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Moving Poems

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Lisa Schultz is a former card-carrying member of the sandwich generation, now working on her return to life outside the family. Earning her MAIS degree fulfills a lifelong dream of advancing her education and is the stepping stone to the next phase of life... stay tuned!

It was a bit strange for me to think of my poetry as interdisciplinary, but it didn't take much to realize just how much goes into writing a piece like this one. My poetry is sometimes storytelling, when it is narrative. My poetry is almost always descriptive. This series of "moving poems" is both. It explores a period in my life when my family was relocating from Northern to Southeastern Ontario. "Moving poems" also explore word usage, specifically the varied meanings, tenses and uses of the word "move" as a noun, an intransitive and transitive verb. These poems are also an exploration of an aspect of life that different people handle very differently depending on the situation. The writing of these poems "moved" me from an emotional struggle into a spiritual realization.

moves

calm the flow
and the depths undertow
the contemplative sits
through raging breath
gulping thoughts
feeling life-lost
still-finding presence
within itself wholly unchanged

movement

five years i watched you
head down, lip biting
shoulders drooping in submission
in supplication
your body wailing
cursing injustice
in its mother tongue
while your stolen ideas
and your just desserts
were sent to that guy's table
accepted with a smug smile

his false wide eyes
glancing to ensure you saw

five years i wanted to shake you
by the shoulders
and ask why you take it
but eventually i knew why
you checked your pride at the door
with your stupid briefcase
and lay face down

because we needed
you provided

love

movers

i remember that day
you called to see if we needed anything for dinner
i told you i scheduled an interview for you
(i remember because you never swear)
you wouldn't do it for yourself
so i did
because i got tired
of seeing you too tired to even try

it took only three weeks to pack up our lives
when they said yes, please
life gave us the big-change blinders
it pulled the wool down just far enough
to normalize the extraordinary
into seeming like a good idea

some decisions aren't really ours to make

moving

packing, unpacking
moving, removing
filling the unfillable void
stuffing life in
on top of itself

into very small spaces
until everything fits
compartmentalized
closed up tight
taped shut and labelled
room by room
a box for everything
and everything in its box
we live boxed in
we live outside of comfort
we make yet another space
hoping to open up
and live outside
box free
we long for curved open soul-sounds
but we put our heads down
our hands up, fingers splayed
surrounded by the ubiquitous boxes
we look for someone to blame

move
things fall apart
as easily as
they fall into place
do angels influence
or demons drive us
from within or out
for good or naught
no matter
what
unseen forces
work every day
to move us
with a knee jerk
or what we think is purpose
we are mistaken
we are missing
we have forsaken
that we breathe
wherever blows the wind

moved
for many
movement is stationary
one foot nailed to the floor
circle walking
chasing vicarious tales
for some
moving is all part of it
fact and matter
packing light and rootless
for fear of immobility
for others
movement is fantasy
these big move-talkers
say it's better there
but never go
for those
who do move
always under duress
sometimes running from
sometimes running to
sometimes running also
into the known or unknown
pierced by direction
the point of every turn
we unpack to settle in
we pack the unsettle in
full rooms, empty boxes
empty rooms, boxes full
of something sinister
and hope
that our own move meant
something
we stopped running altogether
thought inside the box
lined it silver
called for change
right in it up to the elbows
we took a good long look

at what some try to get outside of
we smelled its breath
held filth bare in hand
turned on its head
until tears fell out
and moistened the fertile earth

there is life after
crisis and epiphany
not just the credits
we need time
to react
to make it
grow
from here to there
and there to here
funny moves are everywhere
with twinkle-eyes
and holding hands
offering our grace
wise-up
trying still
not to take it all so seriously
twisting focus
while-waiting
fabricating quiet marvels
in the falling of our dust
we begin again
to move