In dreams I remember

By Rebecca N. McKinnon

~~never~~ let go

1. (~~never)~~

There is a locked

filing cabinet of us

in my mind

It doesn't matter

how much I love you

I lost the key

That's the way moving

on works, though I wish

it wasn't

In the dead of my sleep

I found it

the key to you and me

My grip was strong

on the little locket

but my unsteady wrist

trembled the tiny key

in trepidation and longing,

twisted it

giving my mind access

to the perfect details of your face

to your sweet voice like a clear bell struck

and striking me I woke sweating,

my mouth cracked open

in silent scream

I am convinced now

that we never forget, truly

that our brilliant bodies

do only what they must

to protect themselves.

Indeed, I was broken

all morning from the nightmare

of missing you, again

after all this time

Broken like it was 3 days ago

not 13 years

Broken like the star-crossed girl

I used to be

and somehow--deep inside,

locked away, inaccessible to

even me most of the time--

always will be.

2. let go

We threw the party

at a new restaurant

that month.

It was a corner shop,

mom and pop,

on the edge of nowhere.

Exit left for everything

you've chosen/ever known.

Exit right for something else entirely.

It was only the beginning

and people were standing.

No one had their food.

This should have infuriated me

but you walked in, found me

with only your eyes

and moved me with only the

gesture of your finger.

I followed and away we went

away from everyone/everything

we thought mattered at the time

where we could be alone

right, directly into the deserted dark,

where you'd never go with me

if it wasn't a dream

so I knew and I fought the illusion slipping

I grabbed your hand

and squeezed

I held on tighter to the loveliness

of the lie, and suddenly

we were masked

Reality plucked me in and out

of consciousness and each time

I closed my eyes tight

knowing this was a way back to you

and probably the

only one

You pushed me against a cold

brick wall and I let you,

I would've let you do anything in that place

The nose of your Zanni mask

pushed awkwardly into

my own covered face

the closer you came to me.

I didn't even know what disguise

I wore, why or for whose benefit

But I recognized yours

and the symbolism elicited such

grief in me

that when I woke again

I did not close my eyes.

I no longer wanted to see.