

two days ago, she lost her first tooth;
two months ago, she climbed that
yellow bus,
backpack half the length of her.
She did not cry out, *Mama!*
She did not cry.
Two minutes ago
she held my hand
then let go.
And I am left to hold
candy wrappers,
her lingering sweetness.

Halloween, Age Five & Thirty-Five

Last year
I carried Page down shadowed paths;
tonight she races through moonlit grass,
gypsy friend Ava skips behind,
their laughter like the lilt of chimes.

Oh, how close the sky
in this star globe,
and how I wish to freeze time—
keep my child here
in sweatshirt beneath fairy dress,
wings aflutter with every step—but

I ponder my father's process—
how it would be easier to capture
images by day, but there is something
to his deliberate unveiling, his patient
uncovering,
(with eyes drenched in wonder)
that reveals his real nature.
My father, ever the teacher, unfolds
each of his children this way:
through such gentle illumination,
such quiet searching. It is a good thing
Dad's pupils are coal-black, his irises, sepia:
to filter the light
of his blinding kindness.

until the shadows emerge in color,
until he discovers a purple blur
beneath all that night:
a lone iris lost in the reeds.
Near dawn, my father pulls this flower
from the shadows and names it *Fragile Beauty*.
And I think that about sums it up—
this once-hidden bloom, now here
in sharp focus—one bright yellow tongue,
one violet throat translating hope.

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Origami Poetry Project

These Onyx Hours

by Heather Sullivan © 2009

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Daylight Saving

*It is He who reveals the profound and
hidden things.
He knows what is in the darkness, and the
light dwells with Him. ~ Daniel 2:22*

My father shoots his photos in the dark.
The moon, his flashbulb, tacked
to a backdrop of sky. His camera lens:
a telescope to penetrate these onyx hours.

Later, Dad brings his findings home;
like a poet, he exposes the ink sea.
Slowly, he lifts layers of darkness
from the snapshot's surface..