



## Museum of the Soon to Depart

**Andy Young**

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Poets come equipped. Where mortals lower their lids in terror, poets play a game of stare down—making hay through the pain, lemonade of loss, fun of fear—never ever looking away. Steely Andy Young lives in New Orleans after a Southern West Virginia childhood. She is a graduate of Warren Wilson's MFA Program for Writers and now teaches at New Orleans Center for Creative Arts.

### *Villanelle of Her Absence*

*I keep on forgetting my mother is dead.  
The fact is sealed: a shard in a vitrine.  
Loss sews me up with its surgical threads.*

*I almost send her a pic of the kids  
hugging the dog in the sun. Their sweet grins.  
I keep on forgetting my mother is dead.*

*I send it to my sister. Try to get out of bed.  
Light a candle in front of her picture again.  
I'm lost; breaking at the sutured threads.*

*Which saint for students? Which for staying fed?  
She knew the saints: more like friends than religion.  
I keep on forgetting my mother is dead*

*until birthdays, Thanksgiving—I'll dread  
every time she can no longer be in—  
her loss the last gossamer thread*

*of the time on earth she had to spend  
with us. Why didn't I pay attention?  
I'll keep on, forgetting my mother is dead.  
Loss is remaking me: cloth, filling, thread.*

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2024)

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