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The Empty Chair

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THE EMPTY CHAIR

The empty dining room chair
where my sister once sat
confronts then stares at me
waiting

So I sit beside it
to avoid its glare
and significance
maintain my composure

But it demands my attention
like a former lover
grasps for a hug or a hand
unwilling to be ignored

The emptiness
prompts family memories
recalls the warmth of her smile
mutes her hoarse voice and hearty laughter

The chair
like her picture
hung on a wall
a bittersweet reminder

My grief
momentarily released
again anchors itself to me
waiting

My balance wavers
eyes moisten
I rise and turn away
“Mom, let’s go out to eat.”