

The four seasons of a fading mind

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Spring

Sunset dappled warm, pink and purple 'cross your smiling creased face
As we talk of creaking joints and laugh about your old and funny ways
Then you ask me "Where are you going?" eyes searching, quizzically
And I say "I've told you three times Nana," in confused disbelief

A thousand colours bloom and blossom, in a flood kaleidoscopic
When you rang me, lost while driving, though I knew you were myopic
I knew you knew those streets better than the dorsum of your hand
A seed of worry planted in the smooth suburban footpath of our lives and of our plans

Summer

The sun bore down like blankets made of lead and iron and hessian
The haze of heat it shimmered morphing what is real, to false impressions
As you scrawl on paper things you never would forget
And I wondered if this haze was hiding cracks in the road that may grow deeper yet

For creeping through those cracks, so slight, was a chaos of your mind
Which was mirrored in your house things. It was impossible to find
Your prized flowers amongst the weeds, but it was summer still
So we left the weeds to grow and thrive, and tried to enjoy the pleasure past-times with which our days we'd fill

Autumn

Like leaves, dusky and brittle, that snap with the winds of change
Autumn bought you a storm of moods that flickered from elation then to rage
And tears like rain inconsolable, inexplicable, you couldn't verbalize
That hurricane that filled your head or the tears that filled your eyes

The cracks now chasms, left you standing on the cliffs of your frustration
There was no way to bridge the gaps but to cling to ropes of confabulation
You'd assure me that this morning you'd been from here to Timbucktoo
And though I'd say "That's not possible," you'd decided in your mind, that in the absence of other memory, it simply must be true

Winter

Winter bit, left us sleepless and froze right to our hearts
As you screamed nightly of insects that crawl on walls and threaten in the dark
No longer sure of where you were, as the gloom stretched backward over your years
And took you back, to relive so childlike, all your childhood fears

MORE ONLINE

Audio

Listen to Dr. Lennon read this poem.

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And came your fall and then the recognition, we couldn't manage you alone
And though it tore the family from hip to shoulder, we found a nursing home
There you faded, like winter trees, as indolence sapped your brain
And for Mum you died, before your death came near, when on that cold morning
you did not know her name

Spring

The sunrise, crisp and golden touches your calm, creased face
Like Gods' radiant, open arms calling, waiting for embrace
And though memories of screams and rage have left our minds with scars
We hold on to those old times, and the knowledge that your disease isn't who
you are

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