

Dining in a Restaurant
by Sheri Doyle

In the company of strangers,
who spoke softly by the window
across tables for two at dusk
I lost her a year ago today, cheers to her
or laughed uncontrollably over at the bar
only you would get this, man
or where whispers swept our necks and earlobes,
was the close exchange of words
of air and breath from moving lips.
All of us packed into the restaurant,
shoulder to shoulder, back to back
sometimes just inches apart,
we were faces above candlelight,
eyes in a flare, strange but connected
glances so close that we could see
the flecks of gold in deep brown,
the glint of blue in grey.

We could have eaten at home
but we ate together in crowded rooms
not to hold or know each other
but to exist near one another
as if to close the distances between us,
to feel the light in our shared darkness—
the way we might together hold the moon
lifting now above buildings on these quiet streets.