

Fate

For Lee Harvey Oswald

by [Peter Dreyer](#) (December 2023)



Oswald Shot, City Prison Basement– Paul Rogers

With a Colt Cobra revolver in 1963

Jack Ruby plugged you in the belly (aorta and kidney).*

You were killed, as JFK was—you'd blown his brain away;
you had some obsessive reason, though what no one can say.
You were young and foolish, you'd just turned twenty-four.
All this I've held onto these three score years no more.

There is no real logic: late on November 24
someone told me what had happened; a passing bore!
We were walking in Marylebone down Great Portland Street,
going to some trendy party—I had a girl to meet.
Why bring it up today then? You can write it off to age—
It's not you I'm recalling, but remembering that page.
You cared about your Marina—a bit at any rate.
Did you know she remarried in a Texas town called Fate?

*On November 24, 1963, Ruby's bullet "perforated the chest cavity, went through the diaphragm spleen, and stomach. It cut off the main intestinal artery, and the aorta ... as well as breaking up the right kidney" (attending surgeon quoted by Gerald Posner, *Case Closed: Lee Harvey Oswald and the Assassination of JFK* [New York: Random House, 1993], p. 397—the best book I've read on the subject).

11/24/2023

This is a poem from the collection *Toward a Desk-Drawer Anthology*.

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Peter Richard Dreyer is a South African American writer. He is the author of *A Beast in View* (London: André Deutsch), *The Future of Treason* (New York: Ballantine), *A Gardener Touched with Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; rev. ed., Berkeley: University of California Press; new, expanded ed., Santa Rosa, CA: Luther Burbank Home & Gardens), *Martyrs and Fanatics: South Africa and Human Destiny* (New York: Simon & Schuster; London: Secker & Warburg), and most recently the novel *Isacq* (Charlottesville, VA: Hardware River Press, 2017).

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