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To My Husband

It's 8 am, and I already miss

our waking, gray shade, night's

alter ego, the sun riding love's

ketch into a new day. All is right

is this white room, your smooth back

arced to my belly. We carry

our friable dreams with care

and white cotton gloves, mis-

taking their portholes for portents, back-

hoes digging tomorrow's grave. Last night

we were younger. I age as I write

each word of this poem. My love,

time ribbons us forward, love

a weighty knapsack and a sail.

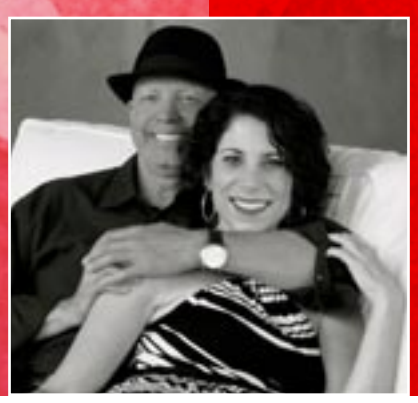
Loving Elya

Each night, I dance before Elya at the foot of our bed in my underpants. I hike them up as high as they will go and feel bald and chubby and old and ridiculous. But in my belly, I feel a happiness too simple to name, an idiot delight, as I bob and cavort like an over-sized water bug.

Once, I wished to be famous, to be known. Now I just wish to know Elya in ever smaller ways. I wish to know things as simple as watering a lawn and remembering to remove the used coffee filter from the coffee maker because that makes Elya happy. And yesterday I sat with Elya on the steps of our house and held her hand and the smallness of it seemed infinite, the softness, the she-ness. And a shriek of pleasure ran through me and reminded me of how alone I'd been for so many years and how "not alone" now is bigger than any fear and yet how small her hand is. I kiss her and feel all barefoot as if I were floating in the soft, ferocious history of love.

Elya Braden + Jon Pearson

Jon Pearson is a writer, speaker, artist, and creative thinking guru. He has been a cartoonist for the Oakland Tribune, an extra for the New York Metropolitan Opera, a college professor, and a mailman. He writes now for the same reason he played with his food as a kid: to make the world a better place. His work has been nominated for two Pushcart Prizes and has appeared in numerous publications. He once created a human computer, and invented a Nonsense Laboratory. He claims to have incredible frog legs. www.jonpearsoncreative.com



Elya Braden took a long detour from her creative endeavors to pursue an eighteen-year career as a corporate lawyer and entrepreneur. She is now a writer and mixed-media artist living in Los Angeles and is assistant editor of Gyroscope Review. Her work has been published in Algebra of Owls, Calyx, Causeway Lit, Rattle Poets Respond, Willow Review and elsewhere and has been nominated for Best of the Net. Her chapbook, Open The Fist, will be released in June 2020 from Finishing Line Press. You can find her online at www.elyabraden.com.