

Poetry Series

Ben Gunn
- poems -

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Ben Gunn()

3 Hours 57 Minutes...

And as I have walked lifes path well worn,
I've seen friends die and my children born,
I've been loved and hated in equal measures,
suffered the pains and savoured some pleasures.

I've tasted sweet victory and bitter defeat,
I have been deceived and yet practised deceit,
I've been immeasurably happy and ineffably sad,
been the dutiful husband, been an absentee Dad.

I've lost and been loved, loved and been lost,
I've realised the value but not the overall cost,
Had a go at marriage, enjoyed time on my own,
I've met hearts of gold and hearts barely grown.

I've met bastards and angels along the route,
I've been acutely naive and less often astute,
Made loads of mistakes, got some stuff right,
I've acted with kindness, and reacted in spite.

And now I just try to do as I would be done to,
remembering to thine ownself always be true,
Accept that there are always differing views,
A mile is a lifetime in another mans shoes.

Ignore mishap and misfortune with head held high,
Not always succeeding, but still willing to try.

14.02.02

Ben Gunn

3 Hours...Reprint...

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14.02.02

Ben Gunn

By Way Of An Explanation...

You don't get it, do you?
I can't water it down -
Can't dilute what drives me
to write, or I will drown.

It's in me, it IS me -
and has been for so long
that trying to ignore it
makes it twice as strong.

I can't take it away,
nor make it nicer to read,
any more than I could ever,
kill the fucking need.

It's there forever, regardless -
accept, ignore or disagree.
& I can't change it anymore,
than I could
stop
the
tides
at
sea...

11.06.96

Ben Gunn

Cold Light...

As he sat, idly playing with the spoon in his coffee
with one hand
whilst
repeatedly touching the letter in his other - as if by magic the next
touch
would be finger against thumb -
the evidence undone
from reality
to kingdom come.

Not written in copperplate nor any florid script
those words so quickly
(aggressively?)
written to keep
not as a rose-tinted souvenirs
but as mitigation fading towards obscurity,
milestones as tombstones.

There, ultimately unadorned (for are we not naked
In the presence of Our Lord?) He will speak these words
As others will read, with no repentance nor stigmata
to bleed, but just the catastrophic awakening -
Of knowing there was potential for more,
Responsibility too often swayed by selfishness.
The unimaginative immaturity ensuring the excuses
were everpresent - and temporarily credible -
Till soon he found even that- the poorest of sustenance-
inedible.

But now just the last dregs of bitter ground bean,
a clatter of coins - thirty maybe - it matters not.

Outside.

Calm now, the note momentarily forgotten -

after all - he had a train to catch, and a meeting to fulfil.

Down the steps at Notting Hill Gate tube station

- the smell of urine, and beggars seemingly in migration
Railcard shown (not his own, but one he inherited from
the last) escalators broken, recently the norm
meant echoing steps down to the nearest platform.

'Next service due in 3 minutes' the board proclaimed
a ghost of a smile at the corners of his mouth played
but died as soon as it could be recognised.

Two minutes later the air pushed by the oncoming
carriages entered the station, adrenaline strangely absent
now, headlights gleam as the train arrives, early

must hurry now - do this ONE thing right -

In the air now, waiting for impact...

...Shaking driver, later undergoing
the standard procedural interview for a 'one under'
(I've just killed a man...What more to be said?)
'Before he jumped - he looked straight at me
-there was nothing I could do -
and he mouthed the words...

'...Thank you.'

BG 07.11.07 15.00

Ben Gunn

Endgame

I could not hurt you, try as I might,
with words, inflection, impotent spite,
for pain not borne by lips that say,
is cut by reason then ripped away.

I would not hurt you by dereliction,
of duty, nor tarnished by false attrition,
What sleeps shining shall not awaken,
it binds my true faith never shaken.

Silence and dignity, respect for the gift,
the only defender long since cut adrift,
The purpose forgotten, the conclusion foregone,
You cannot replace
what so
blindingly
shone...

Ben Gunn
1996/2007

Ben Gunn

In Memoriam

It's like
A death in the family -
with neither funeral
nor wake...

...but I think
a bereavement would
be easier
to take.

Instead -

We've nowhere to
Lay flowers, and
No focal point
for grieving.

It seems that
something has died
between us - without
physically leaving...

Ben Gunn

Live And Let...?

Just live your life as you wish to,
Please don't involve me any further at all,
you never knowingly feel anything true,
your whole life was meant to appall.

Any joy you attain is at others expense,
none are spared your tongue bar your own
Never to blame tho' you have no defence,
You sit unmoved, above us all, alone.

Your life is portrayed as full and complete,
with not a hint of penance nor grief,
but you're only happy in torment and deceit,
As you betray yet anothers belief.

You'll die unloved and leave nothing worthwhile,
You'll be the first sinner that Jesus won't save.
And when I hear of your death, firstly I'll smile,
Then I'll dance on your motherfucking grave.

Ben Gunn 30.11.92

Ben Gunn