

**Poem #1**

**Full Moon Risin'**

The truth began to set in  
like hardened concrete.

Though we had been here before  
this time was different.  
You weren't going to recover.  
The time came for  
cancer to win.

Propped in your hospital bed  
you ate popsicles as your  
appetite faded.  
Your weight dropped.  
Your breath labored.

Reality hit like an  
uppercut and your fate  
was accepted.

You were going to die.

You were confined to the hospital  
for almost a week.  
The same hospital you worked at for years  
and now found yourself on the other side  
as a patient.

You convinced the nurse to let you  
go outside to have one last cigarette  
and to feel the spring wind on your skin  
one final time.

Mom wheeled you out.  
The nurse followed with a watchful eye.

High in the blackened night  
sat the fat, round moon.  
Stars dotted the sky.  
The wind ruffled your hair  
as you stared up  
the moon and your eyes wide.

This brief moment  
freed from the restraints of time  
felt like years.

You drank in the moment  
like a dry desert  
savoring the rain.

You uttered good-bye  
to the night  
to the moon  
to the spring breeze.

Mom wheeled you inside  
as she helped you back into bed.

***Poem #2***

**The Time of Season**

It was days before Christmas.  
The tree twinkled  
with multi-colored lights  
and tinsel.  
The stockings hung on the wall  
empty and limp.

Lingering smoke hung like fog in the house.  
Nicotine clung to the walls  
that locked you inside.

You were sentenced:  
six months to live.  
It was too late.  
The tumor struck like a match  
spread cancer like a hungry fire  
through your organs and bones.

The couch was your nest.  
You found comfort and relaxation  
among the cushions and pillows.  
Between sleeping most of the day  
you would awake with bursts of energy  
and write out your thoughts  
and plan for your death.

On December 22<sup>nd</sup>  
your body surrendered.

You were gone  
but all the decorations remained  
an empty, hollow home  
ready to celebrate.

On the table was the Christmas card  
you bought me but were too weak to sign.  
The words of a stranger filled the  
Hallmark card but  
the curves of your handwriting  
were missing.

I sat on that couch that  
held your body as you took  
your last breaths  
grasping my card.  
I cried.