

## Art Heifetz

### The Memory of Love

As sleeping children  
Place their arms  
Around their pillow,  
So we embrace our grief,  
My fingers tracing circles  
On your moist cheeks,  
Your warm breath  
Caressing my ear  
With words like "it's all right"  
When clearly it is not.

Language cannot bear  
The weight of our sadness  
Our grief is inarticulate,  
Torn from the heart,  
The barely audible cry  
Of a lone whale  
Seeking out his pod.

Our son has disappeared  
Without a trace,  
An almost man  
With stubble on his chin  
Who loved funny hats  
And Monty Python songs,  
Who played klezmer  
On his clarinet  
And danced to gamelan.  
Who wanted clowns  
To lead his funeral.

What dark vision  
Propelled him  
Beneath the truck's wheels,  
We cannot say.  
He left behind  
No parting words,  
Just an out-of-tune piano,  
Sitting in a corner of our bedroom,  
Unplayed

People greet us on the street  
With homilies about "God's plan"  
And "Heaven's peace."  
We don't want him in a "better place."  
We want him here with us.

Yet all that remains  
Is the memory of love,  
Tentative and fragile  
Like insect wings  
Preserved in amber  
And the half-completed imprint of  
Cretaceous leaves on shale.  
Our only proof of his existence,  
Our only consolation.

**Art Heifetz** is a retired State Farm insurance agent, returning to his first love poetry. At the urging of friends, he has begun to publish his poems, with 10 slated for publication.