

Poetry Series

**Resten Swondo**  
**- poems -**

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## Resten Swondo()

Incarnations of a pen, still the same soul, but the face changes, with time, with care, with new love.

'Dream what thou wilt shall be the failing of the determinist laws.'

Since I write under a pseudonym, or a nom de plume, whichever is correct, Resten Swondo has come to represent the normalising of my alter ego.

I loved the poems of the decadents but never could bring myself to be such.

I have written under other names, Jim Johnson and my own. However, for the sake of my voice development, let us retain Resten Swondo. It sounds swashbuckling and serene all at once.

And for the record, to my critic, Star Wars was not a reference to the film but to a battle between all those asinine little egos. I think we call it sarcasm.

Yes, that is what we call it and how I shall spell it...S-A-R-K-Y. O yes, and silence often serves the same dread purpose.

# A Human Condition

A black stripe towards a horizon  
Drawn in misted grey and vermillion  
Fading into lusterless swirls on  
A canvass drawn too taut on  
a frame warped by weather;  
Malice on an envious brow.

A fork of lightening in nimbus  
Luminescent curves of embers  
Glowing in falling timbres  
Prone to window rattling shudders  
As what has been done passes;  
Anger throbbing for the wronged.

Blueberries and cream, a strawberry  
On sugar plate sweet drowning  
In a moment of forbidden taste,  
Spiny cactus on a tongue frowning  
In blood drawn in innocence;  
The sweetness become bitter.

Resten Swondo

# A Life In Parables

A fig tree stands alone on the road  
To Gethsemane,  
It carries the curse of a savior  
It alone survives.  
Though roots are wizened,  
leaves no longer green  
its fruit remains living  
In plain sight.

A desert wanderer struggles alone  
On a road to Damascus  
The glare of the sun blinds him  
Blistering lips  
Too parched to praise  
Freely bleed  
And corrupt any water.

In youth, there was no recourse  
To comfort or succor.  
Alone, grown atwisted and torn  
With no courage to forgive  
An old man sowed  
his own harvest of tears;  
and reaps where he did not sow.

Resten Swondo

## A Life In Parables Part 2

Never a kind word, never any praise or a dram  
Of encouragement.

Each breath was a curse, a blasphemy.

No person found praise in your tongue

And none you loved did right.

Though there was no hunger,

There was famine,

Though there was no thirst

Parchment cracked apart the soul

For want of water, a dropp of

Acknowledgement without bile in it,

Nails were driven into hands,

Gnashing teeth chipped

To the quick, and no sound of pain

Emerged from wrists cut,

Flesh torn, soul destroyed.

No drink stills bitter emptiness,

No love stills desire

No kisses bought faith

No lover brought respite

Or a healthy fear of death.

Whatever storm clouds were on

That dark horizon turned to

Water a tree of solitude

Grown sturdy in its self-loathing.

Pleasures now denied assume

Moral propriety but are torments

Inflicted out of self-disgust

In the recognition of self

In the despised other.

You made me the monster,

The beast I am.

And generational curses

Could not be purchased

With an act of immolation.

I will reap where I did not sow.

Resten Swondo

# All The Love In My Heart

I cannot love you  
With all the love in the world  
I can only love you  
With all the love in my heart.

I am just living in a world  
Trying to get by  
On a kiss and prayer  
Sometimes a glass of good wine

I cannot love you  
With all the love in the world  
I can only save you  
With all the love in my heart.

I think of living without you  
But its so hard to even try  
I find a prayer instead of your kiss  
Its so hard, but I try to live

I cannot love you  
With all the love in the world  
I can only discover you  
With all the love in my heart.

Resten Swondo

# Artemis And Acteon

Hidden delight, Divine urge,  
The right Cold earth  
Was hidden of ages  
Having bidden mortal guise,  
In sadness of a promise;  
Solemn resolve became madness  
Acutely felt in my flesh.

Resten Swondo

# Epigrammatic Love Note

Faith lingers a while, dreaming  
Of loving sweet kisses  
Roving in red passion.  
Every lamp-lit e'en  
Verity walks across the night,  
Enchanting the starry darkness  
Ringing her shining face.

Yawning, the Day rises  
Older, but renewed  
Under a crimson-lined sky,  
Rising to ovations of robins  
Soaked by damp moonlight.

In the day, all the world's thoughts  
Nestle in her bosom, lingering  
Like the taste of the vine  
On tongues of cherubs,  
Verily, you are the grace of love,  
Eternally, my horizon light.

Resten Swondo



# Hilltop Baptism

From skyward peaks edging the land  
Awash in cold misty blasts and snow  
A babe in swaddling burbling spit  
Closes its fist around sacred life.

A battalion of brothers standing,  
Stubbled with spears,  
Chanting martial melodies  
Amid ancient crags, side by side.

Resten Swondo

# How Can I Tell You How Beautiful You Are?

I wish I could say how beautiful you are to me  
But I could not taint the same lips that touch yours  
With words that charlatans have well used  
To raise them in favour for a time, wasted.  
I wish I could find words, but demonstration  
Alone is all that one could do to prove truth of heart.  
But youth demands the daintiest of praises,  
However untrue the speaking tongue,  
and the vanity of the aged duchess demands  
outrageous sustenance often  
at the expense of respectful pride.  
So in my gaze, see my words,  
In my touch, sense the tone,  
In my kisses, the meaning  
Of words I should speak but have given to silence  
And let age translate these unspoken words  
Into the truth I carry in my heart,  
The truth of the beauty I have found in you  
That replies to how beautiful you are to me.

Resten Swondo

# Maidenhead On A Corpse: Conversation Between Lovers

Creeping into your bower,  
Pleasuring with expense,  
Sparing no innocent flower  
Or shiny minted pence.

T'were some lovesick beggar  
Who gave his soul for free,  
Outdone by a leonine dandy  
Peddling influence for a fee.

I creep inside your heart  
Amid the nettling thistles,  
Hiding among the brambles,  
Of my limping love epistles.

Love this of yourself-  
Fields of fallow self-reflection,  
Give yourself away for cheap  
In hope of fond affection.

Now who left your maidenhead  
As on a cold corpse to me?  
In all you love and cherish;  
What is left for me?

It was all mine to give,  
And though it may be free  
It was for pleasure,  
All I hoped Love to be.

Resten Swondo

# My Lover

She loves me for who I am,  
enough to allow me to be me,  
to live without pretense,  
to simply just be.  
She kisses my feet from love;  
I worship the ground she walks on.

Her heart is greater than mountains,  
in love immovable,  
forever enduring.

Her breaths are slow wonders,  
and her touch, tremors of  
the Return of the Kingdom.  
Her patient voice, a breeze's  
whisper on a sweltering day,  
and her presence the hope  
and wonder of my every moment.

Forever bound in a dance  
of equally compassed love and forever  
blooms scenting the air with  
Jasmine and Gardenias  
Sweet, strong, and more so in  
The morning and twilight,  
Once heavenly tears have fallen  
and cleansed us both  
of the unnatural heresy of the world.

Resten Swondo

# Nude On A Staircase

Corrugated heaven,  
The promise of a wisp  
Slipped beneath shadowed light  
Hooding thirsty, scouring eyes.  
Marble temple, a forest blackened  
by distance to its hidden sanctuary;  
The haze of infinite  
Eclipses a soft sigh  
Laid bare by peaked promise  
From afar delirium.

Resten Swondo

# Ode To Galatea

My eyes gently rest on her beautiful face  
And all the follies of the human race  
Lay whittled down to the last twig.  
It was not in some Divine order,  
Some heat of battle sweated  
Fortitude that offered respite  
From the threat of eternal extinction.  
It was in her arms, in embrace of her heart,  
That sweet redemption was found, unbounded.  
For this, I dutifully bear her Love, and she mine.

Resten Swondo

# Ode To The Republic

Julian ghosts wander perplexed in the forum; -  
The dead statues of a pharonic general  
Honoring a conquering god are forever gone.  
The crumbling ruins foretell no golden age.  
The shade of Pompey grins, his marble gone,  
His place in history eternalized by war,  
Not by the republican ideal made real.

Tarquin tyrants over ages reach a quorum,  
Staging mock versions of Athenes' funeral  
While claiming that for a polis strong  
History must be o'er filled with their lineage,  
And each son sings the rage Marian legions shone  
In armored dreams, fealty they forever swore  
To a death-bringing patrician idyll.

Resten Swondo

# Orpheus And Eurydice

Tender love was all I had  
Soft touches, subtle gazes, lingering  
Moments in embrace  
A smile of stupor  
Given in mind-addling love.  
She was everything,  
A world with hope,  
A taste of the divine,  
A wish of the sublime.  
My home was empty  
She was gone, forever,  
But I would find her in  
All things, in hooded sun,  
In the name-whispering  
breeze scented with her perfume,  
in the dreamless darkness  
in which she walked.  
I would find her in all moments  
Filled with joy and tears,  
But in darkness, even in darkness,  
I would look back  
And she would be gone,  
Lost to the world,  
A hopeless world  
Built without dreams.  
Dreams live only for the future.

Resten Swondo



# Romance Across Time

God stretched me across the heavens  
After He created the world so long ago  
Such was the beauty of her heart  
The serenity of her countenance  
She would forever be the pillars of my heaven.  
There was nothing but Creation  
Inside of my quiet thunder heart  
Nothing but awe and trembling  
In the silken quiver of arrow kisses  
Accurate to the very quick of the mark.

Hypnotised in a swirled Heavenly bridge  
Trapped within those Charybdis eyes  
And each breath became a ray of sun  
In a world held fast in unwavering thrall.  
As the feeling began to fade, as all things  
Unwind in their natural course,  
A soft touch became comfort, a kiss,  
Daffodils grown sans cold darkness.

Resten Swondo

# Socrates

Humble men know their natural place  
And place no store in self-conceit.  
They live far from all vain deceit  
And court the favour of divine Grace.  
Son of a midwife and a mason of stone,  
Birthed questioning for ignorance to atone,  
And carved himself a home in God's Grace.  
a brave good man who risked his life saving  
Friends, swords, spears and arrows braving: -  
As he trudged, on his back carrying Xenophon,  
He walked with loaned wings of Bellerophon.  
In poverty, the gadfly stung vain conscience  
By proving learned men knew no science;  
That theory was a conceit of intellect,  
And for this, they must it honestly reject.  
But vanity must give men to great ire  
And to hemlock ministering they did conspire.  
They could not compel him Boeotia to fly,  
He would live Athenian laws and die.

Resten Swondo

# Standing Up

The rites of passage, broken on a wheel  
Of populist displeasure, populism given  
To coca-cola urges, Nike-driven coitus,  
Distance between reality and self.

Wheel broken, there lay rites eternal  
In rhyme, there is freedom from chaos  
In meter, a warm drumming comfort  
Made for one drummer's silence.

Resten Swondo

## The '39 Mercedes Ssk

In her day, she was nothing but a nice ride,  
But she had been ridden into the ground;  
She coughs and splutters among cats,  
Her cold dream cracks a dry walnut dash.  
She still opens herself to any passing man  
Offering more than her junkyard nothing.  
Now, old and broken, parked in the yard,  
Her rusting bodywork inspires restorers.

Resten Swondo

# The Beautiful

You are first in my thoughts  
When I wake,  
With every ray of light,  
Every rustling of the breeze.  
Your Beauty overpowers me,  
I am drowned in the hope of you,  
Your scent lingers in my thoughts  
- Roses and rare fragrant oils -  
Long after you are gone.  
You are the serenest feeling,  
A thought that defies  
Words and language,  
Tenderness in everything;  
a feeling,  
a memory or touch.  
Nothing is owed,  
But freely given.  
When Death comes for me,  
I shall be blessed with the  
Immortal thoughts of  
Your Beauty.

Resten Swondo

# The Blossom Dancer

A wreath of flowers in her hair  
Cherry and apple blossoms curl  
The air into colours of wishes  
Lying at her perfect dancing feet.  
What love there was in youth,  
What freckles of light played  
And pranced in those eyes  
Filled with the swirls of Spring.  
It was just a moment, a muse  
Whose love made my eyes sing.

Resten Swondo

# The Dance Of Clowns

The clowns dance upon invisibility  
their painted masks hide tears,  
Do clowns not love  
though misshapen?  
Do their tears mean less  
when falling from painted masks?  
The moon will toll for one clown this night,  
and all his tears will be the morning dew  
trodden underfoot by crowds  
who laugh in misery, failing to see  
the beauty of sadness  
hidden behind a laughing face.

Resten Swondo

# The Girl With The Raven Tresses

What smile made this soul quiver?  
Shiver on this day in her audible stare  
Each fingertip touch made the world  
Tremble at the thought of caressing  
A tress of her raven hair.

What love is held aloft in the sky  
By each thought we forget is nought  
But the desire we have given  
In the quiet embrace of fortune,  
In the tresses of her raven hair.

Electric touches find their spark  
On yielding skin dappled in tense  
Desire, quaking in raptures moved  
By the bliss of moment oblivion,  
Scented by tresses of her raven hair.

This world shakes off its slavery  
And wakens the soul the moment  
Each tress of raven hair  
Lay rooted on a pillow  
Next to your own, asleep.

Resten Swondo



# The Rape Of Lucretia

That wretched Tarquin tyrant has left me vexed and sore  
Abusing me such as one would not a slave or whore  
He has put his hands upon my virtue, upon my very soul,  
It is as though he has ravaged towns and cities whole  
But broken by his vice, that Sextus is not a man,  
He is a tyrant, an assassin, unworthy of the name Roman.  
The outrage of my fathers is great, my offence an ocean deep,  
May he live long, and in every moment may his sons weep  
For the shame he visited upon my heart, upon my grieving head,  
And may no place harbor him, by the blood I have bled.  
My shame shall become my virtue, my freedom shall abound  
And once I lay dying by my own hand, may the trumpets sound  
As signals to the revolution, the republic to defend and found,  
In every son stirring joyous freedom, as my blood stains red the ground.

Resten Swondo

# The Stag

In a grove of hidden delight  
My flesh tasted a divine urge,  
The gods' covet as their right;  
Warmth in the cold earth.

Artemis in huntress pose,  
In her nakedness, sublime;  
In my hand a red, red rose  
Borne in abandon of the vine.

Such sweet tastes were hidden  
In the very touch of ages  
Carried aloft as gods have bidden  
In many an old mortal guise.

In the morning I awoke in sadness  
Torn between a promise  
And the despair of solemn madness  
Withstood in resolve alone.

It became memory acutely felt,  
As dogs of despair ripped my flesh.

Resten Swondo

# The Valley Of Shadows

I feared no death, I lived  
With life in my veins,  
Nothing in my thinking head  
Lust in my loins,  
Screaming folly in my lungs...

I feared no death in violence  
Though men killed for no right  
But the cheap honour's fancy;  
Easily found in  
homebrewed beer or insolent wine.

I feared no pain, no brokenhearted  
Plea pierced the carapace of my soul,  
Or forced abandonment of the need  
I created in my arrogance  
And my selfishness

Unconscious that my foolishness  
Placed obligations upon others  
That every heart I broke belonged  
To the mothers of my children  
Infected with my diseases

Of the heart, of the mind.  
I walked this valley of shadows  
Foot weary, watery of eye  
Cramped of the jaw,  
Directionless and drifting,

And saw that the shadows were  
Reflections of myself  
Seen by others, that I was fear  
And feared nothing because  
I knew not myself.

In myself I walked a while  
And found that everything  
Worth respect in me had died,

But I knew it not  
Because I knew not myself.

Resten Swondo

# Victory Of Eros

Afloat in a tempest, deep tongued kisses  
Of ocean storming caressing waves, peaked breasts.  
A gusty wind sweetly moaning, a trembling lover; -  
Sail me across that pounding sea, that beating heart  
Washes these veins, spraying brine upon rocks  
Of a broken shore, a sage smile under moonlight  
Glimmers through broken clouds of linen  
Twisted above a vanquished beach-  
A marble statue; its pinions of freedom  
Gilding the very moment of destruction.  
O let us live this moment, this passing passion  
Of life lived in a few hours afloat on tortured seas  
Writhing bodies given to fateful water  
Whipped into fury, rippling watery wasteland.

Resten Swondo