

Poems from Loss  
Sixfold, July, 2021

Photograph

While clearing out  
your drawers,  
I found that photograph  
I took one night so  
long ago, when  
the lover's heat rose  
from your naked body  
like the strong,  
salty scent spiraling up  
from a bowl  
of warm chicken soup.

I stood transfixed,  
trapped inside a memory.  
And I gazed in silent awe  
at the way you were then  
and think of the way I was:  
barely a man, foolish, proud,  
far too young to know  
that love can be a cylinder  
sealed at both ends.

I don't remember that night,  
one of a thousand nights,  
a grainy, distorted image  
blurred by time, like  
trying to see a single  
snowflake in a raging blizzard.

What I do remember is the smile –  
warm, broad, and oh so real,  
the capstone of a  
good day passed.  
Or a life.

## Love as a Ghost You Can't Avoid

This once-crowded room  
is crowded no more,  
not since...well, you know.  
We are alone now, just  
me and my memories of you.  
And we are searching through  
this thin ghostly mist  
for that slender thread  
of all we have left.  
There isn't much. But  
what we find is the love,  
just the love and only the love.  
Perhaps it really is eternal.  
Or perhaps it should be.

## You Listen

You stand alone in the darkness  
just outside the tunnel  
and you listen.

You straddle the endless track,  
one foot on each shiny rail  
and you listen.

An insistent rain falls from the sky,  
piercing the air around you  
and you listen.

You listen.

But not for the train  
that's on its way,  
not for the train.

You listen for that wondrous voice  
rumbling like the train from  
the roiling clouds, urging you into the light.  
Go into the light.

## Moon

You look up at the moon  
and you think,  
"This night is cold and  
deathly quiet. The  
sky is clear as dark crystal.  
It is hours before dawn.  
I am awake, I am alone.  
And I look up at the moon  
and I feel nothing."

## Mortgage Due

What a plain to pay for  
on a tornado night  
(having a bite of tomato,  
home grown).

Dew drips from  
the sod roof;  
a wagon atrophies  
in the unmowed grass.  
An adhesive wind  
binds the soil to the soul:  
two deserts.