

Poetry Series

Jon Butter
- poems -

Publication Date:
2010

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Jon Butter(3-22-1974)

Spiritual teacher, motivational speaker, and communication consultant, Jon writes from his home in Vernon, CT.

A Modern Psalm

I miss you God.

My mind aches from too much worry.
Where is serenity?

You showed up for our ancestors in
Voice and flesh.

You broke into time and dwelt among us.

Am I not worthy of your voice?

Come, shake my hand.

At night I dream of milk and honey,
Of peace and quiet moments.

I wake hopeful, even when I'm afraid.

I believe in you without evidence.

Yet in my search I cannot find love.

Where is your temple of heaven on earth?

Jon Butter

After Battle

On the edge
Where all explorers go,
Fear is like air.

You can't see the color
Right in front of you
When every breath is short.

The day you return
It is better to have
Gray morning light.

You need a few minutes
To look at pale sky
And remember.

You have courage
Like the sun that
Will be out tomorrow.

Jon Butter

Beautiful

The picture is only of her face.
She floats on the page.
Her hair is more aura than earthly.
She is the most beautiful.
Daddy hired the famous one to draw her.
She died by a man's knife.
The sketch, pencil on course paper,
Hangs hidden in a corner.
Her gaze is distant,
As if she knew.

Jon Butter

Beer In The Morning

I'm drinking beer at 9: 38 AM.

Damn, no, it's cider.

I want to be one of those guys who's
so loose he can drink beer in the morning;
but I'm not cool.

I like it sweet, and if you were here,
you have no idea how sweet I'd be.

Jon Butter

Birth And Death

Dizzy and wailing like a child,
the blood pours thick and dark.
Too many moons and too many sleepless nights already,
and you are perfect.
You took four years of shots in the ass
and hope
and all the money we had.
You are alive.
You have a mommy.
She lies still as the nurse screams for help.

Jon Butter

Blackberry And Tar

Bad cheap wine
Tasting of blackberry and tar,
Dancing angels
That take me far
From the piece of
You that causes me to
Wonder: In
God's eyes, are
We
A mistake?

Jon Butter

Blue Skies

On the outside,
You can't see what's eating him.
No more treatments are available.
He lives on milky white liquid
Dinner pumped into his body at
84 ccs per hour,
A teaspoon every 3.57 minutes.
No one can say how many
More days, hours, or teaspoons.

I asked him what he wants
To pray for.
His eyes don't open for
Most of our visit.
He says, "Blue skies."

He is a pilot.

He flew in the war,
Then for two different commercial
Carriers over thirty-two years.
He averaged 423 passengers a week,
17,766 every twelve months.
He carried a total of 570,627,
He never had an accident.
He gave away plastic wings to
36,311 children.

He is not a religious man.
He has gone to church his whole life.
He believes in the grace of physics
And his God is blue sky.

He almost died in the war.
He was accidentally exposed to a chemical test.
He didn't read the sign and
Went in to clean the room.
They didn't know why he lived.

His wife died of cancer
Twelve years ago.
He has three children,
Seven grandchildren,
And a new girlfriend.
She has not left him through
Seven months of treatment.
The day he went on hospice
He called all his friends
To see how they were.

"Are you afraid? " I ask.
"I'm going to fly the plane until it crashes, " he says.

He does not pray for himself.
He recites poetry.
The one about the surly
Bonds of earth and touching
The face of God.
He wants it read at his memorial
Service in the spring-
When all of his friends are back
From Florida.
He doesn't want them to
Come back early.

He lies on his back
With his eyes closed,
Listening to my prayer:
That when he dies,
He becomes blue sky.

Jon Butter

Cardigan

Cardigan above the knotty pine,
All granite peak and snowy cap.
The fire that burned your
Alpine scrub left you naked.
After a century, you are still bare,
Giving the impression
You are bigger than you are.

Jon Butter

Cherries And Cream

God kisses angels from sleep like
waves rippling the sun into
a million tiny diamonds.
We eat cherries and cream
for breakfast and I look
at you like the gulls,
floating on the updraft,
hoping for scraps.

Jon Butter

Current Life

I leave tomorrow.
Like an urchin
Feeding from the current,
Summer's fall becomes
Frozen shores and
The terns will come again.
The moon brightens
The crab's nocturnal hunt
From the same burrowed hole as the
Tide smooths yesterday's footprints and
Turns forgotten coins into hidden treasure.
The ocean breeze chills your skin and
You pull me close.
The orange dawn is a most
Beautiful and unwelcome reminder
Of seasons and time.

Jon Butter

Dive

Dive into cold water,
And this morning
You might discover,
Dazed by the frigid shock,
When you stop wanting
You have everything.

Jon Butter

Dream

When a dream became
three cents of death
and cream I lick your
patience off the revelation
that you will always be
the happiest day of my life.

Jon Butter

Elegant

The silhouette of your shoulder,
Moonlit and naked.

I see you turn your head and
Breathe the Paris night.

It's winter. Too cold
For balconies.

I walk outside, grab your waist, and
Kiss the chill from your skin.

Jon Butter

Gatekeeper

Endless hallways and never an open door:
The giant in you will only die if you stop trying.
Don't stop because elegant banisters and
Marble hallways will lead you to the place where you can rest.

I know they don't understand, and how can they?
Angels sing because of who you are.
You are the dream.
You become the moment,
Like breathing in Jasmine evening air;
And it is everything.

Don't ignore your giant.
Don't drink too much doubt.
Don't think too much about the outside or
What spins on sleepless nights.
Something is forming, and it needs the restlessness.

You are the gatekeeper.
Only you can stop the becoming.
Everything else—every soul, every wall, every angry voice—
They are teammates who do not know your giant,
Who do not understand the role they play;
And you need them.

If they do not fight,
If it is too easy,
Your giant will be carved from inferior experience.
The paradox is pain and beauty need each other:
Like you are already your giant,
Like you are the gatekeeper
To what you've always wanted.

Jon Butter

Kiss

Cruising for a smile
With her knowing look,
She sees my flirty eyes,
Impenetrable and delicious.
Wine turns to whiskey
And dim lights become night.
Will tomorrow's coffee be bitter
Or sweet from a kiss?

Jon Butter

Know

Do you know how happy you've made me?
Like sunlight on the first morning after two weeks of rain.
My heart doesn't know what when I'm near you,
Except for you.

I wonder sometimes, like silly men do,
About what I'm made for.
There is an assumption among our gender
That we're supposed to rise—to our birth, to our potential.

Then, I walk into the room where you sit, unaware;
And I look at your face smiling at someone else's joke.
You don't know how much love is in you.
You can't. You haven't felt it; but I have.

I have woken on a winter morning and been warmed by you.
I have fallen asleep desperate and comforted by you.
I have lost my best evenings bent deep in you.
And every moment is a diamond, every anticipation the perfect setting.

I only need forever with you to be happy.
Because on a moonlit night, there are no words;
But there is your hand holding mine.

Jon Butter

Last

Exeter rain and persimmon tea feed the
Angry demons who steal your wonder.
They laugh because you care too much
About petty slights and sucker punches.
They know your history of being last picked.
When you're not looking they take your girl
Around the corner and ask her things.
You were so sophisticated this morning,
Ironic pinkie in the air like you weren't faking it;
And now the others are writing checks with your pride.
Don't stop drinking or their smirks
Might stop meaning something.
Then you would be anonymous.

Jon Butter

Morning Eyes

You look at the pages that sweat and chewed fingernails produced
Over way too many hours that could have been spent at the beach.

You peruse, with polite distance and gentle judgment, the work.

I wait. Me. The one who keeps putting his whole guts into trying to
Do something that is as much stardust and elf magic as talent.

Write a great poem, you are a poet. Write a strong article, you are published.
Publish a non fiction book and you are an author. Spend a decade on a novel,
have no guarantee it will ever touch a reader's hungry hands, keep driving
yourself to write when everyone else is playing, drinking, loving and living, and:

You still may not be a writer.

Jon Butter

Peel

The harbor buoy peals on the ferry's rolling waves.
Old houses, wind battered, line the same coast line
that 100 years before held only shells and creatures.
The clouds and water look the same: Gray, ancient, tired.
But the houses get their spring paint on peeling columns.
Gardens refresh with new earth and then color.
The same waves that sounded the buoy hit the shore
like the din of children slapping the lunch table with open hands.
Life will never be the same and nothing changes.

Jon Butter

Perfect

The perfect burger:

Thin and fried,

Gooey cheese,

Grilled Bun,

Ketchup and

Onions and

Shoestring Fries on the side.

The only problem with my lunch is

Remembering you chose him.

I loved you perfect every time,

and now I will wash down the

Bitter taste with cola.

Jon Butter

Reasons

When you died,
You took one of my reasons.
I will not find another as
Pure and worth living.
But I will see you again.

Jon Butter

Thaw

As the Spring thaw runs out of snow,
The roaring waterfalls return to trickles, and
Wild flowers burst like children laughing,
Painting the fields with contagious colors:
Purple and violet, yellow and bright white.
If only you could lose your chill,
We could be happy again.

Jon Butter

The Artist

You don't really like people.
You're committed to beauty.
You see the canvas and the only relationship
You need is with color and the transfer of
Perfection from your mind into this world.

Then, when you're finished, you need love.
You need to love.
You want to be adored and so
You love her like
She has never been touched.

She'll never feel like that again.

And when you are finished,
Like with a painting,
The beauty transferred,
Your art done,
You leave, and go in search of your next creation.

Jon Butter

The Ends

Hemingway called it "blackass."

I call it The Ends.

The place where no one visits:

Even if they could,

They wouldn't stay.

There are no sunny days

Or candy canes

Down here.

Even when the sun shines

You can't taste a thing.

Your pen is full.

You have plenty of paper.

The coffee drips dark and black.

There is no dancing.

Your walls are like mountains.

Anyone who climbs over

Gets shot.

Being dead is better than the ends.

You just don't have the energy

to finish the job.

Jon Butter

The Rose Bush

If you are not in that rose bush then you must have sprinkled heaven down
because every year you arrive this same day, and its large pink petals
are exploding like confetti. The wind is throwing them up in the air
for your ticker tape parade, and only the summer's first blooms
have truly popped. There are still days, weeks of painfully perfect flowers
reminding
us to water your garden and to toast every evening, wishing you were still here.

Jon Butter

The Shoebox

I wish I could go back and
not make the same mistakes.

Cleaning out our bedroom closet,
I found a shoebox.
Inside was our relationship.
I pulled out pictures one by one.
They told our story.
The pictures weren't in order,
but the plot was clear.
Two people fell in love,
and then life kept getting in the way.

I want those frowns to smile like the early years
before you asked me to leave.

Jon Butter

Tired

I'm so tired
of your sex,
But if you
were gone
I would only
Want you.

Jon Butter

Unless

Your days will run out like sugar for your tea.
Unless one night as you stare into the fire,
Or perhaps the water boiling for your dinner,
Or maybe at the neighbor's children, a boy and a girl,
Chasing each other around the yard wearing rainbow sized smiles,
You admit that you will not experience everything.
Then, like stars reveal why God made dark, you do.

Jon Butter

Your Best Friends

Faith and Doubt are your best friends
Who have never met.
Throw a party.
Shake some martinis.
Put out some cakes.
Introduce the two.
Turn on music.
Invite them to dance.
Stand behind the bar and watch.
Have another round ready.
In front of the guests,
They will begin to argue.
Pour the cocktails.
It doesn't matter the question:
They know all the answers.
Shake a drink for yourself.
They never agree.
Love, politics, the meaning of everything:
Doubt always throws the first punch.
Give the crowd thirty seconds
To enjoy the scene.
Watch your friend's reactions.
Take mental notes.
You have to do something.
Tip your glass,
Swallow hard, and
Choose who leaves.
Smile at the one who stays.
In a few days
Plan a make up session
For the late afternoon.
They always come again.
Brew the coffee strong.
Put out some cakes.
This time, no one leaves
Until it's settled.
You choose who is right.
It's after five.
Shake the first round.

Don't worry.
You have time.
They will stay all night.

Jon Butter