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**Origami Poetry Project**

## **A Photograph**

Lawrence J. Krips © 2012

## **A Photograph**



**Lawrence J. Krips**

### **A Photograph**

She looks straight at the camera,  
a sly smile faintly upturned on her right.  
Her left hip juts towards him.  
She knows something, a secret  
purposely not shared with the world,  
perhaps only with her lover.

He leans on the car, confidently relaxed, handsome,  
an arm gently encompasses her left shoulder.  
He looks into the distance, sees happy imaginings  
having found something, something emergent,  
a new home of grace and fulfillment.

And there they pose in black and white  
before a thirties car in an unknown field,  
photographed by an anonymously held camera;  
unwittingly disclosing  
their smug joy,  
their newly simmering passion.

I love their love,  
her femininity,  
his proud protectiveness.  
My shock is the revelation  
they ever felt this way,  
ever experienced the profound secret.

When is it, they forgot  
to love one another?  
Why did they lose this preciousness?  
Was it the struggle to attain?  
Was it the busy life they chose --  
the children, the money, the house?  
Was it they pursued what they thought  
to be most important rather  
than what they knew?  
Quandaries' questions evoked  
by the photograph's foreshadow.

But now I have this gift before me,  
a present posthumously proffered  
endowed with their whisper,  
"Take this bequest, our son, and love  
no matter the story to follow."

### **Yahrzeit**

Nineteen years ago this night  
I viewed your body  
contorted by death  
into a form unlike any  
assumed during life.  
In that hospital basement  
you did not care  
about such worldly matters.  
The aide who accompanied me  
kept apologizing for his presence.  
I understood the legality,  
while resenting restrictions  
on my only wish  
— just to embrace you,  
an intimacy refused me  
in your life.  
Would I have said  
something different,  
something more meaningful,  
out of ear shot?

Don't know.  
Don't remember  
what I did say  
to your rigid coldness that night.  
In that subterranean sanctuary,  
while my wife and children,  
your grandchildren,  
patiently waited in the lobby above,  
my once generous provider,  
lay delicate and vulnerable and open,  
attitudes you did not envision in life.  
These years later,  
divorced, children grown,  
I sit before a fireplace  
in New England woods  
Yahrzeit candle glowing  
on the mantlepiece.  
I go out to get more wood,  
put it on the fire  
and look up to see  
the flame extinguished.

### **Consecration**

The trees formed in a circle  
up upon a ridge,  
just a hundred feet or so from the stream  
feeding the cascade below.  
Clearly, these elders were here  
to be among the ancient spirits of this  
mossy Northwest.

Of course, the conversation  
took decades as these giants grew.  
Each in this circle,  
fulfilling life's authority  
in this consecrated conclave  
now centuries old.  
They may briefly remark,  
in future years, of the man  
who fleetingly sat in the  
valley by the stream over there.  
Whereas I will probably savor the time  
I invoked and admired  
these old ones,  
summoning their wisdom,  
at our preordained meeting  
as I prepare to join  
my council of elders.

A limb reaching, creating  
their gathering arms in arms.  
A slim one began to turn  
in future conversation.  
Another, an older fellow,  
bent backward by a comment's  
humorous inference,  
began to laugh.