

Poems For/From Her

I Never Knew You

I was four when you ascended.
I knew you only through their words.
Your journal, a godsend,
Yet I haven't seen any bluebirds.

I have so many questions none of them can comprehend.
Why did you hide him?
Did you ever think he was the one?
The answers are slim,
I'm trying to get answers from anyone.
I have to go on a whim
to see why you had to run.

"I'm here" I want you to say,
but I can never be certain
which day
you'll be there,
When I can breach the surface
of the possibilities of the
why
instead of settling
with the
goodbye.

The Innocent Years

“delivered a lovely bundle of love and joy to my Mom + Dad.”

In the final moments of December 21, 1917,
I was born.

“I had double Pneumonia”

The odds weren't good for me at a young age,
“but you can see I lived through it.”

“age of 5 was standing on a horseshoe nail box
+ baking pancakes for my Mom + Dad”
Responsibilities were gifted to me,
I was a new tool ready to be worked.

“I started school in Churchville at the
age of 5.”

My mind was always ready to learn,
but my body was needed somewhere else.

“We moved around a lot because
Dad followed jobs wherever they were,
I can't ever remember a day that he
wasn't working.”
He was far but never was he miles away
in our hearts.

My brothers and sisters,
Lee, Gene, Thelma, Powell...

“I always had a baby on my hip.”
Betty, Clarence, Peggy, Bill, Clara, Shirley, Joyce.
raised as if they were my own at times.

“My Dad was a good provider,
we always had plenty to eat +
Mom was a good cook + baker +
she cooked all kinds of good things.”
They were loving and caring,
providing and nourishing,
sweet like fruit cake
And comforting like the Sunday dinner.

“By the time I was thirteen
I could cook all my mom cooked.
So I was well trained in cooking,
baking, housework, + watching kids.”
I was prepared for the world ahead of me.

This was the simple, easy blissful childhood.
With the things, I would face in my late years,
I use this brightness as a way to forge my fires,
bring light in the caves of darkness.

The Attempts for Love

John,
I ran from you
because of the assumptions,
the looks,
the hurt,
the hope,
the darkness?
For a purpose, right,
John?

Charles,
I have never wanted
to relive
this marriage.
Dampened my fires in my own tears
you got out of me.
I wished when we married,
I laced my shoes and my heart
a little tighter.
So they could be prepared
to run,
Runaway from the beast
that loves to play with me.
Our boys are one thing
I don't regret fighting
those constant battles
Charles.

Hugh,
The one,
My true love,
ruler of my heart
the father of my daughters,
the father of Howard, Steven, Hugh Ellis, and Terry.
The man who was there!
Who would do anything to ensure my happiness,
Who worked to provide for us,
Who made me never want to fall
in love again after you went.
The man who never stopped loving,
Hugh.

Hugh

Even when you're gone,
I still feel the way your legs
were able to hold me up
as I sat on your lap and watched
our children play.

Your sweat falling
down your brow when I would caress
your face once you came home.

Your stubbornness
as you would never admit you were wrong,
but willing to make up your ignorance
with sundaes.

The love you mended
my soul with each stitch,
a memory to replace the dark
out of the heart they created.

Our hands clutched
each other for strength as we thought
our child was going to die in the first days
of his diagnosis.

Our salty droplets
from the ocean of sadness flooding
from our souls
as our first child dies,
as our children lost their brother,
and as we all lost Howie.

Even with my years without you,
I can still feel your body,
mind,
soul,
brains,
quips,
kindness,
your love
in our children,
their children,
and in their children.

It's been a long time Hugh
and even as the Lord takes me
away from our children,
I can't wait to see you,
my love.

I Understand

I can feel your fears.
Empty lines on the page,
scarce description of darker times,
the shakiness of the pen drifting
over the paper.
"I don't know's" - a fluent phrase
from your descendants,
attempting to reason with the ghosts
the sit at the dinner table.

I can feel your love.
smile lines engraved into your children,
desperation for another bite of your food,
laughter - a common side effect of the memories

of you,
the endless stories of who you were...
never getting old.

I can feel you.
Caressing my confusion
with good reasoning,
admiring your humbleness
the kindness you invoked into your children
through the simple heirloom
wrapped around my uncalloused finger.

The gift that keeps giving as it reminds
me of you,
who you were,
why you left,
how you survived,
when you knew...
all of my questions seem to fade
into the darkness
as I aspire to write these poems
that can fit in your wallet
to be in your light.

I love the woman I can't remember,
Catherine Louise Wellen.