The Dead Weight

The apartment held memories of a time before he left us. A time when he was still alive. A time when we were still alive. A fragile relic of how you and I were before he died. Death is so cruel. Irreversible, unacceptable, final. You began to sob the last time that we drove away from that haunted apartment, uncontrolled and full-bodied, in a way that you rarely see outside the confines of childhood. You had to pull the car over. You were sobbing too much to drive. I reached over for your hand, but you didn’t want mine. It is a hot iron to your tender hand. You want a type of comfort that I could never bring. You and I left the haunted apartment, but we packed the dead weight with us. I was naive to think we could leave such a large oversized item behind. How does one carry the dead weight of another through a relationship meant for two? I simply cannot.

-Sara Shilling, 2021 graduate of University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill