

Omen

I first realized the barn was dying when I came home from college in early spring. It didn't welcome me like it did when I was young. I think it was too tired for that.

It used to house so many lives- pigs, cows, sheep. But that day, even the stray cats were gone.

Then I found the frozen calf.

Did it die before they took it's mother to slaughter?

I hope so.

The barn gave my family so much. A livelihood, independence, relationships- my parents met in it's milking parlor.

Maybe I was too young to see that it was sick. The holes in the floor were fun obstacles, not signs of neglect. The broken ladder was instrumental to our games, not a rotting artery in a once-working barn.

Sometimes when you forget to love something, you lose it.

I cried when it burnt down.

I wonder if the barn died before it caught fire.

I hope so.