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### Reflecting on a Season of Loss

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### Cover Page Footnote

Artwork by Isidora Monteparo and Asim Ahmed

# REFLECTING ON A SEASON OF LOSS

BY BRINDA RAVAL

Two men in my family used to sit across from each other in the living room  
 They would trade quips and push each other's limits  
 All us bystanders would chuckle, roll our eyes, slink away lest we be pulled in  
 Today, both those men hang as portraits in the "living" room  
 The daily battle of wits has ceased but their presence has never been more palpable  
 Why is it that we can glean the essence of others more strongly in their absence?

Their physical shrouds, the noise of their being  
 The clatter and chaos  
 The sharp words and short tempers  
 The lack of social inhibition  
 Obscures and clashes with the person you love

Distance gives us perspective.  
 Death is the ultimate distance.  
 Death gives us the ultimate perspective.  
 Why does it have to be like that?

My grandfather was so earnest  
 He would beg family, friends, anyone he met at his doctor's appointments  
 To come \*bless\* our home  
 It was a sacred thing for him to receive a guest with care  
 He never cared that people would think he cared too much  
 Called too much  
 Pleaded with them to take just one more sweet too much

Why am I so worried about being "too much" for people?  
 Because all the love in the world squeezed into every minute till it explodes  
 Doesn't feel like enough the moment they're gone  
 Who sets the threshold for "this is enough"?

Don't miss the chance to cherish people  
 In all their complexities when they're with you  
 In death, the essence of who they were becomes so clear  
 You crave every flavor of them  
 Not just the sweet, creamy belly laughs  
 Or the pervasive rich aroma of prayers sung at dawn with heart-wrenching conviction  
 But the proud fiery green chillies of "I don't need your help" that bring tears to the eyes  
 The rock hard exterior of nuts, traditions, that will break your teeth if you chomp down too hard  
 The dry, crackly reality of aching bones searing over wide open flames of souls.

ARTIST - ASIM AHMED