

Poetry Series

**Joseph Camphouse**  
**- poems -**

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# Joseph Camphouse(09/15/1969)

## 2 Souls

Our souls passed.  
A brief moment.  
A glance.  
The space between Michelangelo's God and Adam.  
Eternally in limbo.  
Our creation.  
A lesson.  
A world in-between.  
Never to waiver.  
Not built that way.  
So much to loose.  
Is it worth chance?  
Do you think so?  
Is happiness in borrowed moments.  
I wonder in the night.  
What would have happened.  
If we met years ago.  
One of the big ten.  
What would Jesus say.  
He sits silently.  
Look the other way.

(1.21.06)

Joseph Camphouse

# Beholden To David

An honor I've never know was recently given.  
I am most flattered and much humbled.  
A gift I never aspired too,  
Nor thought I would er be presented

It was given quietly and over a time not measured.  
It was given most freely and with an honest heart.  
In the dawning moment I faltered.  
In what way have I become worthy?

The honor follows me from dawn to dusk.  
It climbs stairs beside me and lies in bed with me at night.  
Not burdensome, but considerable, quiet, unassuming.  
Lovely.

It is too pure and desired to describe.  
Yet noteworthy in a way few but two can know.  
To share its name would betray the spirit of the gift.  
Affection hitherto never known.

Hallmark makes no card.  
Emily has no steadfast rule.  
But my regard must be known.  
I am most beholden for my fuzzy, pink, teddy bear.

Joseph Camphouse

# For My Beloved Dolley

Death is my kitty  
She purrs from beyond  
I still hear her, is it only in my mind?  
I loved you as best I could, forgive me my trespasses  
I held you in my arms, small comfort for both.  
I pushed and forced and tried to hold life in your fragile body  
But like movies we watch over and over I knew how it would end  
In time my spirit will release the particles of you it clings to  
Knowing in vain it was to try and fill such a large hole with so little.  
My time with you was too short, when was the last time we played?  
You ever the brave of the two of us steadfast you stood until the end  
The car rides you didn't like, you grew used to the exam rooms, comfortable  
Laying, waiting, caring, for me until I was ready.  
You protected me until the end, Kitty I am sorry I wasn't the strength you  
needed.  
I know you stayed with me until the tears and weeping stopped, I felt you there  
The purring, I recognized as if you were of me. But it was from you petting me  
Comforting me as powerless to ease my pain as I was to ease yours.  
You knew though as you always seemed to that it did ease me into your knowing  
Now the vessel lies still as I try to absorb the last of its warmth  
I know you wander the night waiting until you know I am okay before you move  
on to  
Your own  
Eternal is my kitty The brave strong and true. I'll never let go, but in turn I  
release you.

Joseph Camphouse

# I Wish You Were Here!

What a time I am having! I wish you were here! Well, not really... I mean yes, it would be nice to have the companionship, but only when I could stand it.

Otherwise, I think it would just stand to make me even more self-conscious.

I have a desire to be buried in the ground under dirt, like a vampire (I am not unlike the undead.)

I think it would be sweet solitude. No ringing, no sirens, no talking, no asking. I think it would give me time to process the experiences I have had.

How strange, it seems I have desired to be able to feel and be in the moment for so long, and now that I am having these very strong feelings I don't want them, I can't stand them, I am not sure I can survive them.

I go to the gym where I pretend to be normal and everyone is nice enough to me. But I suspect they understand they are part of a deception and play along because they know the interaction will only last a few moments.

Then off to work, though today I did not go. I was home today drifting in and out of sleep, escaping into movies that I love how nice it is there.

How silly I was just thinking how I wish I could live there, I would fit in there...

How like me, there doesn't exist. How sad for me.

Seemingly stuck here where I am doomed to never fit, to never understand and to never be understood.

An alien alone, observing rituals walking the path these humans prize called life. Observing.

I don't want to be here anymore.

When I sleep, at least I can walk among the dreams of my people even if somewhere deep I still know it is a dream.

At least it is mine and familiar. Even the nightmares are far better than my waking reality.

Joseph Camphouse

# Just Be

I would like to just be  
Free to just be  
Just be  
Be

I think that I shall never see a picture as lovely as a be  
But be is so rare when you see one and it is true  
It is squashed beyond repair.  
The damage wrought is out of proportion

But swiftly wrought by one and all  
Oh you've participated a scoff or pall  
Any little look or twitch  
No matter be it young or rich

We are raised by it, it feeds and clothes  
Which iPod or color rose  
It surrounds and nurtures  
It prods and pulls

But suffers not those wayward fools  
The odd the quirkish the nerd the geek  
It dictates testosterone put tape to cheek  
Be this not that be like not freak

Sometimes I pretend I made it around the cliff and over the bend  
No reaction no response I've suffered not from any stance.  
Adjusted level aloof askance  
Free to revel in my own be dance

But from the corner I need but glance the devil mirrors rigid stance  
I watch and jiggle where once firm was  
Describe the shape as post modern worm  
A snap its gone dashed a bourning

Its start and nourished from society  
But carried to fruition by I, self, me.  
The power of will the strength within  
All fades away, eroded by years of whisper and sin

Someday I would like to just be  
Free to just be  
Just be  
Be

Joseph Camphouse



# My Real Life

This is not the real me.  
This is just someone I play on TV.  
This is not the life I lead.  
This is all imagined.  
I am just rehearsing for my moment in the light.  
I know it will come.  
When it does all this time will pay off.  
36 years as a hooper in my so called life.  
Rehearsing for the real thing.

(1.21.06)

Joseph Camphouse

## Ode To David (Upon First Meeting)

Silently he moves towards me, beckoned by a wave.  
Resolute in body and spirit, spirited as a wild mustang.  
His eyes flash at challenge a joy seldom seen.  
Entrance gained by credential ask as key.  
A mythical being known only by rumor and hope.  
Honor respect principle nobly endowed.  
He made my brain hard as he stroked me by question.  
A true beauty, unaware.  
Full lips thou speak temptation mind and body entwined.  
As he leans in to make a point his shirt opens slightly, unfair distraction.

Joseph Camphouse

# Of Mike I Sing

A chance encounter made possible on a whim of a decision in the midst of a House filled with holiday revelers.

Laissez Faire about the evening I. Walk into my house without note, Unassuming, cordial & polite, you. In introduction, I was told of your admiration and pressed to walk you through the space I inhabit.

As we walked and talked all else slowly faded to the back. Unassuming turned to opinionated but not overt. Cordial turned to soulful sincerity and polite became the deepest heartfelt care I have ever witnessed.

All before my eyes.

The jade and cynic wrapped coating melted in your hands. "We will have to find something we can both get into! "

You are depth and learning.

You are Humble and forthcoming.

Mad and grounded.

Soulful and defensive.

You are so many things I aspire to be, and make them all seem so easy (as I am sure they must be.)

You appreciate the smallest of small "What a great feeling to get love from a 5 year old" you spoke but to me.

As we coursed through the night sharing of our experience, it felt as though we had been friends for many a year and as if we had yet to begin needing only to choose a direction.

There is magic in our pair.

The fates all smile upon our path should we choose to express it.

Have I doomed what is yet to be with my irresponsibility?

Numbers exchanged I told you I would not call, invitation given of the morrow.

As in all great tales of woe, information is crossed and the phone of use in my brothers hands. Lost is the connection.

In vain trying the only other.

Alas! Curse the voice mail whose box is full!

So I sit and wait.

Fate intercede!

Hoping you remember the magic.

We two.

And have the faith in me

And courage in you to reach against prevailing winds.

Joseph Camphouse

# Rhapsody In White

I sit reflective in shorts and a t-shirt, wondering  
In jest I muse out-loud why is there death?  
The only other in the room looks up at my voice as it fades into the air.  
Cross-legged and pensive he gazes looking for reassurance I wasn't addressing  
him.  
Quickly a thought follows upon the heels of spoken word, I wish I were a dog.  
As I caress his lumpy head and he seems to contemplate my thoughts.  
I realize, he is not a simple creature.  
Every life every existence has their own worries, there own bane of existence.  
There is no such thing as an easy life.  
This realization is driven home as I speak to Elliott, I stroke his head and watch  
as he enjoys one of his simple pleasures, attention.  
The worries that plague him fade, no matter how short the time, he falls into my  
hand.  
Knowing this too shall pass, but knowing just as equally it is here now and it is  
good.  
I look to him to guide me through the questions of life...

Joseph Camphouse

# Shadows On The Wall

When I left that cold day most was right with the world.  
The drama most families have hidden was still furled.  
When I came back I parked and stepped off a cliff, to fall.  
All that was left of my life, my love, was shadows on a wall.

Without a hand to hold I toured what had been mine, still warm.  
It was there for all to tell, the smell, the cold the loss the harm.  
So much at once, irony surrounding me, oozing with charm.  
All left my body I felt not. No rules applied gravity suspended.

Day after day I returned praying it was all the stuff of nightmare.  
But the story was there for all painted by brushstrokes large and small.  
A picture there, the sun mirror, a clock a chair.  
All stood silent, staring from the shadows on the wall.

Kermit, my friend did not fall, sat strong to become a shadow on the wall.  
The pain of loss, the angershame, the could haves and should haves that  
Fall from your lips as fast as rain.  
The comforting of friends just too much to bare, bottom line I should have been  
there.

From that day to this and on to my last I will bear that scar carved deep in my  
chest.  
I think of you all there no comfort to each. Fright and panic is all that was within  
reach.  
Did you cry out to God with your last thought. He will be here he will come he  
will save us I know.  
I would trade all I own, then and now. To have been able to be there to protect  
you somehow.

Life keeps moving, what choice do we have. I'll carry you forever not as burden,  
or salve.  
I know you forgive me, and let me not cry. A tortured soul to not be I try.  
As time works it's magic as it silently calls.  
All of us, in the end to be shadows on the wall.

(1.22.06)

Joseph Camphouse

# The Innocents

When a pact is made with Providence for the bond of an innocent  
Your soul must know the fullness of the charge  
To question a responsible on the attraction of such bonds the words that jump  
immediately to mind  
Love unencumbered  
Devotion notwithstanding  
Affection without detriment  
A life devoted to one  
Without stray  
Without want

A bond without hindrance ere the eye can see  
Oft times the circumstance thus engaged will be

Of the Oracle I bear a message for souls eager to partake  
Your deed will be noted, your bond of faith most kind, for this innocent you have  
now spoken your two paths ever to be twined.

Take counsel bonded brethren old words I've come to learn are said to be passed  
through the ages, but their reputations have been earned.  
For ages immemorial Providence maintains poise  
What is dissonance to an ear of green an ache of great discord  
Only grows in pain and volume as you are hurled ever closer toward  
But as your eyes are seared with the light as strikingly sharp as glass  
It's not what you remember though days and years may pass

Once open they will never close  
Once wise to what you've seen  
Once dried and curled in the searing truth to caution you will lean

Upon the great mountain top beyond the clouds and steam across the rushing  
waters of lore and gold and dream  
You'll come upon a figure that stands alone a gaze quiet, serene  
In the silence there is no struggle, the battle now far below  
Though sweat may still course down your back your rage not quite yet cold  
At once you will know

There is no use in struggle there is no dance can be done  
There is no spectre lurking to fly at with a gun

Just a lithe figure apart from all we know  
Our presence warmed and scorched concurrent in their sun-like glow  
You will stand and watch enrapt their attention to never know  
As you see the sang-froid Providence weave easily too and fro

The charge she has is simple and intricately complex  
A simple mind as your and mine this task would only vex.  
To keep the scales in balance no matter what the cost no matter what and where  
and whom will need incur a loss  
For all good there is the evil for employee there a boss  
Every flower has a bumble bee a rock will have its moss

For Love unencumbered there is pain  
Devotion breeds disdain  
Affection without detriment Leaves Detrimental gain  
A life devoted to one Without stray Without want  
Seems no longer possible from witness of this Mount

Knowledge is not a salve it not meant to sooth the loss  
Will not supply a pointed reason for blame to point or toss  
Will only help us understand for each gain there is a cost  
For all action there is re  
For all pull there will be toss  
To know there is a reason a rule a tithe to be spent  
When a pact is made with Providence for the bond of an innocent

Joseph Camphouse



# Want

A silly little word  
Of such power and influence  
To go on with descriptors would not be an issue  
But that is a poem from the future  
I won't be distracted by now

I am in the act of want  
It seems such a simple little want  
Just to share and be shared with  
The longing is so strong now I would accept any and all it seems

Yet when the invitation is recorded on a machine designed to hide from friend  
and foe  
If asked logic would predict a reaction of rejoice  
But logic seems more often than not easily tricked  
As a finer dust of despair settles over the room

With the countless number of humans in the world this would seem a simpler  
task  
Logic again intercedes out of range of its own experience  
As those most lonely souls wait in vain to be found  
Heeding sage scouting advice we don't stray far from where we find ourselves  
lost

I walk through the motions of a life, I walk through the emotions of mine  
Thinking and walking  
Is true love true? You thought once that you knew, but now age and distance,  
sun and rain  
Have banded together cynical, small, faded eroded what you once built your life  
around

What now brown cow?  
Another bump in the road and you have started to take down your tent  
Too tired to try.  
How sad you used to think when in youth you caught eyes that tell the same  
story yours speak of now

Where to turn, why to try  
You seem to have lost the way so lately found

Is it really that easy to loose your way? Is it better to keep walking  
Should I stop? Will it seem different by sunlight? Dare I hope?

Joseph Camphouse

## With Him

A look of interest.  
Sizing me up like a piece of meat.  
I catch what is thrown.  
We are two at this table.

As we get up to leave,  
I wait at the door as he relieves himself.  
I am approached with a phone number.

I am with him, I say.  
Defiance short lived.

Except when he is with her, I think.

(1.21.06)

Joseph Camphouse

# Yes, Yes A Thousand Times Yes!

I look of your face a face full of query I say to my heart I feel not the least bit leary.

I read of your words (the numbers are telling!) they ring in my ears of your passions oft-swelling.

Not believed at first reading, so again but aloud; Is he too not afraid of being 'alone in a crowd? '

He speaks of conviction of knowledge of frauds. Be your self of your self by your self be proud!

As further I read through your words of rain and thunder, am I man enough to embark on this journey I wonder.

As oft in nature first bluster and brimstone, you follow those words with more, far gentler in tone.

Encouragement of passion, inviting expression, all that you say is not said with aggression!

Off with my hat I bow to your honor ere long, share coffee with me so I may hear more of your passions song?

Joseph Camphouse