

***THE SAINT, A STRANGER AMONG MEN***

**By Louis Kasatkin**

A previous age, perhaps less materialistic than our present one would have recognised and acknowledged his otherness. His air of inner spirituality which others say he carried with him and wore as lightly as the finest cape about his shoulders. Shoulders that others imagined might have sprouted angelic wings. Eccentric, a flaneur with a quietly assertive insouciance he wafted along the boulevards with transcendent equanimity. Then on a day of no particular significance, at least none that I could apprehend at the time nor afterward, I actually encountered him at one of the more popular Cafes, this figure of some Left bank intellectual /philosophical speculation /admiration/veneration. This itinerant dispenser of wisdom and insight.

The Saint with the shabby overcoat and hangdog expression asked me if I could spare him a few reminiscences. I replied that the change in my pockets changes with the changing tide, though I could offer him some reflections instead. The Stranger sat back in his chair ordered himself another absinthe and began whistling some nameless tune while he waited for his drink to arrive.

" If all our pain and sorrow only came on the morrow would we set the alarm late or not at all? taking the chance that vicissitudes had all somehow passed us by while we were fast asleep."

This I realised immediately was the aphoristic balm which the Saint dispensed with customary generosity to those he presumed were in need of immediate spiritual relief of some kind; which in his own inimitable view included just about everybody. Though not all at the same time.

" And were we to store all our tears shed in our lives, how big would the bottle have to be? Could we claim back some pennies if we returned it empty? " I was inwardly responding with something akin to mild annoyance, outwardly with a beatific smile bordering on rictus when,

the Saint glanced askance at his watch where time had stopped years ago.

He wondered aloud where the waiter might've got to with his drink? " If we don't feel the suffering of others, how will we know if we have blood in our veins? " thereupon the Saint got up, bid me adieu and was gone.

Sometime after he'd left I saw in the mirror that there was no longer a reflection there of me.

**Bio**

**Louis** is editorial administrator at [www.DestinyPoets.co.uk](http://www.DestinyPoets.co.uk) and founder of Destiny Poets and in his spare time is a civic, community, political activist, blogger and general nuisance to the status quo!