

shocking

to lose something
so important

i mean, this wasn't like
the remote or
keys or
even a
famous painting

this was something actually priceless

how could this
happen?
how could someone
so full of life
lose their kid?

how could a kid
so full of life
be gone?

couldn't wrap
my mind
around
her departure

in the dead of winter
age 20
threshold of adulthood
threshold of next
not unlike a spring season
for her
so she died
full of life and spring
in the dead of winter?
what the...?

she had so much life to live
wait... what was the point?

we had been getting her to
adulthood
showing her how
leading the way
shoe-tying
piano-playing

stick-shift driving
a thousand things
we did it
she observed
then followed

that's the way this works
kids follow parents
but then she died
and the sequence
was wrecked

hurt so bad

messed up eating
messed up sleeping
messed up eliminating waste
messed up routine
messed up directions to post office

messed up everything

i'd be talking
and words would start acting
like little tripwires
connected to
little memories
connected to
little detonations
of sadness

just normal conversations
dentist or
barber or
grocery store
have any kids?
sons?
daughters?
how many kids do you have?

next thing i knew
i was slipping behind closed doors
trying not to make a scene
in public space
dentist or
barber or
grocery store

yeah, just trying to find
secluded place to
make room for
little detonations
of sadness

weeks

until the headstone arrived
until the sunshine arrived
march maybe
maybe april
little flames of sprouting green
all throughout the cemetery
in springtime

in springtime
we went to see the grave marker
to mark her grave with flowers
wife and me

i'll not soon forget intentional
way she knelt
took a breath
and arranged
uprooted plants

way she leaned
back on heels
fingers absently gripping
fistfuls of grass

way she snatched a tear with
the back of her hand
dirt and moisture creating
little patterns of grief
on her cheek

way her hair fell
over her face
way i felt looking at her
how much i loved her
how much i wanted to
throw up

i stood close
~~like a tree providing shade~~
~~like a sentinel providing protection~~
useless

she arranged and then rearranged
as if this spot
might be fixed
with uprooted plants

as if uprooted lives
might be fixed
with an arrangement of
uprooted plants

started to say
it doesn't matter

started to say
nothing matters

but i stopped
because something
very much started to matter
in the way she worked
so diligently amid
the sadness

i've thought
five or
thirty-seven or
a thousand times since

*what is life
if not beauty's pursuit
at the edge of the grave?*

Indigo: the color of grief

bit.ly/indigocampaign

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