

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## **Ineffable Loss**

By Helen Heineman

It's the loss of you I can't describe,  
And yet our life was full of things.  
When we took trips  
We brought back souvenirs,  
Charms for a bracelet, perhaps,  
Postcards, T-Shirts, photos,  
All meant to keep alive forever  
The places we'd been.

But they don't, never can.  
Life's like that.  
Four thousand weeks our longest span,  
And when we're gone, what's left?  
Suits of clothes that fit no one  
As well as they did you.  
A ring, a medal on a chain.  
Though I listen at keyholes,  
Eavesdropping on the past,  
The words you spoke to me are gone,

I didn't cut a lock of hair  
Pressing it in a pin.  
I have your hospital bracelet,  
Stamped with your name and blood type.  
Like the ones our children wore  
When they entered the world.  
It seems both arrivals and departures  
Are announced in these plastic wristlets,  
Points marking a journey,  
Not calling cards,  
But a notice that you've left.