



## Mother's Day by Julie Stahl

I think I would prefer to die  
my second death

Now while the scent of him lingers yet  
in the soiled clothes strewn around on the  
floor of his bedroom

While his footprint remains oil on glass  
from our last long road trip  
on the windshield of my car  
valuable no longer for its re-sale value  
nor cargo carrying capacity  
but only for this fading track

While his voice is still trapped in someone's answering machine (Why can't it be mine?)  
so that when they come to town  
they can play it for me  
They haven't yet erased it  
but they will

Before I close my eyes and can no longer see his eyes  
Or the dimple in his cheek  
Or the mole on his back  
Or the dozen other things  
that made him mine  
especially, mostly, but never all

Before I have lost all trace  
and the fine line  
between memory and fantasy  
blurs and he becomes  
a Saint or a Hero or a Legend  
Instead of just a boy  
Whom I loved above all others,  
All else past, present, future

In the silent aftermath of  
my first.

*Julie Stahl is an American who contacted us during a stay in Whanganui as she was travelling soon after her son's death. She has returned to the States and is on our e mail list. After she received the Mother's Day newsletter 2021 she sent this raw and realistic verse as she contemplated Mother's Day. It will be published in 2022 Newsletter.*