

## ***A Poem for Hannah***

**By Lizzie Keefe**

When my best friend's brother died, she collected his clothes and offered the pieces that did not fit her to the rest of us.

We didn't go digging through the large trash bags she brought but, instead, We watched her hold up each tattered sweatshirt or pair of pants as if she were auctioning them off.

We took it off her hands while being especially careful as we folded and placed the items in our lap.

The one item I chose was a green and orange striped flannel shirt, knowing I won't wear it as much as I hope but wanting to preserve its being for her. Preserve *his* being.

I remember thinking "*this is what we do for the ones we love.*"

We refuse to let each other wander alone down those familiar paths shrouded in darkness,

we sit together and go through the piles of things left behind by people who are no longer around,

we listen to a story that has already been told because it's a little different each time.

We welcome their unprompted tears in the middle of a party and lead them towards a cozy space where catharsis is offered in the cavity of our open arms.

There are days when I wake up and don't think of you at all but

even that is a lie

because acknowledging your absence allows it to exist in shadow form.

In the middle of falling asleep, there are times I am suddenly struck  
by the other side of the bed being occupied by someone  
other than you.

I still organize my underwear drawer by pairs I would want you to see and  
ones I wouldn't.

And I can't help but think, "*this is what we do for the ones we love.*"

This is what we do; we close the drawer,  
we wear the flannel.