**Let Me Go**

Carole Greenfield

At some point my husband will die. At some point

my heart will stop beating, my eyes will fix open,

some stranger's fingers will have to pass over

and close them, lids worn thin with age, my fingers

pressing them shut to blot out images I couldn't witness.

The lights of our world are already going out

and I try not to drown in the darkness, try to keep

the nightlight lit, the lanterns blazing, keep some tiny flame

of faith alight, deep in my dark heart, my heart that's dwelt in darkness

all along, and still I draw in breath, still I get out of bed

eager for the first cup of tea each morning.

Whether there will be a communal going-out of light,

if we will snuff ourselves out or be snuffed out

like old candle extinguishers, small cones at ends

of long-handled brass stems, lowered gently

over open flames, quiet executions, I do not know.

Let me go out like the morning star, slow fade into dawning day.

Let me go out like smoke rising from chimneys, soft silent swirl

in the cold air. Let me go out like leaves drifting down to land.

Let me go out with small fuss, loving hands holding mine,

someone beside me to usher me on, wish me safe passage.

Let me go out like a good dream, the kind you don't want

to wake up from, the kind that lingers on the periphery,

infuses your day with a hint of magic, wish or even the belief

you may have stepped over, stepped through.