

Love Poem

If we live to be ninety-four
and we lie side by side
in our adjustable nursing home beds
and if we talk then day after day
about how soft were the boiled eggs
and how tough was the corned beef
If we marvel at the skill of the photographer
each month when we flip the calendar
to the next photo of roses or mums
and argue every Christmas whether it was
our granddaughter Kerry or niece Rhonda
who sent the plastic poinsettia for the window sill
If we clutch the small hands of our frightened great-grandsons
as their parents bribe them to kiss us goodbye
If we sit for long hours or days without talking,
me at the window and you by the door,
and insist on having your morning paper and my lavender talcum
even though your eyes are too clouded to see more
than the largest headline and the powder is helpless
to soften the odours of this room
If we dance one evening at our seventieth wedding anniversary
tottering cheerfully for three minutes while the cameras flash
and the unfamiliar faces of our nephews,
granddaughters and sons-in-law beam with delight
If we wake up the next day in our adjustable beds
swallow our pills and talk of runny eggs
If you turn over one February morning
to find me dead of some petty cough or cold
and you are moved to another room with one bed
by the door and space for a table and chair
Will you remember the first touch
of your hand beneath my full breast
And the glint of April on my hair?

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