

James Hannon – Two Poems

Frozen

Snow
covered the roof
and icicles
shadowed
the porch
the night
of your midnight
shift.

You had left
your purse
in our bedroom
and heard me
whispering
already
in the guest room.

No great surprise
in that time of our lives,
or that moment of history.

But as hard as I tried
I could never cross
those twenty feet back
to the right room.
Twenty years later I fear
I'll drown in the flood
if the ice ever melts.

Solitaire All Night

Solitaire at night is played
to keep the memories still,
buried like swindled Polynices
beneath his sister's handfuls of dirt.

What comes alone
in the quiet of 3 a.m. but the past?
Not a happy, frolicking past
but the injuries that crippled us,

the blindside betrayals
that linger beyond all reason
through a season of endless gloom
'til we numb the hyperactive
hemisphere of brain still baffled
by the how and why.

Better to block that tape
with jack on queen,
the click, click, click
of a new tableau, each game
a new beginning
with no dispiriting history
and where everyone plays
by the same rules.

But what a vicious harpy
picks our guts!
Even here we must unearth
buried cards to find those alone
that can save us.
We learn soon enough--
if the cards didn't fall right at the start
the only outcome is defeat.

James Hannon is a psychotherapist in Massachusetts where he accompanies adolescents and adults recovering from disappointment, deceptions and addictions. Before becoming a therapist he was a professor of sociology at several colleges and universities in New England. Recent publications include poems in *Assisi*, *Blue Lake Review*, *The Wayfarer*, and *Gathered: Contemporary Quaker Poets*.