Pure Slush
May 2026

THE LOST LIST

This morning as I sat at my bay window,
and the hummingbird hovered over the daylilies:
and I thought of all I've lost in my seven decades.

First, the shy, five-year-old girl across our street
who died of a tumor bigger than an apple—
then the neurotic parakeet who flew out the window,
the bird my narcissist mother preferred over me.

Then there was grandma,
the elegant Viennese model
who swallowed too many sleeping pills,
in her room beside mine—
sheer curtains waving one final good-bye.

Then Pixie, the gray cat who ran away
and Mon Ami, another cat,
who was flattened by a speeding car,
in front of my home.

My neighbor, an auburn-haired boy
with piercing brown eyes who I had a crush on:
took his own life
to escape his mother's hatred.

My best friend, Nancy,
fourteen with long silken hair,
sprawled out on the pavement after being
tossed in the air by a speeding car.

Years later 83-year old grandpa,
who swam an hour a day in The Atlantic
died on the operating table from a bleeding aorta,
while I sat proudly in new white nursing garb
taking my licensing exams.

Then Lynda, my dapper nursing mentor
who babysat my firstborn, and
taught me how to give morphine shots, the same drug
which killed her as she bolted
from a twenty-story building.

For fifteen years there haven't been losses,
until yesterday when Barbara died—

of lungs coated in nicotine,
who taught me how to be a mom.
Gone years before we were ready to say good-bye.

Seated near my garden Buddha—
I think about how, as I get older,
I become more meditative: each day another blessing
and each day unpredictable.
But it makes me move forward
and yet it stops me at the same time.

I glance back at my studio window
at the dragonfly hovering to say its prayer
before it slowly disappears
into my garden's shadows
leaving the world in my power.