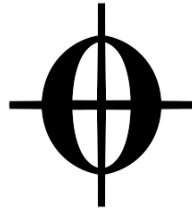


Excerpts from

With & Without

Lyrics, Prose, Stories, and Songs



Imre Vitez



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Last Night in Havana

By now the time has long since gone,
we should have packed our bags and parted ways a long time ago.
And just as the espresso now sits still and quiet, far beyond its time,
the coffee is no longer sweet and strong,
only bitter and past its age.

For our last night in Havana,
let's just say we'll agree not to bicker,
the neighbors below and above us
will at last have peace for quiet evenings of dominos.
They won't need to hear our loud debates,
our anger, our frustration.
Perhaps even now, the loud sound of the quietness that returns
will deafen their ears.

It seems almost like yesterday when we first danced
beneath the Havana moon,
drinking dark rum and coffee till dawn, walking barefoot in the sand,
as the warm waters ebbed at our feet.

For all the effort we made to build our lives intertwined,
for as hard as we scraped and saved to build our back porch
on which to share conversations over sunsets,
the back porch was, is, and now will forever, be quiet,
just as the chimes that chime no more.

We should each pack a suitcase of clothes and memories,
and walk away.
Walk till we can walk no more
and ask ourselves whether we kidded each other,
or whether we ever had a chance at all?

When the novelty wears thin and the joy begets regret,
when deception begets frustration,
when partial truths beget partial lives,
it is time to call it a day.

Take your chips and cash out at the casino bank.
Take with you whatever it might be that you've learned,
and pack away the things inside that you have earned.

Before we go, let's go walk to the water's edge,
and take the rose petals that we saved for years
inside a champagne bottle,
let's pack away those sins that drove us apart and seal them away,
and throw the bottle far into the ocean
and let the salt water cleanse our sins.

Once the sun rises on the morn,
perhaps a brighter day will appear after our
last night in Havana.

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Who is to say that all dreams live on in paradise?

