

## Winter in Castaneda

Climbing the stairs  
from the cellar to the room  
with the tile floor,  
eight months later,  
after the pain has softened,  
after the ashes have been scattered  
on the rock, after driving past the  
snowy fields of Saint Gotthard,  
we feel your presence  
fill the spaces between our bodies.

Not yet understanding the full meaning  
of this merging, of your hands  
entwined in the leaves of plants,  
your scent lingering in the  
cedar closet, your smile  
in the candle flame,  
your voice trailing the crackling  
of logs in the fireplace,  
a sound so delicate,  
we dare not move  
as not to disturb it.

With each breath we take  
the silent words into our hearts  
and choose to believe in the  
here and now  
of all that was, before you left us.