

Late

Jerrilyn Black

I mourn my father.
I am afraid to relive him
lest my heart break.

He had circled outside my perimeter,
did not intrude, but hovered
undetected. I rejected.

To the end of his days
I was no partaker of his feast.
I had no taste.

He ate in barrenness, at the last
in cold hospital nights, calling
my name. I did not wait.

Once I hugged his sedated body
bridled to tubes, bitten with sores.
Said Goodnight, turned.

Surprisingly, he answered,
a gruff solid sound,
a deep last greeting.

Had he always heard me, waited
my lifetime to answer to words
I did not speak,

always ready to say Goodnight?
Tears tremble, tears I dare not loosen.
I will drown.