

The Messenger

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Now to Then and Back Again

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Now To Then and Back Again

While up in the attic,
Listening to the rain gently beat against the walls, roof,
and windows

And searching through memories
That I had stored in trunks and boxes
I came upon a photograph.

It was a yellowed black and white,
Ripped at the corners,
that your mother took of you and me
the summer we stayed at the lake.

I sit back and close my eyes,
running my fingers over the photograph,
delighting in its cool smoothness,
tracing the boundaries of its worn edges.
In my mind, the picture explodes into color.
I can see how pink the dogwood blossoms were.
They were a bold, daring hue that is not possible anymore.
And the lake was a crisp, still blue,
one that no longer exists on the spectrum.
The wind played a soft, almost imperceptible symphony,
with tones so subtle they could only be heard that summer.

You and I stood there
amidst the glory of that place and time.
How young I was.
How alive you were.

That was the last time I saw you,
there, in that photograph.
You have stayed there forever,
in that world of colors and music
that have vanished from existence.

I, in my solitude,
sit in my secluded attic
and strain to hear the music,
to see the colors
that have evaded my senses for so long.
And I watch the rain splash along the cold landscape
reflecting the gray sky.

Continued

So I hold on to this photograph-
it is all I have left of a time I lost
and that you kept.

As I try in vain to recall the astonishing pink of the dogwoods
and the echo of music that I used to take for granted,
I envy you your death.
Because you see it all so clearly,
Because you are forever young.

Ty Schwartz