

*tick, tick, tick.*

I fear the silence that fills the room  
between the *ticks, ticks, ticks*  
of seconds, minutes passed.

I fear between those pauses of time,  
of still *life*,  
that my memory of *you* will stir  
and rise to the forefront of my mind.

*You* and *your* songs  
that haunt the twists and turns in the house *we* shared.  
*Your* quips and jokes  
which brought smiles to the face of Mother's and mine alike  
And *your* homely affection—hugs, forehead kisses, and hand holding—  
that are now wholly foreign to my a head, and f  
r s, i  
m n  
g  
e  
r  
s  
.

*tick. tick. tick.*

*Your* eyes  
last I saw,  
were jaded  
and gone was the vivacious spirit  
I once assumed was simply a thread  
in the fabric of *your* being.

*Your* speckles of gray and white  
that briefly showed in *our* last few years together  
reminded me *ticks* and *tocks* touched you as well.

And wrinkles *you* allowed me to see  
deepen and spread across your worn hands

and face that masked a heavy,  
burdened,  
and sad  
soul.

*tick-tock.                      tick-tock.                      tick-tock.*

Was it time's whispers of age that sent you away?  
Or were *you* simply compelled by the promise of anew youth  
in the form of discreet pleasure?

God knows *we* all face the cruelties,  
realities  
of time.

Perhaps *your* affairs were inevitable as well,  
but *father*, I wonder if *your* leave was.  
*Father*, I fear that this rift of *ours* was preordained.

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

Or maybe what I truly fear,  
between the cracks

and slips of time,  
is the reminder  
that in a world where I called *you Dad*,  
you chose to leave me  
nameless.

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

*tock.*

*tick.*

*tock.*

*Dad*, I fear I will soon forget the last comfort  
*you* bestowed on me—the image of  
*your* back.