

Ellis Paul

"Love's Too Familiar A Word"

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I stepped into the room late last night
Because late is the time I keep
You were sleeping warm as coal
In a pocket of comfort and white sheets

But you don't startle anymore when I step into the room
Though the hour is later than midnight
And neither window can place a moon.

"i missed you," you say
And it sounds like a promise
When whispered half asleep
Your skin still damp with sweat
From thoughts your dreams refused to keep

I follow my memory to a switch on a light
"shut your eyes" my voice cut short

When darkness turns bright

"do you love me? " you say
But love is too familiar a word
For in this bed 10,000 times a phrase already heard
But, "yes, I love you" speaks my reply
Though I know I failed myself and you for not
Matching how I feel with words of higher wealth

I know it's lonely in the world tonight
Because here is more than what's deserved
And the imbalance can't be summed in black and white
Cause "love's" too familiar a word.

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