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As the Years Pass



the voice
of a wrong number
for a moment
wishing I was the daughter
she's trying to reach

morning rain
on silent yellow tongues
purple irises
speak to me of
my mother's voice

hunting wildflowers
I find indian pipes
doll's eyes and bee balm—
recalling all the names
my father taught me

at my son's first job
he mops up at closing
while I wait
thinking about the lessons
I wish I could teach him

spring college tour our guide competes with birdsong and coeds in shorts outside the freshman dorms sparrows mate on a bench watching through spring rain for his return from college I touch the window recalling his heart beats' image on the sonogram after years meeting an old friend for lunch I arrive unsure how to describe her to the waitress thirty years later
I catch a glimpse of you on a busy street the flash of a smile from a young stranger

my library filled
with books I hope to read
again
I fear I've planned
too far ahead

winter rose garden thorns and cropped canes old lovers sit near the promise of fragrance and the memory of bees winter moonlight—
making room for new flannels
I cull old lingerie
toss tap pants and teddies
save the merry widow

as the years pass the more I find myself content to enjoy the pleasure of my own flawed company

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bottle rockets, Dreams Wander On: Contemporary Poems of Death Awareness (Modern English Tanka Press, 2011), paper wasp, red lights, Ribbons, Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Three (Modern English Tanka Press, 2011), Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Four (Keibooks, 2012), and tinywords.

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