



Palm Reading Shop Sign, by artjunkie09

Cathy Allman

In Another Life

Sometimes at 2 a.m. your ghosts slips into my bed
through the slumbering realm between my husband and my nightmares.

There I tell you about my garden, sleepwalk with you through the French doors
admiring my pool inside the white picket fence below my bedroom balcony.

In that moment there are no scars, or complex fractures, no limping
just dancing barefoot beneath the fountains' splashing current, warm

water washing away all the unspoken, unfinished, unanswered
empty spaces and blood. See those red roses climbing the trellis?

In another life I will be the one who says, "No matter what, I'll always love you."
You will be the one who drives your station wagon into a wall.

I will sit at your bedside viewing you through tubes and ask, "What happened?"
You will wonder where to begin, why you didn't wear a seat belt.

You will be unable to find words through a morphine-induced dream.
You will feel like it is time for some final exam, but you can't find the building.

I will disappear, marry someone else, and pretend you never happened.
You will divorce the woman you left me for.

I will be glad you left me, I mean, left the me you never actually got to know.
I will get to see myself instead of looking in the mirror at your shadow.

I will not wrestle with the life we never finished living,
the life the palm reader on Melrose told us would be happily ever after.

Cathy Allman began writing as a reporter after attending the School of Cinema and
Television at the University of Southern California. Her poetry has appeared in such
publications as *Elysian Fields*, *On Location*, *Pearl*, *Talking River*, *The Old Red Kimono* and
Pisgah Review.