

A Wake

By Glenn Currier

Last night I went to an old friend's wake
he lay in the coffin now at peace
gone overseas from the land of pain.
Pictures of his active life and loves
lay about on small tables
where persons gathered alone
tearfully remembering him and the stars in his universe
dwelling in moments of solitude with his soul
to reflect on the paths he crossed
entering for a brief era
the valley of their loss.

The room was loud with laughter
and stories like the one I told
of beer and touch football three decades ago
when our bones were young
joints moved easily and swiftly
running and receiving passes
on legs that now move like molasses.

Hugging old friends and catching up
was like drinking a cup
of sadness and joy.

He was a man of peace
and there in that still presence
past grievances and sins
no longer swirled among us
but only volumes of shared lives
meeting our husbands and wives
abiding in a circle of re-remembering
as if we were limbs and organs
of the same human flesh
still pulsing with unfinished work.

We were a wake
to our souls and his
and today I meet all those beautiful souls
in place of hope
that these precious moments
of rising from death
will remain with us
for our small sliver of eternity.