

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## Losses

By Helen Heineman

Imagine the moment  
When everything was taken away,  
Or nearly everything.  
You didn't know right away  
What the blow meant,  
Loss of your right hand, for example,  
No more notes on what you've read,  
No more diary entries,  
No more compositional thoughts  
Rushing from your brain,  
Forming characters in your stories.  
No more watercolor paintings,  
No more playing Chopin on the piano.

It was time to seek for what I could still do  
With that largely useless hand,  
Since surely nothing in life  
Is totally useless.  
Bill, who fell yesterday,  
Still persists in tending his garden.  
I'll have to find a garden of my own,  
One I can still tend.

Yesterday I went shopping at Target  
With my aide and selected four shirts,  
A package of file folders and  
Some colorful looseleaf dividers.

When I came home,  
I had her start labeling the folders  
In much the same way, I used to do myself.  
We made notebooks and called them  
Poetry Class and Jane Austen,  
Hoping by invoking the name of the author  
I might steal some part of her power.  
It was a thought,  
And I'll be waiting to see  
If it brings some remains of this day.

Monday is my class, and Tuesday,  
I'm meeting with Sol to discuss  
Tennyson's "Ulysses"  
With its story of a man with a history of losses,  
Not yet finished  
With traveling the world.  
I'll tap it for more inspiration.  
"To strive, to seek, to find."  
Yes, I'll try to find some new horizons  
Hidden among the landscapes of  
Sirens and Lotus Eaters,  
Before finally coming home  
To my faithfully woven life.