

## Forgiveness

Do you remember when I wanted to stuff my whole self in your mouth? Remember when I wanted to feel your heat, your breath, and your taste surround me? To feel engulfed, encapsulated, in rapture?

I remember feeling holiness, sinfulness, and elegance all at the same time. I remember the way your eyes squinted smiles before you had wrinkles. I remember the eruption of your belly laugh before we had teenagers. I remember composing celebratory poems that marveled your heroism. I remember all the promises of any conceivable idea that we could create into possibility.

Now, I feel light, and heavy, and transparent. I am looking for truth behind your new glasses. I force the curves of my mouth into neutrality. I stutter insults and spit shamefulness and wonder how long we can slide side by side into our children's adulthood.

I remember your tears in a basement delivery room, and our awe at tiny Stride-Rites across a beam in the grass. I remember warm beer, candles, and playing cards. I remember you grooming my horse. I remember our loft, our first house, and your patience as I hurried off to evening classes. I remember your paychecks, scratchy toilet paper, and refinished furniture. I remember motorcycles rides, grandchildren, and drum circles. I remember your visits to Olneyville, a postcard with multiple addresses, and a short dress from Mexico. I remember the way I felt when my hand fit inside yours. I remember oncology visits, parent teacher conferences, and recitals. Hope, pain, Christmas eve dinners.

I sit in silence, after the echoes of yelling have reverberated around my head. I wait for what? I cry, untended, and unafraid, and unsatisfied. I will ignore my desire for kind words and sleep alone. Keeping the Olan Mills still-frame photo clearly in my mind before I launch further accusations, I fight to be fair to a man who saved my life more than once.

And I remember, all too clearly... It isn't about us. It's just a mistake. So, what gets remembered? I hope to remember you.