

Rona Laban – Two Poems

My Father's plant stand

I wonder whose house
that table is in now,
what corner it's been relegated to.
Does it hold a plant like intended
but then, it was intended for me.
My father so proud, telling the story
of how he had acquired it
for her, for my mother.
I left it there in the apartment.

Flying down to get him,
bringing back just what could fit
in the empty suitcase,
shirts, pants, shorts.
I brought him back to the apartment one last time
to make sure I didn't leave anything important behind.

He didn't mention the plant stand then
or even look back as we left,
though he must have known
he would never return.
There was nothing left, no one

I might have thought of that plant stand
once or twice before,
but today walking through the store
with a terra cotta pot,
for the one remaining plant
someone had sent when he died.

I saw the small table,
black, plain wood
not ornately etched, beautiful
like the one my father had bought
for her, for my mother
how badly I wanted that plant stand now.

Greyhound bus

I write poems for my father,
but it was my mother I failed.
I took care of him,
she died worrying about me.

Taking the bus
from Vermont to New York
with my new boyfriend.
My father not happy about it,
"This is a family matter, private
you don't bring strangers."

The boyfriend went on his way.
I went in to see Mom,
what was left of Mom
in fetal position, gasping for breath.
I don't think she knew I was there.

We drove back to New Jersey in silence,
had dinner at the diner.
Slipping into the booth,
the light illuminating our pain,
could the waitress see it as she took our order?

Back home retreating to our rooms
waiting for sleep's sweet escape.
The phone rang at midnight,
she was gone.

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Rona Laban has been a copywriter, as well as an editor for a published writer. She's been in two anthologies: *Making Waves* and *Voices from Everywhere*. Her haikus' have appeared in *Extract(s)*: *Daily Dose of Lit*, an online zine. She was the facilitator of a local poetry group and has been a feature reader at the Plymouth, MA Center for the Arts.