

James B. Nicola

Turn of Imagination

I don't imagine anymore the way
I used to imagine. Learning to stop,
to "grow up," as they say, might count as
the most significant turning point of
a life, but might have been no turn
at all; rather, just the fruit of growth,
the destination of one leg of a trip,
the goal at the end of the field, the aim
of becoming.

I don't imagine coming upon
a secret of the world in the world somewhere
out there; searching within I'm constantly
amazed.

I don't imagine meeting one day
the love of my life, who was there all along
and says, Where have you been all my life?
I imagine running into someone who's
read something I wrote and in part
recalls it.

I don't imagine going on forever
but in my absence—and I've long
been absent, haven't I?—imagine
you.

James B. Nicola, a returning contributor, is the author of six collections of poetry, the latest being *Fires of Heaven: Poems of Faith and Sense*. His decades of working in the theater culminated in the nonfiction book *Playing the Audience: The Practical Guide to Live Performance*, which won a *Choice* award.