

# WHAT DEATH TEACHES US

Tonight I think of how death  
teaches us how to live—  
woven with images  
of distant names and accomplishments  
on illegible tombstones—  
a hint to enjoy life's simple pleasures.

Perhaps this is a reminder  
left behind by the dead,  
like Socrates who professed that death  
has no place in our lives.

By my bed sits a Buddhist book,  
earmarked pages saying there is no end,  
and praising the power of living.

It describes the power  
of living in the present moment:  
gears fixed in slow motion,

like time spent setting a dinner table,  
watering flowers, walking in gardens  
or engaged in quiet meditations.

I ache with melancholy  
as my favorite aunt is put to rest  
and leaves no legacy.

Life continues to remind me  
to stop and feel its joy  
over and over again,  
with no regrets  
but just...permission to live.