I touch the walls  
I stare at the ceiling  
I stay like this for weeks and months  
I look out the small window  
I see stars and a too pale moon

I am inside a room  
I touch the walls  
I stare at the ceiling  
I stay like this as time goes on  
I see shadows form and long moving things  
I see creepy things  
I hear scary sounds from other rooms  
I hear strange voices in my room  
I look out the small window  
I see no more stars

I see more and more crimson moons

Richard Lam

# Pyramids Of Sand

I pretended  
I lied  
I brushed aside  
Thinking  
That I could go on  
Living  
Doing the things I liked  
As if every day was fine  
Like scary dreams that eventually stop coming at night  
I insisted  
Everything would be alright  
Yet  
I was only hurting myself  
More badly  
In more places than I could tell  
Because when my pyramids of sand really fell  
And the last of shells  
Had lost its spell  
It felt like hell

Richard Lam

## Second Chance

Don't let the clowns keep you down.  
Don't let Negativity make you frown.  
When they sing aloud, 'You're done! You've wasted that one chance! '  
You have to make them understand.  
They don't know they're wrong.  
That's why you got to prove you are strong.

You're past making those lousy choices.  
You're past listening to those bad voices.  
What is now.  
You do know how.  
What is ahead.  
No need to dread.  
At the end of these corridors of sorrows,  
Awaits a new door of tomorrow.

You have your boat and your oar,  
Row away and clear  
Trees and rocks and many more.  
They can't make you fear.

So really,  
Don't let the clowns take away  
For a minute,  
For a day,  
Even if it's just a ray.

Richard Lam

# Sleep

My heart is tired  
So is the soul  
This whole body  
Of flesh and blood  
Aches  
I'll close my eyes  
Let sleep embrace me  
Close to those warm bosoms  
And sing me her favorite lullabies  
I'll dream of the ocean waves  
Of seagulls and breeze  
And background so blue, so clear  
I'll dream with a smile  
I'll sleep for a while

Richard Lam

# The Fish

I am a fish put in a bowl.  
They let me eat, they let me sleep,  
They watch me grow.  
But I am a fish trapped in a bowl.  
My day is long, and time goes extremely slow.  
I am the fish that doesn't know  
What other worlds are beyond this tiny bowl.  
I want to see the sun, the rain, the snow.  
I want to jump over high and over low.  
Where the current pushes me forward,  
Where the gentle wind urges me toward,  
I follow.  
If only I were not in this bowl,  
Enclosed with these many rows  
Of fake treasures, silly plants,  
And children's ships,  
I would really grow  
And put on an amazing show.

Richard Lam

# The Heart

There's so much pain  
There's so much bitterness  
Tears keep falling and falling

But the heart is foolish  
But the heart is blind  
It contradicts reason  
It ignores advice

It doesn't need riches  
It doesn't want status  
It doesn't love beauty

It only needs one person  
It only wants one person  
It only loves one person  
And that's really enough

There's very little time  
There's very little happiness  
Tears keep falling and falling

But the heart is foolish  
But the heart is blind  
It contradicts reason  
It ignores advice

It doesn't need riches  
It doesn't want status  
It doesn't love beauty

It only needs one person  
It only wants one person  
It only loves one person  
And that's really enough

Richard Lam

# The War We Fought (Part I)

I saw him and he saw me  
In a land so faraway,  
At a place neither of one us should've been.  
I was faster.  
I was luckier.  
No time to think.  
I pulled the trigger  
And kept on shooting and shooting  
Until my ears became deaf,  
Until my hand felt numb,  
Until his body became a terrible mess  
Spread on the ground at a strange angle.  
I don't know his name.  
I don't know his story.  
And I killed him.  
He looked so young, not yet a man!  
He could've had years ahead of him.  
And I killed him.  
Maybe his parents are praying for him at home.  
Maybe his sweetheart is still waiting for him to come back.  
But I killed him and now they'll never see him again.

Richard Lam



## The War We Fought (Part II)

Why did you kill me?

I killed you because I had to.

I killed you because they told me to.

Why did you kill me?

I killed you because I hated you.

I killed you because your people looked and talked funny.

Why did you kill me?

I killed you because you killed my friends.

I killed you because you would've killed more of my brothers.

Why did you kill me?

I killed you because you took away my best years.

I killed you because you pulled me away from my family.

Why did you kill me?

I killed because I didn't know you.

I killed you because I didn't understand you.

Why did you kill me?

I killed you because I was scared.

I killed you because I wanted to live.

I am so sorry.

Richard Lam

# They Don'T Know Me

It's been like this for so long  
Almost like a forgotten song.  
They think I'm the clown,  
Easy smiles and quick jokes,  
And so never frown.  
They think I'm the magician,  
Full of tricks and charms,  
You can never call them pedestrian.  
They think I always stand tall,  
And likely have it all.  
They think I am the solution  
For their everyday situations.  
But they don't know.  
They don't know that inside me  
There's already a vast ocean of sadness,  
A wide desert of loneliness.  
They don't know I am an abandoned island  
That now can't connect with their mainland.  
They don't know my doubts,  
That drive me mad that sometimes all I want to do is shout.  
They don't know my beautiful shell  
Is the one thing left I could sell.  
They don't know that  
I don't show them the real me.  
They don't know that  
I don't know how to stop being the fake me,  
Because it's been like this for so long  
Almost like a forgotten song.

Richard Lam

# Time

Time to celebrate  
Time to mourn  
Time to live  
Time to die  
Time to reflect  
Time to carry on  
Time to cry  
Time to smile  
Time is all I've got  
Time is passing by  
Time was young and foolish  
Time has turned old and wise  
Time caught in messy spiderwebs  
Time struggled to fly away  
Time buried in some nameless grave  
Time shot down to cold ocean floor  
Time before time  
Time after time

Richard Lam

# Two Roads

The girl I loved  
The girl of my dream  
The road you chose  
The road I chose  
They are two separate roads  
I know it's wrong  
But you are strong  
You need to carry on  
Perhaps some day not far  
You and I  
Will meet each other  
At the intersection of roads  
Or perhaps that waited day  
Will never come  
There's no intersection, no connection  
The girl I loved  
The girl of my dream  
It's okay, it's alright  
The sweet memories I've had because of you  
Will keep me strong  
They will help carry me on  
In another life, another place  
Perhaps we wouldn't have to choose  
Between these two stupid roads  
Perhaps the road you chose  
And the one I chose  
They are one and the same  
I would have you by my side  
And we'd take the world by surprise  
The girl I loved  
The girl of my dream

Richard Lam

# What Happens To People When They Die?

What happens to people when they die?

Do they go in pain

Or they go in peace?

Do they seek forgiveness

Or do they grant forgiveness?

Do they feel scared

Or do they feel relieved?

Do they wish to relive

Those hours when life was most innocent and beautiful

Or do they wish to erase those seconds when fate was bad and cruel?

What happens to people when they die?

Do they wish to be surrounded by their most beloved

Or do they wish to be alone?

Do they go to paradise

Or do they go to that one place so cold that's void of life?

Do they wish they don't have to die?

Do they fight to hold on to that thing that's life?

What happens to people when they die?

Do they simply disappear

Or do their traces stay behind?

Richard Lam

# What Is Love?

Love is old  
Love is young  
It makes us weak  
It makes us strong  
It lasts a week  
It lasts a month  
It lasts a year  
It lasts a lifetime

Love is selfless  
Love is selfish  
It makes us blind  
It makes us fools  
It brings us smiles  
It gives us tears  
It picks us up  
It sets us free

Love is sweet  
Love is innocent  
Love is cruel  
Love is those beautiful moments you always remember  
Love is those painful times you try to forget  
Love is a promise  
Love is a box of chocolates  
Love is life's mystery  
Every true lover's pilgrimage

Richard Lam

# What You Are To Me

You think  
You are so ordinary, so plain.  
The world has no interest in you.  
What you do,  
Where you go,  
How you feel,  
Nobody cares.  
You think  
Life is real despair.  
But hang in there,  
And let me explain.  
To me,  
You are neither ordinary nor plain.  
Instead,  
You are special,  
You are fair,  
You are gentle,  
You are kind.  
You are all I am interested in,  
Everything I care.  
The world can parade all the gorgeous princesses,  
But I'll always pick you,  
The true princess,  
Again and again.

Richard Lam

# What's Hope?

Hope is the thing  
That keeps you going  
That makes you fight  
That makes you love  
That makes you try  
That makes you dream  
Even though you're too old  
Or too tired  
Or too hurt  
Or too broken  
Or too lost  
Hope is the thing  
Those who want you failed to think it doesn't exist  
But that little seed  
It's in you and me  
Once you decide to plant it  
In that soil of your human consciousness  
Where fields and horizons meet and stretch on and on  
And save it no matter what  
It will grow  
Bigger and stronger  
It will grow  
No rain long enough can stop it  
Or drought harsh enough can kill it  
That's hope  
Beautiful and sweet

Richard Lam



# Will You Be My Wife?

The girl of my life  
The girl full of life  
Will you be my wife?  
You are the person  
That doesn't change like the seasons.  
You help me see steady motion  
Amid crazy commotion.  
You are the light  
That's amazingly bright.  
You are the flower  
That possesses special power.  
You always give  
It's about time for you to receive.  
When life gets tough  
Or your road turns rough,  
You don't have to hide  
Because I promise to always stay by your side.  
Girl, no matter what adversity,  
I promise to love you with all my sincerity  
And still keep you my number one priority.  
Please be my wife  
This girl so full of life  
This girl who is the one true gem of my life.

Richard Lam

# You Want Me To Tell You

You want me to tell you  
Words from within  
You want me to tell you  
Those empty eye sockets  
Or those tongueless mouths  
Blood slowly soaking the entire room in my last night dream  
You want me to tell you  
I was killed many times in some strangers' land  
You want me to tell you  
The sound I hear is the sound  
Of terrible pain and agony and young men turning into savages and flying  
sausages  
You want me to tell you  
I can't even look at you and love you the way I loved you before  
You want me to tell you  
I am scared of the moving shadows and the locked doors and the soft sand I  
tread ever slowly and cautiously  
You want me to tell you  
I am fighting every minute of the day to swim back to shore  
You want me to tell you  
My mind is really sick  
And my heart is, too

Richard Lam

# You'Re Gone

You're gone  
But I try to find you  
In an endless sea of people  
That familiar face  
That warm smile  
How can I forget?

You're gone  
And there's one ugly hole  
In my heart  
It grows every day  
It hurts every night

You're gone  
And now  
I eat  
I see the movie  
I stroll the beach  
I watch the last fading lights  
I count the stars  
Alone

I love you so much  
More than life and the world  
How can I accept?  
You're gone  
You are really gone

Richard Lam