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## Three Poems of Survival

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Three poems from Survive and Thrive Writing Workshop #1 in 2015 written  
and submitted by Larry J. Matthews

WHAT I WANT

TATTOO

FEAR

## WHAT I WANT

I don't want that title  
I want you back

All those years of living  
and crying and scratching  
and balancing  
and trying to love

Then discovering ourselves  
and each other four decades in

I want you back  
with your lips soft and moist  
with your tongue ready to snap  
at dumb things I say all too often

I want you back  
with bright eyes and clear mind  
But I know  
I can't have what I want

"Widower"  
There I uttered it  
Only a whisper  
but saying it must make it so

## TATTOO

My body is all do-it-yourself.  
Years digging creases  
into my face.  
Painting brown spots,  
sagging skin, dry deserts, and more.  
Time has finally come to hire an  
exterior  
decorator.

I've chosen an eye to adorn.  
No gender, no symbol of wealth.  
Just something to see what is real.

I want to see  
what is true beauty and what might be false,  
the difference between discipline and abuse,  
the nature of fear and the souls of people who sell it,  
what is worth valuing and what is not,  
where a child loses hope  
and  
what  
causes it.

And I wish to show people what  
insight I gain from this eye.  
So let's add  
a tear,  
to let others know how much it hurts  
to see what is real.

## FEAR

I suspect there will be a day  
When time stops for me

It might be something like  
Punishment as a youngster  
When forced to sit on a chair  
For the three minutes it takes  
Sand to pass through an egg timer

Or it may be like the distance  
Between meeting your lover  
At a party and later  
Feeling your naked bodies touch  
An agonizingly long way to go

Or the end of time could be like  
Going to sleep only without the dreams

But I don't fear the end of time  
What I really fear is  
When I have a wondrous idea  
For a story or poem  
That arrives in the space between  
Waking and sleeping  
I fear I will lose that idea  
In the fog of slumber  
And never find it again