

## Walking Away

There are many resources and commentaries on this poem which may be found with an internet search. However, a search may not throw up this interesting letter in The Guardian 13th January 2018 from the poet's son, Sean Day-Lewis.

### Why my father's poem stands the test of time

It was good to see the last couplet of my father's *Walking Away* properly quoted by Saskia Sarginson (*Empty nest? Not a chance, Family*, 6 January). But she is a little off-message with her view that this Cecil Day-Lewis poem was "written for a different society".

It can be argued that much of his poetry, now well out of fashion, belonged to its time. But this poem is very much for all times. It is a memory poem, looking back to my nervous first day at school in 1938. But it was published, some while after he walked away from my mother into a second marriage, in his 1962 volume of verse *The Gate*. Believe it or not, society of 1962 was much like that of 2018. It is the craziness of our governance that has changed.

*Walking Away* is addressed to all caring parents at all times as they watch their offspring leaving for new lives at school and whatever education and work that may follow. The poem, as it happens, was dedicated to me, but I guarantee that whenever I am asked to give a public reading, mine are not the only wet eyes.

**Sean Day-Lewis**  
*Colyton, Devon*