

## Sister Who Could Not (*for Daniel*)

It doesn't matter how  
tarnished the relationship or  
what water and bramble have passed beneath the bridge;  
what you thought was once lost you recognize  
was not,  
for this loss proves all the previous losses  
insignificant.

They  
were simply the fraying of the worn-in collar;  
the discoloration of the shirt worn well and long  
and washed too many times in the background beneath consciousness.  
This loss is unmendable  
even with modern technology -  
machines that pump and groan and beep their warning  
of the inevitable that waits with the grim reaper round the corner.

The DNA of "before" and "after" is already shifting.  
The hint of the recognition of "who I was before" rising  
like the dust storm before all settles  
and layers life with the gritty can't quite get the taste out of my mouth  
and eyes.  
Until all restructures and eyes see clearly through the scarring of the retina  
that can only be seen by others with similar striations.

We stand together then,  
In the bittersweet preciousness of family,  
In the bittersweet preciousness of humanity,  
gaining the bond that is forged in such loss.

We stand alone then,  
in the recommitment to live well and true  
and by doing so we honor, pay homage  
to our oh so dearly departed  
who could not.