



וְיָשָׁב אֶל-בְּרֵיתוֹ
וְיָשָׁב אֶל-בְּרֵיתוֹ
וְיָשָׁב אֶל-בְּרֵיתוֹ
וְיָשָׁב אֶל-בְּרֵיתוֹ



A-bide
with me



It seems to me that bending someone else to your will is the very stuff of sex, by force or neglect if you are male, by spitefulness or nagging or scenes if you are female.

Everyone is working
terribly hard, shifting
ten to fifteen
thousand books
a day, and only doing
so by maintaining
a kind of wartime
hysteria, reminiscent
of amber warnings,
strong tea and
small newspapers.

Larkin

Richard Cole

(b.1942)

Signed and dated 1988, pen and ink, and monochrome watercolour, 12 x 9 inches. Reproduced in *Book Pages of the Daily Telegraph*, 15 October, 1988.

I never remember
my parents making
a single spontaneous
gesture of affection
towards each other.

When I try to tune
into my childhood,
the dominant
emotions I pick up
are, overwhelmingly,
fear and boredom.

Such attics
cleared of me!
Such absences!

I never left
the house without
the sense of walking
into a cooler, cleaner,
saner and pleasanter
atmosphere.

It seems to me
that what we
have is a kind
of homosexual
relationship,
disguised.

I accept, don't I,
and without private
reservation or
grudge, that you
don't like me enough
to marry me.

You've been
cavorting in my
mind dressed in
pink shoes and
pink pop-beads
and nothing else.
All to the detriment
of my typing.

I don't like going
about pretending
to be myself

I want to do both,
write and be involved
with people.

Yet always I shy off
when they come
too close.

...a poet should
be judged by what
he does with his
subjects, not what
his subjects are.

The girls in the library knew about Monica, but she was kept in a separate compartment, ...

About love,
if I could have said
last September,
'I'm in love with
Maeve, goodbye,
I wd: as it was,
I couldn't - .

...perhaps too fond
of you, perhaps not
fond enough of her,
perhaps just too
cowardly all round.

My prime
responsibility
is to the experience
itself, which I am
trying to keep from
oblivion for its
own sake.

The impulse to
preserve lies at the
bottom of all art.

He did like large,
well-built ladies...
the sort of lady
you get in the
thermal underwear
catalogues.

I'm sick to death
of all the men I love
and admire going off
with other women,
usually much better
looking than me.

The Faber Quartet
(1969) :

Douglas Dunn,
Ted Hughes,
Philip Larkin,
Richard Murphy.

The Faber Quartet
(1969) :

Douglas Dunn,
Ted Hughes,
Philip Larkin,
Richard Murphy.

This is the awful
time of year — these
awful speeches
to students.

(4 October 1974)

Dearest
Old Creature

Oh dear, ten o'clock
and nothing done
again, and a letter
to write to my mother
to stop her worrying.

When does one get
rid of one's family?
Just in the last few
threadbare years?

How pretty your
last envelope
looked – grey paper,
green ink, orange
and reddish-brown
stamps.

Letters are
comforting
assurances that
I'm not forgotten,
but meetings
are too real.

I need a lot of
training in quick
thinking and skilful
blarneying, to match
Brynmor Jones.

How sad to cease
writing is.

I'm afraid if we were
going to rush into
each other's arms
we should have
rushed, long ago...

As I lift pen from
paper, depression
rushes back...

I must nearly have emptied this pen this weekend, for I've written home and also in my diary.

One thing about
home is the
enormous amount
of time spent
on meals...
It makes me
want to live on
toast and
orange juice.

What lovely
postcards you
have found from
time to time!

A series of
vignettes of life
along the bank,
many you'll have
forgotten, I'm sure.

What lovely
postcards you
have found from
time to time!

A series of
vignettes of life
along the bank,
many you'll have
forgotten, I'm sure.

The sitting room
faces north and
has grey walls
with cream paint
and ceiling.

The bedroom
faces south and
has pale yellow
walls, cream paint
and lemon ceiling.

The kitchen
faces north and
has pale blue
walls, cream paint
and lemon ceiling.

The bathroom
faces west and
has grey walls,
cream paint and
a pink ceiling.

Mother is always
adversely affected
by Christmas,
and the routine
of endlessly waiting
for meals is very
trying. Christmas
is awful.

To destroy letters
is repugnant to me
– it's like destroying
a bit of life. Yet they
mount up so.

Of course one often
wishes one had more
time for poetry.

In what spare time
I have poetry has
to compete with
letter-writing,
social life, reading,
mending socks...
and of course it often
comes off worst.

So H.G. Wells is
dead. He couldn't
bastard write, he
couldn't bastard
think, what he
could bastard do
was write bastard
good scientific
bastard romances,
the bastard.

Keeping one's life
to oneself is a dreary
business. Giving
it someone else
is a fearsome one.

I've sent a typescript
of 20 poems
to the printers
to be made into what
I feel sure will be an
ugly little booklet
of ugly little poems.

If I had a black tie
I'd wear it.

Depression hangs
over me as if
I were in Iceland.

Tell Kitty I now
have the typescript
of B. Pym's
*An Unsuitable
Attachment.*

She said that my
having a sister no
doubt accounted
for my virtues – a
piece of reasoning
I can't follow.

Someone once said
that the great thing
is not to be different
from other people
but to be different
from oneself.

Pym's novels are powerful reminders of the fact that one of the great and proper concerns of literature is that motley cluster of small concerns that make up our day-to-day lives.

I entertained
Philip on the
beach, cooling my
bare knees in the
breezes. It will take
some few days to
get acclimatised
after having been
enclosed in trousers
for thirty years.

To Maeve, who
can read between
the lines.

...the bachelor
is constantly
involved in a secret
war with society.

...adolescents
must be given
every intellectual
and emotional
opportunity
to break out from
their introverted
state of mind and
respond to their
surroundings.

I haven't given
poetry up, rather
it has given me up.

I am going to the
inevitable...

Letter
to my
mind

The library they are planning looks at present like a rejected design for a cinema. If it is put up it will be the laughing stock of the British Isles.

Most Saturdays
he would come
bowling along on
his enormous bike,
the biggest I have
ever seen, looking
more than life-size
as he pedalled down
Hull Road, Hessle.

The building will be
a freak and there'll
be a lot of what-did-
you-expect-with-
a-poet-in-charge-
haw-haw.

We spent
most of the day
drinking

At last
I am free
of that foul
futile mockery
of a library.

It is a clumsy, rather
graceless building,
lacking intelligence
at all levels, but not
without a certain
needless opulence
in parts.

The minute,
as an artform,
has its limitations.

Mr Wood's driving
lessons continue
and there is no sign
of his being killed.

...I must tell him
a good driver
is a fast driver.

To Sir
with Love

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.

FOR REFERENCE:

Please replace
on the trolley
after browsing.