

Poetry Series

John Powers
- poems -

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John Powers()

I am a dying tree in winter
scheduled to be a parking lot
by spring.

A Man Who Knows Too Much

Sitting in a darkened room, Indian style
with the TV light selling happiness
sits this man.
Toes cold, soles stiff
legs tired and crossed
genitals lonely and discontent
back aching, stomach growling
lungs still breathing
hands folded patiently
heart still beating, beating, beating away
mouth dry
and his eyes
veiled,
but when giving a single spark in the tv light
you can see his eyes stating
quiet disappointment.

John Powers

Accomplished

Creepy boney
skeleton man
why you standing there
holding my hand?

'You have completed your task,
it is time now to bring you back.'

Creepy shadow
skeleton man,
I have only just arrived
I cannot be done on this land!

'By simply being, you will be remembered.
A memory of you is all they need.'

Creepy kind
skeleton man
surely my life is more useful,
I know it can

'To leave you here past your time,
you would only undo what you have done.'

Mercy kind
skeleton man
what have I done
with my helping hand?

'You have done enough.
You cannot stay alone.'

Mercy kind
skeleton man
If you say so.
Come and take me home.

John Powers

Aerial

flash of red
dare you to catch me
glide through again
you can only watch me

swoop of blue
get out of my way
that twig is mine
won't you go away?

black power line
goes with my eyes
but gotta look sharp
for unfriendly spies

beak in my sights
yes, i can see
told you once before
this tree is mine!

so goes the air
at dawn of the day
the coat of the cardinal
the wars of the jay

John Powers

All At Once

All At Once

Saw a creole man
up from down south
with a wide set grin
and the voice of a god
with a menacing cackle
wearing a Tide baseball cap
yeah, real clean
with his big wide grin
and a sooty blue hoodie
ridin the bus to town
he said, in a powerful call
'God of War is loving this'

i let him be and went for shelter
pondering the question
'i really wonder if the small ones
are worth fixing'
took a seat in the lobby
And no one ever forgets their change
from the pop machines
And a pretty little girl is finally noticed
when her shoes squeak from the rain,
past a beatnik reading in
the
math
building
who just saw a retired Santa Claus
press the elevator button
and walk away
keeping faithful that when he returned
it would be there
waiting for him

But there are gunshots being fired
in America's holy land
of churches and Malls
You wanted to be famous,
they did as you asked

and now I remember your name
out of spite
You went out in style all right,
and now you're a burden to every
man, woman and child
who wanted a Merry Christmas

So sick of 'politics as usual'
that's why he's endangered,
he's got a spotlight following him
everywhere he goes
Now the only thing i like about my last name
is the whiskey associated with it
'Gotta be sure that Angel didn't put
anything in your drink'
With all this happening,
can't we just be alone,
happy together in shared sorrow?
Maybe it all is predetermined,
and we've been wasting our lives
chugging through the equation
we already knew....

but then again
the world's been ending for centuries
and Heaven sounds boring

Now there are gunshots being fired
in America's holy land
of churches and malls
You wanted to be famous,
they did as you ask
and now I remember your name
out of spite

'Gotta be sure that Angel
didn't put anything in your drink.'
Where's my whiskey?
And call me Tully!

John Powers

And His Hand Shook

one man heard a word
said hope was alive
and as it turned out
it was a beautiful lie
and his hand...shook

the man heard a song
that touched him deep inside
and the man who wrote it
was shot and died
and his hand...shook

the man went back
to sleep in his bed
but he felt it wasn't home
inside his own head
and his hand...shook

now this old man
he was trying all his hardest
to make a career
as a literary artist
so he could dig out
of his ol' comfy grave
and he thought of the world
if it could be saved

and this old man
tried to take the lead
but everything he wrote
no one could read
'cuz his hand... shook

and that old man
never loved, though he tried
he could never get past
the one look in her eye
and his hand... shook

so that old man
stood under the sky
looking upwards
and choked down a cry
while his fist... shook
and his fist... shook

John Powers

Autumn

The rain falls gently upon the window
the sky is a dark grey-blue
and the leaves have revealed themselves true,
for we all show our Colors when we're through.

The year dies gracefully,
it's breath now damp and cold.
Natures story, the last chapter's being told.
We can only hope we're so beautiful when we're old.

Such an antique age,
never done or changed by painter or sage
Nature turns her last leaf, as she does the next page.

John Powers

Beasts In The Night

The sun is set
and the town is quiet
the birds are gone
and the streets are clear
the air is fresh
but what is that
before the city light?
silent and still
but for the wind
great black beasts
through the window
larger than a house
as tall as the sky
thrashing limbs in the night
always seeming to move
but never closer
the fearsome figure taunts
it imposes dominion
everything is shadow
in the death silhouette
this child knows fright
Beams blast the head of the beast
piercing holes in the blackness
an explosion ignites the sky
the great demon is shed of sin
and the darkness made to sparkle
colors flash under the rising sun
the beast turned to leaves by light.

John Powers

Being Born Blues

i was born in the nighttime
and the bears came round and growled
yeah i was born in the night time
and the bears came round and growled

i was born in the storm
and mother nature came down and cried
i was born in the storm, yeah
and mother nature came down and cried

and all the folks could tell her
was its gotta get sunny some time
and all the folks could tell her
was its gotta get sunny some time

i was born in the heat of hell
fates said it was time to grow
was born in the heat of hell
and the fates said it was time to go

i was born in the ether
daddy didn't know what to do
said i was born in the ether
and dad didn't know what to do

and all the folks could tell him
the suns gotta come up some time
yeah, all the folks could tell him
suns gotta come up some time

those bears did growl
and the storm did howl
and the heat did burn
as the ether churned

all i can say
is all i can say
suns gotta come up some time
the suns gotta come up some time

John Powers

Big Fur Coat

I've only my warmth to give you
but what good is that
with your big fur coat?
how could you ever chill
with you big fur coat?

i could give you my shoulder
but what good is that
when you already got two?
why lean your head on mine
when you already got two?

i can give you my shoes
but why should i do that
with your big rubber wheels?
don't you got places to be
with your big rubber wheels?

i wanna give you my loving
but how silly is that
when you got it from someone else?
yeah how silly is that
when you got it from someone else?

i wanna give you what you want
but only got what you need
and how useless is that?
only what you need?
how much is that?

i've only my warmth to give you
but what good is that
with your big fur coat?
how could you ever chill
with your big fur coat?

John Powers

Blaze

fading the darkness
you take it away
the warmth you give me
the light it overwhelms
every day I must chase you
and you always slip away

John Powers

Candle Light

I see your palm
lit by candle light
warm and golden
I'm with you tonight

I feel you touch me
it's alright
together somewhere else
hold on tight

Inside and out
we are everything
moving as one
we mean nothing

gasp and arch
close your eyes
never see your face
in an evening of lies

fade back and away
all a soft mess
never leave me side
and forget all the rest

i see your sole
so cold and gray
what good was pink
to you anyway?

John Powers

Footprints In The Snow

A lone girls foot prints in the moonlit snow
with nothing behind her telling her where to go
the road up ahead is white with ice
though the moon will guide her through the night

They stood in the wind by the night time road
a memorial to where she was and what was ahead
Small determined steps that struggled and braced
and still never faltered to carry her forward

A wall of evergreens in the distant shadows
stood as audience and sentry against her
She would not cry, would barely open her eyes
A march to the end and all that was away

Stinging air in the fields white beside her
She went on through the cold, under the black
Soft little steps disappear into the drift
A lone girl now gone, footprints burn away at dawn

John Powers

Heaven

Dawn again!
Blue light outside
Birds chirping from the nest
Cold morning air
and the dew in your throat
and the music of light uncovering
the people in Hell.

And I knew how rare I was.

John Powers

Hell

It's dawn again
blue light outside
But the night never ends
for those who carry it with
them
Dawn again...
blue light outside

John Powers

If I Knew

If I knew
I'd be going away
today
if I knew
I'd be going away

we would have spent
one more day
together
today
if I knew
I'd be going away.

Time has come
to carry me home
where
I am destined
to be alone

But for he
who does long and
burn
I do yearn
to be with you

If I'd known
I'd be going away
today
If I'd known
I'd be going away

I would have given
myself
to you
today
If I'd known
I'd be going away

I'd have taken

you home
with me
If I known
I'd be going away.

John Powers

Like A Shiver

Hi
and look away
I look to you
and your eyes close
Where the hell am I
supposed to go?
You got that look
like I'm a shiver
but I'm not cold
Lucky that you see me
at all I suppose
Like I've done something wrong
I can't do anything at all
You turn your head and
fade away
turn your head and
fade away
When we were here
and what we used to be
a laugh and a smile
so nice to see
now it's Hi
and you look away
your eyes always close on me
what am I supposed to see
You turn your head
and I fade away
I fade away

John Powers

Lonely Boy

i want to say that i am
only a heartbroken man
that after all i've been through
i could still be able to love you

but in my heart i know it's true
i'm just a lonely boy
just a little lonely boy

if i were simply
a old cold soul
I know that person like you
could make me feel warm again
if i was just strong and far away
that you could hold me
make me weak
and bring me home again

but what you've really got to be
and i can't ask you to be for me
is a mother and a lover too
so young and happy, i won't ask that of you

because in my heart i know it's true
i'm a scared little boy
i'm a lonely little boy

John Powers

Me And The Moon

i stepped into the dark to grab a light,
and saw above me the moon in the night.
i stood alone in the cold and wondered what i am,
all the rest had gone to sleep, just shy of 5 am.
The air was frigid and the ground was frail,
the smoke around me burned cool with a trail.
The lamp lit the snow and all that was around
and all was broken, but me and the moon.

So i stood and watched my breath
i tasted the tar on my teeth
i wanted to beg at the foot of the sky
but knew no answer was there to hear.
Only the moon, burning white thru clouds
gave me comfort, it stood with me.

Down on the earth i looked down the path
to see memories and memorials of the past
So much was gone, twisted and stained
i knew who had lived, had left, had strayed.
Once there was me, a use, and a need.

i stepped out further into the night
and ashes fell from my hand again.
the salt cracked under me feet,
my toes were numb from the cold.
i looked to where i'd come from, why i was there
and i looked back to the moon, now thru the trees

Behind me i thought where did they go,
could i really have gotten here all alone?
Those by my side never wanted to stay
When they were here, i stood alone anyway.
Where was i going, is it to be?
Can these feet make it, carrying me?

The coal still burned bright red
just a bit left and then to the filter
And i heard a laugh, then two from up ahead

A boy and a girl walking down from the hill
her head on his shoulder, his arm locked with hers
i looked to the moon, it'd sunk to a glow behind a wall.
i went back inside as my cigarette flickered in the snow.

John Powers

My America

□

My America/ Heaven (Poems)

My America

The night was deep
but the window was clean,
one of the few on the street

The road to sunrise was empty
and the light above it was
obstructed.

Something filthy and broken
wrapped up on the arm of the light
over the road to sunrise.

Looked as though the wind
and blown a plastic bag
ripped, torn and stretched
around the light
over the road to sunrise.

I peered closer.
The night was deep, but the window was clean.
It was no plastic bag,
but faded Glory in the breeze.

John Powers

Nature Of Things

We went together
to a clearing in the woods
one night
She looked to me and said,
'The twinkling stars are beautiful! '
And I wanted to tell her
those lights may be long extinguished
but didn't.

We walked together
in a light rain
one afternoon
She looked to me and said,
'I love the smell of rain.'
And I wanted to tell her
that ozone is quite toxic,
but I didn't.

As we sat together
on a hill overlooking
the coast
She looked to me and said,
'Isn't the sunset beautiful? '
I just had to tell her,
'You know, it's not really there.'
'I know, ' she said,
'it's beautiful all the same.'

John Powers

Nightly Spider

bounce bounce
cling tight
the wind has more
for tonight

crawl crawl
patch up the holes
can't let a single
one flee and go

spin spin
twirl about
can't let the children
go without

buzz buzz
whimper and twitch
got another one
wrapped in a stitch

scamper and stalk
the sun does shine
look at the trophies
mine mine mine

John Powers

October Girl

The sidewalks are wet
and the sky is grey
wind wrapping round you
as the smell of dead leaves
with a hint of ozone
fills your lungs to take you away
away
the air is chilled
and filled with flecks of rain
beautiful rain with new life
reinvigorate what the
witch of summer stole away
away
no more sweat, no more fears
only the breath of reaper season to hear
and we're thankful
oh yes we are thankful to see that
last leaf curl and fall away
away
and all the people in comfortable clothes
can walk about freely with no sun to blind
their paths, walk more assuredly, into the wind
and the sandled naked toes
of schoolgirls retreat to hide away
away
and the nights are dark and cold
as the lights reflect off wet sidewalks
this is the wide open night, wide open season
safe enough to walk barefoot on the hard, sure ground
if you dare and care to throw those shoes away
away
just for a little while.
and brave the chill wind to explore the
whole new world uncovered and covered
by the colored once-were live leaves
on the path from your home, you can't run
away
from the barefoot girl standing on the
wet sidewalk under the grey skies

buffeted by winds with a tear in her eye
holding herself tight for company and warmth
defiant until the last leaf does fall
but never goes away.

John Powers

Ohio Nocturne

the night is quiet
and pregnant kinetic
cool breezes and songs
in the air
can't last much longer
possibility calls
at a rude hour
the road flies beneath us
and the driver has no hands
men talk of rotted minds
while a quiet brunette
says nothing
we can't tell the smoke
from the fog
blend just like you should
haze creeps blue
moths sleep in the light
and the birds start telling
that you've done something wrong.
don't believe them.
roll out and see you later
its time to go to work
after just another night
in northern Ohio

John Powers

Rainbow

Why I do not follow
you may never know
but it's only certain
where my path will go
I will follow a reflection
i will follow a ghost
for it seems it is those things
about you I love most
You will dream of a perfect day,
and waste it in every way,
and you will be unsatisfied
all the rainbow's colors
blackened to mold
I could shield you from anything
but not from yourself
for it is the unknown
which makes things beautiful
and now I know
who you are.

John Powers

Rainbow Shadow

i saw her one day
carrying a bag like a tear
she wore it in a rainbow
and had no fear
saw her the next
her hair in a hat
eyes to the sun
on the bus she sat
saw her everywhere
quiet on her toes
she was a rainbow shadow
and i wanted to be close
one day we danced
and i left this earth
i held her hand
and knew what it was worth
and i will remember her
by the touch of her hand
as she told me goodbye

John Powers

Still Awake

the sun comes in on the slant
as the day turns on
the sky twinkling in the sea of leaves
the silhouetted trees no longer
black and flat
and birds coo and swoop
past the nightly spider
crawling on the hunt
with his web overflowing in the light
it's warm in the breeze
that smells of dew and grass
what a time to make love
with her that is still awake

John Powers

Sunset

It's dark in here
the light by sunset
fading quickly now
without a regret

have you seen where the sun went?
do you know where it hides?
do you know where the sun went?
will it come back? has it died?

now i'm all alone
the beauty is gone.
cold if i could feel
we did something wrong

flickered by the fire
your color is pale
said cheers to the wind
no comfort, no ale

so much for a dream
that fell to a fear.
I'll miss you by my side.
No time for a tear.

John Powers

The Modern Ripper

i can see you
every day
with the sun
on your skin

lucky to get
a smile
typical
casual
denial

i was no beast
i was no beast
i was no beast
until you made
me one

now they call me
jack
jack
jack
the ripper

i can see you
every day
with the sun
on your skin

got to get
along
don't look
just listen
to the song

i meant you no harm
i meant you no harm
i meant you no harm
but you kept
saying no

now they call me
jack
jack
jack
the ripper

i can see you
every day
with the sun
on your skin

GOD did this
to me, to you
made you beautiful
and said
not to look

i only wanted love
i only wanted love
i only wanted love
but your eyes
kept saying no

now they call me
jack
jack
jack
the ripper

i can see you
every day
with the sun
shining in

you can't deny
me anymore
the truth does hurt
just keep silent
take it
through the fog
under street lights

you can't deny
me anymore
the truth does hurt
take it
rip it!
rip it!
rip it!

now they call me
jack the ripper

John Powers

Til You Break

I want you
pump the body full of seed
until you cry it out
of your beautiful blue eyes
i want you until you're not
a person anymore

i will be the last man
that you can ever have
you belong to me
until i throw you away
this is my resurrection
this is my revenge

I want you
make you scream until
you can't feel anymore
so you know what its like
give all my pain
back to you

I will feel my heartbeat
as yours fades away
I will look at what's left
those beautiful blue eyes
bend you til you break
bend you til you break

John Powers

Untitled

the light, which is blessed to touch your skin
is stolen by my awed eyes
I could call you by name, by my voice waivers
to define such beauty is to imprison it
whether i am seen by you matters not,
for i cannot be in anything but a dream
I must turn away, for it is rude to stare
but the impression I retain is painfully deep.
If the light, which touches your skin and is
stolen by my eyes is so blessed, and it is,
then I am blessed to be in the presence of it,
and I may steal it until I am gripped by blindness,
because it is worth the cost, just to see you today.

John Powers

Went Outside

Someone could be watching you

And you'd never know it

Someone could be watching you

And they'd never show it

See the trees,

Bare feet on cool grass

A light in a window from far away,

As his night is our day

Loss of innocence in the stars

Dragonfly in the lights,

A psychological playground

Little flying attacks of curiosity

(illegible)

alone except for the lights

I want the earth to touch me

Stinger

Tingle dead in the cold

Late night deposit of who

4 am secrets,

no deception

I can sleep for miles
Here's no surprise
Liquid extension of the sky
Cold lightless depths under the
Veil of twinkle sparkle sparkle
Most beautiful is most deadly
Back in the heat of the soul with cold feet
Cellular life
With our own little lights
Flicker flicker but never go out
Never at radiant peace
Cannot hide under overcoming the night
No wind still as itself
Adaptive eyes see the silhouette of a strong life
Always nice, never great
Never night, never day
Can't keep my flicker away
I need to breathe and see in the night
I can see you all
No grass on concrete
I can see the fire bird

And crawling illusions of infestation

Response to invasion

Not enough power anymore

A reality of symbols

Living bookended by an accident in time

Enjoying a ride to a star faded away

Out of the bull's eye into the board

Back turned toward homeward shut door

A rare pillar of life

Reaching into the beautiful unknown

To grow stronger, deeper, twisted

Jaded shade of green

Against the promise of blue

Chasing blindspots

Viewing in the negative space

Pound the earth with bared souls

Bared toes

Take me where it is unsafe to go

But keep me home

A turf war with good

Bare toes on solid ground

A slow processor of reality
Obsessing with what everyone else is missing
Suddenly
Whether you know it or not
You've made me the happiest I've
Ever been
But somehow that's still wrong
Must without
Never at the light reflection
A return to mother earth
More to work with in the dark
Everyone looking in on each other through
Distant dirty glass
A chilling and welcomed erase
The night is a woman
Sweet seduction of the
Unknown always watching,
Nurturing the secrets
Of what you know most intimately
Instinctively
Though you sit in solace

You are in the arms of the night
And shall never be alone
For the infinite possibilities
That want only those
With the courage to seek them out
Safe and vulnerable
With the shadow the possesses you
Simultaneous within without of
The freedom and submission your
Own will to infinity
An inescapable desire to be within
That which encompasses all and is without
Which it needs to be real
And not a confusion of the perception
Of life
A door opens and a man walks away in
I provide the warmth
And you provide the haul away
Always on audition except for
myself
an imaginary cricket in the real life night

a door closes
the sun discerns you
the sun uncovers you
the sun breaks into you
the sun kills you
and I imagine a false reality a falsehood
the most beautiful night this side of
the planet
a chill of fear as the light creeps near
a shot of light
just a warning beacon of up coming storm
of blanched earth
no more possibilities
only one way to work
only the devil plays with fire
incorrect past precedes as truth
unless confronted by a replacement truth
searchlight on the worker
the needle
scribing at the table
embracing what is rightfully

intrinsically his but is
barred or scared from it
floating up from the bottom of the sea
guardian beacons turn away
as the torch comes forward
from its annual part-time grave
silhouetted secrets become clear
being surrounded by persistence
of life and limit
the battle will end and it'll get
boring
strong life, no longer free,
increases it's demands upon that
which is no longer secret
night is always giving to what's
right in front of you
more than one darkness in the night
stirs and toils in the cellular lives
dependant on what is no longer secret
Another blank page saying something
Heard by nothing

Peace only in the extremes of light
Shielded by an incomplete head
The depths of the darkness become
The protrusions of the light
The long howl of war
Struck ringing with the truth
Fire sweeps the floors
Heat fills the air
Two ones in the dark
Experience two completely different
Realities
Two in day experience one reality
Of vast, shared knowledge
The winds of the rotating earth
That which is greedy of the darkness
Becomes dependant on the light
Intimate With The Infinite
I've been coming all night
Sudden Incoherent Reality
John Powers

What To Tell The Child

On a passage
of diesel and rust
a mother
brings a child
along.

The mother
not one
but a drunk
college night

The child
a regret
living
in aftermath

It looked
to me
as if
I knew

I could
not answer
I starred back
at the future

We rumbled
past the
signs of
high ruin

A child
fat hands
soft feet
wonder eyes

still watching
as if
I had
an answer

I'm sorry

baby blue

ocean eyes

I'm sorry

The rust

did rumble

through signs

of a high

ruin

John Powers

White Tears

They close their eyes and feel
each other's breath on their skin
At last vulnerable to touch
there are no secrets, no sin
In the light of the moon
there is no child on her breast
only the soul of a man
far too pained to rest
Sweat beads on her stomach
that tightens for a groan
while she is entered
like a long forgotten home
Together they move as one
a wave in an eternal storm
though his mind was calm
and her body was warm

Watch her little faces of death
the joy dressed as agony
Never are we more real
Never are we more clean

There is one final thrust
At last he bursts, finally he feels
all the power of a raging river
with this release, he is healed
she arches her back
and squeezes the bed
millions of everything
rush thru her head
she looks at him
and forces one cry
as a white tear falls
from her open eye.

John Powers

Woman Of The Rain

It rained today
sudden with blowing wind
I breathed in the cool, wet
autumn air
a woman came into my sight
her hair heavy
sweater spotted with
the sky's tears
she came inside
arrived from the storm
eager
she was looking for something
I watched her
I took her in
saw her flip-flop feet
cede the glisten to open air
adjust her toes to dry floor
i watched her
the smile and curious eyes
her sloping nose and gentle chin
damp and glowing cheeks
she wanted something
I welcomed her

I could have loved her
and made her warm
I could have held her
while we watched the storm
with her sweater put away
her toes dry
I wanted her
woman of the rain
she wanted something
she did not want me

it rained today
sudden with blowing wind
i breathed in the cool, wet
autumn air.

John Powers

Wrens

all i've got to say is i love you
and that means nothing
all i want is to know you
but i never will
all i want is to touch you
and you move away
so what am i at all?
the hint of a desire
something in the air that you walk through
no longer curious of what we could have been
i am all of nothing, i guess that's all i've been
fairy tales do no good
I can't pretend what we are anymore
you should not dance with a shadow
and sleep in the light
you should not hold hands
with a stranger in the night
the shadow feels empty,
the night alone and cold.
but nothing you can do
will let them in your home
The shadow does bleed
and the night cries with a soul
so do them both a favor
and leave the shadow alone

John Powers

Zenith

AS THE STREET LIGHTS STAB THE BELLY OF THE DAWN□
the darkness winces in stars flicker
but the leaves grow green greedy
to possess the fleeting night
as veins strain to retain the cold
with all their might
the creak of the trees
follows with ease
at the blue that floods the sky
the clutch of night must fade away
for the implicit reason why
The street lights all withdraw
and the belly drips onto Earth
the dew of life, of manna, of new
light bathes the waters calm
Awakened now, the pavement is warm
for the sole of spirit's foot.

John Powers

Zephyr

Juggernaut clouds and a lake of boiling silver under a setting sun,
the veils of rain fall

a curious girl on the shore of a dream, her hair buffeted,
her arms folded and heart crossed

churned waves shatter upon the walls of the sea,
there is only the sound of fury

gales tear stones to sands and mists with a roar,
a war twixt two who are one

and the time must come when a boy must bare his soul to the sun
and the girl
her heart to the wind.

John Powers