

2021

A Year

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A Year

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Westfield State University

It’s been a year since you slipped from this life, stolen
in your sleep— I awoke to a voicemail...
My mother, dead.

A year, some of them good days some of them bad,
some of them mornings born
clueless and opaque, only to turn into hot
drowsy afternoons lit with a white filmy
sun which freckled the snow and melted
the ice, turning the mud beneath my
feet the color of clay.

A year,
But what does *that* matter? It won’t help
you now.
The number is arbitrary, like the tea
and cookies
the nurse put out for us to
nibble on as you died on the
hospital bed.
People come up to me and tell
me: you visit them in their dreams,
to which I reply: “isn’t that something”,
twitching all the way back to the punch bowl.

But I do take walks,
and sit by pools of water, talking to birds,
asking them
if they know where you’ve been?

And I sing and
cry And cry and
create,
noticing when my sister’s
glasses rest on the bridge
of her nose,
a dead ringer for her mother.

And I laugh when my brother
nibbles on the cookie offered,
staving off grief, teaching us to
treat ceremony for the poor
joke it is.

These are my equivalents,
the things that hit me like
a thunderbolt, leaving me full of will
and dignity when I’m
running from
but arriving at the same
place. You.

About the Author

David J. Cook is a Department of English graduate student at Westfield State University. This poem was written under the mentorship of Professor Glen Brewster. David currently teaches at Hampshire Regional High School. David plans to pursue a Ph.D. in the future and work on fiction and poetry.