

### Lopsided Mailbox

You're standing on a crowded sidewalk  
waiting for the light to change so you can  
cross. People are milling about you, but their  
voices sound distant.

Like you're in a bubble,  
separated from them.

You glance up as the light turns green, and everyone moves to cross the street.  
You're pulled along with them.  
But you don't fight it.

You begin the walk to your destination.

Home?

Or the place where you sleep at night?

You can't decide.

Either way, you walk to the building that holds childhood memories and broken dreams. You  
swore you'd never return, yet here you are.

The mailbox is lopsided  
just like it was the day you left.

The faded red door and chipped white paint on the shutters shows  
how time has passed.

Nostalgia follows you to the entrance, pushing past the bold FORECLOSED sign  
hanging halfheartedly on the door.

You walk inside.

Into the Christmases and Easters and birthday extravaganzas.

Into the home cooked meals and family laughter.

Into the tickle fights and smiling faces.

Smiling faces that soon stopped smiling.

Yelling now.

Your parents fighting, bills being thrown onto the floor. Your mother crying.

There's a knocking at the door.

"Sir, Ma'am? You have been ordered by the courts to vacate the premises."

A suitcase and the old minivan that broke down every ten miles.

You remember driving away from your childhood.

You remember having to grow up too soon.

You remember everything falling  
a p a r t.

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10th

RESA #1

You shiver again.  
Pull your jacket closer. Turn around and walk out.  
You promised yourself you'd never return.

And now, you are sure you can keep that promise.