

Anitha Devi Pillai

Shattered Smile

I gathered broken pieces
of my heart scattered all over
the floor of the year.

The larger pieces that I found,
I kept – to glue together someday.
Memories of lazy conversations
stolen moments and silly laughter,
broken but intact.

The smaller pieces escaped me as
they turned to dust with my touch.
Some dissolved in the tears
like forgotten promises
leaving no trace at all.
I could not save those.

The rest – tiny odds and bits
were the hardest to discard.
Photos, messages, gifts –
they left me bleeding
as I yanked them off their pedestal.

Then
I found his shadow at the door
and he said ‘hello’ once again.

I smiled.

Shackled Stranger in the Night

The night lay stretched out
possibilities and anxiety rolled into one.

The stranger across the table
smiled and bantered
with his salt and pepper look.

I wanted to giggle but I was too nervous.
I knew it probably meant nothing.

Yet I wanted a moment more
to watch him smile
as he ripped me apart
one piece of my life at a time.

Was he flirting with me?
The barren night had no answer
until the moonlight
lit up the shackle on his finger.
The stranger was chained to another.