

Breathless

He sits in a chair,
Beside her bed.
Ignoring the repetitious beeps,
He watches her.

He touches her hand.
Did he feel a flutter?
A confirmation of her awareness.
He waits.

A gold band,
Always on her hand.
Another band, worn from age,
Tucked safely away.

What could he have changed?
He could not have loved more.
Even after all the years,
She takes his breath away.

A broken cupboard door,
Never fixed.
She would have smiled,
If only he had.

The family,
In another room,
Behind closed doors,
Determining fate.

Leaving him alone,
To say goodbye.
How does he give his permission?
Allowing her to die.

Who will be there for him?
In the morning when he wakes,
And in the night,
He will be alone.

Holding her hand,
Hoping she knows,
He sits in a chair beside her bed,
He waits.

Birthday Condolences

Inhale,
Exhale,
Don't open my eyes.
If I open my eyes it will be Kelly's birthday.

Sunlight filters in through the blinds.
It is my worst enemy.
It warms me and
I open my eyes.

I'm out of bed,
I wear my robe.
It is my annual ritual.
I will not dress today.

John sits at the kitchen table.
He cuts coupons.
He does not look up.
His scissors snip perfect squares.

"There's coffee," he says.
We do not say, "Good morning."
This day never receives a good morning.
We do not acknowledge this day.

I drink my coffee,
I continue to watch him.
He stacks the squares according to size.
Everything carefully contained.

Does he remember?
We do not share our grief.
There are memories,
I cannot share.

He could not stand and
I could not stand, the pain,
I would see in his eyes.
So we say nothing.

Is he fighting her? Like me.
I try to keep her in her place.
She is stubborn and refuses to be ignored.
“It is my birthday.”

I relent, only for a moment.
There she is, smiling.
I remember her favorite color is purple.
I remember she hates broccoli.

I stayed too long,
John is watching me.
I cannot see his face.
It is distorted by my tears.

He is gone.
Down the hall!
Closing another door!
The coupons are tossed.

I do not expect him to console me.

I cannot console him.

Behind the closed door,

I know he is crying.

I open the blinds.

I lean my head against the glass.

I close my eyes.

I feel the warmth.

Don't look!

Open your eyes!

I taste the salt.

I ignore the warning.

I whisper,

"Happy birthday."

Everlasting

I sit quietly
and look up to the sky.
I see your face in the clouds.
I imagine the warmth of your body
in the morning sun.
Your essence floats on the gentle breeze,
you are there with me.

You share my joy.
You rejoice in my happiness.
Your spirit enfolds me,
in a tender embrace.
When I am defeated,
Your words of encouragement,
a whisper in my ear.

You are forever,
more than just remembered.
You are part of my journey.
Living in a place beyond time,
You will always be with me.
I hold you in my memory.
You walk with me through life.

Family albums

In your eyes I see
Tomorrow's expectations,
Belief in dreams,
Adventures that await.

Your face holds memories
Of my father's eyes,
Your mother's smile,
The innocence of youth.

You are
A promise of the future,
The understanding of eternity,
My immortality.

