

Twilight Is Merely A Shade of Color

by Ajay Vishwanathan

My front lawn was dying, pocked in sick, brown patches. A small animal had tread across wet mud, its spoor still undisturbed. The twilight mist wreathed my trees in diaphanous folds. Its edges fluttering in the dull breeze, today's town newspaper lay at my old feet, open to the obituary page.

Every morning since being incapacitated a year ago, I turned my attention to that page, waiting for names I knew to show up. Slowly, they did. They were friends, they were colorful, now dead, now flat obituaries riddled in platitudes. With a crumbling pen that my son had won at a school contest - seemed like in eons past - I drew unsteady circles around the names. And stared at them, the names strewn like jagged rocks on a barren plain.

Today, the circle seemed wobblier. It was around Gladys, first my ex, then a friend until I started shriveling away from her memory. Her eulogy came from her first son, Jack, who wrote pleasant things about her. But my eyes were on the photograph, from her thirties I guessed, tresses shining, that smile like early Spring. Jack had chosen a good photograph. Just that she looked prettier in person.

Tonight I'll feel different, my sky will look different, even those stars, every star once a life on Earth, once mortal. I'll soon be that star, a pinhole of light in the mammoth darkness, softening, diffusing, becoming the name that somebody else will draw a circle around.

