

Poetry Series

Pat Raia
- poems -

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Pat Raia(July 24,1953)

Pat Raia is a veteran journalist who covered crime and politics for the Chicago Sun-Times, Leader and the Chicago Tribune newspapers.

She holds a bachelors degree in Press Law and Ethics from Rivier College, and she taught young journalists at that school.

She is the author of the Barraia Greeting Arts line.
Pat Raia has been writing poetry since childhood.

Almost Everybody

Everybody
moves forward
from
girlhood
when
all
the boys
were
conquests-in-waiting
and
all
the girls
were
rivals
or simply
dull and dumb.
Now
all
these
years later
the youth
has left
your face
and all
the boys
have turned
into
unhappy
fat old men
but
you
still think
all
the girls
are rivals
and
the boys
fall
at your

feet
Somebody
ought
to tell
you
that
you're
wrong

Pat Raia

Am I Angry?

Am I
angry?
You bet
I am -
I'm angry
because
I have
to fight
just
to stay
alive
I'm angry
because
I may
not win
that fight -
I'm tired
because
the tremors
and
the nightmares
keep me
up
at night
And
I'm exhausted
from
saying that
I'm just
fine -
Finally
I'm really
really tired
of your
failure
to understand
why
I'm so
damn angry

Pat Raia

Because

I don't
do this
because
you allow
or
demand
or
command
me
to
do it
I
do this
because
I can
do it
and
because
you can't

Pat Raia

Chicago

Going home
means
warmth and
family and
work and
friends
since childhood
It means
being someplace
that
never changes
at least
in my mind
But in
my haste
I sold
the house
and
gave up
the job
The childhood
friends all
grew up
and
the family
died off
Now
there is
no home
to go to

Pat Raia

Connected

We
are all
connected
to the
generations
past
like
droplets
from
a wellspring
like
particles
of light
we
know
the things
our ancients
knew
in minute
detail
which
we
must spend
our own
life times
trying
to
remember

Pat Raia

Dreamer

I was
close
closer
close enough
to hold you
and
kiss you
and
feel your
beating heart
You were
young
and handsome
just waiting
for me
to nestle
in your
arms
Standing there
in
your embrace
I was
whole
and
home
and
happy
But then
I
woke up

Pat Raia

Enough Is Enough

Sometimes
getting through
a tough time
is enough
But
most times
surviving
what's after
is better

Pat Raia

Famous

Jesus
can do
anything
you believe
he can
like
walk on water
save your soul
or
bring
your lover
back
but
he
can't
make you
famous
it takes
hard work
for that
still
he'll
have his
hand out
if
you manage
to
cash in

Pat Raia

Gifts

I want
to give
you
something
no one's
ever
seen
before
like
an ocean
in a
water glass -
a universe
in a
nutshell
something
so amazing
no one
could deny
such
a splendid
gift
could come
from
anyone
but
me

Pat Raia

Grown-Ups

We
 can talk
like
 grown-ups
now -
 like people
entitled to
 an opinion
so
 we
tell
 tales
about
 our parents
and
 our uncles
and
 our aunts
and
 talk about
the things
 we
did
 to try
to change
 the world
still
 in the
end
 we're
only kids
 posing
as adults
 who
should not
 have had
opinions
in the
 first place

Pat Raia

Heart's Desire

I
always wanted
to live
like that:
jetting off
to Gstaad
or to
some
Venetian ball
I'd wear
beautiful
clothes
have
beautiful
dogs
and wear
eyeshadow
picked
for me
by some
Paris designer
I'd
go away
to
luxury hotels
with men
who wore
turtle necks
and
tweed
and
we'd
make love
and have
breakfast
in bed
just like
lovers
in some

1963 movie

Pat Raia

How Could We

We
were young
once
and
beautiful
and
everybody
noticed us
everywhere
we went
How
could we
have
ever known
how
tough
our lives
would be
when
we
were young
and
beautiful
and
everyone
noticed us

Pat Raia

Prayer For Pay

There
will always
be those
who
get paid
to pray
Who mix
their faith
with
commerce
And when
they try
to
convert me
I wonder
if they
are paid
on commission

Pat Raia

The Acrobat

When she was young
and newly married
she bent over backward
to reach
her husband's goals
And when her babies
were just children
she did handsprings
to get
her husband's attention
When her husband threatened
to leave her
she did cartwheels
to keep him
She never seemed to realize
that she
was somersaulting
through
her life

Pat Raia

The Creator

I wanted
roots
so
I invented
them
from
other people's
stories
I wanted
wings
so
I made
them
from paper
scraps
and
string
I conjugated
a million verbs
to tell
my own
life story
and
I witnessed
things
that
frighten you
especially
when you
dream
Now
you want
to be
me
and
it makes
me laugh -
I don't
think

you've saved
enough
broken string
for that

Pat Raia

The Hardest Thing

The
hardest
thing
we
ever do
is
give up
youth
for
wisdom
casting off
the things
we think
for
the things
we know

Pat Raia

Thicker

Where you
come from
blood
is thicker
than
anything
and
nobody bleeds
like
you do
still
your children
are
dull-eyed
and
dreamless
and
disparaging
of anyone
who
doesn't bleed
like
they do

Pat Raia