

# The Clarity of Loss

*by Collin Kelley*

This year I did not mark  
the day of your death.  
I let it slip by in an afternoon  
filled with music you'll never hear,  
words you'll never read,  
a chorus of voices raised in protest  
at the unwavering passage of time.  
I don't need a number  
to know that you are gone.

Since you went away, other tragedies  
have left their toll, the media  
mining the fragile, the exhaustion,  
the relentless sorrow of things we cannot change.  
We have made high art out of twisted cars,  
planes crashing, buildings falling.

I have dissected my past into little pieces  
and put them in their proper places.  
I have begun the process of growing up  
and older, of stripping down memories  
to their essence and casting off the extraneous.

Even without a calendar, we will be born  
and die, clock work beyond our control.  
And there is a clarity in loss  
because it reveals the true path, the one common  
experience, the thing we all share.  
You have died and I will join you, and time,  
which we have enslaved ourselves to, will snap,  
and in whatever an instant is,  
it will be as if we never parted.

