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## The Spaces Between

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## The Spaces Between

*Winner of Creative Writing Award, Spring 2016*

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Most days I think of myself  
as failing. To reconcile this I say things  
like leaves grow and die over and over—  
the cycle I am running is my own and I find  
consolation in that;

but after grease  
popped out of a pan I was browning chicken in  
and put a blank dot on my retina  
I stopped looking so closely  
at unimportant things. That helped  
for a time,

but soon most things  
seemed unimportant:  
another night  
out, a visit up the coast, sitting  
snowed in with a book—  
does this affect the way I love?  
Sometimes I think I am not capable  
and undeserving.

Sometimes  
the hour is late and I think  
of the past: like another life  
I have died and lost  
everyone  
and myself:  
a person familiar with a certain  
arrangement of homes and the spaces

between them.

I have given up, left  
myself behind.

Why is being  
erased such an obsession?  
How you die is not a matter  
of how you lived.

Have you  
been with someone who is sick  
and waiting for death? What  
did you talk about?