

INK & ECHO
Poetry & Spoken Word

TAKE MY SMILE WITH YOU

Nicholas J. Pirro

And someday,
when I cannot walk beside you anymore,
don't carry my absence
heavier than you carried my love.

Take my smile with you
even when I'm gone.

Keep it somewhere
between the memories
that make you laugh
and the ones that make you cry.

And when you think of me,
don't think only of the man
who worked,
who worried,
who fought,
who carried more than he should.

Remember that I smiled.

And know
you were the reason.

The purpose.
The pleasure.
The joy.
The bliss.

Not the things I owned.
Not the things I built.
Not whatever name
the world remembers
or forgets.

You.

You were the part
that mattered.

So when my chair is empty,
when my voice exists only
in the corners of your memory,
when you would give anything
for one more conversation-

don't spend that conversation
telling me you miss me.

Tell me what you did.

Tell me where you went.

Tell me who you loved.

Tell me about the chances you took,
the mistakes you made,
the ridiculous things you laughed about
until you couldn't breathe.

Tell me you rested.

Tell me you walked away
when staying cost too much.

Tell me you failed
and got back up
without once believing
you disappointed me.

Tell me you built a life
you didn't need to escape from.

Because then I'll know
everything I tried to teach you
finally made sense.

And wherever I am-
if anywhere at all-

I'll be smiling.

So take my smile with you
even when I'm gone.

Wear it when life is beautiful.

Borrow it
when life is cruel.

And if someday
you catch yourself smiling

for no reason at all,

maybe that's me.

Or maybe

it's simply the piece of me

that I always hoped

I'd leave behind.

You.

About the Poet

Nicholas J. Pirro is a writer, researcher, and publisher whose work explores the intersections of human experience, leadership, resilience, and change. Founder of Pyrrhic Press and Ink & Echo, his creative writing turns toward love, loss, memory, family, and the complicated experiences that shape a life. His poetry favors emotional honesty over convention, finding meaning in the things we carry, the people we love, and the words that remain after a moment has passed.

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