

(There Are Ways) to Come Home

by Jason Lee Norman

When you return home, one year to the day that you left us, one year to the day that you decided that you should go elsewhere and the day that it rained, the day that we asked for something, the day that a man destroyed himself in front of a grocery store and the day there were fireworks and the day we saw icebergs floating down the river, remember to look to the east to remember why you left in the first place. Don't try to measure how much the trees have grown; there won't be any.

When you return home, one year to the day that you left us, you will wonder if you can do it all over again. You will wonder how you can knock on the same doors again and talk to the same shop keepers again, and you will look east to the factories and the smoke clouds that they make and your lungs will hurt and you will immediately want to leave again, to go away like you did one year before.

When you return home, one year to the day that you left us, you will look for changes. You will look for new street signs, you will look for children, you will look for vineyards. We took everything with us when you left, one year ago to the day, we took the seeds and signposts out of the ground and we followed you. A few stayed behind to turn the lights off. So when you return home, one year from the day that you left, please send for us and we will come back to turn the city back on.

