

POEM OF THE WEEK

REMEMBERING

1.

In which the writer remembers his doubt-plagued youth, and being introduced to theatre and her charms

During those long dark days,
Or “daze”, I could say when I was 20,
She was there to spur me on,
to do better, to persevere.

There, during those long, lonely walks
in an uncaring city, on feet of clay
laden with self-doubt and despair,
She was there to show me the way.

On the river Avon

On the bridge over the river Avon,
as I peered hopelessly at the flowing
water below me, ‘Should I jump?’
She softly said. “It’s too shallow!”

Remember Tchaikovsky, she said
I shook my head and said, “Pardon”
Then I recalled a similar scene
In Ken Russell’s movie

I understood
The embarrassment
The laughter
The shame

Encouragement

On dark, lonely nights
When give up, I might,
She whispered in my ear,
“Come hither, come here!”

She led me to the lights,
burning bright: row upon row,
mounted high above: just waiting,
waiting to light up and glow.

2.

LIFE HAPPENS IN STAGES

Having been spellbound by her charms, the writer learns of her disciplines and demands.

The stage on which I strode,
lifted my head high, raised my voice:
I am here, I am who you want me to be.
Here, under this proscenium arch, I am free.

The makeup, the costumes,
learning all those lines; let us resume,
“Stand here, speak, move now, turn,
Feel the passion, let it burn

from deep inside, I want it REAL!
I want to hear you, reach out and touch you
from afar, feel you beside me, inside me,
confide in me, reside for a special moment beside me.”

Oh, how I loved her; she loved me;
spurned, encouraged and caressed me
in my moments of panic: “repeat it, breathe,
Your words are weapons, tinkling bells to bind me

to your creation, your time in the lights:
work with me, don't fight me,
I am your friend, your only friend
Here in the half-light, this delicate mystery.”

I was young, I was old;
I was whatever I was told
to be: English, Kiwi or somewhere
on an island, a boatman

This I tell you
and proclaim as truth

I was enthralled, besotted,
bound and absorbed by her touch.
“You aren't here to play,
I want it all, I want it now.

Is that too much?

3.

THE MUSIC OF THE NIGHT

Be it literal or metaphorical, a musical or straight drama, it still had its sound - it was part of its setting in time. A bit more on discipline.

Feel it deep inside,
learn to take me astride
to a world of wonder;
Be it soft, be it thunder.

Feel it deep inside;
make me feel it too.
Standing up, lying down -
shake that which I stand on, the ground.

I am here to be pleased,
not merely appeased;
I paid my money, and I want
What I want: here, now, with passion.

Open your mouth, loosen your tongue,
breathe, art-ic-u-late! Let me feel your words
reverberate through my being. Faster, slower,
do it again. I didn't come here for solitary pleasure.

I want to feel your performance,
from the top of my head to the tips of my toes;
do not break the thread that binds:
do not loosen me from the throes

of your passion, that only you can provide:
again, again: take me on a cosmic carpet ride.
For this brief moment in eternity, take my life
and enhance it in shades of a new reality. I will decide

whether you were successful and worthy of doing it again
night after night (for a specified time);
whether you have the reason or rhyme
to be worthy of my patronage."

Night after night, in that magic space,
delight after delight, none could replace;
Begone, the tyranny of the mundane,
That was another time, another place.

4.

TRISTESSE (Sadness)

Parting is such sweet sorrow.

We parted, nonetheless; maybe
She wanted new blood.
Have you guessed her name?
What is her Fame?

You might call her, Theatre.
I embraced her as Life.
She is too untamed, wild and free:
exuberant and exultant; nobody's wife.

It has been many years, we have been apart.
But still, I can hear her voice:
"Again, again; feel the pain,
express the joy - make it real;

This is not just a part,
It is life (in the Theatre)
no pain, baby, no gain"
Have I been unfaithful to her?

Possibly, I have met
and been entranced
by one of her sisters.
Poetry, be her name.

Her demands are the same.
She calls me to create
And let sleep elude me
to type poems at 2 am

and then abandons me
without warning.

The Bitch,
(as you so phrase)
does as she pleases
When she pleases

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