# Reflections

*by* Deborah Oster Pannell

Rocks and crevasses, vestiges of
a bitter past, lie directly in my path
I thought I would be far beyond them by now
But no, the passage of time
is never that deliberate,
It pulses with expectations, and demons,
fears, reflections of our worst selves
    The rift of losing you was jagged and violent
Then swiftly smoothed over by future thoughts,
daily exigencies and the need to be confident
Today I am swooning with sadness
As I remember the sweet promise of all our plans
We had it all mapped out.
Now, seated in this room,
Surrounded by the detritus of your collections
The accumulations of your dog years,
Somehow meant to fill the empty spaces
of your unrealized dreams,
Placeholders for the challenges that
would remain abstract, untested
I am left with the regrets of that other life,
reminders of what could not be,
daring me to attempt the impossible now
    Oddly, I feel free, and happy beyond belief
An unseen beat continues to tap out
A path into tomorrow
And nothing is stopping me from dancing

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