

Jessi Jarrin

The Afterlife is Just Reliving Your Childhood Again

“I am one of those who like to stay late at the cafe,” the older waiter said.”

Ernest Hemingway, “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place”

We were always packing our things when our parents were off
and no matter how much they prayed that the spell I was under
would wear, I found you again in some Denny’s--greasy
hash browns and okay coffee, our own clean,
well-lighted place.

How do we convince our parents that it's their own curses that kill us?

Now I'm here, staring at a boy and his dad
in little league caps which reminds me of
my own brother and father.

How I watched them throw
the ball. I learned then
a lot of my life would depend

on this back

& forth,

the way the waiter doesn't ask
if I want more coffee. He just

keeps

pouring.

This grief. How it taps on the window today
telling me it's time to wake up. My parents

are almost home. Take
the belongings you have (some books, earrings,
your crumpled up
heart) and go.