

Winning Poems in 2021 CFCP, Inc., Annual Contest

8. I Remember, First Place

Music from the Past

I didn't expect the music.

With a longing to see that old house one more time
before it was torn down,
I drove to Rockland,
nearly a ghost town now, where my mother
grew up with her many siblings.

I found the house weather-worn, sagging, lonely.
Peering in the dark kitchen window, I heard music.

Perhaps it was Grandma, humming at her
sewing machine, creating exquisite dresses
she sold to help support the family.
Or was it Grandpa, singing and rocking
telling Finnish tales to his grandchildren.

It might have been the copper miners,
the upstairs boarders, singing, happy
that their long shift was over
relieved that they had survived another day.

Maybe it was my Aunt Helen
who died when she was sixteen,
dancing and singing now
to make up for all those lost years.

How long did I stand there
gazing into the window
with the lilac bush nearly hugging me
and all the while, music,
ghostly music flowing from the past
from those with their stories to tell.

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