

IN MEMORIAM

By William A. Cook

Richard Jameson
Actor

That morning mourning knew
When I arrived to hear
That he would not return.

Death's force burst upon the brain,
Sudden, so sudden that even fear could not intervene.
What expectations a moment shatters
When life to death can pass so fast,

And days to live, dreamt in the fullness
Of times unending, stops;
Its substance but the lingering images of a dream.
So passing strange a life once lived remains.

Thousands knew his face as one who never lived;
Whose soul was words others thought;
Whose substance, images upon a screen.
To them, he is no more who never was;
His death an interruption of a play
Some nameless author must explain away.

His life gave life to some,
Their voice and purpose driven by his vision.
They too died that day.

To me, a friend in passing only,
His passing gave me pause
To fix upon a memory of a man no other knew,
Though they knew him as I could not:
One face imparts so many images to an aching heart.

Haste forced me to leave that day
Though it had been a year since our leaving;
And on my return, he would not return,
And death would be my greeting.
O time not taken will never be
And remorse will ever follow me.

As he in sleep passed that sleepless day,
His daughter danced the time away.

No death held fear within her heart,
His life is all she knew to be.

But death unknown does not deliver death to life.
It confirms the sudden shock of stillness
That gives us pause to know the
Precious passing of our days.

Death severed love in this passing,
And robbed Robin of richness and repose
Even as dreams from sleep to life were born.

This specter, swift as steel slicing golden grain,
Destroyed life again,
And death has dominion.

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