

Rick Christiansen

George's Bloom

The bad stuff never stops happening really. It fades for awhile
and then re-emerges as prophecy.
We learn that about memory.
Experience cuts deep lines into the self.

Families are like storms.
They can rumble and darken for awhile.
And then the rain starts.
Sometimes there is lightening and you hope for shelter.
Because it can steal your breath away and cause third degree burns.

You may wish that it was all more like a game of Checkers.
A board you could pull out only when you wished.
A set number of pieces
half one shade and half another. Always assembled in the same configuration.
With unchanging rules and predictable outcomes.

But instead you have to listen for the wind. Sniff the air. Watch the clouds.
Sometimes you have to hurry home.

We lost George a couple of years ago. But he is still somehow present.
I do not hear his voice.
It is hard to explain.
I sense his intent.
He urges me towards patience and acceptance as I prepare for each coming storm.

I do not hear his voice.

But I feel the words. I feel more than the words
I feel the meaning of those words and their importance.
It is conveyed to me daily and most strongly when the wind has risen
and I can smell how deep the rain is going to be.

Patience and acceptance.
Almost like a Yoga coach whispering behind your right ear.
“Breathe.”

The experience is figurative, not literal.
But it is him.

Soon after George was gone away from us in all of the ways and manners in which most people mark departure, I was looking at a yard full of identical bushes.
Each bush was covered by green tinged blossoms.
But there was one blossom that bucked the trend.
A flower going its own way. It was brilliantly white and seemed to surge forward.
Away from all the rest.
It was unexpectedly unique.

I knew that it would fade and wilt and that, over time, new storms would scatter its' petals.
But I hoped for it to re-emerge as prophecy.
And it has.
Patience and acceptance.
George's Bloom.

Rick Christiansen is a retired executive who fills his days with grandchildren, pets and poetry. He lives near the muddy Mississippi in Missouri. He has published several poems in *Oddball Magazine* and is currently working on a chap book.