

Native to Afghanistan

by Anne Elezabeth Pluto

Your father's remembrance
and memorial
would be
inappropriate
for me
to attend.
never mind
the truth
the searing combination
of desire and memory
moving back one
calendar year
when you wrote
and asked me
to be your spring
and we met
in the greening park
eager to find the hemlock
grove and lie together
one body made from
two unlatched
like a screen door
watching each other's
breath for the pause
to heaven
and the fall then back
to earth.

Walking later
down the ice path

I hold on to you
the spring ahead
hawks above
mating erratically
we watch them
a sign
of our own
unfinished
love.

This year
your dead father
commands the day —
belongs to
your ill wife
your sad son.
I cannot come
to that gathering.

I shall
instead
remember
the hawks circling
overhead
the ice on my red
shoes
the taste of your
last kiss
and how you smiled
when I told you
the tulip
was native
to Afghanistan.

