

Robert K. Johnson – Two Poems

Another Long-Time Friend

Not when I learned Leo, too,
had died,

not when I attended

his memorial service, crowded
with people and sadness--

not till a later dusk,

while driving toward a restaurant
where we often

enjoyed meals together,

did his death hit me
so hard

I had to pull over

to the curb and stay there
minute after

darkening minute.

Echoes That Never Fade

In your slow final years,
whether you live in a home
fringed with grass
or surrounded by cement,

always

there is a deep
uncrossable ditch

that lies between you
and family members, friends--
all the dead people
you want to walk up to

and tell how much you regret
something you said to them
or didn't say,
or did or didn't do--

something you ache to set right

while the ditch keeps reminding you
it is too late too late
too late.

Robert K. Johnson, a retired Professor of English, taught at Suffolk University in Boston for many years. His poems have appeared individually in many magazines and newspapers. In addition, eight collections of his poetry have been published.