

Poetry Series

Timmy Angel Naylor
- poems -

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Elegy For Jack

In grief she came to stand alone
To gaze upon the names in stone,
The fallen in the wars of man
From Passchendaele to Afghanistan,
Then lowering her gentle head
She whispered to her heart and said
"Jack wasn't hard or vain, just kind,
A friend so quietly wonderful,
And mine.
From across the miles I caught the flower
From a boy our wreaths can never grow,
And no, it is not beautiful
(That does not matter now)
But wild and alive.
His love did not die.
So I'll cling to this flower
For his letters said that each day
He's not further but closer instead.
My true.
As a bugle sounds in an anywhere town
I'll remember you"

Timmy Angel Naylor

Ferry Lane, Skellingthorpe.

Oh to be that child again
And ride my bike down Ferry Lane.
Wind and speed conspired with the sun
To steal my heartbeats
One by one
To surf the greasy top
Of the rushing road.
And pausing only to look, hushed,
To the dark intrigue
Of the abbatoir jaws.
Or wade, waist-high in the marsh
To abduct the innocent eggs of the gull.

Fishing the Fossdyke; Always providing
You safely cross, by Rowlands Siding,
The busy track, where thundering past,
The Knight of the rails, Sir Nigel Gresley
Hauled his freight
And stole my breath as I clung to the gate.
And scaffle pike spins my dreams
In it's howling slipstream (A fish?)
(Ok 44 D1 44001 Scafell Pike BR Sulzer Type 4)
But scaffle pike.

One sunny holiday, stragglings
The canal bank,
The Pyewipe Cottagers came, and
Swam, fished and picnicked
Through the warm afternoon.

Oh to be that child again
And ride my bike down Ferry Lane.
Less a place of habitation now.
But spirit-children play
In the long grass
That was the railway cottage.
And wielding his lonely oar
From bank to bank,
Through the cruel tides of time

Rows the ferryman.

Timmy Angel Naylor

Girl On A Bench

She came sometimes
To the end of the lane
And sat on the bench.
Looking at books
Of Latin or French,
But really came to dream
And watch the world go by.
And I
In passing, just said "Hi";
Looking scruffy and feeling shy.

I knew she was a kind girl,
Clever and funny
With flaxen hair,
I hardly ever saw her there.
And I was plain and country-rough
And didn't sort of know stuff.
But she was just
The most intriguing thing
In my small world.

Fifty years on I can google in vain,
I can't get back to the end of the lane
And look for the girl with the flaxen hair
Who once in a while was sitting there.
A soulful girl
Who sat on the bench
And looked at books
Of Latin or French
But came to dream.

Cyberspace may empower us a lot
But can make me feel like a worthless dot.

But I could walk past that place
On any evening
And feel
A small presence,
A warmth

That makes me look back.
And in that moment
Cyberspace could shrink
To nothing nothing
Dwarfed
By a simple memory.
Of a girl in my small world.

A girl who sat on a village bench
In a place I loved.
A place where I was worth more.

Timmy Angel Naylor

Machine(Young Soldiers, Belfast 1971)

Ours, the infantile Machine,
Will crawl through craned black landscapes
Craving death and leaving this:
The dashed-down grindled grit that
Pits at bitter sweepings with warm blood
To mock the fronds of softness.
Ours, the mangled destiny that
Gropes, with torn-spilt talons,
Gloom-split grief.
But yet for all my bleak imagery,
Please, set yourselves non too safe:
People lank of shallow mind and gutless,
Shorn of gallowed soul,
Who sip secure with artificial windows,
Do not chance to glaze veracious
Where, through bones of broken suburbs
Blow your harrowed
Hollowed husks of ravaged children.

Timmy Angel Naylor

My Old Panama Hat

It hangs on a nail
At the back of the shed
With a mantle of mould
And a spider's web makes a veil.
In the early days of crisp, clean canvas
It perched stiffly on my medium head
And on the label the tiny figure of an explorer
Scurried round impatiently.

That Spring,
That first Spring when I knew your eyes
For the bold cornflower blue that they were,
We walked down tidal creeks
In the ebb and flow of easy emotion.
And do you remember you snatched my hat
From my head and ran
Laughing down Padstow beach
And into the sea?
And later
Tossed soggy on the bed
It dried and left our
Sheets sprinkled
With sea-salt, sand and chrystalised laughter?

Since then,
Many a sunny day I've sat
Beneath the bamboo in that dusty old hat
And strummed a lazy guitar.
You call me in to sit with you
In that infinite hour of the afternoon
When the things that matter most
Are the things that mattered most all along.
And your eyes, now the colour of honesty, offering
Without surrender, nothing less than unconditional peace.

And that old hat?
Why it hangs on a nail

At the back of the shed
With a mantle of mould
And a spider's web makes a veil.
Shall I dust it down
And heed the fading label,
The explorer's call to chase
One last fatuous dream?
Not today.
Truthfully never.

Timmy Angel Naylor

Pebble Beach

As she walked upon the sand
She dropped a pebble from her hand
And I, curious,
Picked it up and studied closely.
To my surprise it was a near perfect heart,
Smooth and still warm from her touch.
I stared after her and then,
Feeling strangely sorry for the
Ocean's small offering,
I stored it safely away.
Why had she left it there?
Was it a token from one
Whith whom her love was done?
Did love burn so painfully
In her own heart
That she cast it down?
Was she so replete in love and life that
The token held no meaning?
Mystified, I took the pebble home.

Some time later I looked again
And felt how the small heart
Warmed with a hand's caress.
I was hit by a sudden thought.
What if she went back?
What if, frantic with regret and realisation,
She hurried back
In a desperate search for the lost heart?
The poet in me took over
And I was soon on a train to the coast.

And swept with relief
Put back the pebble.
But as I did,
It struck me like a stone:
What if she too had followed another
Who dropped the pebble
And she too took that heart away
Untill, driven by her romantic soul

That craved to give,
She brought it back again.

By the turmoil of the sea was shaped
A heart of pure simplicity.
In turmoil too, we long to share the same.
But all is well.
I left it there you see.
But who was walking, watching me?

Timmy Angel Naylor

Poem With A Gift For My Bride

It was windy on the day we wed.
The little breeze blew fragile leaves
Like silver lace
Across the face of the sun that peered through
Like the round, wide eye of a child
To read the secret code of love.
It wasn't my tale of mystery
Or my anthem, penned with pride,
But the simple words of a simple soul
In a poem with a gift for my Bride.

Timmy Angel Naylor

The Man With One Tune

In a Kaftan coat and an Afghan hat
On a box by the side of the road he sat
And played a battered
Piano accordion.
Time had etched a mystic beauty
Into that weathered Middle Eastern face.
And he had one tune
Just one, just one
As he played in the rain or the morning sun.
I stood, hard listening,
And smugly scanned my
Mental database of music.
And I heard
In that wheezy clatter of notes,
The strains of an old Parisian waltz.

Again and again I passed him by
And heard that tune and wondered why.
Some other locals looked askance
At this offbeat man with his tune from France.
But people came to the town for the day,
Saw him there and heard him play
His waltz
And listened once, then, entertained,
They carried on.

I wish that I could be like him,
A man without airs,
We enter this world like a bare melody,
As life in a single strand,
But get snagged somehow and woven into
The illusions and delusions of being.
He teaches me
That I could unwind,
Just be that bare melody
And love life in a single strand.
(That each day may simply bind two hearts?)

So I loved that man with a tune, just one,

As he played in the rain or the morning sun.
With a Kaftan coat and an Afghan hat
On a box by the side of the road he sat.
I understand a life like that.

Timmy Angel Naylor

The Return Of The Vandal

There was a gamekeeper's cottage in Wiseholme Wood.
Nestled in a clearing,
Of warm red brick and rosemary tile.
And ringed by a slowly waving and cheering throng
Of trees and bracken.
A place to remember
Then to forget
Then remember again
And run past in breathless intrigue.
There was a snake
And a well
And a pretty girl pressed flowers
In the old wooden bus there.
Then she was gone
And the house was empty.

With sly, stealthy step
And heart-pounding intent
The vandal came.
Kicking the warm red walls in joyful destruction.
A rapture of broken glass.
An ecstasy of flying tiles.
The snake was cast in the well,
The departed girl now a mocking void
Into which he could only scream profanities
Through his orgy of Smash! Bash! Trash!

And then he was gone
Amid the throng of trees and bracken
Now petrified and silent.

A silence slowly melted
By a distressed songbird
Somewhere distant,
The first faint herald of a dawning heartbreak.
And then the cottage was gone.

Years later the vandal returned.
Drawn to that spot down a strange familiar road.

He knelt, curious and perplexed.
Then, scooping the earth
With aged and finally care-worn hands,
Where stray bricks had crumbled
And fused forever with the bluebell's dust,
He felt, trickling through his fingers,
The first inklings of grief.

Remember that cottage.
Remember the snake,
The well,
And the pretty girl.
And remember that long ago an early workman sat on his wagon
And waited for mates,
To build that cottage in the wood,
His pipe- smoke curling upwards
In the cold morning air.
The clearing seemed bright
And full of opportunity,
Like the day.

Timmy Angel Naylor

Words You Left In A Dream(Song Lyric)

Someday I'll walk away with you,
Stealing across the early dew.
Showing to the sunrise
A friend to trust my heart,
To know that my life is just about to start.

Someday I'll find a place with you,
Breathing in air and space with you.
Build a dream together,
A vision for a life.
A simple partnership in which to strive...

I found these words in a dream one day
As I strolled through work in my usual way
So I brought them home
And made a song for you.
Brighter by far than the stars in the night
There's a jewel that is part
Of our untamed hearts
And I'll sing by the light as it gleams
These words you left in a dream...

Someday I'll light the way with you,
Moving in time and faith with you.
Shouldering our sorrows
To free a caring hand,
The perfect blessing is to understand.

Always I'll share the path with you,
Meeting a love to last with you.
Following the footprints
That lead back to your door.
Immortal diamond is forever more.

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