

Empty

By Ann Crago

(Inspired by : At a Sunny Window)

I couldn't bear to look. Through the gently moving net curtains my life was walking away. The sun continued to shine, warming the glass and the air in the room but leaving me cold and chilled. I turned away from the window, turning away from my past into a future I couldn't see. What now? I couldn't stop the relentless march of time or the emptiness that was slowly filling my very soul.

Biting my lip to stop the tears and searching the room for something to focus on and prevent the screams building, I saw the photo. Picking it up, I studied the laughing faces and the joy it portrayed. I would never know that joy again. I know that now. There is nothing but darkness, even the sun has moved behind a cloud as if to confirm my diagnosis.

Twenty years I have nourished and tended this life making sacrifices and avoiding trouble. Happy memories are overtaken by dark thoughts of opportunities missed,, of sleepless nights and worry. In that time my hair has greyed and I have lost the sparkle of youth on my skin. Was it worth all the pain, all the money? Glancing again at the woman in the photo I barely recognise myself. That woman knew who she was and had a great sense of self, brimming with confidence she radiated happiness.

My phone vibrates in my pocket and I answer. My reason for living speaks firmly but with love:

“ Mum, stop moping, I'll be back at the end of term. I love you”

Yes it was worth it. Every second.